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BEYOND THE RUBICON

Romans and Gauls in Republican Italy

J. H. C. WILLIAMS

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Preface

This book began as a D.Phil. thesis submitted in the University of Oxford in the summer of 1994. It was written in Oxford, Tübingen, and London between 1989 and 1994, and the final product still bears the imprint of the many generous institutions and individuals in all these places from whose support, attention, and advice its author has benefited. The British Academy, Wolfson College, and St Hugh's College between them provided welcome financial assistance and congenial community in Oxford. A semester in Germany in 1992 funded by the Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst afforded the opportunity to broaden horizons and improve linguistic skills at the Karl-Eberhards-Universität, Tübingen. Two periods of absence from the Department of Coins and Medals in the British Museum assisted in the completion both of the thesis and, four years later, of the present book. To my colleagues there, in particular Andrew Burnett, Roger Bland, Andrew Meadows, and John Orna-Ornstein, I am profoundly grateful. For the unfettered use of his table when I needed it most, many thanks are due to Daniel Hepburn and, for expert photocopying, to Richard Bottoms.

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Finally, I should like to thank Konstanze Scharring for all her encouragement, advice, and unfailing affection over the past four years. Further to the dedication to my parents, I should also like to offer this book to the memory of Christopher Gray, who was Priest-in-Charge of St Margaret's Church, Anfield, Liverpool, until August 1996 when he was fatally wounded outside his church: *permanet in aeternum in conspectu Dei*.

London, October 1998

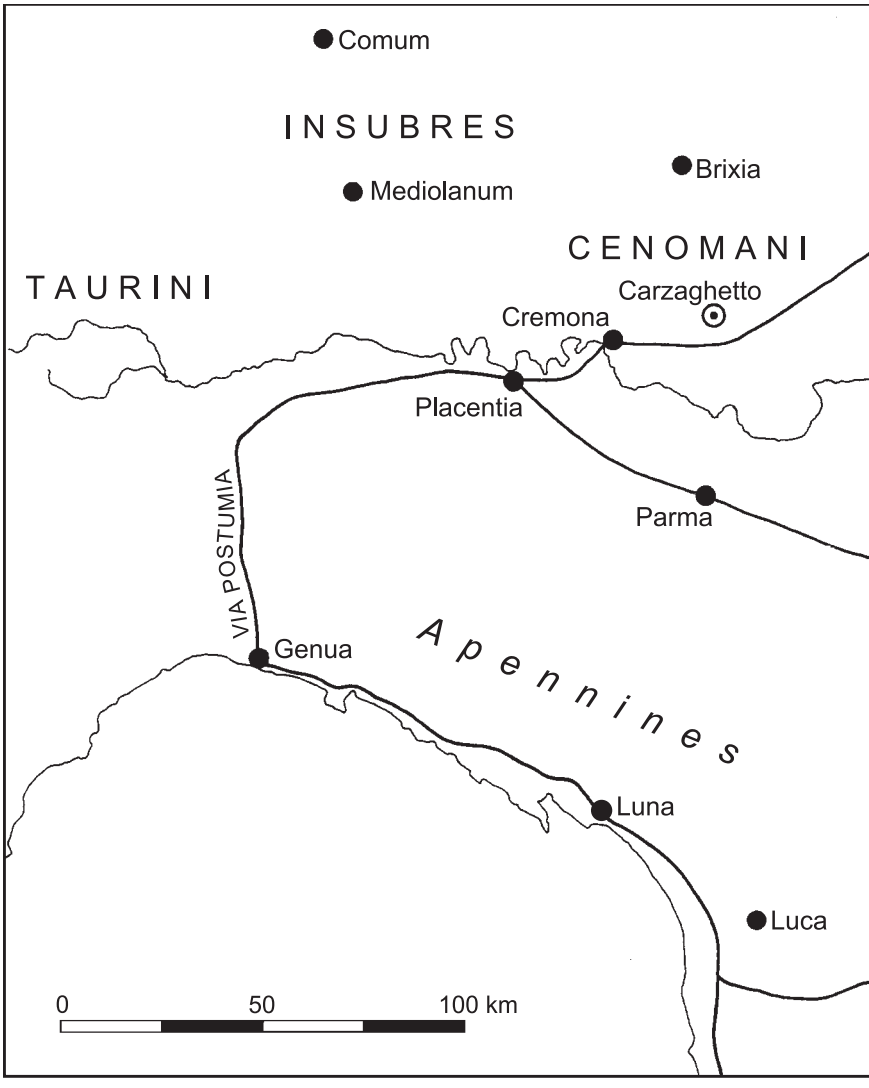
Contents

Abbreviations

AAAd	*Antichità Altoadriatiche*
AJAH	*American Journal of Ancient History*
AJPh	*American Journal of Philology*
AncSoc	*Ancient Society*
ANRW	*Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt*, H. Temporini, W. Haase (eds.), Berlin and New York, 1972–
Atti CeSDIR	*Atti del Centro Studi e Documentazione sull'Italia Romana*
BCH	*Bulletin des Correspondence Hellénique*
BIAL	*Bulletin of the Institute of Archaeology of the University of London*
BSAF	*Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France*
C&M	*Classica et Mediaevalia*
CAH^2	*The Cambridge Ancient History*, 2nd edn, Cambridge, 1961–
CIL	*Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum*, T. Mommsen (ed.), 2nd edn, Berlin,1893–
CP	*Classical Philology*
CQ	*Classical Quarterly*
CR	*Classical Review*
CRAI	*Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptiones et Belles-Lettres*
Criniti	*Grani Liciniani Reliquiae*, N. Criniti (ed.), Leipzig, 1981
DHA	*Dialogues d'Histoire Ancienne*
DArch	*Dialoghi di Archeologia*
FGH	*Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, F. Jacoby (ed.), Berlin and Leiden, 1923–
FIRA	*Fontes Iuris Romani Anteiustiniani*, S. Riccobono (ed.), 3 vols., 2nd edn, Florence, 1968–69

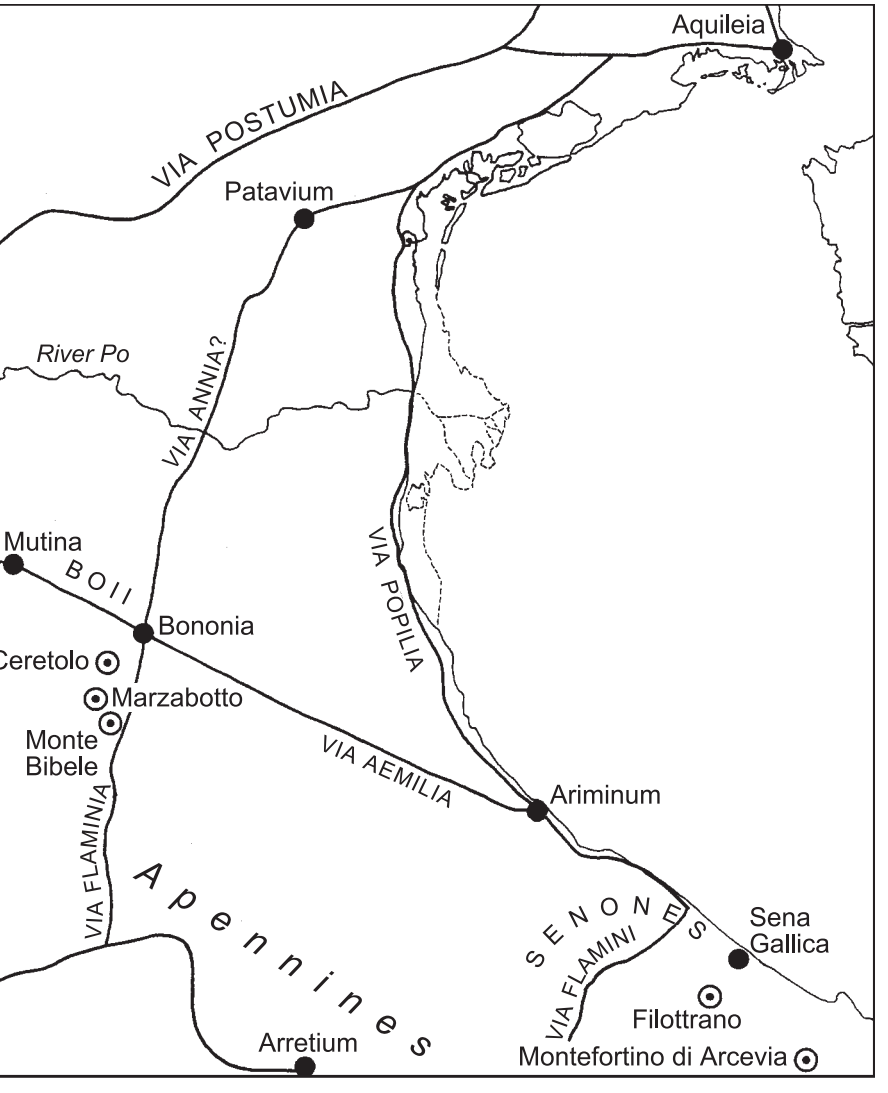
Funaioli	*Grammaticae Romanae Fragmenta*, G. Funaioli (ed.), Stuttgart, 1969
G&R	*Greece and Rome*
Giannini	*Paradoxographorum Graecorum Reliquiae*, A. Giannini (ed.), Milan, 1966
GRBS	*Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*
HSPh	*Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*
II	*Inscriptiones Italiae*, Rome, 1931–
ILLRP	*Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*, A. Degrassi, vol. 1, 2nd edn, Florence, 1965, ii, 1963
ILS	*Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, H. Dessau (ed.), 3 vols., Berlin, 1892–1916
IPE	*Inscriptiones Antiquae Orae Septentrionalis Ponti Euxini Graecae et Latinae*, B. Latyuschev (ed.), vol. i, 2nd edn, Petrograd, 1916
JdI	*Jahrbuch des deutschen Archäologischen Instituts*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
JRA	*Journal of Roman Archaeology*
JRS	*Journal of Roman Studies*
LCM	*Liverpool Classical Monthly*
LEC	*Les Études Classiques*
Lindsay	*Sexti Pompei Festi de verborum significatu quae supersunt cum Pauli epitome*, W. M. Lindsay (ed.), Leipzig, 1913
MAAR	*Memoirs of the American Academy in Rome*
MALinc	*Memorie della Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche dell'Accademia dei Lincei*
MEFR	*Mélanges d'Archéologie et d'Histoire de l'École française de Rome*
Mette	*Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*, H.-J. Mette (ed.), Berlin, 1959
OJA	*Oxford Journal of Archaeology*
PBA	*Proceedings of the British Academy*
PBSR	*Proceedings of the British School at Rome*
PP	*La Parola del Passato. Rivista di Studi Antichi*
PPS	*Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*
RA	*Revue Archéologique*
RAComo	*Rivista Archeologica dell'antica provincia e diocesi di Como*

RE	*Real-Encyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, W. Kroll (eds.), Stuttgart, 1893–
REA	*Revue des Études Anciennes*
REL	*Revue des Études Latines*
RFIC	*Rivista filologica e d'Istruzione Classica*
RhMus	*Rheinisches Museum*
RIL	*Rendiconti dell'Istituto Lombardo, Classe di Lettere, Scienze morali e storiche*
RIN	*Rivista Italiana di Numismatica*
Rose	*Aristotelis qui ferebantur Librorum Fragmenta*, V. Rose (ed.), Leipzig, 1886
RRC	*Roman Republican Coinage*, M. H. Crawford, 2 vols., Cambridge, 1974
RS	*Roman Statutes*, M. H. Crawford (ed.), 2 vols., London, 1996
RSA	*Rivista Storica dell'Antichità*
SE	*Studi Etruschi*
SIG	*Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum*, W. Dittenberger (ed.), 4 vols., 3rd edn, Leipzig, 1915–23
Skutsch	*The Annals of Q. Ennius*, O. Skutsch (ed.), Oxford, 1985
StudRomagnol	*Studi Romagnoli*
TAPhA	*Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*
Vahlen	*Ennianae poesis reliquiae*, J. Vahlen (ed.), Leipzig, 1903
Wehrli	*Die Schule des Aristoteles: Texte und Kommentare*, F. Wehrli (ed.), 10 vols., 2nd edn, Basel, 1967–69
Wünsch	*Iohannis Lydi de Magistratibus Populi Romani Libri Tres*, R. Wünsch (ed.), Leipzig, 1903



MAP 1 Northern Italy in the Republican Period

Key: Solid black dots = Major ancient towns mentioned in the text
Ringed dots = Major archaeological sites mentioned in the text
Small capitals = Roads
Large capitals = Gallic tribes


Aquileia
VIA POSTUMIA
Patavium
River Po
VIA ANNIA?
Mutina
BOII
Bononia
VIA POPILIA
Ceretolo
Marzabotto
Monte
Bibele
VIA AEMILIA
Ariminum
VIA FLAMINIA
Apennines
SENONES
VIA FLAMINI
Sena
Gallica
Filottrano
Arretium
Montefortino di Arcevia

Introduction

GAULS AND ROMANS

Why did Caesar choose to attack Gaul in 59 BC? According to his own account, there was no choice involved. The large and warlike tribe of the Helvetii were on the move westwards, likely to endanger Roman interests in the south. In the background were the even more menacing Germani intending to invade Gaul under the leadership of Ariovistus. Italy itself was in danger. Memories of the Cimbric Wars, only forty years in the past, were not far away and Caesar played on them to good effect.[1] There had been fears that the Catilinarian conspirators were in collusion with the subject Gallic people of the Allobroges in 63 BC. In the following year they broke out into open rebellion which lasted until 60. On the Ides of March of that year, Cicero wrote to Atticus that the Senate had decreed that the consuls draw lots for the two Gallic provinces either side of the Alps and that troops be recruited with none of the usual exemptions allowed. Ambassadors were dispatched to the neighbouring Gallic peoples with orders to discourage them from making common cause with the Helvetii. Fears of a Gallic war were *the* dominant theme in politics.[2]

Caesar's interest in a Gallic adventure clearly arose from current anxieties in Rome about a recrudescence of war emanating from the Galli north of the Alps. Yet only two months after Cicero's letter of March, the situation had calmed down and previous fears subsided.[3] When Vatinius came to pass his law granting Caesar a five-year command in 59 BC, the province assigned to him consisted not of the two Gauls, but Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum: Gaul over the Alps was given to him only later in the year by the Senate.

[1] Caes. *B.G.* 1. 7. 4, 12. 5, 13. 2, 33. 4, 40. 5, 2. 29. 4.

[2] Cic. *Att.* 1. 19. 2: 'in re publica nunc quidem maxime Gallici belli versatur metus.' ('Fear of a war against the Gauls is now especially a matter of very great concern in public life.')

[3] Cic. *Att.* 1. 19. 5; 2. 1. 11.

So was it Caesar's unwavering intention to conquer what would become Roman Gallia? Or did he canvass options in other directions, perhaps along the Danube? In 59 BC, he had had Ariovistus designated as a friend and ally of the people of Rome.[4] This move is often interpreted as a cynical piece of diplomacy to neutralize Ariovistus until the Helvetii had been dealt with and the time was right to attack him.[5] This may be correct, but there are other possibilities. It may also suggest that Caesar really was contemplating directing his energies elsewhere. By the time he assumed command in 58 BC, the north-eastern approaches to Italy seem to have become as much of an immediate preoccupation as the movements of the Helvetii. As many have thought, the empire of Burebista the Dacian may already have offered an inviting target for the aspiring world conquerer.[6] It is certain that when Caesar assumed command in 58 BC, his three Cisalpine legions had spent the winter in Aquileia and, not far away, the Boii had just attacked Noricum and besieged the city of Noreia.[7] Plausible opportunities for military action and triumph hunting were available all along the transalpine zone, and on at least two later occasions Caesar considered a Balkan campaign based on Illyricum, once in the winter of 57–56 BC after initial successes in Gaul and again shortly before his death.[8] But in the winter of 59–58, he settled on Gallia.

Caesar had several immediate pretexts to hand in the recent disturbances north of the Alps involving various Gallic peoples to justify his marching into Gaul and to assist in his presentation of this choice as an inevitable response to a sure and certain danger rather than an exercise in calculated triumph hunting. Moreover, the people were behind a Gallic campaign—the Senate gave him the command fearing that if they denied it, it would eventually be given to him by a law of the people anyway.[9] But contemporary anxieties about the Helvetii and Ariovistus were not the only reason why the idea of a Gallic War caught the popular imagination in 59 BC. It went much deeper than that with the Romans. For, as Cicero expressed it in his speech *De Provinciis Consularibus* of 56 BC: 'in the opinion of all who have ever deliberated soundly

[4] Dio 38. 34. 3.
[5] Cf. Seager 1979: 89.
[6] Gelzer 1969: 86–7; for a different view, Seager 1979: 89.
[7] Caes. *B.G.* 1. 5. 4, 10. 3.
[8] Caes. *B.G.* 3. 7. 1; Str. 7. 3. 5, 11; App. BC 2. 110; Suet. *Caes.* 44. 3.
[9] Suet. *Caes.* 22. 1.

about this Commonwealth of ours, Gaul has always been the greatest threat to this empire, ever since its inception.'[10] Cicero was, of course, speaking for Caesar and, it might be argued, had his reasons to exaggerate matters. Nevertheless, rhetoric aside, this is reliable testimony to the intensity of the fear and loathing capable of being evoked in a Roman audience by the idea of Gallia and the Galli. It was an antipathy, the roots of which were felt to reach back into the distant past of the Republic and to have continued unabated ever since. Vivid historical tradition recalled a regular series of often triumphant but always bitter wars fought against Gauls south of the Alps throughout the Republican period, beginning with one of the most awful episodes in Roman history, the catastrophe on the Allia and the destruction of Rome at the hands of Gallic invaders over three hundred years before. Other great and terrible enemies had come and gone—the Samnites, Carthage, the kingdoms and empires of the Hellenistic world—but the Gauls remained, undefeated and perilously close, a painful reminder of an extraordinary past humiliation and a massive threat in the present. To their conqueror would belong the honour not merely of a great battle won but of delivering the state from an old enemy, and of finally avenging an ancient defeat. This was a triumph that would surely be worthy to rank alongside those of Pompey the new Alexander, precisely because Gallia had impinged much longer, and more acutely, on Roman sensibilities than the exotic East, for all its distant splendours. This was why the chance of gaining the definitive victory over the Gauls was such an exciting prospect for the people of Rome in 59 BC, and why it offered such an attractive prize for Caesar's boundless ambition.[11]

GAULS AND CELTS IN HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND POLITICS

How then did the Galli become the deadly enemy of the Romans in the Republic, and why? These are two of the main questions that this book sets out to answer by examining the literary evidence relating to the historical, ethnographic, and geographical

[10] Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 33.

[11] Cf. Bellen 1985: 41–3. See Walser 1998 on Caesar's account of the beginnings of the Gallic War.

writings of Greeks and Romans about Gauls in the period of the Roman Republic. Until the conquests of Caesar, Romans interacted most intensely with them within Italy itself, in the region of the Po Valley between the Apennines and the Alps. Accordingly, the geographical focus of this book will largely be on Italy as well, for it is here that 'the Gaul' was first created in the Roman imagination, a creation whose several attributes were inherited by Gauls encountered subsequently elsewhere, from Asia Minor to northern Europe, and by other groups of transalpine enemies like the Germans and the Goths of later centuries. The aim of this investigation is not, however, merely to make a further contribution, with specific reference to the Italian Gauls, to the continuing discussion in ancient cultural and art history of the construction and representation of the 'barbarian other'.[12] The reason for this is that the conclusions arrived at would be substantially the same as for all the other periods and contexts already treated, though perhaps based on previously unexplored material.[13] The idea that Greeks and Romans were possessed of clear and structured preconceptions about barbarians in general and Gauls in particular is now well established among ancient historians. But little attempt has been made to see what difference these preconceptions, as expressed in literary and figurative media, actually made to the ways in which Greeks and Romans behaved towards and interacted with Gauls and other sorts of barbarians. This is why we began with the question of Caesar's intentions in 59 BC, as an example of the ways in which an understanding of ancient preconceptions about Gauls and barbarians can help in shedding new light on problems that have mostly been considered as subjects for straightforward political and military history. There are already in existence a number of useful accounts of the Roman military conquest of northern Italy and of its subsequent colonization.[14] But in the course of these treatments, the implications of what Romans felt and thought about the peoples and places they encountered in the north for the understanding of this history do

[12] For some recent contributions see e.g. Hartog 1980; Hall 1989; Nippel 1990; Cartledge 1993 on Greek barbarians; Sherwin-White 1967; Dauge 1981; Schneider 1986 on Roman views of eastern barbarian peoples.

[13] See Berger 1992, 1995 for a recent contribution on the Celts of Italy, with Kremer 1994 on the Celts in general.

[14] See Dyson 1985: 1–125; Eckstein 1987: 3–70; Harris 1989 for recent military and political accounts.

not tend to be brought out. This is a gap which this book will begin to address.

There is a further important corollary to the conclusions contained in the first four chapters of the book, which are essentially historical and historiographical in content and direction, to be drawn out in the fifth and final chapter. For the burden of these four chapters, which consist primarily of a reconsideration of ancient literary traditions concerning the ethnography and geography of northern Europe and the Celts, and of crucial episodes in the historical tradition relating to the Celts of Italy such as their initial invasion of Italy and the sack of Rome, reveals the inherent insecurity of this material when it is considered as historical evidence. Yet these same literary sources continue to be used by both historians and archaeologists as a reliable chronological and descriptive framework within which to write their narratives and construct their explanations of historical events or archaeological phenomena. As such, the narratives and explanations constructed often fail to convince because they tend to rely too heavily on improperly assessed literary evidence more or less skilfully sewn together with material evidence. The literary record of the early history of the Gauls of Italy may be of considerable importance for interpreting how Greeks and Romans understood and related to the Gauls at the time when the relevant texts were written, but it is perhaps less likely that they will in all cases provide a reliable foundation for historical reconstruction. A treatment of the implications of this position for various current consensuses on the archaeology and history of Celtic northern Italy, therefore, forms the final section of the book as a whole.

The problems of using the literary tradition as a basis for writing the history and archaeology of Celtic northern Italy is not the only element in the study of these disciplines that requires a certain amount of reassessment. Equally important is the fundamental question of what we mean by 'Celts' and 'Celtic', and how modern and ancient usages of these and analogous terms relate to one another. These are not merely linguistic points, for they go to the heart of the subject as a whole: how should ancient references to *Keltoi* and *Galatai* in Greek texts and Galli in Latin be interpreted, that is, to what should these words be taken to refer, and how well founded are modern ideas of what constitutes 'Celtic', with respect to culture, language, and ethnic identity in particular?

In various parts of Europe, Celts have become the focus of considerable academic controversy and popular interest in recent years. The latter has its political and mystical sides and is fairly widespread throughout Europe; but the former, the academic questioning of the meaning and validity of 'Celtic' as a useful concept is, for better or worse, mostly restricted to British contributors, to which tendency, doubtless in some sense nationally predetermined, the present author also belongs. A brief excursus on the current state of play in the 'Celtic question' may be in order at this stage in order to clarify the nature of this position.

By the end of the Republic, the large area south of the Alps inhabited by the peoples called Galli by the Romans, made up roughly of the modern Italian regions of Piedmont, Lombardy, the Veneto, Emilia-Romagna and the northern part of the Marche, would become part of Italia. But in the middle Republican period this region was commonly called Gallia, 'Gaul-land', along with all the other little-known regions of continental Europe beyond the Alps where people known generically as Galli also lived. The memory of Gallia south of the Alps faded quickly in antiquity as the Gauls of the north became respectable Romans and shed their disreputable Gallic past. But the memory has, perhaps surprisingly, persisted to the present day and in recent years found new life in two distinct but interconnected fields, those of academic study and European politics. There is a long tradition of popular scholarly books on the subject of the history and archaeology of the Gauls or Celts written in most of the major European languages.[15] The last twenty years have also seen a considerable resurgence in the history and archaeology of what is now usually called Celtic northern Italy. The discovery of new sites, the reconsideration of existing evidence, the publication of articles and synthetic studies on the history and archaeology of the late pre-Roman Iron Age of northern Italy, mainly by French and Italian scholars, has gathered pace since the 1960s.[16] One of the main consequences of this expansion is that the Celticness, or Celticity, of the local peoples of the region identified as Galli by Roman

[15] Cf. e.g. Hubert 1932*a*, 1932*b*; Grenier 1945; Powell 1958; Chadwick 1970; Filip 1977; Duval 1977; Ross 1986; Moscati *et al*. 1991; Dannheimer and Gebhard 1993; Cunliffe 1997; Birkhan 1997.

[16] See e.g. Chevallier 1962; Arslan 1976–8; Peyre 1979; Santoro 1978; Tizzoni 1983 and other essays in same publication; Vitali 1987 and other essays in same publication; Kruta 1988; Grassi 1991.

authors and *Keltoi* or *Galatai* by Greeks has increasingly been assumed and affirmed. In the academic study of the history and archaeology of ancient Europe, the word 'Celtic' is used as an ethno-linguistic label that has come to be widely applied, often vaguely but mostly with conviction, to the peoples, cultures, and languages of pre-Roman Europe from the Apennines to the Rhine, from Central Europe to Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula.

Initially, the terms 'Gaul' and 'Gallic', were preferred, or at least used as frequently, in works on the Gauls of Italy, as in the important 1978 Rome exhibition entitled *I Galli e l'Italia*, which displayed finds from many of the most significant sites associated with them; or Christian Peyre's important survey, *La Cisalpine Gauloise du IIIe au Ier Siècle avant J.-C.*, published in 1979.[17] But by the 1990s, Gauls were out and Celts were in, as exemplified in the title of the 1991 exhibition, *I Celti*, held in the Palazzo Grassi, one of Venice's most prestigious exhibition halls, and accompanied by a large and impressive catalogue, and the latest synthetic treatment of the Celts of Italy to appear recently, Maria Theresa Grassi's *I Celti in Italia*, published in the same year.[18]

There are various reasons why the ethnic category of 'Celtic' has become more widely acceptable in recent years, both in academic and non-academic discourses, than that of 'Gallic'. No doubt the palpable increase in the number of books dealing with Celtic New Age spirituality, mostly written in English but many of them translated into Italian, has something to do with it on a popular level. But there are more than purely esoteric reasons why the notion of 'the Celtic' has gained ground academically and politically in various parts of Europe, and northern Italy in particular. For Celts and Celtic have in certain contexts become a symbol for two contrary but related political developments within Europe and especially the countries of the European Union.

The first of these arises from the search for a transnational European identity able to encompass the member states of the EU. In Europe's past, the Roman Empire was the source most frequently employed in the creation of historical precedents for multi- or international polities, such as the Byzantine Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, or the Napoleonic Empire. But the Roman model has been notable by its absence in post-war Europe. The

[17] Santoro 1978; Peyre 1979.
[18] Moscati *et al.* 1991; Grassi 1991. An exception is Vitali 1992.

unfortunate connotations it acquired during the period of Fascist domination in Italy are one obvious reason for its abandonment in favour of other less contentious ancient European unities. No less salient in this regard is the point that the Roman Empire included within its borders North Africa and the Middle East, two regions from which the great colonial powers of Europe—Britain and France, and Spain to a lesser extent—were forced to withdraw in the post-war period, often in rather ignominious circumstances. The inconvenient Mediterranean bias of the Roman Empire makes it an inappropriate prototype for the new European Union, whose identity and strength above all stems from the essentially continental European alliance of French and German economic and political interests that arose in the aftermath of the Second World War. In response to the need for an appropriate historical character to symbolize this union, the figure of Charlemagne was mobilized as a more suitable representative of Europe's common past than the Rome of the Caesars. As a German and a Frank he was equally appealing to both major partners in the new European family, but he had less to say to other constituencies within Europe, and the short-lived nature of the empire that he founded was never perhaps the most encouraging of exemplars. Yet Charlemagne and the Franks have continued to play an important role in what one might call archaeological pan-Europeanism, as demonstrated by the 1996 exhibition in Mannheim on the Franks which gave them the soubriquet *die Wegbereiter Europas* (the forerunners of Europe).

The Celts have gained in popularity in recent years as the latest plausible candidates for the position of the founding fathers of Europe, for a range of reasons. The territories which most handbooks have attributed to them coincide more or less with the boundaries of the countries of the EU—notably excluding Africa and Asia (forgetting for the moment about the Galatians of Asia Minor). They are thus able to offer to most of the current aspirants to European identity an equal stake in a common inheritance based in part on an idea of ancient Europe as constituted by a single ethnic group with a common culture and language, the Celts.[19] This was certainly an explicit element of the message of the 1991 Venice exhibition, in which the symbol of the (then) European

[19] Cf. Jones and Graves-Brown 1996: 14–17.

Community was employed in the display.[20] The location of this important exhibition within Italy, rather than France or Germany, was an indication of the general acceptability of the Celts as a symbol of the modern political community of Europe, to which Italians on the national level seem to be generally committed. The establishment of a closer association between Italy and the Celts by means of exhibitions and books such as those mentioned above may in part be interpreted as representing the widespread desire within Italy for closer economic and political ties to the nations of continental Europe, dominated by France and Germany, whose common claim to a Celtic past, indeed to being the original homelands of those Celts who expanded throughout Europe and created its original Celtic unity, has long been established in academic and popular literature.[21] The Celts, as opposed to the Gauls who are too closely identified with France and the French, offer an all-purpose identity in which individuals and communities from many different parts of modern Europe can take part and which they can regard as their own as part of their 'heritage'.[22]

In what we might call 'federalist Celticity', the Celts are presented as the original ethnic community of Europe, to which the diverse nations of modern Europe are all able to connect themselves in some sense or other. It does not claim that all Europeans are really ethnic Celts, but seeks to posit the existence of a prehistoric European community under the name of 'the Celts' as an encouragement to believe in the possibility of a future European unity.

But there is another kind of modern Celticity abroad in

[20] Cf. the optimistic words of Leclant and Moscati 1991, 4: 'An essential part of this exhibition is its subtitle, "The Origins of Europe". It was conceived with a mind to the great impending process of the unification of western Europe . . . We felt, and we still feel, that linking that past to this present was in no way forced, but indeed essential, and could very effectively call us back to our common roots . . . In this way, the Celtic exhibition itself slowly turned into a symbol of the new Europe, by now united from the Urals to the Atlantic.' See also the various contributions in Graves-Brown *et al.* 1996, esp. Shore 1996.

[21] There is a long tradition of maps in books about the 'Celts' purporting to show their expansion from an original homeland in northern France and southern Germany into surrounding areas of Europe and the British Isles: cf. e.g. Powell 1958: 99, fig. 15; Fischer 1981: 50, fig. 15; Nash 1987: 10; Renfrew 1987: 213, fig. 9.1 (after P.-M. Duval, reference not given); Green 1995: p. xxiv.

[22] Collis 1996*a*: 172. On the French and the Gauls, see Duval 1989: 1–219 (various essays); Amalvi 1984; Fleury-Illett 1996. On 'heritage', see Lowenthal 1998.

European politics which has very different connotations and, in fact, a longer pedigree. Since the nineteenth century, the ethnic category of 'Celtic' has been employed by minority groups in various parts of Europe to establish their cultural and sometimes linguistic separateness from the dominant population, often with a view to securing some measure of political autonomy for themselves. Such movements have been strongest in the British Isles (Ireland, Scotland, Wales), France (Brittany and, more recently, Corsica), and Spain (Galicia), all of which saw the rise of local nationalist movements partly based on an appeal to the independent Celtic heritage of the individual regions and, to a lesser extent, to their common heritage as Celts.[23] This kind of local, separatist Celticity has persisted in all these regions to the present day and has in recent years found a new home in northern Italy where in the 1990s under the umbrella of the *Lega Nord*, a host of localized separatist tendencies pressing for autonomy or independence from the Italian state have united to form a party that has become a significant force in Italian politics, the avowed aim of which is to establish an independent state in the north, with the name of *Padania*. As an ingredient in the popularizing of the party's image and in the attempt to establish the differentness of northern Italy from the loathed south and the no less abhorred Rome, the party's adherents have rediscovered the Celtic roots of the north—the sack of Rome and Brennus naturally have a particular appeal to those northerners whose principal objection is to the central government of the Italian Republic.[24] In the summer of 1996, the leader of the party, Umberto Bossi, instigated the *Marcia sul Po*, which involved proceeding along the length of the River Po towards Venice with what was called an *ampolla celtica*, a vessel filled with water taken from the source of the river.[25] Equally, the history of the Roman conquest of the Celtic north

[23] Díaz-Andreu 1995: 52–4 on celticism in 19th-cent. Galician nationalism; and Ruiz Zapatero 1996 on the politics of celtophilia in Spain more generally; Lowenthal 1998: 82–3 on Celts and Corsicans.

[24] See Stella 1996 for an amusing account of the characters and history of the Lega, esp. p. 6 on the *tradizione celtica* of Padania; *ibid*. p. 55 on pseudo-scientific claims to Celtic DNA among north Italians (cf. Williams 1997: 78 n. 8); Stella 1996 210–14 for texts expressing the anti-Roman notion of the Celtic and Lombard heritage of the north, summed up in the interesting neologisms *Keltia longobarda* and *La Nazione Longo-Celtica*. The term *Padania* has even begun to make its first appearance in academic writings on Celtic Italy: cf. Arslan 1992–3: 206.

[25] See Williams 1997: 78 n. 8.

resonates with what is represented as the colonial occupation of their region by the Roman government. At the festivals of the Lega, *giochi celtici*, including caber-tossing and wife-carrying races, are a popular feature, while the film *Braveheart*, the hero of which was the Scottish (and therefore Celtic) freedom fighter/rebel William Wallace, made a great splash among *Leghisti*. More serious political links are also cultivated with other would-be Celtic separatist movements elsewhere in Europe.[26]

What we might term 'separatist Celticity' is a particular consequence of the rise of the concept of 'Europe of the Regions' within EU parlance. This idea seeks both to spread the notion of German-style federalism to other countries within the EU, and to reassure the populations of Europe that their local communities and identities will not be swallowed up within some new European superstate. While the EU does not explicitly intend to cause the break-up of the states of Europe as currently constituted, local separatist tendencies, the *Lega Nord* included, have attached themselves to this aspect of the EU agenda in order to insert their essentially parochial ambitions for independence within what appears to be a larger Europe-wide trend towards devolution of government away from centralized states to the EU in one direction, and autonomous local regions in another.[27]

How does the rise in academic interest in Celts, of which the present book is also a part, relate to these two recent developments in the political dimension? Archaeology has been frequently adduced to provide material support for modern nationalist causes, and it would be naive to imagine that it has always been politicians rather than professors who, whether wilfully or unconsciously, distorted the interpretation of the archaeological or historical record for ideological ends.[28] In this case, however, of the two strands of modern Celticity mentioned above, the federalist and the separatist, the re-emergence of academic interest in the Celts seems mostly to have accompanied and, in the case of

[26] The website of the Lega includes links to a number of other such movements, including the less well-known, but equally anti-Roman, Lega Sud which seeks the establishment of a southern state called *Ausonia*.

[27] The Lega produces an identity card which carries the various symbols of the league itself, together with the symbol of the EU glossed with the phrase *Europa delle nazione*.

[28] See the various essays in Kohl and Fawcett 1995; and Graves-Brown *et al*. 1996.

the 1991 exhibition *I Celti*, to have explicitly associated itself with, the federalist variety. Separatist Celticity, particularly within Italy, has, however, taken up the theme, now popularized via the medium of such exhibitions, and adopted it for its own political devices.

There is a third way in which Celticity is treated, which might, for the sake of a label, be called 'post-Celticity'. This variety of approach to the idea of the Celts has proved particularly popular in recent British archaeological literature, to such an extent that 'Celtic' has become, in the opinion of many, so controversial as to be an unacceptable academic usage, on the grounds that it imputes a spurious, or at least dubious, cultural, linguistic and ethnic homogeneity to an area (most of Iron Age western Europe) and a time (the Iron Age) for which there is insufficient evidence to show that any such homogeneity existed.[29] The way in which the term 'Celtic' has commonly been used by academics, it is argued, has involved an unfortunate confusion between two different kinds of ethnic terms which need to be carefully distinguished: those referring to ethnic, or ethno-linguistic, *categories* imposed from without upon populations with no sense of themselves as belonging to that category, and those referring to ethnic *communities* which are conscious of themselves as separate historical and cultural groups.[30] The ethnonym 'Celt', as used by Greek and Roman writers and modern historians and archaeologists, more probably belongs to the former rather than the latter group, given that the evidence on which it is based is taken entirely from external sources which may or may not have accurately described contemporary ancient communities. This problem, which is essentially conceptual and logical rather than ideological, is either not realized by most of those that use the term or, by some who are consciously committed to the Celtic idea, expressly denied.[31] Others again take account of the post-Celtic position while continuing to use the term in more or less the same ways as they did before—that is, not necessarily intending to imply that there was an ancient Celtic ethnic community in Iron Age Europe, but supposing that a

[29] For some recent contributions see Champion 1987; Merriman 1987; Hill 1989; Chapman 1992; Collis 1996*a*, 1997; James and Rigby 1997, esp. 84–5. The debate even entered the pages of the national press in 1998: see the *Guardian* 13 March 1998, 6; *Daily Telegraph* 12 March 1998: 4.

[30] Cf. Williams 1997: 73, drawing on Ardener 1989 and Smith 1991: 20–1.

[31] See Megaw and Megaw 1993, 1996.

perhaps more cautious version of the the traditional approach of combining Greek and Roman literary evidence, Celtic philology, and the archaeologically attested expansion of 'La Tène culture' in the late Iron Age is still so suggestive of at least a cultural and linguistic, if not necessarily ethnic, unity within Europe that the use of the term 'Celtic' to signify that unity is still reasonable, if defined appropriately, and therefore not so wrong as to be unacceptable.[32] The problem with this position is that, despite any number of qualifications to the contrary, the continued use of 'Celtic' even as a convenient shorthand for some avowedly non-ethnic concept like 'La Tène' or 'late pre-Roman Iron Age', inescapably imports some suggestion of an ethnic community behind the art-style, archaeological culture-province, or period of history in question.[33]

Largely for this reason, the position of the present author, theoretically at least, is essentially post-Celtic, on conceptual grounds. There has in this case been a perhaps understandable failure to observe the vital distinction between externally imposed ethnic categories and real ethnic communities when treating of human groups in late Iron Age Europe, for whose ethnic identities actual first-hand and internally generated evidence is poor or non-existent, while there is a good deal of apparently internally consistent and plausible evidence from contemporary outside observers, whose ethnic categories have generally been adopted by modern archaeologists and historians. This is not to say that there is *never* any coincidence between categories and communities, merely that the likelihood of a serious misconception arising from considering them as more or less interchangeable is so great that the distinction must be observed for the sake of clarity and consistency.

The notion of a Celtic ethnic community in antiquity is at best a useful, and at worst a limiting, hypothesis, though not perhaps as ideologically dangerous as some make out.[34] In consequence, the English words 'Celt', 'Celtic', 'Gaul', and 'Gallic' will wherever possible be avoided in this book as terms to denote ancient ethnic communities, and will only be employed either to mean those peoples called *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and Galli by Greek and Roman

[32] Cf. Green 1995.

[33] For 'LPRIA', the preferred terminology of some British Iron Age archaeologists in recent years, see Millett 1990: 10.

[34] Cf. Collis 1996*a*: 176.

authors or those commonly called Celtic by modern academic and popular writers, that is, as referring only to an externally imposed ethnic category. The relevant Greek and Latin ethnics will also be found frequently employed in order to maintain the distinction more effectively.

THE PERIOD IN QUESTION

The structure of the book is thematic rather than chronological, but its focus on the Gauls of Italy means that its time range is restricted in the main to the middle and late Republican periods of Roman history, though material and events from earlier centuries relating to the Celtic invasion of Italy will be considered in the final chapter dealing with archaeological interpretation. The final incorporation of the north into Italia and of its inhabitants into the Roman citizen body which occurred in the 40s BC marks the end, in at least a juridical sense, of a slow but steady process of discovery, conquest, colonization, and integration, whereby the Galli who lived south of the Alps became Italians and Romans. The date of the Gallic sack of Rome, now in the opinion of most commentators established as 387 BC, may be adopted as a convenient fixed point with which to begin a brief survey of the main historical events of this period.

In 387 BC, then, the city of Rome was sacked by Gauls from over the Apennines. This was the start of a series of conflicts over the next fifty years between Romans and Gauls crossing the Apennines, lasting until the 330s BC, in which the honours seem to have been fairly even. The Romans did not start to invade the Gallic territories in northern Italy themselves until the second round of warfare which began thirty years later. This next period of conflict lasted for the first twenty years of the third century BC, during which the Senones and Boii, two Gallic peoples living south of the Po, became involved in the tail-end of the Third Samnite War and the Roman conquest of Etruria. This resulted in the final defeat of the Senones and the foundation of a colony, Sena Gallica, on their territory, and ended with the first Roman triumphs over the Boii in the 280s BC, followed by the foundation of the important Latin colony of Ariminum in 268, a town which would often serve as the base for Roman military operations in the north. There was again a long gap in the fighting between Romans

and Gauls before war began again in the 220s BC in the wake of, and possibly caused by, the Flaminian settlements of 232 BC. This latest round of conflict reached a high point in the great Gaulish invasion of 225 BC, apparently involving forces from both sides of the Alps, which was finally defeated at Telamon in Etruria. The next three years saw a concerted response on the part of the Romans to this invasion. They crossed the Apennines for the first time into Boian territory and undertook a series of successful campaigns against the Gauls and Ligurians. They also advanced over the Po for the first time in 222 BC, defeating the Insubres in the famous Battle of Clastidium where Claudius Marcellus won the *spolia opima* for killing the opposing commander in battle, and capturing Mediolanum. This chapter in the Roman military advance in the north ended in 218 BC with the foundation of the twin Latin colonies of Cremona and Placentia either side of the Po itself, quickly followed by Hannibal's invasion of Italy.

In the next two decades the Romans had constant battles with Gauls, fighting them on their own account in the north, and as contingents in Hannibal's army on his campaigns throughout Italy. The defeat of Carthage was then followed almost immediately by a concerted series of Roman campaigns in northern Italy in the 190s BC, when all the Gauls of the northern plain, north and south of the Po, were finally conquered. Thereafter no further campaigns were undertaken by the Romans against the Gauls south of the Alps. More or less straightaway, the Romans proceeded to build the Via Aemilia along the length of the Apennines, beginning in 187 BC, furnishing it with a series of colonial settlements in the late 180s and further viritane allotments in 173 BC. These developments in effect brought to a close the military history of the Roman occupation of the Po Valley. Nevertheless, it seems that for the rest of the century there was a continued Roman military presence in the region, with sporadic conflicts against mountain peoples intruding into the plain from both the Apennines and the Alps, most famously in 183 BC in the Veneto.[35]

The history of Gallic northern Italy takes on a different character from about 170 BC onwards to the end of the second century BC, excepting the brief but terrifying invasion of northern Italy by the Cimbri in 102–101 BC. Though the lack of Livy's

[35] See Sartori 1960.

account means that the information available about what the Romans did there suddenly becomes much less abundant, this seems to have been a period of development and consolidation, from the Roman perspective at least, rather than conflict and conquest. It is in this poorly documented period that the culture of the Po Valley began to develop the Latin-speaking, city-based milieu that produced many of the foremost literary figures of the late Republic. Although this is perhaps not the most important single feature of the changes that took place in northern Italy, it is the clearest marker of the extent to which the Latin language and presumably its speakers and their culture, had penetrated the world of the Po Valley in previous generations, beginning in the second century BC. Though the north did not participate to any great extent in the Social War, Italy's great struggle over its own identity, northerners from the Po Valley, such as Catullus, Cornelius Nepos, Livy, and Vergil, would contribute much to the fashioning of the Roman identity and culture of the late Republic and the early years of the Principate, in literature if not yet perhaps in politics. The increasing cultural integration of northern with peninsular Italy was recognized institutionally in 89 BC with the granting of the Latin Right to communities north of the Po and the extension of the grant of the citizenship to those living south of it. At some point around this time, it is not known when, the area, often but not always designated in the sources as Gallia Cisalpina, was developed into a province. This meant that it regularly received a proconsul as its legal governor rather than being assigned to a consul as his area of responsibility, which seems to have been the norm for most of the second century. This was a somewhat anomalous status, given the fact that its population contained such a large number of Roman citizens. Indeed, the Transpadani did not obtain the suffrage until 49 BC, and the whole area was finally 'liberated' of its provincial status and became a part of Italia in 42 BC.

Here my period ends. The span of time between 387 and 42 BC was one of great change for northern Italy, changes which in turn had considerable effects upon the Romans and upon Italia. Gallia and the Galli were removed beyond the Alps whence they were thought to have come originally, and in their place the Romans established a provincial landscape par excellence, transforming the whole area into Italy and its people into Romans. It is the history

of how the Romans imagined and dealt with the Gauls in the midst of these changing circumstances, and the implications of this history for contemporary research, that I shall examine in this book.

I

The Discovery of Celtic Italy

BACKGROUND

Geography and ethnography always played an important role in the historiographical traditions of the Greco-Roman world. Hecataeus and Herodotus were not just the fathers of history.[1] Greek historians showed an abiding interest in the customs of foreign peoples and places. In the Hellenistic period, the scope and character of this interest developed in two ways: through the opening up of new fields of inquiry in the wake of the conquests of Alexander and the establishment of the successor kingdoms across Asia, and with the intellectual elaboration of new theories to explain the apparent variety in human cultures. Largely because of the geographical direction of Greek conquest, scientific inquiry was also oriented primarily towards the peoples and cultures of what to Greek observers constituted the East and the South, in particular the Persians, Indians, and Egyptians. By contrast, the peoples and regions of the North and the West received less attention. Consequently, the Celts were relatively unknown when, having invaded Greece from the north in the early third century BC, they began to impinge unexpectedly and rather more immediately on the Greek consciousness than they had before.[2] This was a position that would change over the course of the third century.

The Romans, on the other hand, had no native tradition of ethnographic literature before the second century BC, and yet were intimately acquainted with the peoples they called Galli in Latin. They soon learnt to equate the Galli with the Greeks' *Keltoi* or

[1] Generally on classical ethnography, Jacoby 1909; Trüdinger 1918; K. E. Müller 1972–80. Fundamental on Hecataeus is Jacoby 1912. For Herodotus' influence on Hellenistic historiography, see Murray 1972; and for a recent collection of essays on ethnography in Herodotus, see *Hérodote et les Peuples non-Grecs* 1988.

[2] On the literature of the Greek discovery of Italy, the west and the north, see Wikén 1937; Ninck 1945; Pearson 1987; Timpe 1989.

Galatai, an equivalence that will be of primary importance to our story. Its first literary instance probably occurred in writings of the earliest Roman historian, Fabius Pictor, who fought at the Battle of Telamon in 225 BC, and wrote an account of it in Greek. Traces of it have been plausibly sought in Polybius' version in Book 2 in which he invariably uses the two above-mentioned Greek terms of the Romans' opponents.[3] It seems reasonable to conclude that, even if he did not lift his account straight from Fabius, he at least met no contrary usage in his text. It is probable, then, that Fabius himself and others before him had identified the Galli with the *Keltoi* of recent and contemporary Greek experience. In this they were, probably knowingly, following those Greek authors who had already made this identification in the other direction.[4] This was an important development in informing the Roman image of the Gauls, which would have wide-reaching implications as the extensive Greek literary and oral traditions on the subject of their own Celtic history became more familiar to the Romans in the second and first centuries BC. But how far had it gone by the time of the period of the Roman conquest in the late third to early second centuries BC? What kind of ideas, historical, geographic, ethnographic, were Romans working with during the period of the conquest? What were the sources of this knowledge, and to what extent did their ideas actually affect what they did and how they behaved towards the peoples identified as Galli or *Keltoi* in the literary sources? These questions will be addressed throughout this book with the aim not only of saying something about the Roman reception of Greek ideas about culture, civilization, and barbarians, but also in order to put forward an interpretation of the Roman conquest of the Gauls of northern Italy.

There is both Greek and Roman material on the ethnography and geography of Celtic Italy dating to the mid second century BC, the decades immediately after the cessation of Roman military operations in northern Italy and the period of post-conquest

[3] Pol. 2. 23–31; cf. Orosius 4. 13. 6; Eutropius 3. 5, with Bung 1950: 151 ff.; Walbank 1957–79, i. 184.

[4] Greeks had already identified *Keltoi* in northern Italy as early as the 4th cent. BC: Plutarch (*Cam.* 22) reports that Aristotle (= fr. 610 Rose) wrote of the capture of Rome by *Keltoi*, while Pseudo-Scylax (ss. 16–19), a *periplous* text apparently dating to the 4th cent. BC, locates a group of *Keltoi* along the eastern coast of Italy; on whom, more below.

settlement, contained in the text of Polybius and the fragments of Cato's *Origines*. In different ways the relevant material from both authors illustrates one important characteristic of these two sciences in antiquity: that new acquaintance with unfamiliar peoples was often acquired in the course of military expeditions in previously unexplored areas. Acknowledging which, Polybius remarks that the conquests of Alexander and the Romans had between them furnished new opportunities for inquiry about lands previously inaccessible (Pol. 3. 59. 3–5). Polybius recognized the importance of conquest as a motive cause provoking research into strange peoples and uncharted regions, generating fresh material for testing and refining existing ideas and models, and he himself made great use of the opportunities offered for travel in the new world opened up to Greeks by the Romans in the north and west. In the second and first centuries BC, new knowledge and new conceptions were born as a consequence of the Roman conquests in northern Italy, southern Gaul, and the Iberian Peninsula. Greek science benefited greatly from Roman feats of arms, but Romans also, though to a lesser extent and in different ways, began to reflect in writing on these conquests in the same period. It is with the content and contexts of these writings, as they relate to northern Italy and its peoples, that this chapter is primarily concerned.

Cato and Polybius are the principal sources of information for what was being thought and written on northern Italy in the second century BC. They are also, of course, two of the most important and controversial personalities in the history of the reception of Greek culture at Rome in the same century.[5] It is not known whether they had much close, personal contact during Polybius' stay in Rome, or whether one used the other's writings as a source of information, but they were certainly composing their works at roughly the same period in the second and third quarters of the second century BC.[6] In this period the Romans had com-

[5] Opinions on Cato's attitudes have, more recently, tended away from viewing him as the arch-enemy of all things Greek: for Cato the Greek-hater, see Marmorale 1944: 34 ff.; Smith 1940*a*: 163; Klingner 1961: 34 ff. For a range of more moderate views, see Alfonsi 1954; Kienast 1954: 101 ff.; Della Corte 1969: 59 f., 112 f.; Astin 1978: 158–81; Ferrary 1988: 531–9; Gruen 1993: 52–83. On Polybius and Roman culture, cf. Walbank 1974; Dubuisson 1985.

[6] On their potential relationship, see Balsdon 1953: 161; Walbank 1972*b*: 80–1; Musti 1974: 125 ff.; Nicolet 1974: 243 ff.

pleted the conquest of the regions of the north, where the Gauls lived, and were undertaking the intensive colonization and centuriation of the area, particularly south of the Po.

Cato and Polybius thus wrote after the initial period of conquest in the north had come to an end. But there was continuing warfare against the Ligurians of the Apennines, carrying on into the 150s BC.[7] There were sporadic campaigns in Istria, the building of further roads from towns on the Via Aemilia to Aquileia, of the Via Postumia from Genua to Aquileia in 148 BC, and the execution of extensive centuriation and settlement projects along the line of the Via Aemilia. As Brunt has shown, there was a consular army present north of the Apennines in every year except one from 200–167 BC, while in the period 166–91 BC both consuls together are known to have operated outside Italy on only nine occasions.[8] Polybius mentions that most of the pigs slaughtered in Italy for private and army consumption were raised in the plains of the north (Pol. 2. 15. 3). This remark makes best sense if northern Italy is envisaged as an area of constant military presence, if not necessarily great activity, in the first half of the second century BC.

It is against this historical background that Polybius and Cato wrote about the geography and the peoples of northern Italy. Polybius considered the topography and the history of the area in a lengthy excursus in Book 2, with further notices scattered throughout his work and another extended section of description in Book 34, now extant only in fragments. Cato's writings about Transapennine Italy appeared in the second book of his historical work, the *Origines*, and perhaps elsewhere in the text. Fourteen brief, but suggestive, fragments refer to the region, indicating that his was a detailed account of the land and its people. Between them, Polybius and Cato also had a good deal of personal experience of the north. Cato himself fought against the army led by Hasdrubal at the River Metaurus in 207 BC, which included large contingents of Gauls, and may have campaigned against the Boii in 194 BC as a legate of the consul Ti. Sempronius in one of the final operations against them.[9] Polybius, forty-odd years later, travelled the length of the territory that had once been inhabited

[7] For an account of the Ligurian Wars, see Toynbee 1965, ii. 260–85; Dyson 1985: 87–125.

[8] Brunt 1987: 567–9.

[9] The evidence for this is Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 12. 1. Astin 1978: 54 n. 11 thinks he did; Smith 1940*b*: 109 n. 3 thinks not.

by the Boii, and saw a land of agricultural abundance and cheap accommodation.[10] Between them, they put the literary investigation of northern Italy and its inhabitants on a new footing and they will form the main subject matter of this chapter, but it may be worthwhile to take a look first at what went before them.

1. GREEKS AND THE CELTIC WEST IN HISTORY AND LITERATURE

What had been written about northern Italy and Celts before Polybius and Cato? How far developed was Greek scientific investigation of the area before the second century BC? Already before the invasions of the early third century, Celts had come to be identified by certain Greek writers as one of the more important peoples of the barbarian world surrounding the world known to Greeks.[11] Herodotus is the first extant writer to refer to a people in the far west called *Keltoi* who lived somewhere near the source of the River Istros and the city of Pyrene.[12] But for Ephorus in the fourth century, *Keltoi* assumed a much greater importance as the people occupying the western portion of the surrounding world, with Scyths, Indians, and Ethiopians having the north, east, and south respectively.[13] The fourth century thus saw *Keltoi* come in from the ethnographic darkness, as they were systematized and classified, taking their place alongside the Scyths as the other great barbarian people of northern Europe. The appearance of *Keltoi* in Greece as mercenaries fighting for Sparta in 367 BC, sent over by Dionysius I of Syracuse, will have contributed to this development of interest and the raising of their profile in the Greek imagination.[14] Although detailed observations on their customs are not present among the ethnographic fragments extant from this century, it is apparent that *Keltoi* were coming to be endowed with certain characteristics in Greek writing, and two themes seem prominent: their natural belligerence, and the cold climate of their

[10] For the direction and dating of Polybius' Italian and Alpine travels, probably in 151–150 BC on his journey in the west with Scipio Aemilianus, either on the way to, or returning from Spain, see Walbank 1957–79: i. 382; Pédech 1964: 528.

[11] For early Greek ethnography on the Celts, see Momigliano 1975: 50–64; Rankin 1987: 45–56; P. M. Freeman 1996.

[12] Hdt. 2. 33. 2–3; 4. 49. 3. Cf. Fischer 1973.

[13] Ephorus *FGH* 70f30.

[14] Xen. *Hell*. 7. 1. 20–23, 28–31; Diod. 15. 70. 1.

homeland.[15] So there were already in place the broad outlines of a conception before the invasions of Greece in the 270s BC, when *Keltoi*, or *Galatai* as they also came to be known, entered Greece and Asia Minor, and were transformed at a stroke from being an object of occasional and vague speculation to an immediate focus of attention.

There seem to have been several historians of the wars against the *Keltoi* in Greece and their narratives will probably have contained information on their geographical origins, religion, customs, and something of their history.[16] As for the *Keltoi* of Italy, Aristotle knew that they had sacked Rome, while Duris of Samos mentioned their presence at the Battle of Sentinum.[17] These and other similar details concerning Roman and Italian history may also have figured in Greek narratives, particularly those written after the defeat of Pyrrhus by the Romans. The nature and characteristics of these third-century writers must remain obscure as, for the most part, must Pytheas' and Timaeus' roles in describing *Keltoi* in Italy and western Europe.[18] Timaeus apparently claimed that he had spent a good deal of time and money collecting material on the peoples of the west, *Keltoi*, *Ligues*, and *Iberes*, which might suggest that there was already a significant body of literature to which the historian could refer in his study in Athens. We owe this information to Polybius' disparaging and polemical remarks on Timaeus' armchair historiography, which makes Timaeus' contribution difficult to assess.[19] All that the fragments reveal is that he attributed a mythological ancestry to the *Keltoi* or *Galatai*, deriving them from the Cyclops and the nymph Galatea.[20] While it would be unjust to judge Timaeus' writings on the Celts on the basis of one fragment, it does serve to exemplify a more generally recognizable characteristic of Greek ethnography and geography of this period.

[15] On the belligerence and fearlessness of *Keltoi*, Plat. *Legg*. 637d; Arist. *Pol*. 1269^{b}25–27, *Eth*. *Nic*. 1115^{b}25, *Eth*. *Eud*. 1229^{b}28; Ephorus *FGH*. 70f131, 132; on the frozen Celtic north, Arist. *De Gen*. *Anim*. 748^{a}25–26; the Pseudo-Aristotelian text *Problemata* 909^{a}–910^{b} mentions the physical and moral effects of hot and cold climates on humankind in north and south.

[16] See Nachtergael 1977: 49–83.

[17] Arist. fr. 610 Rose; Duris *FGH* 76f56.

[18] For Pytheas' contribution to the discovery of the north, see briefly Timpe 1989: 323–32. For the fragments of Timaeus on Italy and the Celts, see Timaeus *FGH* 566f62–74.

[19] Pol. 12. 28a. 3–4.

[20] *FGH* 566f69.

Hellenistic authors tended not to contrast the results of contemporary experience and observation with pre-existing mythological accounts and explanations. Instead they often attempted to reconcile these two sources by locating the peoples and places of myth within the new worlds being made known to them by conquest and exploration through the rationalization of legend on the one hand and, on the other, the mythical interpretation of real experience.[21] This was also accompanied by a seemingly wilful fascination with the fantastic for its own sake, giving rise to the production of books of *paradoxographica*, which often took the form of lists of amazing facts and bizarre tales about the regions and peoples on the edge of the known world.[22]

That northern Italy and its inhabitants were treated in works of this kind seems not unlikely. Polybius again protests about the stories told about the region by Greeks concerning the fall of Phaethon, and accuses Timaeus of displaying much ignorance in his writings on the area.[23] The River Po became a favourite setting for legendary material. Quite early in the tradition, it was identified with the mythical Eridanus, though there was some disagreement and vagueness on the exact location.[24] By contrast, the Alps remain strangely absent from the scene until a relatively late stage.[25] Herodotus mentioned two rivers called Alpis and Karpis, flowing northwards into the Istros above the land of the *Ombrikoi*.[26] The former is presumably to be connected with the Alps, while the latter may with less certainty be linked with

[21] Timpe 1989: 311 ff.

[22] On the character of Hellenistic ethnography produced in Alexandria, see Fraser 1972: i. 494–553.

[23] Pol. 2. 16. 13–15.

[24] Hdt. 3. 115 denies that there was a large river flowing into the northern sea called Eridanus which was the source of amber, on the grounds that the name itself was Greek, not barbarian, and made up by some poet. Aeschylus, *Heliades* fr. 107 Mette, on the other hand, seems to have identified it with the Rhodanus, and placed it in Iberia. He was followed in this by the Hellenistic writer, Philostephanus of Cyrene: see Müller 1849: 32. fr. 22; cf. Timpe 1989: 315–16. See Chevallier 1980*a*: 8–12 for a list of Greek references to northern Italy.

[25] Cf. Chevallier 1980*a*: 39–40; Purcell 1990*b*: 10–11.

[26] Hdt. 4. 49. 2. For discussion of the evidence for early Greek contacts with northern Italy and the Adriatic, see Beaumont 1936: esp. 189 on a Corinthian crater of the 6th cent. BC inscribed with the name *Omrikos*. This seems to be one of the earliest ethnonyms used by Greeks of the inhabitants of northern Italy, together with that of the *Enetoi* known to Herodotus (1. 196. 1; 5. 9. 2). Polybius adopts Latin versions for both, *Ombroi* (2. 16. 3, 24. 7) and *Ouenetoi* (e.g. 2. 17. 5, 18. 3, 23. 2) respectively, while Strabo reverts to Greek conventions, *Ombrikoi* (5. 1. 7, 10) and *(H)enetoi* (1. 3. 2, 21; 5. 1. 1, 3).

the Carpathians.[27] But however that may be, Herodotus thought they were rivers, not mountains. The distinct lack of a range of mountains between the *Ombrikoi* and two supposed tributaries of the Istros is indicative of the vagueness of the information reaching him. Many people must have known a lot more, for instance the Greeks who lived at Spina, but Herodotus did not or could not speak to them. In fact, it seems that no extant Greek author either spoke to or read anyone who knew what they were talking about for a long time. In Apollonius Rhodius' account of the wanderings of the Argonauts, they sail up the Eridanus, turning aside from a river which would have taken them to the ocean, pass the Hercynian Rock through the countless tribes of *Keltoi* and *Ligues*, then move into the River Rhodanus and finally back down to the sea.[28] This is a poetical description which does not claim to be exact or even true, but there is enough specific information about significant features of the north to suggest that it reflects current ideas about the configuration of the rivers and mountains in transalpine Europe which envisaged a confluence of the Eridanus, the Rhodanus and a river leading to the Outer Sea at a point called the Hercynian Rock. As in Herodotus' brief notice, what is most obviously missing is the Alpine watershed between the Eridanus (Po) and the rivers of northern and western Europe.

The cycle of tales that related the legend of Phaethon with the mythical River Eridanus and the mysterious source of amber were regularly located in northern Italy, consequent upon the widespread identification of the Po as the Eridanus. Herodotus and Polybius denied the association, both attributing the link to poetic fantasy, but many others were prepared to accept it and wrote more or less fabulous accounts of what they knew about the area, some details of which are known to us. Polybius says that the black clothing of the peoples living near the Po was explained by Greeks as a sign of mourning for the death of Phaethon, while he also mentions that Greek tragic writers, by which he may mean either poets or sensationalistic historians, had written a good deal of fanciful stuff about the Veneti.[29] Elsewhere he inveighs in similar vein against the heroic nonsense written about Hannibal's crossing of the Alps by ignorant Greeks who had never seen them.[30]

[27] So suggests Timpe 1989: 314.
[28] A. R. 4. 618–55.
[29] Pol. 2. 16. 13–15, 17. 6; with Walbank 1957–79: i. 180–1, 183 ad loc.
[30] Pol. 3. 47. 6–12.

Pliny the Elder names various other Greek authors who had composed material of a comparable quality relating to the Po Valley and northern Europe on the vexed question of the source of amber, which was, he mentions, also occasionally associated with the legend of Phaethon, the amber being interpreted as the tears of his sisters, the Heliades, after their transformation into poplars: hence the association with the Po.[31] Among other examples of *vanitas Graecorum* ('false tales told by Greeks'), Pliny mentions the theory of one Demostratus, who opined that amber came from Italy and that it was in fact solidified lynx urine; and the refinement of Zenothemis, who located these animals on the banks of the Po. Others, including Theophrastus, thought amber came from Liguria.[32] Pliny, for his part, knew as a local that this was all nonsense and explained the long-standing association of amber with northern Italy with reference to the common custom of Transpadane peasant women of wearing amber as an ornament. Other notices, mostly in later poets, show how *Keltoi* too were variously invoked in poetry as the semi-mythical producers of amber in a loosely located landscape in northern Europe. They probably reflect to some degree these scientific explanations of an earlier period, a feature which is to be expected given the close intellectual relationship between investigative scholarship of all kinds and poetic composition, especially in the learned and creative milieu of the Alexandrian Museum and Library.[33]

The section of Pliny's *Natural History* just discussed shows well, in the case of northern Italy, how the learned and poetic assimilation of traditional legends and new discoveries encouraged the production of bizarre scientific and mythical conjectures to explain the various amazing facts and phenomena about the world which were being collected in the Hellenistic period. This fascina-

[31] Plin. *N.H.* 37. 30–46.

[32] Theo. *De Lap.* 29.

[33] A. R. 4. 624–7 mentions the story of the Heliades as the Argonauts sail up the Eridanus, while the Scholiast comments that the *Keltoi* used to say that the origin of amber did not lie in the tears of the Heliades, but those of Apollo when he was forced by Zeus to become a slave after the killing of Asclepius and the Cyclops. According to the 2nd-cent. AD poet, Dionysius Periegetes 5. 228 ff., the Celts, living near the Pyrenees and the source of the Eridanus, which is the river called the Po by some, extract amber shining like gold from poplar trees. He explains that this feature accounts for amber being called the 'tears of the Heliades', as gold is the metal sacred to Helios. Nonnus *Dion.* 2. 153 later situated the Heliades among the Celts. See Chevallier 1976: 31–7; Mastrocinque 1991: 11–56 for discussion of the ancient literary tradition on the source of amber.

tion with the recondite and unusual is a well-known feature of the intellectual culture fostered by scholars in the Museum of Alexandria and other libraries around the Greek world, who had at their fingertips all the texts describing the wonders of the half-known world, but rarely made any independent eyewitness investigations themselves.[34] The process of rationalizing legend created expectations, defined questions, and suggested answers and interpretations, all of which tended to prejudice geographical and ethnographical observation and limit the conclusions able to be drawn from it. Hence, the uninvestigated world of the north was not simply *terra incognita* for Greek observers or travellers. It was already potentially peopled with Hyperboreans, living near or beyond the Rhipaean Mountains.[35] Greeks looked for these peoples and places in the stories they heard, in an attempt to make sense of new information in terms of what they thought they already knew, seeking confirmation in the physical landscape for features described in myth and poetry. This was one useful way to bridge the historical and cultural gap between the rich store of Greek myth set in far off and only vaguely identified lands, like the voyages of Odysseus and the Argonauts, or the travels of Hercules, and the newly discovered, or as yet poorly investigated, regions of the barbarian world, which included northern Italy and the Alps.

Of course, different authors had different standards and methods, and Polybius thought his literary predecessors on northern Europe credulous and lazy, as Timaeus, or mendacious, as Pytheas: the former had not visited the area, and therefore wrote nonsense, the latter claimed to have done so, and therefore must have lied.[36] Only he himself, as he claimed, had visited the area in person and then told the truth about what he saw. The claim may be thought disingenuous and polemical, but it does not seem unlikely that there had been few before him with both the desire and opportunity to see such distant regions of the world, and the literary talent to write them up. The only obvious candidates are Silenus and Sosylus, the Greek historians who accompanied Hannibal on his campaigns, and probably crossed the Alps with

[34] Fraser 1972: i. 312 ff. on the museum itself, and 770 ff. on the Alexandrian love of the fantastic.

[35] Cf. Timpe 1989: 313–14 on the Rhipaean Mountains. Posidonius *FGH* 87f48 identified them with the Alps.

[36] Polybius criticizes Timaeus constantly. Cf. e.g. Pol. 12. 3–4, on his description of Africa and Corsica; Pol. 34. 5. 1–9 on Pytheas.

him.[37] Doubtless many a Greek and Italian had crossed the Alps before Polybius, but few Greek historians had ever been there and so little had ever been written down. Polybius, though polemical, claimed to be a writer with integrity and he did not fantasize or speculate about areas that neither he nor anyone else had seen, and this included most of continental Europe.[38] In his opinion, northern Italy belonged to the category of lands poorly known up to his own time. However much had already been written on it, it was, in his opinion, all factually worthless, and it was up to him to put the record straight with a simple description based on sound observation. That Greeks had travelled throughout the Po Valley for hundreds of years is probable.[39] But, if we accept Polybius' polemic as being at all a reasonable characterization of his predecessors' writings, the available material about the area was mostly paradoxographical and mythographic, concerned rather with concocting new explanations of the origins of amber than with geographical realia.

The best indication of something approaching a coherent geographical picture of the region as a whole before Polybius is the text of the *Periplous* (*Circumnavigation*) of Pseudo-Scylax, dated by most authorities to the late fourth century BC.[40] It consists of a typical *periplous* text of the Mediterranean coastline. In the section covering the Adriatic coastline of Italy, those mentioned as the major peoples inhabiting the coast, sailing up the Adriatic, are the *Iapyges*, then the *Saunitai*, then the *Ombrikoi*. Next come the *Turrhēnoi* who are known to inhabit Italy from one coast to the other, and then the *Keltoi*, described as 'those left behind from the expedition'. They occupy a short stretch of the coast at the top of the Adriatic before one comes to the *Enetoi*, in whose lands lies the River Eridanos.[41] The form of the description is simply a list of the peoples inhabiting the coastline, with an indication of how long it takes to sail along their respective portions of it, which is perhaps all one should expect of a *periplous* text. Nevertheless there is no evidence that the writer knew anything about regions away from

[37] See Jacoby 1929*a* on Silenus (*FGH* 175); id. 1929*b* on Sosylus (*FGH* 176); with Walbank 1957–79: i. 28, 333.

[38] Pol. 3. 38. 1–3.

[39] Boardman 1999: 225–9 briefly on Greeks in northern Italy.

[40] For the text, see Müller 1855: 15–96; with Zuffa 1978: 144–6, 156 nn. 26–7; Peretti 1979: 198–218.

[41] Ps.-Scyl. 14–19.

the coast. There is no mention of the navigability of the Po or of the existence of the Alps. Inland northern Italy then seems to have remained very imprecisely described in Hellenistic literature.

Why was there no systematic account of northern Italy, and the west in general, before Polybius, in spite of centuries of contact? Historically, Greeks had tended to direct their attentions towards other regions, mainly towards the East and Egypt, because of the intrinsic interest and antiquity of the great eastern kingdoms, their geographical proximity and the important role they had played in Greek history. This is not to say that the west received no attention: Massilia produced Pytheas the explorer who probably reached Britain on his voyage of discovery, but few subsequent efforts were made, and the boundaries of Greek geographical knowledge and interest in the west remained fairly constant for centuries.[42] Herodotus wrote a detailed ethnographic account of the Scythians, but the admittedly fragmentary evidence seems to suggest that we have to wait three hundred years for Posidonius to give a similarly detailed investigation of their western neighbours in the Greek system as elaborated by Ephorus, the *Keltoi*.[43] The geographical direction of Hellenistic conquest made this tendency pronounced, until the Celtic invasions of the third century BC gave more immediate objects for study. That there was a good deal written about *Keltoi* in this period is suggested by the material available to Timaeus, but it cannot have been of the same scale or quality as the writings on the new eastern peoples encountered in the wake of Alexander.

I have already mentioned the role of Hellenistic scholarship in ethno-geographical inquiry, and its particular penchant for learned speculation on distant regions rather than voyages of discovery. Yet the conquests of Alexander and the establishment of the Hellenistic kingdoms in Asia and Egypt had brought Greeks in direct contact with a large number of previously unexplored peoples and places. Later, royal patronage and the library culture that spread throughout the East with the Hellenistic kingdoms encouraged the writing of scholarly literature about the native peoples among whom the Greeks now found themselves. Various

[42] See Fraser 1972: i. 763 ff. on the geographical horizon of 3rd-cent. BC Alexandria and its western limitations.

[43] Cf. Posidonius *FGH* 87f15–18, 31–3, 55–6; and Edelstein and Kidd 1989, frr. 67–9, 272–6 for the fragments of his accounts of Celtic ethnography and the Cimbric invasion; with Tierney 1960.

authors of distinction, including Aristotle and Callimachus, wrote books on the customs of barbarians.[44] There being no similar development in the West, the expansion of literary interest in the region was commensurately less. Eratosthenes is said to have written thirty-three books of *Galatika* (*History of the* Galatai), but this seems inherently unlikely.[45] In the late third century BC Sotion of Alexandria wrote something about barbarian philosophers among the Celts, called *druides* and *semnotheoi*, but little seems to have been known about them. They did not excite the same interest as did, for instance, the Persian magi or the gymnosophists among the Indians.[46]

In addition to the historical bias in Greek ethnography and geography, there were, of course, considerable practical problems facing anyone writing about northern Italy and the West in general, which must form part of an explanation of why these areas were so poorly known to Greeks before Polybius. On the problems facing the ancient travel writer, Polybius comments that one should not be too unkind to previous authors, despite all their fanciful inaccuracies, considering the difficulties they faced in visiting distant, barbarous lands before the days of Alexander and the Romans.[47] He is patronizing his predecessors, but he has a point. Communication over long distances through foreign or unknown terrain was difficult and hazardous in the ancient world and so was travel, especially overland. Distances kept researchers away from the objects of their interest and distorted what information they were able to gather themselves. As Polybius says, even if you did travel to the ends of the earth, you might not find what you wanted because of the language barrier and the inhospitability of the country in such far-off places that made travelling arduous and the investigation of what you could see awkward. This, he says,

[44] For Aristotle's work, see frr. 604–10 Rose. Cf. Fraser 1972: i. 305–35 on royal patronage and libraries, and 523 for Callimachus' work on barbarians, of which only one fragment survives. For an extensive treatment of early Hellenistic court historians, see Meißner 1992.

[45] For the fragments of this work attributed to Eratosthenes, see *FGH* 745; Jacoby assigns them to a younger Eratosthenes, as does Momigliano 1975: 59, referring to the statement of Strabo at 2. 2. 41, where he says that the famous Eratosthenes, of Cyrene, was not particularly well informed about the western Mediterranean and the Celts. It seems unlikely, then, that he could have written a monumental work about them.

[46] D. L. *praef*. 1, 6. See Momigliano 1975: 59–60; Piggott 1968: 76–90 has a useful discussion of the place of druids in the Greek tradition.

[47] Pol. 3. 58. 5–59. 2.

was the reason why earlier accounts were so often replete with myth and exaggeration, a tendency which he claims to have overcome in his own work.

Other difficulties also hindered the furtherance of geographical inquiry. For instance, Polybius came across what he took to be the habitual secrecy of merchants when he and Scipio tried to find out about the existence of Britain.[48] The Greeks of Spina and Adria may have reacted similarly to requests for information about their hinterland. Moreover, an enduring ignorance of inland areas long after the discovery of a new coastline is perhaps to be expected in regions on the margins of the known world. Even with the help of the river system, land travel over the Po Valley would have been a serious problem. The practical difficulties of geographical research were considerable and were in this case, it seems, sufficient to keep even so salient a physical feature of the landscape as the Alps hidden from Greek writers for several centuries. For the most part, they were content to account mythically and anecdotally for what they could not, or would not, visit in person and investigate systematically. Even when this last stage was attained, there were still the obstacles caused by the limitations of ancient cartography, which will be examined below in connection with the much fuller and more detailed, yet still flawed, description of northern Italy written up by Polybius.

These two factors, then, historical and practical, acting in concert, prevented the development of a significant ethnographic and geographic literature about the West and the *Keltoi* located there by Greeks in the Hellenistic period. Only with the conquest of Greece by the Romans and the transfer of prestige, wealth, and patronage from kings to senators, did Greeks like Polybius, Posidonius, Artemidorus, and Timagenes begin to turn their attention seriously to the barbarian West.[49] Polybius was, then, as he claimed, among the first to travel in continental Europe, in northern Italy, the Alps, southern Gaul, and Spain, and write about what he had seen in those barbarian worlds.

Polybius was able to travel to these distant places because the Romans had been there first and he did so while in their custody,

[48] Pol. 34. 10. 6–7.

[49] For Timagenes on Gaul, see *FGH* 88f2; and 11, on the *aurum Tolosanum* and Gallic origins. An epitome of Artemidorus' geographical work was made by one Marcianus: see Müller 1855: 574–6.

and therefore to some extent under their control. He says that the conquests of Alexander and Rome had opened nearly the whole world up for new inquiry.[50] But in what capacity did he undertake this project? Momigliano argued that the relationship of Polybius and other Greek ethnographers to the Roman Empire was that of state geographers or official researchers.[51] But this perhaps misinterprets somewhat the political and intellectual position of these Greeks in the Roman world. Polybius wrote for the whole Greek reading public throughout the world and for all time, not just as a reporter for the governing power. Moreover, the Romans, for their part, were perfectly capable themselves of finding out about the customs and geography of the peoples they had conquered, as will become clear from an examination of the fragments of Cato. Polybius may have been the first to carry out a geographical investigation of northern Italy, but the Romans did not engage him specifically for that purpose. This point is important for the understanding of the relationship between Greek science and Roman power. The latter enabled the former, and benefited from it, but Romans were not so ignorant, nor Greeks so subservient.

One important aim of Polybius' work was to describe the nature and development of Roman power for the conquered Greeks, in other words, to inform the conquered about their conquerors.[52] In the process he tells his audience about the various peoples and places in the far north and west which the Romans have taken, and he represents his account of his journeys in the west, including northern Italy, as intended to correct the errors of earlier writers and to make these regions of the world known to Greeks.[53] Polybius' aims as a reporter of the Roman involvement with the Celts were political as well as geographical, in that he uses his account of Rome's Celtic Wars as a means of showing Greeks the wider historical and geographical significance of Roman imperial success. It is clear from his comments at the end of the excursus dealing with these wars that he was presenting his Greek audience with a pointed contrast between the achievements of the Romans

[50] Pol. 3. 59. 3–4.

[51] Momigliano 1975: 66–7: 'Cato had realistically encouraged the Romans to do what no Greek had done before—to study the Celts in their own land. Now we see how the Roman leading class accepted his advice and hired the Greeks to do the work for them.'

[52] Pol. 3. 4.

[53] For Polybius' corrective, didactic purpose in geographical matters, see Pol. 2. 16. 13–15 on northern Italy, and 3. 59. 8 on geography in general.

against the Celts and the Greeks' own consistent failure to deal effectively with them in Greece and Asia.[54] This digression thus forms one element in Polybius' general purpose, which is to show that Roman universal rule is quite reasonable and explicable, based on sound planning and the execution of specific aims and realistic ambitions.[55]

The character of Polybius' writings on the north, and those of the other later Greek authors is perhaps not quite that of a scientific survey commissioned by the Romans for their own information. Romans did not need Greeks to gather raw data for them about their conquests. Such information was available in Rome, in the non-scientific form of a senatorial report, an epigraphic catalogue perhaps, and in oral traditions. When Cato came to write about the West, he did not have to consult a Greek to tell him about the Galli of Italy or the peoples of Spain. Polybius was doubtless right to assume that the task of writing scientific treatises about the newly discovered world would fall to Greeks.[56] But that is not to say that the Romans knew nothing about the Gauls of the north until a Greek wrote a book about them.

Polybius' ethnographic and geographic work seems, then, to have been directed primarily towards informing his Greek peers about the Romans and their conquests in the west, rather than for the education of Romans. While Polybius' writing is still characteristically Hellenistic in this sense, it is nevertheless different from the works of his predecessors who worked in the Library and Museum of Alexandria, or who had travelled in the distant areas of the world. They had written about a barbarian world which was either directly subject to Greek rule, or conceived in various respects, militarily, culturally, or politically, as deficient by Greek standards. The achievements of Hellenistic ethnography and geography were, in part at least, an expression of what Greeks felt to be their ascendency over the barbarian and were attained as a consequence of Greek domination over large areas inhabited by barbarians.[57] But it had to serve new purposes and find new inspiration after the Roman conquest. Greeks did not cease to explore the world they knew after they themselves had ceased to be

[54] Pol. 2. 35.
[55] Pol. 1. 3. 9.
[56] Pol. 3. 59. 4.
[57] Cf. Said 1978 on Orientalism in modern European academic and political thought.

its, or even their own, masters. Their motivation in the Roman period must therefore rather have been scientific curiosity and academic competition rather than politically or culturally rooted strategies of power and domination over their foreign objects of inquiry. The prestige they could now gain among Romans with their writings was one element of continuity with the fame they had previously won in the courts and libraries of the Hellenistic kingdoms. But the relationship of Polybius' writings on the West to the conquest and the conquerors is different from that of his literary predecessors, first because this was not a Greek conquest, and secondly because the new sources of literary patronage in Rome were not yet accustomed to consuming such Greek reflections on their conquests and the nature of their power. It was less the case that the Romans sent the Greeks out to investigate for them, than that Greeks had to work hard on the Romans to arouse any interest in their productions once written.

There cannot yet have been a ready intellectual or literary market in Rome for the sort of material that Polybius and other Greeks would write, and the status of Hellenistic literary culture as a whole was a problem with which the Romans were only just beginning to come to terms in the second century BC. If Greek writers wanted to be read by Romans at all, they would have had to create an audience for themselves in a public that was potentially unreceptive, whether out of simple ignorance or conscious hostility.

Polybius presents the advances under Alexander in the east and the Romans in the west as parallel developments.[58] In purely scientific terms, this was true, but in political terms it was not. He says that now the Greeks have so much leisure time, they can do even more than they did before, and he hopes for great advances in geography and ethnography. He thus tactfully presents an inevitable position of subjection as a great opportunity for Greek science, ignoring the disjunction between the political status of the Greek writers of the Hellenistic period and those of the succeeding Roman era. Furthermore, by specifically expressing his aim as the description of these areas for a Greek audience, Polybius also tacitly recognizes that the Romans themselves would not be the ones to write or read about the new world they had uncovered and conquered. To be sure, Romans found out a good deal about the

[58] Pol. 3. 59. 3–8.

areas they conquered, but their interest was not, at this stage, primarily in composing literary or scientific expositions of their knowledge or reading those composed by others like Polybius.

Is it possible, then, to characterize the Romans' interest in and knowledge of foreign peoples and places in this period if it was not to read or write learned treatises about them? There is sufficient evidence to show that Romans were not entirely self-absorbed in this period, and that their own extensive and long-standing contacts with a wide variety of different kinds of alien peoples and places produced a certain amount of literary reflection on their histories and different customs, as well as a good deal of triumphal art and epigraphy detailing the succession of Roman victories over them. Greeks too went in for imperialist expressions of superiority over barbarians in the pre-Roman Hellenistic period on a grand scale. But a brief examination of how Romans represented foreign worlds to themselves in the third and second centuries BC will suggest that Romans represented and consumed facts and ideas about other peoples and places very differently from Greeks like Polybius.

2: MAPS, LISTS, AND INSCRIPTIONS

If the Greek literary sources on northern Italy were found inadequate, an historian based in Rome in this period would also have been able to take advantage of various non-literary sources of knowledge and information about communities, towns, and regions that had come within the Roman orbit. Cato was the first Roman to use this material, together with Greek literary sources, in his historical work the *Origines*, to compose something like a Greek-style account of the peoples and places of Italy. It is clear from the extant fragments on northern Italy that he made much use of material already available in Rome itself in his research and writing, but what forms did this material take?

Polybius assumed that future advances in scientific investigation and publication would be carried out by Greeks.[59] Strabo, writing 150 years later about the progress of research into the geography and ethnography of the expanded horizons offered by the Roman Empire, confirms this opinion, commenting that the Romans are not particularly curious about foreigners in general, and that it is a

[59] Pol. 3. 59. 4.

rare event when Roman writers fill in a gap left by Greeks, as they tend only to produce inadequate imitations of Greek works.[60] The lack of a developed ethnographic scientific literature in Latin written by Romans is an obvious feature of the Republic.[61] As Elizabeth Rawson points out, this absence of a Greek-style scientific impulse did not exclude other sorts of interest in foreign worlds. She sees these as fed and mediated by the institution of the triumph.[62] But Strabo's emphasis on a general lack of the kind of curiosity which produces works of description and analysis is a significant point well made. The uses to which such knowledge was put and the ways in which it was acquired by Romans were not driven by Greek notions of *historia*, inquiry, or *philomatheia*, love of learning.

By the Augustan period, as Nicolet has argued, the ways in which Romans conceptualized the geography of the inhabited world and their cartographic representations of it had developed considerably, but there were precedents already in the third century BC for the Augustan impulse to produce an inventory of the world.[63] Romans had collected information about the outside world and its inhabitants from an early period, and had used it to commemorate their victories and triumphs, in pictures, maps, and inscriptions. These were the non-Greek sources on which Cato drew to construct his account of the peoples and places of Italy.

There is some evidence for map-making in Rome in the third and second centuries BC, but why did Romans make maps in this period? They were certainly not representations of Roman achievements in overland exploration or Mediterranean navigation, nor were they cartographic illustrations accompanying geographical works on Italy or the Mediterranean. A consideration of the occasions on which they were produced might suggest an

[60] Str. 3. 4. 19. Strabo says here that the reason for this feature in Roman literature is that they do not possess *to phileidemon* ('love of knowledge'), i.e. that Romans are not in general curious about the customs of foreign peoples. Some manuscripts have *philekdemon* ('love of foreign travel') here, which would imply that Strabo thought that Romans were not fond of travelling abroad. This cannot be right. Strabo seems rather to be reflecting a common Greek opinion, which Polybius shared, about the Romans' limited intellectual curiosity.

[61] On this, see Wallace-Hadrill: 1988, 1990.

[62] Rawson 1985: 257: 'the triumph, with its picturesque prisoners, piles of conquered weapons and other artifacts, paintings of the sites of battles and sieges'; for references to triumphal art in the Republic, Harris 1979: 261–2.

[63] Nicolet 1988; Purcell 1990*a*.

answer. In 268 BC, P. Sempronius Sophus dedicated a temple to Tellus after his triumph over the Picentes in which, acording to Varro, there was a painted representation of Italy.[64] As Wiseman points out, the victory in Picenum completed the Roman conquest of peninsular Italy. The picture of Italy, which may possibly have been a painting of a personification rather than a map as such, was the symbolic *monumentum* or memorial of this achievement, the dedication to Tellus also perhaps suggesting something about the fulfilment of the conquest of the land of Italy.[65] Just under a century later, in 174 BC, a commemorative tablet was dedicated to Jupiter in the temple of Mater Matuta by Ti. Sempronius Gracchus, to celebrate his victories in Sardinia and his second triumph as consul in 177 BC. Livy describes it as an inscription recounting his achievements, his killing and capturing of 80,000 of the enemy, accompanied by a painted representation of Sardinia, upon which were depicted the battles he had fought.[66] Shortly thereafter, in 165 BC, a map was set up of public land reclaimed from illegal land-owners in Campania.[67] In 146 BC, L. Hostilius Mancinus displayed a plan of Carthage in the Forum in support of his campaign for the consulship;[68] finally, in the text of the *lex agraria* ('land law') of 111 BC, *formae* ('plans') and *tabellae* ('tablets') of assigned public land are mentioned, which suggests that the making of plans of stretches of *ager publicus* ('public land') was regular practice at this period.[69]

All the above examples of Roman cartographic or schematic representations of parts of the world have two things in common: they are intimately linked with the military conquest of new regions and with their subsequent occupation and settlement. In the same way that the Romans were not as curious as Greeks about foreign peoples and did not write books about them, so they were not interested in drawing maps of the world for purely scientific purposes. The primary motivation for both ethnographic and cartographic interest in Rome was the monumental commemoration of triumphal conquest and the accurate recording of the

[64] Varro *R.R.* 1. 2. 1: 'in pariete pictam Italiam'; Florus 1. 19. 2 on Sempronius' dedication of the temple.

[65] Wiseman 1986: 91.

[66] L. 41. 28. 8–10: 'Sardiniae insulae forma erat, atque in ea simulacra pugnarum picta.'

[67] The map was apparently still visible some years later, as it was reportedly altered by Sulla (Granius Licinianus at Criniti 9. 36–7).

[68] Pliny *N.H.* 35. 23.

[69] *FIRA* 11. 6–7.

results of centuriation and colonization. Much of this had been true for Greeks too, of course. Foreign peoples had often figured in the Greek equivalents of triumphal art, architecture, and literature, but the kind of intellectual curiosity elicited in certain Greeks by the customs and histories of other peoples is not evident in second-century BC Romans, apart from their tentative investigations into the Greeks themselves and their culture. Conversely, the Romans recorded and documented certain other aspects of their geographical knowledge of the world around them more thoroughly than Greeks tended to, particularly information to do with roads and land-measurement. Distances appeared in triumphal inscriptions and on milestones by the side of the roads that began to span the north of Italy in the second century BC, a most un-Greek habit, but one that fits well with the maps and diagrams of public land mentioned above.[70]

Far better attested, indeed, than pictorial descriptions as a means of storing and conveying facts about the outside world, but still very much connected with the representation of victory and the monumentalization of conquest, is the Roman habit of erecting triumphal inscriptions. They commemorated the results of the victorious campaigns of the Roman people, and exalted the reputation of the triumphant general. To that end, these inscriptions often gave detailed information on the regions in which campaigns had taken place and about the peoples and places conquered. But as they were scattered in temples and on monuments around the city of Rome, they could not constitute a coherent or systematic account of Rome's wars, so much as the record of successive claims to military fame on the part of individual Roman generals.

These inscriptions, sometimes written in Saturnian metre, seem typically to have contained a catalogue of the cities or peoples which the general had defeated and numbers of the enemy killed or captured, accompanied, whether appropriate or not, by claims to be the first to have achieved some particular feat of arms, and a description of any peculiarities of the triumph itself: what and who was exhibited in the procession for instance, how much coin and bullion the general had brought back with him in booty, and how much he had given in bounty to his troops.[71] Certain passages in

[70] Rawson 1985: 259.

[71] See Wiseman 1985 for discussion of triumphal inscriptions as a source for the ethos of Roman political life.

Livy's campaign narratives and his descriptions of triumphs seem to suggest that he, or a source, found a good deal of information in texts of this kind, as they contain very much these categories of information, which are also present, for instance, in the inscription commemorating C. Duilius's naval victory off Mylae in 260 BC.[72] In addition, these texts sometimes contained brief snippets relating to conquered peoples and places: names of ethnic groups, cities, rivers, distances, and various other statistics about populations defeated, whether alive or dead.[73] There were, then, names, facts, and figures of various sorts relating to the conquered world around the Romans inscribed in documentary texts in Rome and elsewhere. But before Cato there was nothing resembling a detailed or systematic description of the peoples of Italy accessible to the Roman reader. The kinds of information available reflected the reasons why the Romans were interested in the outside world, and they had more to do with the celebration of individual and corporate glory than with systematic record-keeping or scientific inquiry.[74]

Listing the names, places, and peoples conquered in warfare is a prominent characteristic of the Roman triumphal text. Lists, however unexpansive, can be impressive in themselves as a means of communicating the magnitude of a past event, the scale of an achievement, or the significance of an individual's career. This is the emotive effect on which the rather dry presentation of factual information in list form in these inscriptions draws. It may also be seen reflected in the literary device of the catalogue of armed forces, often resorted to by both poets and historians in antiquity, not merely as a means of relating details and statistics but as a cumulative exposition of the importance of the conflict to be described. Listing the places and peoples of the world in a linear progression had also been a feature of Greek geographical composition, as is evident in the case of Pseudo-Scylax. The

[72] Cf. e.g. the following examples from the 190s BC, mostly concerning triumphs over the Gauls of Italy: L. 31. 49. 2–3 (L. Furius Purpurio's triumph in 200 BC), 33. 23. 4–7 (C. Cornelius Cethegus in 197 BC), 33. 37. 10–12 (M. Marcellus in 196 BC), 34. 46. 2–3 (Cato in 194 BC, after his Spanish command), 36. 40. 11–13 (P. Scipio Nasica in 191 BC). For the Duilius inscription, see *ILLRP* 319 (= *CIL* I. 25).

[73] For distances in inscriptions, cf. the triumphal inscription of C. Sempronius Tuditanus, consul in 129 BC, quoted by Pliny (*N.H.* 3. 129) as a source for the distance between Aquileia and the River Titius; and the Polla stone which, in triumphal manner, lists the stages on the road between Regium and Capua (*ILLRP* 454).

[74] On archives in Republican Rome, see Nicolet 1988: 135–6; Culham 1989.

compilation of scientific lists had also taken on new life with the Hellenistic vogue for pinacography, the production of lists on every conceivable topic of interest, from the names of tragedies, to birds, rivers, wonders in Italy, and so on.[75] Callimachus was the most noted exponent of this genre, in addition to his ethnographic interests mentioned above, culling the material for this encyclopaedic approach to knowledge from the resources of the Museum and Library in Alexandria. It is apparent from the fragments of the *Origines*, that Cato too occasionally recounted the names of peoples and places in the form of an otherwise bare list. While his fascination for listing such facts and other curiosities about the outside world clearly has much in common with the works of his contempories in Alexandria, its fundamental affinities lie with the genre of the Roman triumphal inscription, in form and purpose.

Triumphal maps, administrative diagrams, epigraphic lists, and catalogues of conquests formed important types of source material available in Rome for would-be Roman authors who wanted to find something out about the peoples and places of the world around them. But it would be a distortion, characteristic perhaps of library-bound academic history, to imagine that a man like Cato restricted what he wrote to what he found elsewhere in written evidence, Greek or Latin. For, however learned he was for his times, and doubtless he read many an inscription in his time as surely did most Romans who could read, he was a man of affairs who devoted himself to life in the Senate rather than the study.[76] He had himself been to many of the places he described and had lived through, and played an important part in, much of the history he wrote about, and was both an inheritor and principal literary interpreter of the non-literary traditions concerning the past of Rome and Italy that persisted and developed from generation to generation. From Roman documentary sources, Cato could have got some details about names, dates, and places. But to his reading of these sources he brought a world of personal experience

[75] Fraser 1972: i. 454 ff.

[76] Cic. *Sen.* 21 represents Cato as an assiduous reader of inscriptions, in the context of a passage on the failure of memory in old age: 'equidem non modo eos novi qui sunt, sed eorum patres etiam et avos, nec sepulcra legens vereor quod aiunt, ne memoriam perdam; his etiam ipsis legendis in memoriam redeo mortuorum.' ('Indeed I know not only people who are alive today but their fathers and grandfathers too, and when reading tombstones I do not fear what they say, that I might lose my memory; rather by reading them I return to the memory of the dead.')

and received tradition relating to the subjects his pen touched on, including the Gauls of the north. While we can reasonably postulate the existence and importance of both, it is perhaps harder accurately to assess their character as, paradoxically, they can now only be reached through the literary evidence. Nevertheless, something of their quality and content is recoverable.

The stories about Romans and Gauls from the past that found their way into the literary tradition reveal the nature of the tradition that sustained them. The literary history of Roman relations with the Galli is above all characterized by the occurrence of memorable and remarkable examples of outstanding individual heroism relating to equally memorable characters from history, whose families tended, not entirely coincidentally, to be prominent in the later Republic: Manlius Capitolinus' miraculous saving of the Capitol, Camillus' deliverance of the city from the effects of the sack, Manlius Torquatus' and Valerius Corvus' victorious confrontations with monstrous Gauls, Decius Mus' *devotio* at Sentinum when he sacrificed his own life for the sake of a Roman victory, and Marcellus' winning of the *spolia opima* for killing the opposing commander at the Battle of Clastidium.[77] All of them great heroes with great names. The prominence of these representatives of famous Republican noble families in the literary tradition of early Rome stems not only from the relative stability of the Roman senatorial aristocracy over several centuries, but also from the ways in which the Roman historical tradition was heavily influenced by, and to a considerable extent consisted of, stories relating to and, in various forms, propagated by the great families of Rome.

Through public advertisements of their inherited histories, through inscriptions and monuments in and around the city commemorating triumphs and victories, and through the performance of impressive funeral ceremonies held in the open, as memorably described by Polybius, accompanied by the delivery of eulogies of the dead which also encompassed a recitation of the deeds of former members of the family, successive generations attempted to ensure the continuation of their family's reputation in the minds of the people.[78] The texts of some of these speeches seem to have

[77] The main sources for these events are as follows: Torquatus: L. 7. 9–10; Claudius Quadrigarius fr. 10b Peter; Corvus: L. 7. 26. 1–10; Claudius Quadrigarius fr. 12 Peter; Decius Mus: L. 10. 26–30. Marcellus: Plut. *Marc*. 7–8.

[78] Pol. 6. 53–4.

been preserved, to be used extensively and perhaps uncritically by later Roman historians: Livy and Cicero both comment on the inherent unreliability of funeral speeches and the inscriptions on *imagines* ('busts of ancestors') as sources. For in these speeches, Livy writes, families deliberately and with intent to deceive arrogated to themselves honours and events from the past to which they had no right, and thus confused the traditions concerning both the deeds of individuals and the records of the common Roman past.[79] Livy attributes the motivation behind this tendency to straightforward mendaciousness, but there was more to it than that. Funeral speeches and the public presentation of a family's past were a crucial aspect of the competitive culture of the Roman political class. Of course, individuals, not families, competed against one another in Roman politics, but they did so against the background of a world of family tradition that served to validate their status and of which they were the exemplar in their generation. Families were perhaps able to lay claim to dubious honours from the past because of the paucity of public records against which their claims could be verified, yet they did so not with the intention of rewriting history but in order to enhance their public reputations.

The series of extraordinary events associated with the Romans' early history of conflict with the Galli betrays the influence of noble family traditions on the later, written historical record. Three of the families involved, the Manlii Torquati and Capitolini and the Valerii Corvini, attributed the origins of their cognomina to these events—their very names were represented as memorials of the family's past achievements. Similarly, Suetonius also mentions an otherwise unknown tradition about an otherwise unknown individual concerning the origin of the cognomen of the Livii Drusi: that it was adopted by an ancestor who, as propraetor in Gaul, killed an enemy leader called Drausus, and retrieved the gold taken from Rome by the Gauls after the sack.[80] The theme of single combat and dramatic acts of individual heroism is perhaps not specific to Roman traditions about the Gauls as opposed to other peoples, but it certainly seems characteristic.[81] These are the stories that will have been told and retold in public funeral

[79] Cic. *Brut*. 61–2; L. 8. 40. 4. See Cornell 1986*b*; Wiseman 1986.
[80] Suet. *Tib*. 3. 2.
[81] Cf. Varro on his own *cognomen*, explaining that it was taken from an Illyrian

orations, not only associating certain Romans with famous victories over the Gauls, but also informing the Roman public's conception of the Gauls themselves, of their character in the present and their place in Roman history—a history marked by marvellous encounters with the enemy, often involving divine intervention on the side of the Romans, and heroic deeds of valour.[82]

Is it, then, at all possible to form an idea of how far this history had developed by the second century BC, the period of the conquest of northern Italy itself? There is some contemporary evidence that might be of assistance: the few fragments of Naevius' *praetexta* play, entitled *Clastidium*, written in the late third century BC, and Accius' *Decius*, from the middle of the second century, both of which deal with major and victorious battles against the Gauls, at Clastidium and Sentinum, made especially famous by acts of heroism on the part of Marcellus and Decius, of the kind discussed above. Naevius' play is represented only by two fragments: a single word, *vitulantes*, which Varro interpreted as meaning 'singing songs of victory';[83] and one whole line which must refer to the victor of Clastidium himself, Marcellus: *vita insepulta laetus in patriam redux* (his life unburied, he returns to his fatherland rejoicing).[84] Even from these short fragments, it is clear that this play was about victory and that it celebrated Marcellus' relatively recent killing of his Gallic opposite number that had won him the *spolia opima*. The *Decius* presumably had had a similar intent, to describe the noble heroism of the consul whose ritual self-sacrifice in battle ensured the Roman victory at Sentinum against the alliance of Gauls and Italians. The fragments of this play are more informative about how Gauls

killed in battle by an ancestor (fr. 368 Funaioli, ap. Serv. *Ad Verg. Aen.* 11. 743). But John Lydus *De Mag.* 1. 23 (Wünsch 27), who may have been following Varro here as certainly elsewhere, gives two meanings for Varro: one that it was the Celtic word for 'brave', the other that it was the Phoenician word for a Jew. On John's use of Varro, see Flintoff 1976. I am grateful to Clive Cheesman for this reference. Other families had *cognomina* with Gallic connections as well: e.g. Ogulnii Galli, Sulpicii Gali and Sulpicii Galbae (cf. Caes. *B.G.* 2. 4. 7, 13. 1; Suet. *Galb.* 1 for Galba as a Gallic name): for similar reasons?

[82] For the visual commemoration of these family stories, cf. the torque borders on *denarii* made by L. Torquatus as moneyer in the late 110s BC (*RRC* 295) and also by D. Silanus in the late 90s BC; he was related to a Torquatus adopted into the Iunii Silani (*RRC* 337).

[83] Varro *L.L.* 7.107.

[84] Varro *L.L.* 9. 78.

themselves were imagined in this period. One fragment describes Gauls in battle:

> Gallei voce canora
> fremitu peragrant minitabiliter[85]
>
> (The Gauls with singing voice
> pass on, threateningly.)

In another, the consul, Fabius, appears to be giving instructions to his colleague Decius:

> vim Gallicam obduc contra in aciem exercitum.
> lave patrium hostili fuso sanguen sanguine.[86]
>
> (Lead your army into battle against the Gallic host.
> Wash away your father's blood by spilling the blood of the enemy.)

While not much can be said on the basis of these few scraps of evidence, it is nevertheless suggestive that there is a close correspondence between them and the Gauls as met in later Roman accounts. Both plays deal with battle narratives and famous instances of Roman victory over the Gallic enemy, a favourite theme of the historians, while the picture of the Gauls implicit in these two fragments is familiar from the accounts and descriptions of Polybius and Livy. They are Gauls in battle, which is how they usually appear in the historians, making a terrible, threatening noise, as they do also, for instance, in Polybius' account of Telamon, or in Livy's description of the Gallic advance on Rome before the sack.[87] So far as it is possible to tell, then, the Gauls as they appear in Naevius and Decius seem to be substantially similar to those met in the later historians, described in the same terms and associated with the same kind of events, mostly involving war, Roman victories, and heroic deeds. This is perhaps not an entirely unexpected result. It was, for instance, never likely to be the case that Fabius Pictor's account of the Gauls at Telamon differed substantially from Polybius' in tone or content. But, because not one word of Fabius' account can certainly be identified in Polybius, this would have to remain a more or less plausible presumption, and it is useful to be able to show from other evidence that the image of the Gauls that occurs

[85] Klotz 1953, Accius *Decius* fr. 8. Klotz, surely correctly, changed Ribbeck's 'Caleti' for 'Gallei' (see Ribbeck 1897*a*, Accius *Decius* fr. 8).

[86] Klotz 1953, Accius *Decius* fr. 3.

[87] Pol. 2. 29. 4–8; L. 5. 37. 5.

in Livy has its roots in previous Roman tradition. Moreover, the dramatic context of Accius' description allows a further observation. This description of the behaviour and appearance of Gauls in battle was presented to a much wider Roman audience in the theatre than ever read Cato or Livy. It is, therefore, likely to have corresponded more or less to the collective expectations and experiences of that audience. It is now recognized that drama played an important role in shaping the Romans' view of their past.[88] In this case, it is apparent that it also participated in the formation of ideas about the contemporary outside world and its inhabitants as well.

Dating too to the early second century BC is the famous terracotta temple frieze from Civitalba, near the site of the Battle of Sentinum.[89] It depicts a group of figures, convincingly indentified as Gauls, being driven forth in confusion, both on foot and in a chariot, by various divinities in hot pursuit. The visual details of their appearance are worth noting, as the frieze constitutes the best surviving evidence for how Gauls were portrayed in the second century BC in Italy. They hold, or let fall in their flight, plates and vases, presumably meant to be of precious metal, which are suggestive of captured loot from a city or temple. Some are naked, wearing only a belt and a cloak, others are clothed; they once carried offensive weapons, spears or swords, now lost, and most are armed with a small, oblong shield with a central boss extending lengthways across the face. Some wear torques around their necks, and all have long, flowing hair and moustaches. Both in detail and context, the frieze corresponds closely to the image of the Gauls of northern Italy in literature. Polybius' account of the Battle of Telamon mentions several of these individual features in its description of the armour and physical appearance of the *Keltoi*, including chariots, naked warriors, warriors in short cloaks, small shields, torques, and other personal ornaments in gold.[90] The subject of the frieze as a whole, divine retribution for an act of sacrilege, is also reflected in various literary representations of Celts at war in which perfidious greed and temple-robbing, often avenged by divine punishment, are prominent themes.[91]

[88] Wiseman 1994.

[89] On the frieze and its interpretation, see Zuffa 1956; Peyre 1963, 1970; Pairault-Massa 1978.

[90] Pol. 2. 27–30.

[91] e.g. Pol. 2. 22. 2; Diod. 5. 32. 4; L. 5. 51. 10. See Kremer 1994: 43–5 for further references.

With regard both to detail and subject, then, the frieze coheres closely with what little else is known about the Roman image of the Gauls of the north in the second century BC, and also with much that appears in later literary accounts. It is, of course, not known who erected the temple to which the frieze was affixed or on what occasion, and it certainly need not necessarily have been a Roman dedication. However that may be, the frieze does attest the circulation within Italy of a repertoire of physical details and thematic contexts, also recognizable in the textual evidence, applied to the depiction of Gauls in the period of the conquest of the north. This gives some clue as to the ways in which Romans, and others too possibly, were seeing the Gauls in this crucial period in the history of their relations. There are external iconographical sources and affinities, Greek and Etruscan in particular, that have plausibly been postulated to eludicate the design of the frieze. For the moment, however, these are not directly relevant, though they will come into the picture later on. What we are trying to establish here are not the ideological precedents for the image of the Gaul current in Rome, but something of its actual quality in the period when Cato and Polybius were writing, in order to form an idea of the Roman background to their writings on the subject.

The frieze, then, is important as a visual counterpart to the literary picture. There is, however, no evidence for the existence of triumphal monuments in the city of Rome itself similar to the Civitalba frieze, in contrast, say, to the monumental development of this theme at Pergamum in the third and second centuries BC.[92] At a later date, Cicero refers in the *De Oratore* to a shield captured from the Cimbri hung up on one of the buildings in the Forum with a painted figure of a Gaul. Caesar Strabo, a character in the dialogue, describes the picture as *distortum, eiecta lingua, buccis fluentibus* (misshapen, tongue sticking out, with sagging cheeks).[93] In the course of his discussion of the use of wit in oratory, Caesar says that on one occasion he referred to the image in order to ridicule the grotesque physical features of his opponent in a case, one Helvius Mancia. It is entirely possible that it was a painting of a Gaul, as Cicero says, but as described it also sounds very much like a Gorgon-head, a motif apparently in common use as a shield

[92] See Pollitt 1986: 83–97 on the Celtomachic monuments of the Attalids.

[93] Cic. *De Or*. 2.266. Cf. Pliny *N.H*. 35.25, but with Crassus the orator rather than Caesar Strabo.

design in the Hellenistic period. This either suggests that there were interesting affinities between depictions of Gauls and Gorgons, or that the Romans made a telling mistake in identifying a *gorgoneion* on a shield as the face of a Gaul.[94] Moreover, the rhetorical use of the picture as a comparison for a particularly ugly Roman is also suggestive of what Romans thought about how Gauls looked. Literary accounts often refer to their physical characteristics, in particular their height and the size of their bodies, features which were at first a source of fear but, on closer acquaintance, a reason to depreciate their capacities—the lesson of the story of Torquatus' victory over his Gallic opponent.[95] Satirical mockery was also an option, by the end of the second century at least. A fragment of the comic poet Afranius describes a Gaul, 'dressed in his cloak (*sagatum*) and stuffed with fatty lard'.[96] Clothing, food, and physical appearance are brought together in this one line to present the Gaul as an object not of dread but of derision, almost as an oafish bumpkin. Perhaps such a disdainful view of the Gaul's appearance and, by implication, character was only possible after the completion of the conquest of the north when familiarity had begun to breed a certain amount of contempt.

In Rome, then, there was documentary evidence available for someone like Cato to write a history of the Gauls of the north. It was, it seems, mostly preserved in triumphal or memorial inscriptions or in the texts of funeral speeches, at least for the early period. For more recent times, his own personal experience and that of his contemporaries will have been invaluable sources in addition to what could be found in his Roman literary predecessors. There was also a wealth of non-literary material in the

[94] I am grateful to Sian Lewis for this idea. For *gorgoneia* on Hellenistic shields, see Sekunda 1994: 76, and Pl. 24. The protruding tongue is an interesting detail. Both Livy (7. 10. 5) and Claudius Quadrigarius (fr. 10b Peter) mention that the Gaul who fought against Manlius Torquatus stuck his tongue out in scorn at his Roman opponent. This was clearly a facial gesture which Romans associated with Gauls.

[95] e.g. Pol. 2. 29. 7; L. 7. 9. 8; App. *B.C.* 1. 50 (an interesting story of single combat between a massive Celt fighting for the allies in the Social War and a diminutive Mauretanian on the Roman side who, like David and Torquatus, overthrows his oversized opponent). Further references in Kremer 1994: 21–2; Sherwin-White 1967: 57–8.

[96] Fr. 288 in Daviault 1981 (= Ribbeck 1897*b*: 238). Isid. *Etym.* 20. 2. 24, citing this passage, points out that the word for lard used here, *taxea*, is Gallic; the word was presumably introduced for comic effect.

form of famous tales of Roman heroism against the Gauls. They were, indeed, among the most famous tales from the whole of Roman history, known to Cato, as to all Romans, as part of the common repertoire regularly brought out in public at funerals and in speeches. In some ways, stories like these form the most important source for our understanding of what Cato and other Romans thought about Gauls precisely because of their familiarity, representing in a well-worn and well-known historical narrative form commonplace attitudes and preconceptions that were widely accepted among Romans.

On the matter of peoples and places, there was nothing like a Hellenistic ethnographic survey of the Gauls or the transapennine region accessible at Rome. But there was an increasing amount of statistical and administrative information about the landscape and peoples of the north, generated in the wake of the conquest and in the course of the centuriation and colonization of the landscape—how available for consultation is another matter. There was also a coherent series of stereotyped images incorporated in narrative traditions that formed the substance of the Roman idea of what Gauls looked like and how Gauls behaved, both differentiating them from Romans and permitting their (mis-)identification in history, life, and art. There was, then, no systematic investigation of peoples and places of the north in the Hellenistic manner in existence before Cato, but there was a wealth of material available to him to work with. What, then, did he make of it all?

3: CATO'S *ORIGINES*

The *Origines* was the first Roman work of historiography in Latin, written in the second quarter of the second century BC. So much is clear. All else is open to debate, since so much of it is not extant. Scholarly discussion of the work has concentrated upon Cato's purpose in writing it, and upon its general character and construction.[97] Fragments of the first three books deal mostly with ancient history—the origins and early history of Italy and Rome, including stories on the foundations of cities, the origins of

[97] On Cato's *Origines*, see Peter 1914: cxxvii ff.; Schanz and Hosius 1927, 186–9; Marmorale 1944: 159 ff.; Alfonsi 1954; Kienast 1954: 101 ff.; Klingner 1961; Badian 1966*a*: 7–11; Della Corte 1969: 76 ff.; de Sanctis 1969: 60 ff.; Timpe 1970–1; Schroeder 1971; Cornell 1972; Astin 1978: 211 ff.; Kierdorf 1980. For the latest edition of the text of the fragments, see Chassignet 1986.

peoples, and the various waves of invaders who occupied different parts of Italy. It is not clear from the citations and reports that make up the fragments whether these books were arranged chronologically or not, that is, whether they made up a connected narrative of early Roman and Italian history down to the First Punic War, or whether they consisted of a series of remarks about peoples and places. Cornelius Nepos, and the fragments themselves seem to suggest the latter, but not all modern scholars have accepted this position.[98] It is, however, surely not necessary to regard the problem of the composition of Books 2 and 3 as a straightforward choice between a historical and a geographical structure: Herodotus, after all, offers a plausible and scarcely obscure model for the combination of both sorts of material into a work of narrative history. It is clearer that the last four books of the *Origines* contained a historical narrative, from 264 BC onwards down to 149 BC, reaching an end shortly before Cato's own death.

The sections of the work dealing with the Gauls and northern Italy seem to have been contained in Book 2. Not all of the fragments placed in this book by Chassignet in her edition are directly attested as coming from it, and her arrangement of the fragments should be treated with some caution. All that is known about the material originally contained in Books 2 and 3 comes from Nepos' *Cato*, where we read: 'secundus et tertius (sc. liber) unde quaeque civitas orta sit Italica' (the second and third books deal with the origins of each community of Italy).[99] Chassignet's ordering of the fragments in these books proposes a geographical progression from north to south with a division between Book 2, which dealt with northern Italy, and Book 3, which concentrated on the south.[100] This arrangement is not quite justified by the evidence, particularly as the fragments firmly attributed to the third book are too few in number and uncertain of content.[101] It is just as

[98] Nepos *Cat*. 3. 3–4; cf. Festus 216 L with Chassignet 1986: x–xxi for discussion and references to previous secondary literature on the problem of the composition and unity of the *Origines*.

[99] Nepos *Cat*. 3. 3.

[100] Chassignet 1986: xxi.

[101] Of the 9 fragments attributed to Book 3 by Chassignet, only 3. 4 = 71 Peter, dealing with the peoples, places, and myths of the region of Rhegium, and 3. 5 = 72 Peter, a fragment of a story from the history of Himera in Sicily, are both directly attested by their sources as coming from Book 3 and deal with south Italy. The other 7 are either not based on ancient attributions, or are unhelpful for determining the content of the book.

likely that Cato arranged his account of Italy in the manner of a *periplous* text, proceeding around the coast like both Pseudo-Scylax and Pliny the Elder.[102] But whatever the exact disposition of the fragments, they can certainly tell us something about Cato's knowledge of and interest in northern Italy.

On the vexed question of Cato's sources the scholarly debate has not been especially fruitful, as it has largely concentrated on identifying the various literary texts possibly available to him, and has tended to ignore the various other sorts of written and non-written material discussed above. Because Cato seems to have had no obvious Roman predecessors, Moretti suggested unhelpfully that he must have taken most of his information from Greek sources, Timaeus especially.[103] Timaeus may have known a surprising amount about Rome and Italy, but with regard to northern Italy, there is, as argued above, little suggestion that Greeks knew very much about it, certainly not in comparison with the kind of detailed knowledge evinced by the few fragments of Cato on the subject. Greek authors such as Antiochus of Syracuse as early as the fifth century BC, Hippys of Rhegium and Timaeus later, and Polemon of Ilium in the second century wrote about Sicily and Italy, about the foundations of Greek colonies and the expeditions of the Greek heroes to Italy, as well as about the origins of indigenous Italian peoples and cities.[104] Cato included stories of this kind in his work and he quite probably lifted some of them from Greek texts.[105] The earliest literary sources in existence relating to the antiquity of peninsular Italy were indeed Greek but, as will become clearer, on northern Italy the character of his account was informed and detailed beyond the limits of the preceding Greek tradition of mythographic speculation, and beyond even the corrective efforts of Polybius.

As for Cato's use of the various types of non-literary source discussed above, it has been argued, as an explanation for the number of detailed facts and figures that appear in certain fragments of the

[102] Plin. *N.H.* 3. 46.

[103] Moretti 1952.

[104] Antiochus: *FGH* 555; Hippys: *FGH* 554; Timaeus: *FGH* 566, with Pol. 12. 26d. 2–4; Polemon: *Schol. Ap. Rhod.* 4. 324. On early Greek references to Italy, see generally Wikén 1937; Cornell 1972: 55 ff.; Briquel 1990. On Greek *ktisis* literature and its relationship to Cato's work see Cornell 1972: 137 ff.; Chassignet 1986: xxiv n. 8 gives further bibliography on the question.

[105] For differing estimations of Cato's dependence on Greek literary sources, cf. Timpe 1970–1: 15 ff.; Cornell 1972: 156 ff.; Chassignet 1986: xxiii–xxvii.

Origines, that Cato's experience as censor in 184 BC gave him a taste for archival research and statistics.[106] There may perhaps be some doubt whether the censorship would actually have involved him in dealing with material of this kind. In a more general sense, however, his long personal experience of the affairs of state will surely have served to distinguish his description of northern Italy from those of previous Greek writers and that of his contemporary, Polybius. Cato lived through the period of conquest and the later period of settlement, and will have participated in many of the debates and decisions in the Senate that directed the course of developments in the north. As a senior senator with wide interests, he was able to reflect from personal knowledge and experience on the great changes that had taken place there in a way that Polybius was not.

Cato, as a senator turned writer, was perhaps in a better position than Polybius, an intelligent and inquisitive outsider, to present a more detailed and perhaps more accurate picture of the changes that had occurred in northern Italy. Polybius, for example, was under the impression that the Romans had driven the Gauls almost entirely from the plains of the north, restricting them to a few small areas under the Alps.[107] Similarly, he presents the large-scale export of pork in the context of the contemporary prosperity of the Po Valley under Roman management.[108] Cato, by contrast, seems to be well aware of the continued existence of indigenous communities north of the Po and, on the particular subject of the northern export trade in pork, appears to say that it was in the hands of the Insubres.[109] The fragments attributed to Book 2 as a group show that Cato clearly knew much more than Polybius

[106] Heurgon 1974: 232–3; Chassignet 1986: xxix.

[107] Pol. 2. 35. 4.

[108] Pol. 2. 15. 3.

[109] Cato *Orig*. 2. 9 Chassignet = 39 Peter: 'In Italia in scrobes terna atque quaterna milia [aulia] succidiarum vehere' (Chassignet's text). ('In Italy they transfer three or four thousand flitches of ham into trenches') Cornell 1988 has improved on this by adopting Jordan's 'in Italiam' instead of the meaningless 'in Italia', and Turnèbe's emendation of 'Insubres' for 'in scrobes', adopted already by Peter and Jordan, and suggesting 'annua' instead of the *crux* 'aulia', printing as follows: 'In Italiam Insubres terna atque quaterna milia annua succidiarum vehere'. ('The Insubres import three or four thousand hams a year into Italy'.) This version plausibly reinstates the Insubres into a fragment which Varro anyway quotes in the context of 'gallicae succidiae' (Varro *R.R*. 2. 4. 11) and, equally plausibly for this period, has the Insubres located outside Italia (see further pp. 127–37). For Cisalpine stockrearing and the economy of Mediolanum, see Garnsey 1976: esp. 18; Peyre 1979: 71; Chevallier 1983: 242 ff.

about many aspects of the north, about ethnic and place names, local customs, and local history, or at least that he was much more interested in them. But what was the character of Cato's knowledge and why was he so interested?

The fragments of the *Origines* on northern Italy suggest that Cato liked making lists and accumulating names and numbers. He enumerated the thirty-four settlements of the Euganei and the 112 clans of the Boii;[110] he measured the length of Lake Como at sixty Roman miles, something of an overestimation, and reckoned the annual scale of the Insubrian pork trade at three or four thousand hams, while in the *ager Gallicus* where the Senones used to live he reported that certain regions were able to produce ten *cullei* of wine for every *iugerum*, an extraordinary quantity by any standard.[111] These are all big numbers, meant to impress on the reader the scale of the physical landscape, its outstanding agricultural productivity, and the size of its indigenous populations, both present and former: the Po Valley was Cato's 'Big Country'. Figures like these, for distances, agricultural production, and populations, also represent the kind of statistics produced as a result of the settlement and colonial reorganization of large areas of northern Italy. The building of roads, the foundation of towns, and the centuriation of the landscape over twenty years of intense activity during the 180s and 170s must have entailed a massive practical and administrative effort, in particular on the part of the *agrimensores* and *gromatici*, the surveyors to whom the task of surveying the land and planning its development was delegated by the state as represented by the successive commissions of senators in charge of founding the colonies.[112] This is not to say that there was anything like a central information bureau in Rome, where Cato could have consulted, say, yearly production figures for the *ager Gallicus*. Nevertheless, statistics and measurements of various sorts were produced and recorded in some form or other during the process of the post-conquest settlement, if not systematically or centrally.

[110] Cato *Orig*. 2. 11 Chassignet = 41 Peter on the Euganei; 2. 13 Chassignet = 44 Peter on the Boii.

[111] 2. 8 = 38 Peter on Lake Como (lacus Larius); 2. 9 = 39 Peter on north Italian ham; 2. 14 = 44 Peter on viticulture. Columella (*R.R*. 3. 3. 10) considered a vineyard productive if it could produce one *culleus* per *iugerum*.

[112] For the practicalities and ideology of the colonization and centuriation of northern Italy, see Tibiletti 1950: 200–8; Ewins 1952; Chevallier 1983: viii, 31–5, 74–6; Clavel-Lévêque 1983: 216–23; Càssola 1988; Purcell 1990*b*.

Practically, the three principal elements in the redevelopment of the north, colonies, roads, and centuriation, represented an extremely efficient way of taking control and making the most of the new available land. Symbolically, it represented the reorientation of the north and its people away from its previous state of uncultivated and unsettled wilderness towards a new condition of regulated and administered productivity. From being unknown and undifferentiated Gallia, the north was investigated and surveyed into a new existence as a land of Latin and Roman colonies and farms, all now quantifiable and measured according to Roman standards. Cato's reflections in writing on this new state of affairs and his fascination with statistics on exactly this kind of information constitute the literary correlate of this great transformation, as an expression in connected prose of the same set of ideas and practices relating to conquest, colonization, and cultural change that were affecting the people and landscape of the north. Having observed it taking place, Cato was well aware of the magnitude of the change that followed the conquest, and commented on it in the *Origines*. The fragments on the Boii and the fertility of the *ager Gallicus* both reflect a consciousness of the distinction between the Gallic past and the Roman present: the 112 clans of the Boii are no more; while where the Senones once lived, the people who had sacked Rome itself, Romans now live cultivating the vine.

But there was more to Cato's account of the north than a description of a newly conquered world. The fragments on northern Italy also testify to the fact that his interest in the eponymous subject matter of the work—the origins, ethnic and geographical, of the peoples of Italy—extended northwards to cover the populations of the north beyond the Po and into the Alps, regions still on the periphery of Roman control.[113] The tradition of this kind of erudite research both into the distant past and into the origins of far-off peoples formed the complementary strand in ancient historiography to the kind of contemporary political and military history practised by Polybius.[114] Accordingly, he had a very low opinion of works specifically on genealogies, foundations, and colonies, and of historians like Ephorus or Timaeus, who

[113] 2. 1 Chassignet = 31 Peter on the uncertain origins of the Ligurians; 2. 7 Chassignet = 37 Peter on the Lepontii and Salassi; 2. 10 Chassignet = 40 Peter on the ethnic origins of the towns of Vercellae, Novaria, Comum, and Bergomum; 2. 12 Chassignet = 42 Peter on the Veneti and the Cenomani.

[114] See the classic formulation of this view in Momigliano 1966: 1–5, 216–17.

included material of that kind in their writings.[115] He thought that it was boring, tralatician stuff that had nothing to do with history as he conceived of it and did not explain anything of interest or importance. In this he should not perhaps be followed entirely, inasmuch as myths of origin may in themselves be important narrative expressions of conceptions about the present. To understand a contemporary phenomenon, it makes one sort of historical sense to go back to the very beginning and systematically assemble the known facts from start to finish, particularly with regard to origin stories which often have important things to say about issues of identity and cultural tradition. To find out and set forth the origins of the communities of Italy was a plausible means of investigating and making sense of these foreign identities, how they related to or differed from one another and one's own, and hence understanding the real world in which one lived. The attribution of origins helped to clarify the ethnic differences that were apparent in Italy and provided a historical context for one's views on other peoples in the present. Hence, Cato's interest in the ancient history of Italy and the ethnic origins of the peoples of the north can be understood as something more than the preoccupation of an enthusiastic but disinterested antiquarian, for the questions he asked were potentially of considerable contemporary relevance. Northern Italy and the Alps were in the second century BC still a militarized region and a theatre of sporadic warfare against a wide variety of mountain tribes of uncertain status and origin. To know whether they were Gauls or Ligurians, for instance, was potentially an important theoretical point with practical implications for the ways in which they were viewed and treated. This is a point that we shall return to in the next chapter.

But there was also something of the sensational in Cato's account of the north, and in this he displays a certain affinity with the contemporary Greek vogue for books of *paradoxographica*.[116] It was a region with rivers, lakes, plains, and mountains all out of scale with the rest of Italy, and with fabulous animals to match.

[115] Pol. 9. 1. 4.

[116] Peter 1914: cxlii. Cf. Nepos' comment on the *Origines* (*Cat.* 3. 4): 'in eisdem (*sc.* libris) exposuit, quae in Italia Hispaniisque aut fierent *aut viderentur admiranda*. in quibus multa industria et diligentia comparet, nulla doctrina.' ('In these books he recounted both what happened and what seemed marvellous in Italy and Spain. In them he collected much information with energy and diligence, but with no learning.')

One of the fragments of the *Origines* on the Alps comes from just such a Greek text, the *Paradoxographus Palatinus*, in which Cato is cited as testimony for the existence of various unusual animals living in the Alps: white hares, huge mice, pigs without cloven hooves, shaggy dogs, and cattle without horns.[117] Yet there is a difference between Cato's relationship to the north and the Alps as a source of fantastic detail about the natural world and that of the Alexandrian scholars in the Library to their more exotic objects of inquiry. For they compiled stories of this kind indiscriminately from all parts of the known world, regardless of whether they had any personal or political interest in their place of origin. But unlike them, Cato was not interested in oddities from India or Asia, yet he was fascinated by the wonders of the Alps. Romans, as Strabo observed, were not curious people by inclination. But some, like Cato, were interested in those regions that came within the range of their armies and were susceptible to the instructions of their Senate and magistrates. The accumulation of new information about the outside world at Rome, and its representation in Cato's book, seems in this period to be intimately linked to, and limited by, the development and extension of Roman imperial control in particular areas. What one might call ethnographic knowledge and geographical information was amassed as a by-product of experience in the field, often the field of conflict, rather than being constituted as an autonomous area of inquiry and literary composition, as had become the case in the Greek tradition.

Cato, then, was not an ethnographer nor a scientific geographer. Yet he had a conception of the shape of the landscape of the north, and of how it related both physically and symbolically to Italy and the lands beyond the Alps. At one point in his work, Cato likened the Alps to a wall protecting Italy.[118] He knew, therefore, that the Alps constituted a continuous mountain range running from one coast to the other, separating Italy from what lay beyond, in other words, his geography was fairly accurate. But what did the Alps mean for Cato and why did he describe them as a wall protecting Italy? This remark might, but probably should not, be used to

[117] Cited in Cornell 1972: 49 n. 23 on *Paradoxographus Palatinus* 21, Giannini 360. This fragment is not included in either Peter's or Chassignet's editions. Cf. Cato *Orig.* 2. 20 Chassignet = 52 Peter on the amazing jumping goats of Mounts Soracte and Fiscellus.

[118] Cato *Orig.* 4. 10 Chassignet = 85 Peter ap. Serv. *Ad Verg. Aen.* X.13: 'Alpes quae secundum Catonem et Livium muri vice tuebantur Italiam'.

support notions of 'defensive imperialism' as supposedly practised by Romans in Italy and elsewhere in the Republic.[119] But to take his remark solely as referring to strategic defence is rather limiting. Building a wall around a town is always more than a practical matter. A wall constitutes physical protection, but it also represents a boundary, and boundaries are constructed socially and symbolically before being built materially. Cato's Alpine wall was most importantly a construction of the mind, with interesting implications for the developing concept of 'Italia' and its relationship to Gallia.[120] In 183 BC, Livy records, the Senate sent an embassy to the Galli who had invaded the Veneto with the message that they should return to whence they came and warn others not to cross the Alps, for they were an almost impassable boundary between them.[121] If this is at all an accurate record of what was said to the invaders, then it ought to be taken closely together with the fragment of Cato, in order to complement the image of the Alps as a wall with that of a boundary. Boundaries, whether physical, artificial, or arbitrary, are, like the groups they bound, socially and discursively constructed phenomena, not natural ones. The more apparently natural the boundaries, such as the Alps, or the Rhine and the Hellespont, the more contested they tend to be and, consequently, the more policing they require, both in the mind and on the ground.[122] Hence the immediate expulsion by the Senate of the Galli who wandered over the mountains in 183 BC and, probably, the maintainence of legions in the north of Italy for most of the second century, when the Romans began actively to conceive of the Alps as a boundary and a wall and to maintain them as such.[123]

The establishment of the Alps as a boundary also involved the practical problem of what to do with the region itself and the people who lived there. Polybius complained that too many authors describing Hannibal's crossing had portrayed the Alps as a mountainous wasteland, ignoring the existence of large popula-

[119] See Dyson 1985: 42–86, esp. 42–4, 59–60 on Cato and defensive frontiers in northern Italy. For critical reviews of his position, see Rich 1986; Mitchell 1986.

[120] See further, pp. 132–3.

[121] L. 39. 54. 12: 'prope inexsuperabilem finem in medio.'

[122] Alföldi 1952 for the moral barrier on the Rhine in antiquity, with Schama 1995: 363 on the Rhine as a contested *national* barrier between French and Germans; Immerwahr 1956: 270–6 on the Hellespont as a boundary in Herodotus.

[123] Brunt 1987: 567–9; cf. Whittaker 1994: 7–8, 27, discussing the Alps in relation to Lucien Febvre's concept of natural boundaries as *frontières morales*.

tions living in the Alps.[124] Did the Romans make the same mistake? Until Augustus, after all, no concerted attempt was made at conquest.[125] Yet early efforts were made to investigate the Alps and its peoples, or at least the most immediately accessible valleys, as is evident from the fragments attributed to Book 2 of the *Origines* on the Taurisci, Salassi, and Lepontii, the Oromobii of Comum, the length of Lake Como, and the towns of the Euganei.

Cato's text, then, reflects the ways in which Roman control was developing within the Alps and northern Italy as a whole. As a leading senator and ex-consul, he would have been one of its prime mediators and interpreters. It has been argued frequently that he had a personal, political, and moral interest in the conquest of northern Italy, on the grounds that he believed that it stood for honest, agricultural expansion as against demoralizing, commercially driven conquest in the east.[126] The programme of colonization and viritane allotments executed in the north is likely to have appealed to the man who wrote in fulsome terms of the moral worth of farmers in the preface to the *De Agri Cultura*. But, while farmers are certainly safest and make the best soldiers and citizens, Cato does not suggest that the way of life of the trader, the *mercator*, is bad so much as risky and, anyway, it is perhaps an unwarranted step to elevate these prefatory remarks into a wholesale imperialist ideology that eschewed the acquisition of overseas wealth and advocated a consistent policy of northern expansion on moral grounds.[127] He had himself exploited the silver mines of Spain and fought against Antiochus in Greece. There is surely a distinction to be drawn in Cato's terms between the honest fruits of victory in war, wherever they were won, Spain, the East, or northern Italy, and the practical uncertainties of commercial activity. He may in retrospect have come to the opinion that an excess of wealth flowing into Rome from both commerce and conquest had had detrimental consequences for Roman morals, perhaps characterized by an unwelcome tendency to ape Greek fashions, but that is a different matter and need not imply that he followed a consistent line on the direction of imperial expansion throughout his career.

[124] Pol. 3. 48. 7.
[125] Gabba 1988.
[126] For this idea, Grimal 1953: 114–15; Kienast 1954: 108; Càssola 1962: 347–55; Peyre 1979: 20; Chassignet 1986: 95.
[127] Cato *R.R. praef.* 2–4.

To summarize, Cato was deeply interested in northern Italy, its history, peoples, and places. He had access to a good deal of detailed information which he seems to have compiled relatively systematically. His survey of the north was not quite of the order of an imperial gazetteer: analogies with the Napoleonic survey of Egypt, say, should not be pressed too far. There was no academy of professional researchers, it was all much more *ad hoc* than that. Nevertheless, there is an affinity of intent, if not of extent, in the desire to acquire information about a newly conquered world as both a reflection and instrument of imperial domination. Polybius' survey of the north, by contrast, had a different tradition behind it and an inevitably distinct perspective on the material.

4: POLYBIUS ON THE NORTH

Polybius was conscious of his status as a geographical writer.[128] He wanted to be seen as a contributor to this field at the highest level, and he takes issue with his geographer predecessors much as he does with previous historians. He had read the major authors, Eratosthenes, Pytheas, and Dicaearchus, and had his own criticisms of their ideas.[129] Much of the extant material relating to Polybius' forays into the field of theoretical geography comes from Strabo, who engages in a heated debate with him in which he frequently points out Polybius' mistakes.[130] He had hard words to say about Polybius' estimations of distances in the Mediterranean and Europe, and about his misconceived corrections of previous authors.[131] More particularly, he criticized Polybius' notion of Italy as a triangular figure on the grounds that it ignored the curves which exist in each of the three sides.[132] Here Strabo has hit upon an important defect in Polybius' geography of Italy, to which we shall return.

Walbank characterizes the intellectual background to Polybius' geographical interests as the sterile pragmatism characteristic of

[128] Generally on Polybius the geographer, cf. Pédech 1956, 1964: 514–97; Walbank 1972*b*: 114 ff.; Pédech 1976: 122–7; on Book 34, cf. Walbank 1957–79: iii. 563–77.

[129] Pol. 34. 5. 1.

[130] Cf. Str. 2. 3. 2, 4. 7 for his detailed critique of Polybius' misunderstanding of the theory of 'arctic circles'.

[131] Str. 2. 4. 1–5.

[132] Str. 5. 1. 2.

the Stoics in contrast to the adventurous spirit of Alexandrian inquiry, associating Polybius with the unimaginative world of Roman practicality rather than the scientific brilliance of an Eratosthenes. Pédech on the other hand takes a more appreciative view, and situates Polybius' scientific culture within the various debates current in contemporary Hellenistic science and philosophy.[133] A reasonable compromise would perhaps be to evaluate Polybius as a well-read non-specialist who made a few basic errors of conception and calculation. Strabo may attack him frequently and with good cause, but this very frequency is testimony to Polybius' lasting significance as an authority whom later geographical writers had to deal with, together with the great names of Alexandrian learning.

Polybius treated the geography and ethnography of northern Italy in passages contained in Books 2 and 34. There may have been further material elsewhere in other books now lost.[134] In an extended section of Book 2, Polybius describes the geography and peoples of the region and outlines the history of the Romans' wars against the *Keltoi* down to the outbreak of the Second Punic War.[135] The section as a whole is introduced as an exposition of the sort of men and places relied upon by Hannibal in his invasion of Italy.[136] The immediate context prompting the mention of the Celts at this point in the narrative is the growing power of the Carthaginians in Spain under Hasdrubal, which led the Romans to conclude a treaty with him confining his armies south of the Ebro, a strategy, Polybius suggests, intended to give them time to deal first with the Celts who were expected to invade at any moment, before coping with Hasdrubal.[137] It is not clear from the general prospectus to the history whether Polybius gave a narrative account of the Northern Wars of the early second century.[138] Certainly no traces remain of a substantial account.[139] There was a further section on the geography of the north in Book 34

[133] Walbank 1948: 172–9; Pédech 1974.

[134] For Polybius on northern Italy, see Walbank 1948: 165 ff.; 1957–79: i. 172–84; Pédech 1964: 594; Marotta 1973; Vattuone 1987.

[135] Pol. 2. 14–35.

[136] Pol. 2. 14. 2.

[137] Pol. 2. 13. 5–7, 36. 1.

[138] Pol. 3. 2–3.

[139] The only reference in the extant fragments of the relevant books to these wars appears at 18. 11. 2, the occasion when Roman fear of invasion in 198–197 BC allowed Flamininus to continue in his command in Greece.

anticipated at 2. 16. 15, where Polybius promises that he would at an appropriate moment correct the ignorance of previous authors, Timaeus in particular. This account has survived only in fragments.[140]

Polybius' description of northern Italy in Book 2 was, then, probably the first comprehensive account of the geography, ethnography, and history of the region ever written, and he introduces it with a complex passage combining all three aspects.[141] There appear to be two organizing themes running through this dense section of Polybius' history. First there is a systematic, region-by-region description of the shape and major physical features of the area and of their respective inhabitants, thus:

2. 14:	introduction; the triangular shape of Italy and the northern plain
2. 15. 1–7:	the plentiful cheapness of the produce of the north under Roman occupation
2. 15. 8–10:	the western Alps and their present inhabitants
2. 16. 1–5:	the Apennines and their present inhabitants
2. 16. 6–7:	the River Po and delta described
2. 17. 1–12:	the former Celtic inhabitants of the river and delta area listed; the ancient history of the Po Valley outlined, Etruscan occupation followed by Celts, with an account of their way of life.

Within this geographical arrangement, there also lies an historical movement backwards in time, away from the present, thriving, civilized condition of the Po Valley. The contemporary indigenous peoples of the mountains, the Alps and Apennines, are named, and then the focus moves back down into the plain with a description of the River Po and the delta region followed by an account of its ancient history and former inhabitants, Etruscans and Celts, rounded off with a passage on the customs and livelihood of the Celts with a strong emphasis on their crude simplicity.

The excursus as a whole underscores the extraordinary size and outstanding fertility of the plain, in order to give some idea of the scale of the resources available to potential occupiers, Etruscans, Celts, and Hannibal in the past, Romans in the present. There is also an implicit contrast intended between the Etruscan and Roman

[140] Pol. 34. 10. 8–21.
[141] Pol. 2. 14–17. Walbank 1948: 165 calls it 'brilliant writing'.

periods and the intervening period of occupation by the Celts. The Celts invaded the plain because of their jealous greed for the Etruscans' landed wealth, which they took and, by implication, squandered because of their unsettled and unproductive way of living as pointedly described towards the end of the section.[142] This, in turn, is meant to be contrasted with the Romans' efficient exploitation of the land, which Polybius has already described with much enthusiasm. The Celts' presence in the north is thus introduced as a disruptive intrusion, while they, in contrast to the Romans, are deemed unworthy occupants of the land whose opportunities they had wasted. This is a summary account dealing in broad terms rather than details. The stress is on differing reactions to the historical constant of the natural fertility of the Po Valley rather than on techniques of land management or Roman colonization which, as a consequence, are not mentioned as such here, though they come up in the subsequent historical narrative.[143]

To this consideration of differing ecological reactions to the agricultural potential of the Po Valley, Polybius adds a further historical and moral perspective related to the idea, well established in ancient historiography, of the destabilizing effects of a prosperous land upon its inhabitants. Thucydides, for instance, observed that the rich plains of Greece were subject to frequent invasions because of their inherent desirability and because each successive group of occupants tends inevitably to go into decline, enfeebled by the wealthy environment, and thus rendered vulnerable to the next wave of eager invaders in a seemingly endless cycle.[144] Greek authors often commented on the decadence and effeminacy of Etruscans. Theopompus thought them a degenerate lot, while Posidonius may have attributed their decline from power to the moral consequences of their environment.[145] More particularly, Strabo perhaps followed him in attributing the Etruscans' expulsion from the north to the ruinous effects of *truphē* ('soft living').[146] A similar preconception seems also to

[142] Pol. 2. 17. 3.

[143] Pol. 2. 19. 12 on Sena Gallica; 2. 21. 7–8 on the Flaminian allotments; 3. 40. 3–5 on the foundation of Cremona and Placentia.

[144] Thuc. 1. 2. 3.

[145] Theopompus *FGH* 115f204; Posidonius *FGH* 87f119 ap. Diod. 5. 40. The attribution of this passage to Posidonius is not entirely secure. Malitz 1983: 38 accepts it, and Theiler 1982 includes it as fr. 83 in his edition of the fragments, but Edelstein and Kidd 1989 do not. See also Heurgon 1961: 46–51, 1962.

[146] Str. 5. 1. 10.

underlie Polybius' account of the Etruscans' loss of both northern and Phlegraean plains.[147] The *Keltoi* invade on a pretext but really out of envy and greed. They in turn suffer from the same problems, first descending into internecine conflict as soon as they arrive in the plain, and then fall prey themselves to attacks from Alpine tribes who envy their new-found prosperity.[148] But what of the Romans? Polybius refrains from speculating on the possible effects of such natural wealth upon them, though he suggests elsewhere that their morals had been affected by the new wealth won in their wars overseas.[149]

Polybius also attempted to define the shape of the northern plain using the techniques of Greek geography, the Eratosthenic method of applying geometric figures (*sphragides*) to describe geographical areas, and its size using Roman measurements (see Fig. 1.1).[150] In this, he was making great strides over his Greek predecessors and Roman contemporaries, but he also made some fundamental and suggestive errors. The northern plain was, according to Polybius, shaped like a triangle. The Alps, he says, form one of its sides, running west to east for 2,200 stades and stopping just short of the head of the Adriatic, one of the vertices.[151] The River Rhodanus flows east to west along the north side of the Alps from a point above the head of the Adriatic, discharging into the Sardinian Sea.[152] The meeting point of the Alps and Apennines is placed at a point above Massalia, not far from the Sardinian Sea, and forms the second vertex of the triangle.[153] The second side runs along the Apennines down to Sena Gallica on the Adriatic coast, the final vertex, for a distance of 3,600 stades, and the third stretches from that point to the head of the Adriatic for over 2,500 stades.[154] At some other point in his work Polybius gave a different figure of 178 Roman miles for this last distance, which is much

[147] Pol. 2. 17. 1–2.

[148] Pol. 2. 18. 4.

[149] Pol. 6. 57, 18. 35, 31. 25. Cf. Walbank 1972*b*: 172–3.

[150] Pédech 1964: 591; Fraser 1972: i. 531 ff. Long before Eratosthenes, however, Herodotus (4. 101) had likened the shape of Scythia to a quadrilateral: cf. Walbank 1972*b*: 118.

[151] Pol. 2. 14. 6–12; 34. 10. 17.

[152] Pol. 2. 15. 8; 3. 47. 2.

[153] Pol. 2. 14. 6–8.

[154] Pol. 2. 14. 9–12. Polybius says that the total distance around the plain comes to rather less than 10,000 stades (2. 17. 12), but the total of the 3 distances he gives comes to 8,300 stades. It is thus not clear whether he is just being imprecise or whether one or more of the numbers is textually corrupt.

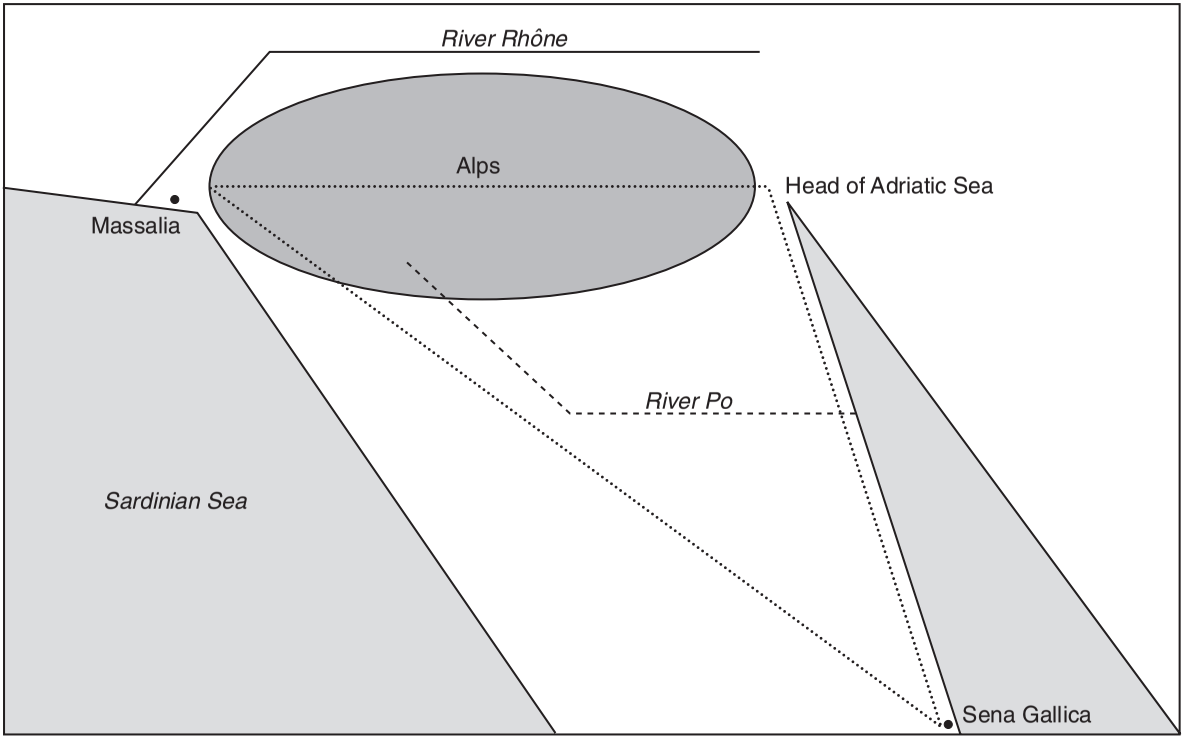


FIG 1.1 Schematic diagram of Polybius' description of Northern Italy (Pol. 2. 14. 8–12)

shorter, but both are rather inaccurate.[155] In Book 2 Sena Gallica is the reference point he uses for the southernmost part of the plain, whereas elsewhere Ariminum fulfils this role.[156]

The picture as presented is a novel combination of Greek theory and Roman practice containing interesting mistakes of conception and detail which reveal the sources of Polybius' information and the characteristic limitations of ancient geography. For example, the distance he gives for the length of the Alps, equivalent to about 250 English miles or 265 Roman miles, is a serious underestimate, as Walbank remarks.[157] It is, however, closer to the the best estimate of the length of the Via Postumia built in 148 BC, which ran more or less straight across northern Italy from Genua to Aquileia.[158] It seems plausible, then, that Polybius, or his source, assumed that the road ran parallel to the Alps and was thus of more or less the same length. Polybius does seem to have thought that the Alps ran in a straight line, and Strabo comments on his ignorance of the curve in the Alpine chain. If the Via Postumia gave Polybius a distorted idea of the geography and length of the Alpine side of his triangle, the long, straight Via Aemilia will have had a definite impact upon his conception of the triangular shape of the Cisalpine region, as he must have journeyed along it on his Alpine expedition. The new roads of the north were central to the Roman restructuring of the landscape.[159] They were also central to geographical conceptions of the size and shape of the north. The

[155] Str. 6. 3. 10 = Pol. 34. 11. 8; Pédech 1964: 592–4 suggests that these two distances represent two stages in Polybius' geographical knowledge which he did not manage to integrate successfully; cf. Walbank 1957–79: iii. 618–19. Polybius was, according to Strabo, unusual in making one Roman mile equivalent to 8⅓ stades, rather than the normal conversion of 1:8 (Str. 7. 7. 4). If so, his 178 miles would work out at 1,483 stades, quite different from the 2,500 stades mentioned in Book 2, and both are quite inaccurate when compared to the length of the future Via Popilia of 132 BC, including the stretch from Sena to Ariminum, which Radke 1973: 1587–8 works out as 259 Roman miles. This by Polybius' method of reckoning is equivalent to 2,160 stades. Radke 1964: 304 f., suggests that Polybius' distance in Book 2 is accurate, but that it in fact represents the distance from Sena to Aquileia via Bononia. He argues that this route should be identified with a road, called Aemilia, mentioned in a confused passage of Strabo 5. 1. 11. This idea has been refuted soundly by Wiseman 1970: 122 ff., who argues instead that the road from Bononia to Aquileia was in fact the elusive Via Annia built in 153 BC; see also Wiseman 1964, 1969. Oebel 1993: 133–8 proposes replacing 'Sena' with 'Felsina' in the text.

[156] Pol. 3. 61. 11, 86. 2.

[157] Walbank 1957–79: i. 175.

[158] Radke 1973: 1587–8 estimates its length at 321 Roman miles.

[159] Purcell 1990*b*.

Via Aemilia ran parallel to the Apennines, which do run more or less in a straight line. What more natural than to imagine that the Postumia stood in the same relationship to the Alps which, as it happens, do not?

Parallelisms and correspondences in physical and human geography had been sought and created by Greek geographers and other writers since the beginning of the tradition: Herodotus thought that the Nile and the Istros ran in parallel with one another through their respective continents. There was a long-running debate about the existence of the Antipodes on the other side of the globe, while Strabo imagined the Rhine and the Pyrenees running in parallel.[160] Polybius was clearly no exception to this general tendency, as it is apparent that he thought that the Po, the Alps, and the Rhône all ran in parallel with one another, and were all more or less the same length. The common expectation on the part of ancient geographers that the geography of the earth showed evidence of balance and order in its configuration suggested to Polybius in this case that one great river flowing eastwards along the length of the Alps to the south implied another one flowing in parallel to the west along their northern flank.

However, this picture also seemed to correspond to Polybius' personal observations on his journey through the landscape and over the Alps in the steps of Hannibal.[161] He must have travelled northwards along the Via Aemilia which will have taken him northwest from Ariminum to Placentia. From there, if he really did follow Hannibal's route over the Alps, he will have crossed the Po at Placentia, travelling onwards in a northwesterly direction, and taken one of the Alpine passes through the mountains bringing him down to the Isère, and finally to the Rhône. The sequence of natural features on this itinerary which Polybius met was thus as follows: plain–River Po–plain–Alps–Isère/Rhône. On the basis of his account of the geography of the north, Polybius must have imagined that he was always moving in the same direction throughout his itinerary, which is why, when he reached the Rhône, he assumed that it ran in parallel with the Po, flowing east

[160] Hdt. 2. 34. 2 on the Danube and the Nile; 4. 36. 1 on the Hypernotians, whose existence in the southern hemisphere was required by the myth of the Hyperboreans; Kauffmann 1894 on the Antipodes, a term probably first used by Plato (cf. *Tim*. 63a); Str. 2. 5. 28 for the parallelism between the Pyrenees and the Rhine.

[161] Pol. 3. 48. 12.

to west on the other side of the Alps. Polybius thought he was moving northwards and was unaware that he had changed direction from northwest to due west in crossing the Alps and consequently rotated the direction of the Rhône round by 90 degrees. This at first sight rather bizarre error is entirely characteristic of ancient geography and cartography, which tended to think in straight lines and linear sequences of points along an itinerary or a coastline.[162] This, coupled with a practically limited capacity to keep track of the changing orientation of an irregular coastline, mountain range or river, produced misconceptions such as those evident in Polybius' projection of his limited personal experience onto the geography of northern Italy as a whole.

In conclusion, Polybius' interest in the geography of northern Italy was partly that of a Greek specialist engaging in controversial debates with his literary predecessors on theoretical points of observation and interpretation. But he was also interested in the interaction of history and geography in the region. He created out of his source material and personal experience a framework in which ethnography and geography were moulded into a compact and unified description for his readers to bear in mind during the subsequent narrative of the events of Hannibalic War that took place there. The geographical picture he drew was limited by the extent of his personal experience and by the practical and conceptual deficiencies of ancient science. But it was in all probability the most comprehensive description that had been composed up to that time.

CONCLUSION

Greeks and Romans were extremely interested in northern Italy in the second century BC, in its peoples and places. Greeks had located in the region various myths and fables associated with the legendary River Eridanus, which they identified with the Po, while Romans called it Gallia, and regarded its former inhabitants with distaste and its landscape as an opportunity for colonial exploitation and development. In writing about the area and reacting to their respective traditions, Cato and Polybius composed very different kinds of accounts. Polybius' version was reflective and theoretical in character, written from personal experience but, as

[162] Cf. Janni 1984; Nicolet 1988: 89 ff.; Purcell 1990*a*.

the work of a Greek outsider, also at one stage removed from the history and contemporary reality of the north. His geography was on the grand scale and encompassed the whole earth, of which northern Italy was but one constituent part. Cato, by contrast, as a prominent member of the community which was actually measuring out the length and breadth of the landscape mile by mile on the ground, did not intend to construct a globe out of the information available to him. His perspective was more immediate, that of the conqueror who, having won the victory, was listing the spoils and surveying the contents of the newly won territory. His account seems to have been both detailed and systematic while Polybius' is, by contrast, a synoptic overview. Both recognized the importance of the conquest of the north, but their personal and historical relationships to it were inevitably different. Between them, however, they give a good idea of what was known and what was being written about the region in the middle of the second century BC, a period of history from which little is recorded in the way of wars and campaigns conducted by Romans in the north, but during which massive changes were working themselves out in the landscape and its different ethnic communities.

2

Characterizing the Gauls

INTRODUCTION

Greek science and Roman imperialism have emerged as significant themes for the understanding of the key texts on the geography of northern Italy from the period of the conquest and settlement in the second century BC contained in Polybius and Cato's *Origines*. But what of the peoples who lived there? How were they imagined, and in what terms were they approached? Here too, differences between Roman and Greek ideas are apparent. What is common to both Cato and Polybius is that their remarks are not to be taken simply as representations of past realities, as they are often understood to be by historians and archaeologists. If their words are to be used as evidence for how things really were, then some idea is needed of the conceptual tools with which these authors were working, and of their reasons for writing about foreign peoples in the first place.

The diversity apparent within human culture is, for any interested observer of the world, a problem in need of explanation, with reference either to a particular cause or to a general theory, or a combination of both. In antiquity, two solutions were offered in response, different from each other in content and in kind: heredity and environment. Heredity explained for many not only questions of identity, why Greeks were Greeks and not Persians, but also questions of culture, why Greeks and Persians were different, because the second was simply referred back to the first. As an idea, it was expressed in terms of attributed stories, myths, of origin and ancestry and was thus inherently particular in its field of application. Stories of this kind were collected systematically and published by antiquarians, but the significance of heredity in explaining cultural diversity tended not to be formulated as a general theory, unlike its main rival explanation, the argument from the environment.

Environmental explanations of cultural variety had been current at least since Herodotus. Greek historians had long been struck by the ways in which the character of certain peoples seemed to suit their natural surroundings, and intrigued by the possibility that particular traits might be altered by a change of environment. Herodotus ends his work with the story of Cyrus' decision not to move his people down into the rich lands of Asia after his conquest of the Medes, 'because soft lands tend to produce soft men . . . So they chose to rule, living in a harsh land, rather than become slaves, cultivating the plain.'[1] This basic theme was taken up by later authors and elaborated into a theory of history and cultural difference. The first extant attempt at an abstract discussion of the relationship of humankind to the natural world occurs in the fifth-century BC Hippocratic treatise, *Airs*, *Waters*, *Places*, in which the gentle climate of Ionia is adduced to explain the soft character of the inhabitants.[2] In the fourth century, Aristotle began to construct a more complex system to explain physical and behavioural differences based on climatic conditions, hot and cold, warm and dry, making occasional references to the Celts in the process.[3]

The Hellenistic period saw the increasing sophistication of ethnography through detailed observation and theoretical systematization, both as a specific discipline and as part of the general intellectual armoury of the historian.[4] This development was given added impetus by the historians of Alexander. His campaigns at the end of the earth in India opened up new worlds and cultures which needed to be explained with reference to current ideas about human beings in the natural world. Medical, climatological, and geographical theories were brought to bear on the problem of accounting for the differences apparent in newly encountered peoples and cultures. Agatharchides of Alexandria, a polymath of the late second century BC, may stand as an exemplar of the intellectual development of the period.[5] Agatharchides investigated the environmental influences on human cultures, and

[1] Hdt. 9. 122. 4

[2] Hippoc. *Aër.* 12.

[3] Arist. *Pol.* $1269^{b}25$–7, *Eth. Nic.* $1115^{b}25$, *Eth. Eud.* $1229^{b}28$ on the *Keltoi*. On their chilly homeland, see Chapter 1 n. 15, above.

[4] Dihle 1961.

[5] Cf. Dihle 1961: 213 ff.; Fraser 1972: i. 1, 515–17, 539–50; Pédech 1976: 130 who characterizes Agatharchides' conception of the relationship between human culture and the natural environment as 'l'adaptation de l'homme au milieu pour subsister'.

explained how the customs and behaviour of different peoples were formed in response to, and in interaction with, their natural surroundings. In contrast, Agatharchides' near contemporary, Posidonius, had a somewhat different approach. He envisaged a much more radical determination of ethnic and cultural characteristics by environmental and geographical factors. In his view, these factors did not merely shape cultures in their diversity, but conditioned the very physical nature of humanity, which, in turn, determined the features of individual cultures. Posidonius seems to have viewed human culture as an immutable product of its immediate environment, an idea which Strabo, who took a position similar to Agatharchides, criticized in some detail.[6]

The second century BC was an age of intellectual debate in the field of ethnography, but to what extent did its results affect the ethnography of northern Italy as represented in Cato and Polybius?

1: CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: THEORIES OF ENVIRONMENT AND DESCENT

Polybius seems not to have been quite as interested in the science of ethnography as he was in geography. There are only two passages which suggest that he was aware of the environmental explanation.[7] The first describes the coarsening effects which the rough environment of Arcadia had upon its inhabitants and their attempts to alleviate them through the institution of a programme of musical education. Polybius observes here that the physical and climatic environment is the most important determinant of differences between characters, features, skin-colour, and customs; yet, however unequivocal, it is an isolated remark.[8] Elsewhere he comments upon the civilizing influence of a fertile environment upon the Iberian tribe of the Turdetani and also upon their neighbours, the Celtici; though he was uncertain whether their civility was to be explained geographically or as a consequence of ethnic affinities with the Turdetani.[9]

Polybius, then, was largely non-commital on the environmental

[6] Str. 2. 3. 7; Dihle 1961: 213–18, 226–30; Malitz 1983: 81 ff. for discussion of Posidonius' ideas.

[7] See Walbank 1957–79: i. 465–6; Pédech 1964: 580.

[8] Pol. 4. 21. 1–9.

[9] Pol. 34. 9. 3 ap. Str. 3. 2. 15.

theory of cultural difference. He paid lip-service to it on occasion, but there is no indication that it played any role in his ideas about the history of the Po Valley. He was, as argued in the previous chapter, interested in describing how different groups reacted to the natural fertility of the region, drawing a contrast between the Romans and Celts in this regard and, probably, explaining the Etruscans' decline and eventual expulsion with reference to wealth-induced decadence. But this does not amount to a thoroughgoing environmental determinism. Other authors do suggest that those Celts who had migrated from the hard conditions of their homelands southwards towards gentler climes and a more prosperous natural environment had gone into moral and physical decline as a direct result. According to Orosius, the Cimbri and Teutones were enfeebled both by the climate and by the various temptations of civilization, food, wine, and baths (warm ones, presumably); while, in his speech to the troops before the Battle of Olympus in 189 BC, Livy makes Manlius Vulso argue that the Galli of Asia were no longer worthy of the name. Like a plant transplanted from its natural soil, they had inevitably taken on the characteristics of their new environment and become Gallograeci or Phrygians, losing their original fierceness to the temperate environment of Asia.[10] There is nothing resembling this botanical simile in Polybius' account and no indication that he thought that the environment of the Po Valley was a cause of weakness in the Celts who lived there. During his narrative of Hannibal's difficult march into Etruria, he does comment on the softness and aversion to physical exertion of the Celts in the army, but this is a general comment on the nature of Celts as such, not on the debilitating influence exerted upon them by their surroundings.[11]

If Polybius' understanding of differences between human groups is not primarily environmental, it is certainly not genealogical. He recounts his reasons for not writing either genealogical or ktistic history in some detail. The former sort attracts the reader who simply enjoys a good story, while the latter, including

[10] Cf. Orosius 5. 16. 14; L. 38. 17. Contrast Mithridates' speech in Justin (38. 4. 8–10), in which he compares the Galatians favourably with the Galli of Italy because of the many trials they had undergone in their journey across Europe to Asia. There was clearly some debate about just how Gallic these Asian Gauls really were.

[11] Pol. 3. 79. 4.

stories of colonies and the foundations of cities and their ties of kinship, such as were to be found in Ephorus, attracts the obsessive students of recondite information. Both are futile pursuits with nothing new to add to the record of the distant past and nothing to say about the present, in contrast to his own brand of contemporary pragmatic history, as he termed it, that dealt with fresh material consisting in the actions of peoples, cities, and kings and their explanations. His history was, he admits, austere and uniform in character, unlike the writings of those who wrote histories dealing with every different kind of material, but it was far more useful for those who wanted to learn about matters of actual importance.[12]

For Polybius, ancient genealogies and all other such stuff explained nothing about the present and only appealed either to the casual reader or the meticulous antiquarian, neither of whom understood the true, political purpose of historical inquiry. As a consequence, he pays scant attention, unlike Timaeus, to mythical conjectures on the ancestry of the Celts and the Veneti, expressly rejecting the stories written about their ancient history by his predecessors as both untrue and not suitable to the serious character of his present work.[13] In short, the ancient origins of peoples and cities were a topic of no interest to Polybius and much of what was written about them was, in his opinion, anyway pure fable. In this, as the title of Cato's history implies, he differed greatly from his Roman contemporary.

The extant fragments show that Cato's account of the north, as of the rest of Italy, consisted of a systematic account of peoples and places, including their origins, ethnic and geographical, in which foundation stories and ties of kinship between peoples and cities were a central element. Polybius characterized all this sort of material as useless for the understanding of the present, which could be gained only by looking at actions and trying to explain them with reference to the intentions of their agents. His only explanation for the attraction of origin stories is that they appeal to the unserious and the pedantic. But he has missed an important point about why stories of this kind excited such widespread interest. Polybius conceived of historical explanation in terms of direct causation, intentions, acts, and consequences, and therefore saw no relevance in stories that took place in another time and

[12] Pol. 9. 1–2; Walbank 1972*b*: 67–8. [13] Pol. 2. 16. 13–15, 17. 6.

which were probably not true anyway. He had no analytical sense for the importance of myths and stories of exactly this kind to shape intentions and orientate action. No more, of course, did Cato, for whom an abstract exposition of this sort would surely have been out of reach. Nevertheless, it is reasonable, on the evidence of the fragments, to attribute to him a consciousness of origins as a determinant of ethnic character and, hence, of subsequent history, quite apart from their intrinsic interest as events and narrative. To find out where a city or people came from was, then, an indispensible part of the picture for Cato. They had an explanatory function beyond the merely ornamental.[14]

But how did Cato determine the origins and ethnic attributions of the peoples of the north and what did they explain for him? The fragments suggest that Cato attempted to categorize according to ethnic origin all the towns and peoples of the north known to him: Novaria was founded by the Vertamocori who were Ligurians in origin; Vercellae was a town of the Libicii founded by the Salui; the Salassi and Lepontii were of the Tauriscan people; but he could not discover the origins of the Oromobii of Comum, Bergomum, or Forum Licinii.[15] The contributions of later authors give some flavour of the nature of the controversy surrounding these questions, which had already begun in Cato's time. Pliny, for instance, thought that Cato was wrong about the Ligurian origins of the Vertamocori, stating that they were a *pagus*, a sub-group, of the Vocontii, who were Gauls from over the Alps.[16] Strabo thought that the Lepontii were Rhaetian, while he calls the Taurini, a variant form of Cato's Taurisci, Ligurian; Livy calls the Taurini *semigalli* ('half-Gauls') while Polybius seems to number the Taurisci/Taurini among the Celts.[17] Moreover, in his

[14] Generally on ancient tales of origin, see Bickerman 1952.

[15] 2. 7 Chassignet = 37 Peter ap. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 134; 2. 10 Chassignet = 40 Peter ap. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 124. See Gianoncelli 1971 on the Oromobii in ancient and later antiquarianism. According to Pliny (*N.H.* 3. 124), Alexander Polyhistor, the first-century BC polymath, argued that they were Greek in both name and origin.

[16] Cato *Orig.* 2. 10 Chassignet = 40 Peter ap. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 124: 'Vercellae Libiciorum ex Saluis ortae, Novaria ex Vertamocoris, Vocontiorum hodieque pago, non, ut Cato existimat Ligurum . . .' ('Vercellae of the Libicii was founded by the Salui, and Novaria by the Vertamocori who are today a tribe of the Vocontii not, as Cato thought, of the Ligurians.')

[17] Str. 4. 6. 8 on the Lepontii, 4. 6. 6 on the Taurini: cf. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 123; L. 21. 38. 5; Pol. 2. 15. 8, 28. 4, 30. 6 on the Taurisci who are identical with the Taurini who oppose Hannibal on his entry into Italy: Pol. 3. 60. 8–11. See Walbank 1957–79: i. 177.

discussion of the three Alpine passes known to him, Polybius also distinguished between Ligurians, Taurini, and Salassi, suggesting that he did not think that the Taurini or Salassi were Ligurians.[18]

There were, it seems, as many different ethnic arrangements of the peoples of the north as there were authors who wrote about them. They disgreed with one another on points of detail but all were at one in accepting that in principle it was possible, indeed essential, to make attributions of this kind based on the available evidence, in order to provide a full account of the history of the region, both ancient and recent, and of its peoples. What kind of evidence and arguments were used? None of the ascribed origins mentioned above is explained at any length by its author, but some idea of the working methods of the Roman or Greek observer trying to make sense of unfamiliar peoples in newly conquered regions of the world can be recovered from a passage of Tacitus' *Agricola* on the origins of the Britons.[19]

Tacitus begins by saying that it is not clear whether the first inhabitants of Britain were indigenous or invaders, and that this is usually the case with barbarians. The Britons show a range of physical characteristics, and these, he says, give rise to different hypotheses about their origins: for instance, the Caledonii look like the Germans, while the Silures resemble Iberians from Spain which is situated opposite them, suggesting that they might be descended from immigrant populations. But, he observes, the Britons' closest neighbours are the Galli and the two groups are also alike, whether because of the enduring influence of a common origin or because their comparable geographical positions endowed them with similar physical features. In conclusion, Tacitus thinks it plausible that it was the Gauls who originally occupied the adjacent island, for one can observe similarities between the religious practices and beliefs of Gauls and Britons, in their languages and in their behaviour, particularly with regard to the characteristic combination of fearlessness and inconstancy in battle, which they both share.

Tacitus here adduces a range of empirical evidence both to support his case and to illustrate other possibilities. Physical appearance is one salient characteristic for establishing ethnic origins but cannot be decisive, because apparent similarities can be derived from a like climate and geographical position as well as

[18] Pol. 34. 10. 18. [19] Tac. *Agr.* 11.

common origins. The best arguments and the most persuasive evidence are drawn from the fields of language, religion, and ethos, for these, in Tacitus' opinion, are inherited features and not affected by climate or environment. Different authors had different views on the relationship between environment and heredity, as discussed above, but it is clear by now that the use of observed affinities in culture and behaviour between different groups to argue for an original ethnic affinity was common practice among ancient ethnographic writers; and, so far as we can tell from the few relevant fragments, Cato seems to have employed similar methods.[20] He wrote about local customs including the curious habit among the Libui of cutting ice for water with an axe as they would a tree for wood;[21] and he certainly had a clear sense of the different habitual characters of the Gauls, loquacious and belligerent, and the Ligurians, untruthful and ignorant.[22] This is the kind of evidence Cato would have used and cited in his work to decide where peoples and cities came from, in addition to available oral testimony when appropriate and if deemed credible. Ancient ethnography was not entirely alien to the idea of fieldwork but the historian was under no obligation to believe the testimony of the people concerned about their origins. Learned conjecture based on comparative evidence of the kind used by Tacitus in the case of the Britons was, as often as not, preferred.[23]

Such, then, were Cato's methods of establishing the origins of the peoples of the north. But why was it so important to find out? What was a people's origin thought to say about it? Galli, Ligures, and Veneti were, it seems, the three main ethnic groups Cato identified in the north, into which he distributed the various towns and peoples he knew of. Fortunately, the fragments reveal the results of his research into each of them, and the different characteristics of their imputed origins suggest why determining the right answer was a matter of such interest and controversy among historians and perhaps others. Cato regarded the Gauls as invaders—he seems to have told the story of their invasion and

[20] Material of this kind could also be used to establish differences: cf. Pol. 2.17.5 arguing that the Veneti were not *Keltoi* because they differed from their neighbours the Cenomani (who were), in language, dress, and customs.

[21] 2. 6 Chassignet = 33 Peter.

[22] 2. 3 = 34 Peter on the twin passions of *Gallia*: *rem militarem et argute loqui*. On which see further below.

[23] Bickerman 1952: 71.

narrated the tale of the sack;[24] the Ligurians, when asked, claimed they did not know, or would not let on, so he called them illiterate liars;[25] the Veneti, on the other hand, were of Trojan stock.[26]

The reported silence of the Ligurians implies that someone had inquired of them about their origins. When interrogated, they apparently said they had no memory of their origins, a response which Cato did not believe. The relevant fragment introducing this assertion of ignorance begins 'sed ipsi . . .' ('but they themselves'), suggesting a contrast with an alternative hypothesis that Cato had just recounted in a section of the work not preserved in the fragments. The wording of the fragment thus suggests that Cato gave an origin story for the Ligurians, and then conceded that they themselves were not its authors. This procedure was not uncommon practice in ancient ethnography. Identities and origins were freely imposed by ancient writers upon the barbarian objects of their research and these external categories were sometimes adopted by their recipients.[27] Many Greek authors, for instance, identified the Veneti as Trojan because of the similarity between their name and Homer's *Enetoi*; for good measure, they also sent the Trojan hero Antenor there as oecist.[28] Polybius, on the other hand, thought they were autochthonous and had no time for any of the stories told about them by Greeks.[29] It is not necessarily obvious which of these was the version believed by the Veneti themselves. Various Italian peoples had by this stage come to adopt, or had themselves developed, Greek origin stories, the Romans included, of course.[30] It is quite possible that by the second century BC the Veneti themselves derived their origins

[24] *Orig*. 2. 5 Chassignet = 36 Peter; Peter 1914: 65. Cf. 2. 12 Chassignet = 42 Peter on the origins of the Cenomani among the Volcae near Massilia; Kierdorf 1980: 213 ff. argues that the sack was narrated in Book 2 and that it prompted a general excursus on the north, the remains of which are visible in the fragments.

[25] *Orig*. 2. 1 Chassignet = 31 Peter; 2. 2 Chassignet = 32 Peter; Della Corte 1933; Chassignet 1986: 22 n. 1.

[26] 2. 12 Chassignet = 42 Peter.

[27] Bickerman 1952: 73–4; Cornell 1972: 359–65 on the adoption of Greek-style origins by non-Greek peoples in Italy and elsewhere; Ardener 1989: 69–71 for the principle that externally imposed, 'hollow' categories can, in certain circumstances, be adopted and thus become real identities appropriated by ethnic groups.

[28] Chassignet 1986: 72, n. 1. The legend had a revival in the second wave of enthusiasm for Trojan origin stories in the Middle Ages with the discovery of Antenor's bones in 1283 by the Paduan Lovato Lovati. The tomb built to contain them still survives in Padua: see Schnapp 1996: 105.

[29] Pol. 2. 17. 5–6.

[30] Dench 1995: 61–3 for the same development in central and southern Italy.

from Troy, or that they had competing myths of origin involving autochthony and migration. Either way, Cato's decision to choose the Trojan story would not necessarily have depended on the opinions of the Veneti themselves. Other, subjective factors would have been of equal significance in formulating Cato's choice. For categorizing the Veneti as Trojan in origin included them in a group of peoples to which the Romans themselves belonged. Whether there was an active feeling of consanguinity on the part of many Romans towards the Veneti is perhaps an open question, but they had been allies at least since the Northern Wars of the 220s BC.[31] Greek stories about Antenor may thus have seemed especially appropriate to Romans in the light of recent events, implying an element of kinship not shared with other groups in the region, with whom relations were, accordingly, not expected to be so cordial. Origin stories could potentially elucidate contemporary relations between different groups as well as ancient history. This was one of the reasons why they were regarded as so interesting and important.

The Veneti were unproblematic for Cato. He knew they came from Troy and, quite possibly, they themselves thought so too. The Ligurians were, by contrast, something of a mystery which he resolved with allegations of mendacity and benighted ignorance. The Galli, on the other hand, had a clear place in his story as outsiders and invaders. Many of the peoples of Italy were, acording to the origins attributed to them by Cato and others, incomers: autochthony was not the sole touchstone of belonging. But the immigrant status of the Gauls had a different meaning for Romans in the second century BC from that, say, of the Veneti, a difference which was expressed in the myth of origin ascribed to them at that time. Cato followed the tradition that attributed their intrusion to the agency of Arruns of Clusium who, enticing them over the Alps with promises of booty and easy living, invited them to help him in his struggles with his ward, who had seduced his wife and shamed her in public, the detail to which the relevant fragment of the *Origines* refers.[32] This is an origin story with a very different

[31] Pol. 2. 24. 7: Veneti included in the catalogue of Rome's allied troops in 225 BC.

[32] 2. 5 Chassignet = 36 Peter: 'neque satis habuit, quod eam in occulto vitiaverat, quin eius famam prostitueret.' ('And he was not satisfied that he had shamed her in secret, but went on to disgrace her reputation.') For slightly different renderings of the whole story: L. 5. 33; Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 13. 10–11; Plut. *Cam.* 15; see further in Ch. 3.

quality and import from that of the Veneti. The rest of Cato's account is entirely lacking but its character can be tentatively suggested. The Gauls came from a different and alien world, the unknown north, not the familiar universe of Greek mythical and historical topography. By definition, they lacked a famous Greek or Trojan hero as founder to make their arrival duly respectable and divinely inspired like most other ethnic myths of colonization. The Alps were, in Cato's own words, the wall of Italy, and the Gauls had breeched it.[33] Furthermore, their arrival lacked the legitimizing hallmark of real antiquity: they were not merely incomers but relative newcomers. It is not clear from the fragment when Cato dated the invasion but, from Livy's later rejection of the idea that the Gauls who assaulted Clusium and Rome in 387 BC were the very first Gauls to enter Italy having just been lured over the Alps by Arruns, it would appear that most previous authorities, probably including Cato, had dated the invasion just before the sack.[34] If so, their arrival would have belonged not to the age of the heroes when most of the cities and peoples of Italy had been founded, but to the more recent, historical past. Moreover they came not to found and build but to destroy and uproot the Etruscan cities of the north, and Rome itself.

The significance of the origin story attributed to the Gauls, then, was that it marked them out among the peoples of Italy as wholly lacking in affinities with their neighbours, because their origins were so different. This made them very different from, say, the Veneti, and certainly from the Romans, both of whom could claim an ancient origin, from the right quarter and the right time, and relations of kinship with other groups. They fitted in; the Gauls did not. This was a historical question with profound contemporary resonances.

The discovery of origins and ethnic categorization were, in this regard, vital issues of far wider interest and meaning than the mere embellishment of historical narrative with quaint detail. It was thus extremely important to know whether the various peoples of the north, whose ethnic identity was uncertain, were or were not Galli, as the answer to this question affected the ways in which they were judged by outside observers. And, because the observers in this case were Romans who also had vital imperial interests in the area, it perhaps affected the ways in which they were treated by

[33] *Orig.* 4. 10 Chassignet = 85 Peter. [34] L. 5. 33. 4–5.

those exercising power over them. We shall return to this point in the final chapter.

To conclude, Cato's research into the ethnography of the north was conducted in the context of the Roman conquest and settlement of the area. His work was composed within the framework of the same attitudes and interests that Romans took with them on campaign. His ethnography was applied and detailed, reflecting the depth of knowledge which had been acquired about peoples who were not distant or exotic objects of inquiry, but subjects, neighbours, and possible future opponents in war. This, and the fact that Cato explained ethnic differences primarily in genealogical terms, distinguishes his approach from that of Polybius who was inevitably a more detached commentator and much less convinced of the causal importance or narrative interest of ethnic origins. The significance of this obvious contrast in views and approaches is that it permits a clearer sense of the specifically Roman view of the peoples and history of the north. Ethnic diversity in the present was explained in terms of ethnic origins in distant antiquity, which, in turn, expressed the nature of the relationship in which the various groups under consideration stood to the Roman viewer. Greeks also thought and wrote in these terms about the world around them, and indeed Polybius was rather exceptional in the extent to which he repudiated the importance of ethnic origins both as historical material and as a means of explaining a people's character, something which other Greek authors did frequently, particularly with regard to Italian myths of Spartan ancestry.[35] But Polybius and Cato were definitely both interested in forming moral assessments of the subjects of their narratives. Origin stories meant a lot to Cato, less to Polybius. But how else did they characterize the Gauls, are there any obvious differences between them and, if so, why?

2: GALLI, *KELTOI*, AND BARBARIANS

Cato encapsulated the dominant preoccupations and ethos of the Gauls in a single sentence: 'pleraque Gallia duas res industriosissime persequitur, rem militarem et argute loqui'. (Most of Gallia pursues two things with the utmost vigour, the art of warfare and

[35] Cf. Dench 1995: 57–8, 86–7, 184 on the Spartan origins and moral character attributed to various peoples in central and southern Italy.

speaking eloquently)[36] When compared with Polybius' longer description of Celtic society and character at 2. 17, it is apparent that Cato formed a rather different and, possibly, more favourable estimation of the ethical capacities of the Gauls than his Greek contemporary. Both mention the practice of warfare as a prominent feature of their way of life.[37] But the second of Cato's passions, *argute loqui*, is more interesting. These words are variously translated, but its general meaning is clear enough, that the Gauls practised eloquence of some sort. Cato may have drawn an implicit contrast between the verbal skills of the Gauls and the ignorant mendacity characteristic of the Ligurians. Later authors also mentioned the interest shown by Gauls in oratory and their peculiar style of speaking, and it seems to have become something of a commonplace.[38] Cato's Gauls also seem to possess the admirable, and very Roman, quality of *industria* to the highest degree, which might be construed as a compliment.

Polybius, by contrast, accentuates the negative throughout his short account of Celtic culture in Italy.[39] He says that the Celts spent their time on nothing else but war and agriculture, and adduces this as the reason for their primitive way of life which is stressed throughout, both with regard to its underdeveloped material culture and its lack of mental sophistication. They lived in unwalled villages, he writes, and were entirely lacking in all the other appurtenances of settled culture, while their nomadic habits and unstable social stucture, in which the most powerful were those with the most dependants, tended to engender internecine strife. The picture drawn by Polybius in this section is internally coherent but, importantly, at variance with the evidence of his subsequent narrative of the Romans' wars in northern Italy, where a number of towns belonging to various Celtic peoples are mentioned as playing a significant role in the course of the campaigns.[40] In his sketch of Celtic life in northern Italy, Polybius

[36] Cato *Orig*. 2. 3 Chassignet = 34 Peter.

[37] Cf. Pol. 2. 17. 10.

[38] Cf. Str. 4. 1. 5, 4. 2–3; Diod. 5. 31. 1; Mela 3. 18. For the meaning of *argute loqui* and discussion of parallel passages, see Dottin 1909; Pichon 1911; Heurgon 1974: 235 n. 35; Fo 1979: 22; Chassignet 1986: 68.

[39] Pol. 2. 17. 9–12. Cf., by contrast, Urban 1991: 137 who emphasizes the factual nature of Polybius' account and his avoidance in this section of the use of the word *barbaros*.

[40] Mediolanum 2. 34. 10–15; Acerrae 2. 34. 4, 10, 12; Clastidium 2. 34. 5; the *polis* of the Taurini, sacked by Hannibal 3. 60. 9; see also Peyre 1979: 59–62.

seems to be particularly concerned to emphasize its rude simplicity and to eliminate towns from the physical and moral landscape of the north. Their absence from this passage in particular, where primitive material culture is introduced as a backdrop to primitive behaviour which will be exemplified in the ensuing war narrative, is especially pointed.

Cato, unlike Polybius, clearly went into some detail about the pre-Roman settlements of northern Italy, mentioning several of them: the thirty-four Euganean settlements, the towns of the Oromobii, and Parra, the ill-fated predecessor of Bergomum. He knows their names, their ethnic origins, and their histories. Cato was interested in them, and duly recorded them in the course of his survey of the north. Polybius knew they were there, but could not see them, or did not want them, in his programmatic passage of description at 2. 17. Cato's Galli, then, come across from the, admittedly rather few, fragments as rather less barbaric than Polybius' *Keltoi*. They have towns, they have a certain energy about them, they speak well. The idea that Cato had a less consistently negative image of the Galli than Polybius is perhaps at odds with the reconstruction and interpretation of his origin story proposed above, where, it was suggested, Cato's emphasis was on the moral exclusion of the Gauls from the world of Italy. But an eclectic approach to the Greek rhetoric of barbarian description is perhaps not unsurprising in a Roman author of Cato's date. Romans loathed and feared Gauls, but they may not at this stage have necessarily conceived of them in wholly Greek terms as barbarians with all the cultural and quasi-ethnographic stereotyping that this frequently involved, and which is evident in Polybius' passage on the Celts at 2. 17. In searching for the essential wandering barbarian of Greek ethnographic tradition, Polybius has introduced an important inconcinnity with his own account elsewhere, which gives it away as a piece of idealizing prose masquerading as accurate description.

Are there any other features of Polybius' account of the Celts in his work that might elucidate his views and explain why he was given, in this instance at least, to a generalization that was not merely wrong but that disagreed with other statements of his own? What was he getting at in unreasonably portraying the Celts in this way? One answer may be that he was using this passage of description not merely to convey factual information about them, but as

an explanation of the often rather bizarre behaviour which they display in the subsequent narrative, not merely of the Celtic Wars, but also of the Hannibalic War where they also take a major part. In his introduction to the Celtic excursus at 2. 14. 2, he says that it will be useful to give an account of what men and what country Hannibal relied upon in his attack on the Romans. Explaining the character of the Celts thus forms an important ingredient in Polybius' general explanation of the course and outcome of the Roman conquest of the north and the defeat of Hannibal. But what principles did Polybius adopt in explaining the character of a group, of a whole people? Other authors chose environment or heredity as a starting-point, both of which Polybius eschewed, as argued above. So what did he put in their stead?

Polybius was an intellectual, or so he liked to think, and a practical man. What he most admired in others, and hence exalted as the best criterion for judging the character and explaining the behaviour of both individuals and groups, was intelligence and rationality. He had a particular interest in psychological states of mind, both individual and collective, and their role in history, and employed an extensive technical vocabulary to expound his thoughts.[41] It is apparent that he applied the same rationality test to the *Keltoi* and found them sorely wanting, as exemplified by his frequent use of the unusual word *athesia* to describe the character and actions of the Celts. It demonstrates clearly how his general, historical interest in states of mind, mentalities, and mental capacities led him to have a definite, unfavourable view of Celtic intellectual capabilities, and therefore of their culture in general.

Pédech and Walbank have both remarked that Polybius uses the rare word *athesia* of the Celts on several occasions in his work.[42] Related to the verb *atheteō*, meaning literally 'to make without place or position' and hence 'to set aside' a promise or treaty, it refers to the moral quality that gives rise to such behaviour, and its connotations are distinctly pejorative. It is a word with an unusual history, occurring seventeen times in Polybius alone, but only a handful of times elsewhere, and only in Hellenistic and later Greek.[43] Its meaning is adequately rendered by such English

[41] Cf. Pédech 1964: 208–29, 248–9; de Foucault 1972: 213 ff., 325 ff.; Mioni 1949: 94 ff.

[42] Walbank 1957–79: i. 208; Pédech 1970: 70 n. 1; with Roveri 1964: 119 ff. on barbarian behaviour in Polybius.

[43] Diod. 18. 32. 4; 31. 45. 1; LXX *Dan.* 9:7; *Jer.* 20:7; *1 Macc.* 16:17; *2 Macc.*

concepts as perfidy, faithlessness, and treachery, all of which seem to be important qualities in his estimation of the ethical character of the Celts and of the reasons for their eventual lack of success against the Romans.[44] Hannibal had to guard against the *athesia* of his Celtic allies, so as to use them to best effect before they lost enthusiasm for the war. In turn, Scipio hoped in 218 BC to turn their *athesia* against Hannibal by delaying battle in order to tempt them into their natural habits of fickleness over a winter of waiting.[45] Hannibal had to disguise himself to protect his life from Celtic assassination attempts prompted by their *athesia*, while the Romans too sensibly guarded against it in 223 BC, and declined to allow their allies, the Cenomani, to fight with them in an important battle against the Insubres; and the Galatians of Asia Minor were regarded as untrustworthy allies by Eumenes of Pergamum because of their *athesia*.[46]

Athesia in Polybius makes Celts dangerous to the unwary and the incautious, but renders them vulnerable or harmless to the skilful opponent who acts in the light of reason and forethought. This is the basis of Polybius' harsh criticism of the Epirotes of Phoenice who admitted a Celtic garrison into their city, which then betrayed them to the Illyrians in 230 BC. He convicts them of foolishness for admitting such a strong force, in particular one made up of Celts, and moreover of Celts who already had a dreadful reputation, having betrayed both Romans and Carthaginians in the Sicilian War. All men are vulnerable to fortune, he concedes, but the Epirotes displayed culpable carelessness in not taking the ethical character of Celts into account.[47] *Athesia* is attributed, whether by Polybius himself or by a speaker in his text, to a number of other groups and individuals, including Philip V, the Aetolians, and the Carthaginians.[48] What they all have in common is that, like the Celts, they all indulge in senseless warfare, mostly

15:10. The verbal form, *atheteō*, is also seemingly a particularly Polybian word (Pol. 8. 36. 5; 9. 36. 10), with several further occurrences in the Greek versions of the Old and New Testaments (*2 Regg.* 13:3; *Ev. Marc.* 6:26 *inter alia*).

[44] Cf. Kremer 1994: 39–43 on *perfidia* and Celts in ancient literature; Berger 1995: esp. 521.

[45] Pol. 3. 49. 3, 70. 4.

[46] Pol. 3. 78. 2; 2. 32. 8; 24. 14. 7.

[47] Pol. 2. 5. 4–2. 7. 12.

[48] Philip V of Macedon (Pol. 9. 30. 2; 15. 23. 4; 15. 24. 6); the Aetolians (4. 29. 4; 18. 6. 7); Pharnaces of Pontus (24. 15. 2); Syphax and the Numidians (14. 1. 4); the Carthaginians (15. 1. 14); Spaniards and Celtiberians (11. 31. 1; 14. 8. 9); and the treacherous supporters of the hapless Achaeus (8. 21. 10).

against Rome, thereby involving themselves in eventual ruin and defeat. The word also appears in an inscription from the Crimea dating to the end of the second century BC, and is used in a sense similar to that which it has in Polybius.[49] It records the honours conferred upon the forces of Mithridates the Great for their victories against the Scythians under his general Diophantus, who was fighting on behalf of the Greeks of the Tauric Chersonese. The text speaks of the *emphutos* (innate) *athesia* of the Scythians in rebelling against the king, and then recounts in some detail how the war was won, contrasting, in a manner not unlike that of Polybius, the skilful efficacy of the general with the futile treachery of the Scythians. This appears to confirm the particular implications of the word in the Greek of this period, which are also evident in Polybius, that is, of treacherous, but ineffectual, behaviour characteristic of irrational barbarians.

Athesia is a quality which, for Polybius, is characteristic of a type of individual personality that frequently occurs in his history, which Pédech calls 'le personnage déraisonnable'.[50] It is also typical of various sorts of barbarians, and of Celts in particular, and also of the would-be civilized who grow to act like barbarians and associate with them, like Philip V and the Aetolians. All these individuals and groups have the common characteristic, in Polybius' estimation, of failing in the crucial areas of war and international relations, and this he explains by their generally low level of moral and intellectual capabilities, which is exemplified by their *athesia* that leads them to act senselessly and calculate disastrously. With particular reference to the Celts, we can see now how Polybius explained their history, their perpetual violence, and their constant belligerence against Greeks and Romans in terms of their collective psychology as a group almost entirely lacking in the ability to act reasonably, in contrast to the Romans, who were blessed with it in ample measure.

Returning now to the passage of description at 2. 17, the social structures there described are for Polybius the evidence for, and consequence of, this ethical lack in the Celtic character. They serve as the explanatory background to his narrative of their disastrous wars against Rome in which they were continually defeated because of essential weaknesses in their social and military organization, and, as he says, particularly because they always

[49] *IPE* 352. 15–16. [50] See Pédech 1964: 223 ff. on this type.

took their decisions in a state of *thumos*, senseless passion, rather than *logismos*, cool calculation.[51] The primitive and turbulent situation implied by his description of Celtic society also explains their bizarre behaviour on campaign: why the invasion of 348 BC collapsed in a panic; why the invasion of 299 BC descended into senseless heavy drinking after battle, causing them to destroy themselves in disputes over the booty—Polybius comments pointedly that this was a common phenomenon among Celts—and why the attempted invasion of 236 BC ended with the angry Boian warriors killing their leaders for calling in the mercenary help of the Gaesati without their knowledge, the whole group then proceeding to slaughter one another in a pitched battle.[52]

Polybius was firmly of the opinion that internal political order and sound organization were the preconditions for success in international affairs, and particularly in warfare. The example of the Romans was the clearest demonstration of what was a self-evident truth to him. Celts, in his view, lacked all semblance of social or political order, and thus they were not really capable of succeeding according to the terms and standards which Polybius applied to history. Hence he was forced to conclude that the occasional Celtic success in battle against Greeks and Romans could only have been due to the guidance of an outstanding general, such as Hannibal during the Punic War, or to the debilitating effects of irrational fear in their civilized opponents. Paralysing fear on the part of the inhabitants of northern Italy is the only explanation Polybius gives for the Celts' success in occupying the region in the first place.[53] Similarly, he criticizes the Greeks of his own day for giving in to their fear of Celts in battle on several occasions. They had, he claims, forgotten the examples of the Persian Wars and of the defeat of the Celts at Delphi, and the fundamental lesson that the application of intelligence and calculation will always overcome the sudden and short-lived invasions typical of barbarians.[54] In Polybius' view, Greeks tended to be beaten by Celts when they ceased to act like civilized men, that is with intelligence and in harmony, as they had against the Persians, and gave way to weakening emotions such as fear and panic, which confused their reason and rendered them vulnerable to defeat.

[51] Pol. 2. 35. 3.
[52] Pol. 2. 18, 19. 1–4, 21. 5–6.
[53] Pol. 2. 18. 1.
[54] Pol. 2. 35. 2–9.

This observation on the Greek failure to deal with the Celts also illustrates Polybius' broader thoughts about contemporary Greek society and mentality, particularly compared with the Romans, but also in relation to the Greeks' own glorious past. The ascription of *athesia* to Philip V and the Aetolians is indicative of the Polybian line of thought that led him to conclude that Greeks, unlike the Romans, had occasionally displayed certain characteristics more often typical of barbarians. This apparent paradox was demonstrated for Polybius in the varying degrees of success with which Greeks and Romans handled the threat posed by the Celts, the most barbarous people of all.[55] The Romans, he concluded, had found the means to deal with their own fear of the threat posed by the Celts, while the Greeks apparently had not. Hence they had succeeded in driving the Celts out of the Po Valley and back into the Alps, whereas the Greeks were still being troubled by them. It was to relate the reason for this success, he says, that he had narrated the Romans' Celtic Wars from the beginning.[56]

Polybius' view of the implications of the differing degrees of success attained by Romans and Greeks against the Celts followed from his practical-intellectual view of events and people. The intellect was, in his opinion, properly applied only when used to practical ends, which could themselves only be achieved through the exercise of rationality and intelligence.[57] The Romans embodied for him the ideal manifestation of this philosophy of action, as he demonstrates throughout the sixth book, where he also reveals that he thought Greeks in general less practical than Romans and, for that reason, not as militarily effective.[58]

Polybius, then, undertook his description of the Celts in order to explain the part they played in his history. As with the Romans, he began with their collective mentality, their customs, and institutions, set forth in the passage at 2. 17, which plays the same role with regard to the Celts as Book 6 does for the Romans. As a result of which, Celts turn out, fairly uncontroversially, to be the

[55] For Polybius' problematic attitude towards the manners and morals of his own people, cf. Dauge 1981: 515–18; Dubuisson 1985: 274 ff.

[56] Pol. 2. 35. 9–10.

[57] See Pol. 3. 4. 10–11; 12. 25. d–e for his thoughts on the necessity of practical utility in all forms of learning and intellectual pursuit.

[58] Cf. in particular Pol. 6. 42 for his comparison of Greek and Roman military camps, distinctly unfavourable to Greeks.

antithesis of Romans. But their place within the Polybian cultural scheme is not merely to stand as simple barbarian polar opposites to the world of Greek and Roman civility. They also act as an unsettling comparator against which Greeks may measure the state of their own civility and their achievements *vis-à-vis* both Romans and Celts. For the clear implication of the conclusion to the Celtic excursus in Book 2 is that the extent to which Greeks have fared less well than the Romans against the Celts is precisely the extent to which they have exhibited the characteristics of lack of forethought and susceptibility to panic and fear, which the preceding narrative has revealed as the hallmarks of Celtic, not Roman action.

So to return to the question posed earlier—why does the programmatic section of description in 2. 17 disagree with elements of the following narrative—the key to the problem lies in Polybius' tendency to account for the collective characteristics of a group in psychological and intellectual terms. His historical research and personal experience had led to his forming a very low opinion of the Celts on this score, and in seeking to encapsulate this impression in a passage of description and explanation, he was perhaps drawn to emphasize features which served this end and suppress other details which did not.

There are other inconsistencies which bear this out. Elsewhere in the work, we meet a number of individual Celts who seem possessed of a degree of intellectual capability beyond what he attributes to Celts as a whole in the passage at 2. 17. There is Autaritus, the captain of the Celtic contingent in the Mercenary War, who proved to be a very effective orator in the mercenaries' general meetings. He had learnt the Punic language after some years of service with the Carthaginians, and so was the only one of the mercenary leaders who could be understood by all the various national contingents.[59] There is Ortagion, who aspired to rule all Galatia. He had many attributes suitable to that end, Polybius concedes, being generous and brave, which he says are qualities particularly important among Celts. But Ortagion was also intelligent and even charming in conversation.[60] On his travels, Polybius also came across Ortagion's wife, the faithful Chiomara, who had been taken prisoner in the campaign of Manlius Vulso. According to Plutarch, they met at Sardis, and Polybius was struck by her

[59] Pol. 1. 80. 1–8. [60] Pol. 22. 21.

spirit and intelligence.[61] Finally there is Cavarus, the last king of the Celtic kingdom in Thrace. Polybius clearly regarded him as a most admirable character, 'by nature kingly and high-minded'. He praises his efforts in suppressing piracy in the Euxine, in helping Byzantium against the ravages of the Thracians and Bithynians, and in acting as mediator in the impending war between Rhodes and Byzantium in 220 BC that was threatening to upset the whole region. In the end, however, he was corrupted by one Sostratus of Chalcedon, and his kingdom overthrown by the Thracians.[62] This little gallery of Celtic worthies who impressed Polybius reveals how the programmatic section at 2. 17 should be read, not simply as a set piece of ethnographic description but as a passage dedicated to a particular purpose—to explain what sort of people the Celts were and why they acted as he says they did in the ensuing narrative.

Both Cato and Polybius aimed to characterize the Celts of Italy, but they did so differently and with varying emphases. Cato looked at origin stories to find out where the Galli came from and how they stood in relation to him as a Roman and to the rest of Italy. He found they were outsiders and probably thought they were rather unwelcome. But he also looked at their towns and their histories and their cultural preoccupations. So far as we can tell, he did all of this in some considerable detail, and probably to a much greater extent than Polybius who was more interested in producing an explanation of why his Celts were as they were, than giving a full account of what or who they were. This may simply reflect differing personal inclinations, but it might also be taken as an indication of how differently Romans thought about these things from Greeks in the early second century BC—that they were more interested simply in the events of the past and the realia of the present and less in questions of cultural definition or intellectual explanation.

3: WARRIORS AND WEALTH

Both Polybius and Cato comment that a preoccupation with warfare was a particular characteristic of the Celts in northern Italy. This is conceived of not merely as an innate belligerence, on which

[61] Pol. 21. 38, ap. Plut. *De Virt. Mul.* 22. [62] Pol. 4. 46, 52; 8. 22.

previous Greek writers had already commented, but as a tendency to practise and cultivate their military skills.[63] This apparent Celtic obsession with warfare must have seemed rather misdirected to the Greek or Roman observer, in that the fighting methods and the weapons which Celts chose to employ against their adversaries were, from their perspective, inadequate and irrational. The tactics and weaponry that they adopted were continually shown to be ineffective, particularly against the inventiveness and efficiency of the Romans. Roman tradition remembered how Camillus had immediately introduced new defensive armour against the slashing blows of the long Celtic swords after the disaster on the Allia, armour which afforded sufficient protection to the Roman soldier, and thus relieved him, upon due reflection on these practical advantages, from the danger of his atavistic terror of tumultuous Gaulish warfare.[64] The Celts, by contrast, were represented as unchanging in their tactics, continually vulnerable to Roman javelins and short swords, unable to respond effectively to Roman innovations and resorting desperately to senseless fury as a solution to their frustrating predicament of constant defeat.

Polybius comments in detail upon the poor quality of Celtic weaponry. Their swords were too long and were only capable of delivering a slashing blow from a distance, which made the Celtic warrior vulnerable to close-quarter combat against the stabbing blows of the Roman short sword. Their blades also had a tendency to buckle upon contact with metal armour, thus rendering them useless. Celtic shields were too small to cover their bodies, and they compounded this lack of effective defensive armour with the reckless custom of going into battle naked. As a result, the defenceless Gaesati at Telamon in 225 BC, having suffered terrible casualties from the Roman javelins, hurled themselves in frustration at the Roman lines and were cut to pieces by their enemies' swords.[65] Their appearance in battle was at first rather frightening for their Roman opponents, who were not used to the sight of massive, naked Gauls, gesticulating furiously, bedecked with curious gold ornaments and making a huge amount of noise with

[63] Pol. 2. 17. 10; Cato *Orig*. 2. 3 Chassignet = 34 Peter; cf. Plat. *Legg*. 637d; Arist. *Pol*. 1269^{b}25–7, *Eth. Nic*. 1115^{b}25, *Eth. Eud*. 1229^{b}28; Ephorus *FGH* 70f131, 132 for earlier references to Celtic belligerence.

[64] Dion. Hal. *A.R*. 14. 9. 2–6; Plut. *Cam*. 40. 3–4.

[65] Pol. 2. 30. 8; 2. 33. 5–6 on swords; 2. 30. 3 on shields; 2. 30. 4 on Telamon.

trumpet and voice.[66] But as Polybius points out in 2. 35, the Romans in the end did not forget that the practical effects of all this show were in truth negligible against good discipline and defensive armoury. We may compare the speeches given by Appian and Livy to Camillus and Manlius Vulso respectively before going into battle with Celts, where they, like Polybius, stress the noisy speciousness of the enemy's courage, and exhort their troops to trust that it will be easily overcome by a resolute defence.[67]

All these points about the Celts' tactics and armoury are of course intimately linked to the general contrast drawn by Polybius between Roman and Celtic morals and mental capabilities. In Polybius' opinion, the Greeks needed only to realize the fundamental truth about Celtic backwardness, mental and technical, which, his narrative demonstrated, the Romans had clearly grasped, and they would perceive the groundlessness of their own fears.

The Celts are described by Polybius as simple, uncomplicated creatures with two primitive enthusiasms, battle and gold. But this ethical simplicity does not imply a simple, moral rectitude in pursuit of these twin obsessions. There is no sense in which he conceived of his Celts as noble savages, not even in the individual cases of admirable Celts mentioned above—nowhere does he explicitly contrast their virtue with their barbarous ethnic origin. The implicit inconsistency either did not strike him, or he simply avoided the issue. The collective moral nature of Celts as a group, then, was devious and unreliable, as the prominence of *athesia* suggests. This was also reflected in his conception of their militaristic tendencies, and the reasons why they cultivated the arts of war.

Celtic militarism is portrayed in our textual sources, including Polybius, as predominantly aggressive and mercenary.[68] Greeks and Romans alike thought that the acquisition of wealth was the primary aim of military aggression among Celts. Polybius' comment that they practised nothing apart from warfare and farming is to be taken closely together with the next sentence, that their possessions consisted solely of gold and cattle, as the most easily

[66] Cf. Plut. *Mar*. 16–27 for a set piece description of the Cimbri and Teutones in battle.

[67] App. *Gall*. 8 for the speech of Camillus; L. 38. 17 for Manlius Vulso.

[68] See Kremer 1994: 43–5 for references to Celtic plunder-lust.

portable objects of value suitable for their nomadic way of life.[69] These two commodities are in turn presented as the most important of their possessions, and he goes on to say that power and influence among them are measured in terms of the size of one's group of followers and attendants.

In this passage, at least, Polybius argues that acquisitive militarism and its fruits, material possessions in the form of gold and cattle and bands of followers, are fundamental to Celtic society. The implied contrast here is with Greek or Roman militarism which, not unsurprisingly, was envisaged in a very different manner by Greeks and Romans. The Greek and Roman soldier was meant to fight for his city unconditionally rather than for money, as a free citizen standing with his fellow countrymen in the line, defending all he held sacred and right. He was, in essence, a defensive warrior, fighting either to protect his community or to obtain restitution for its just claims. The Celts, by contrast, were seen as aggressive in their militarism, and thus unbalanced in their attitude to war. They seemed to regard war in itself as a way of life which provided all that they wanted and needed for success, rather than as just one of the many duties that characterized the developed, civilized life which also entailed many other moral attributes and occupations. The consequence of this was that the Celtic warrior tended inevitably to be portrayed as a mercenary with all the moral deficiencies that status implied, something which by definition the citizen-soldier could never be.[70]

This is the ethical notion underlying the frequent literary references to mercenary service among Celts, which Greek historical experience appeared to confirm. The sources suggest that Greeks in Sicily and the Peloponnese had first made direct contact with *Keltoi* through the employment of small mercenary detachments in the early fourth century BC. Then, after the initial invasions of the early third century, whole peoples were invited by Hellenistic states and kings to fight for them in their wars. The attraction of mercenary service in the army of Nicomedes of Bithynia was thought to have been the reason for their first crossing over into Asia Minor in the 270s BC, and they spent the next

[69] Pol. 2. 17. 10–11.

[70] On the civility of ancient warfare, see Nicolet 1988: 89–109; Garlan 1989: 143–7; Dupont 1992: 122–35. On Greek mercenaries and Hellenistic mercenaries, Griffith 1935; Garlan 1975: 93 ff., 1989: 147 ff., esp. 171–2.

hundred years, until their defeat by the Romans, raiding and plundering the coastal cities of Asia Minor, and serving in Seleucid and Ptolemaic armies.[71] In Europe, the Celtic kingdom in Thrace extorted huge sums from Byzantium until its collapse in the late third century BC.[72] For Greeks, then, there was a close historical as well as moral association between Celtic warfare and mercenarism.

The Roman tradition was of broadly the same opinion on the matter. Like Greeks, Romans put a large ideological space between themselves and any suggestion that their armies were at all mercenary in character.[73] The long-standing historical traditions relating to the sack of Rome demonstrated what Romans thought about the military values of the Galli, that they were aggressive, treacherous, and mercenary. Polybius, probably reflecting the account of Fabius Pictor, mentions that the invasion of Italy of 225 BC was advertised to the mercenary Gaesati as an opportunity for the acquisition of booty, while the quantity of spoils taken by the Celts on the expedition was enormous.[74]

This conception made the presence of countless Gauls at the edges of the Roman world particularly disturbing for two reasons. First, concentrating on their characteristic belligerence and desire for booty, Romans tended to imagine that Gauls longed to lay violent hands on Roman wealth, as indeed tradition related they had done in 387 BC, and secondly, drawing on the perceived role of the Gauls as the mercenary people *par excellence*, Romans feared that Gauls were a constant and ready military resource for the enemies of Rome, a notion which was encouraged by the experiences of the Hannibalic War. Besides Hannibal himself, among the enemies of Rome who were said to have made common cause with the Gauls were included Dionysius I of Syracuse, the Etruscans, Philip V, and Perseus of Macedon, and Mithridates the Great. Among Romans, Catiline, Julius Caesar, and Mark Antony

[71] For an account of the history of the employment of Celtic mercenaries in the armies of the Hellenistic East, see Launey 1987: 491–534; Mitchell 1993: i. 13–26. Cf. Just. 25. 2. 8–10: 'denique neque reges orientis sine mercennario Gallorum exercitu ulla bella gesserunt, neque pulsi regno ad alios quam ad Gallos confugerunt.' ('Eventually the kings of the east neither waged any wars without a mercenary arm of Gauls, nor when driven from their kingdoms did they seek help from any other source than the Gauls.')

[72] Pol. 4. 46. 3–4.

[73] The literary references to mercenary employment by Rome in the Republic are rare: see Griffith 1935: 234–5, where they are collected.

[74] Pol. 2. 22. 2, 26. 5.

were to be similarly branded for inviting Gauls, of all people, to be their supporters and allies.[75]

The characterization of Gauls as natural mercenaries clearly affects, perhaps even distorts, their portrayal in the literary sources. For instance, when in 295 BC Etruscans, Samnites, Umbrians, and Gauls combined against Rome in a campaign that culminated at the great Battle of Sentinum, Livy makes it clear that the Gauls were unique in being paid for their participation.[76] This may be true, but it is also the sort of thing that Romans of Livy's time and before tended to say about the Gauls, and it is important to remember that they said it for a reason. In this way, the Gauls were categorized by Livy as foreign, ethnically and morally, to the ethical world of this Italian war, drawn into it only by the prospect of material gain, and not for any more honourable or civilized reason. It may well have been the case that the relationship between war and wealth among the Gauls was rather different from that which was familiar or expected among Greeks and Romans, but it will probably not have been quite as the authors describe it and certainly not for the reasons they give. This is a perhaps banal but nonetheless important point to make about the characterization of Celts in Greek and Roman historiography. But the notion of the Celt as mercenary plays an inordinately important role in modern interpretations of Celtic history and archaeology in the classical world, including northern Italy. More caution should perhaps be observed in applying an ancient stereotype to answer complex historical and archaeological questions.[77]

4: NORTHERN ITALY: DIFFERING HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

There is some, limited debate among modern commentators concerning what importance to attribute to the conquest of northern

[75] Dionysius I of Syracuse: Just. 20. 5. 4; the Etruscans: App. *Gall*. 11; Philip V and Perseus: Just. 32. 3. 5 (mentions Galli Scordisci while Livy has Bastarnae: L. 39. 35. 4; 40. 5. 10); Mithridates the Great: Just. 38. 3. 6–7, 4. 7–16 (Cimbri, Gallograeci, Sarmatae, Bastarnae, Scythians, *omnemque Orientem*); Catiline: Sall. *Cat*. 52. 24, Cic. *Cat*. 3. 22; 4. 12; Caesar: Suet. *Caes*. 80. 2; Antony: Cic. *Phil*. 5. 5–6, 37; with Kremer 1994: 127–31 for further references.

[76] L. 10. 18. 2, 21. 2.

[77] See further in Chapter 5. Cf. e.g. Gabba 1991*a* on Celtic mercenaries in northern Italy; Nash 1987: 13–22 on Celtic mercenarism and early coinage in northern Europe.

Italy within the course of Roman history as a whole.[78] But what significance did contemporaries attach to it? Polybius and Cato had differing views on this question. They may give us some clue of what people thought at the time.

Polybius looked at the phenomenon of the conquest of the North as an outsider after the event, an event of some scale and consequence as he admits, but of only limited interest for his purposes. His focus was rather on what he regarded as the really significant development in recent history, the unification of the whole world under Rome, in which northern Italy and the Celts were of marginal interest compared to Carthage and the Hellenistic monarchies. In his précis of the contents of his work at the start of Book 3, Polybius mentions that he will write about the Romans' wars against the Spanish tribes and the Celts, but he contrasts the significance of these campaigns with that of the victory over Carthage in the Second Punic War, which gave rise to the Romans' intention to conquer the whole world.[79] For Polybius, this was the decisive step forward for the Romans, and its implications were realized on the battlefields of the Greek East, not the barbarian North or West. Spain subsequently becomes important again, but only in the context of the period of general unrest and disturbance after 153 BC, while the various wars waged in northern Italy do not seem to receive further attention.[80]

We can usefully compare Polybius' summary of the Roman conquest with another perspective, that of an anonymous Jewish author of the late second century BC, surviving only in Greek, which appears to concede to the Celtic Wars a rather greater significance within the history of the Roman world conquest.[81] In the description contained in the First Book of Maccabees of Judas Maccabaeus' alliance of 161 BC with the Romans against Seleucid oppression, we read how Judas heard of the Romans' reputation as powerful and loyal friends and decided to make a treaty with them:

> It was told him also of their wars and noble acts which they had done among the Galatians, and how they had conquered them, and brought

[78] Cf. Millar 1984: 1, who stresses the importance of the Romans' persistent campaigns in northern Italy against the tendency to focus on the occasional grand offensives in the east in modern interpretations of Republican imperialism.

[79] Pol. 3. 2. 6.

[80] Pol. 3. 4. 12–5. 1.

[81] See Momigliano 1975: 103 on the dating of 1 Macc.

them under tribute, and what they had done in the country of Spain, for the winning of the mines of silver and gold which is there; and that by their policy and patience they had conquered all the place, though it were very far from them.[82]

That these Galatians (*Galatai*) were the Celts of Italy is suggested by their juxtaposition with Spain, though the Celts of Asia Minor are clearly not excluded, as the text then goes on to detail Roman victories over the Macedonians and Antiochus the Great, which were of particular interest to Judas in his own struggle against the Seleucids. But the writer of this passage was clearly impressed by the extent of the Roman conquest in the far West (and particularly by their acquisition of the mines of Spain) as well as over the more familiar Hellenistic East; and the distant Celts of the West may have gained in significance from the proximity and reputation of those of Asia Minor. That this is only a sketchy account of Roman history cannot be denied—Carthage is omitted entirely for example—but its differing viewpoint from Polybius' heavily eastern emphasis is helpful in locating his narrative as only one version among a broad range of views in antiquity on the relative importance of the different theatres of Roman conquest in East and West.

Cato, looking at things from an Italian, and more specifically Roman and senatorial perspective, also takes a rather less Hellenocentric view of the history of his people's rise to power than Polybius. He begins with Italy, and it remains at the centre of his focus. His history opened much earlier than Polybius', so far as we can see from the fragments. Whether the first three books contained a connected account of early Roman history or rather a sort of antiquarian tour round ancient Italy, Cato certainly devoted considerable space to material on early history, before moving on to the First Punic War in Book 4. Polybius, by contrast, largely excluded the history of early Rome and Italy from his story. He sees the conquest of the North as a secondary, tidying-up operation in the period covered by his work, which really begins in earnest with the Hannibalic War. It is only in relation to this great war between important cities that he becomes interested in Italian history, as it came to be inextricably bound up with the histories of the Greeks and Carthage. Early Roman antiquity is of some significance for Polybius insofar as it relates to the development of

[82] 1 Macc. 8. 2–3 (trans. Authorized Version).

the Roman constitution, though the account of the development of the Roman constitution in this period is lost from Book 6. But the history of the rest of Italy receives scanty treatment, apart from the Celtic digression itself in Book 2.[83]

Polybius seems to have devoted more space to the history of the wars against the Celts than to any other aspect of Roman history before the start of his period. Greeks were more familiar with the Celts than with any other of the peoples of Italy, so a brief narrative of the Roman campaigns against them would certainly have been of interest to Polybius' wider Greek audience. Because of the Greeks' historical familiarity with Celts, the history of Rome's wars against them could also serve to communicate the general points about the character of the Romans' historical success which Polybius wanted to convey to Greeks, in a way that an account of the Latin or Samnite Wars could not have.

Polybius explains his reasons for narrating the history of the Celtic Wars at the start of his excursus. They were not merely worth knowing about in themselves. This was certainly the case, but it was not sufficient justification for their narration, and could perhaps have been said of any field of history. It is, he claims, absolutely necessary to know about them because of the part played by the region and its Celtic inhabitants in the Hannibalic War.[84] The primary significance of the many wars which the Romans fought against the *Keltoi* was that they acted as training exercises, turning the Romans into perfect athletes in war for the really important imperial struggles to come, first against Pyrrhus and later against Hannibal.[85] Polybius concedes that the wars against the Celts were great in magnitude and duration, as great as any in history, but he does not ascribe to them any profound significance for the understanding of Roman history, or history in general.[86] Polybius was, anyway, not writing a history of Rome so much as the history of an important period of time for the civilized world as a whole, in which Rome played a crucial role in bringing the different local histories of the Mediterranean together and, in the process, came to a position of universal dominance. In his conception of historical structure, the Celts were neither wholly insignificant nor entirely central.

[83] For the history of early Rome in Polybius Book 6, Walbank 1957–79: i. 663 ff.
[84] Pol. 2. 14. 2.
[85] Pol. 1. 6. 6–7; 2. 20. 8–9.
[86] Pol. 2. 35. 2–3.

In Cato's work, by contrast, the focus was on Italy rather than the Mediterranean. He too traced the unification of various cities and peoples under Rome, but they were the peoples of Italy, not the Greek East. For Cato, early Italian and Roman history was not merely the prelude to the main event as it was for Polybius. Cato's view of what was significant in the past was inevitably quite different, because his personal relationship to that past, and his historiographical method, were different. He did not look for the first causes of important recent events or for momentous periods of change as a guiding principle of how to structure his account, like Polybius. Instead, he went back to the start of the Roman story and explained its course by narrative demonstration rather than by the selective and argued presentation of facts to prove a point. As a consequence of this difference of method, he would probably not have agreed with Polybius' interpretation of the privileged significance of his particular period of fifty years from 220 to 167 BC, marginalizing as it did the first five centuries of Roman history and warfare within Italy. Cato gave the early period and its events much more weight than Polybius, because he was interested in Roman history for its own sake, whereas Polybius' aim was rather to prove an historical thesis, that the nature of history itself had been changed by the Romans in that particular half-century.

Polybius required more definition and utility in the practice of writing history than Cato. But in the process of achieving a sharper definition, his history also underwent an editing process, and Polybius edited Cato's Italy, its history and culture, out of history. As in his approach to ethnography, Polybius' historical method was perhaps more theoretically sophisticated than Cato's, but it neglected other approaches and periodizations which a similarly sophisticated reading of the less refined prose of Cato might have suggested to him. Polybius was an eclectic historian of significant people, events, and places. The scale of the Celtic wars in northern Italy earned them twenty chapters and a brief separate description of the land and its people, but in the end they were a sideshow. Cato, by contrast, was the historian of Roman deeds at home and abroad, and of the peoples and areas which those deeds encompassed.[87] His aim was to record all of these things and

[87] Cf. the opening sentence of the *Origines*: 'si ques homines sunt, quos delectat

northern Italy, with its attendant populations of Gauls and Ligurians, seems to have taken up no small part of this survey, just as it had taken up no small amount of Roman time and energy in its conquest.

This apparent difference between the two authors reflects their personal preferences but it also allows us to say something about how differently Greeks and Romans in general may have looked at the significance of the conquest of northern Italy. What it comes down to is the rather uncontroversial point that Romans like Cato are much more likely to have been aware of the scale of the achievement involved in its conquest than Greeks like Polybius who, understandably, were more attracted to the story of the downfall of their own cities and kingdoms in the face of the advance of Roman power.

CONCLUSION

The individual cases of Polybius and Cato exemplify certain broader differences between the ways in which Romans and Greeks reacted to the conquest of northern Italy and to its Celtic inhabitants. The clarification of this difference serves both to contextualize and particularize their remarks, both with regard to the respective cultural backgrounds of their authors, and the works wherein they appear. This is a *sine qua non* for the reasonable application of the fragments and relevant sections to other historical or archaeological problems. Too often the comments of Polybius and Cato on northern Italy and the Celts are cited by moderns as simple proof or conclusive evidence of a particular point, with no account taken of the refractions of 'reality' inevitably induced by the particular cultural perspective of the observer or author in question. This is clearly to misconstrue the status of these ancient texts as evidence. Of course, it does not necessarily mean that what Polybius and Cato wrote about the Celts of the north and elsewhere was absolutely wrong, merely because we can identify certain patterns and traits within their writings that seem to reflect wider Greek and Roman preconceptions and other habits of thought. But an awareness of this point should at least encourage a certain degree of circumspection.

populi Romani gesta discribere' ('If there are any people who delight in recounting the deeds of the Roman people') (1. 1 Chassignet = 1 Peter).

Both Cato and Polybius came to the subject of the Celts of northern Italy with a considerable quantity of inherited and personally acquired notions, some of which they had in common, others not. Both of them thought that Celts were militaristic, both of them thought they were intrusive newcomers to the ethnic map of Italy. But Polybius did not share or understand the Roman Cato's sense of the magnitude and historical significance of the conquest of the north. He had a Greek's sense of the Po plain as a huge, marvellously fertile region, now opened up to explorers such as himself by the Roman conquest, and he was well aware of the long wars which the Romans had had to fight to acquire it. But his essentially Hellenocentric focus and the historical period he chose to concentrate on rendered them marginal to his main theme. Even his account of the wars in Book 2 is justified in terms of other, more important historical events which they serve to illustrate. Cato, so far as we can tell from the admittedly scanty evidence of the remains of the *Origines*, was more impressed by the achievement and more interested in the region itself, its people and places and history. This is perhaps what we should expect from a Roman, and the fragments seem to bear it out. In order to understand exactly why the conquest of northern Italy and the Galli who lived there meant so much to Cato and the Romans, we have to look to Roman historical tradition, and particularly those traditions concerning the Gallic invasion of the north and the sack of the city of Rome, which will form the subjects of the next two chapters.

3

Myth and History I: The Gallic Invasion of Italy

INTRODUCTION

Both Polybius and Cato believed the *Keltoi* or Galli to be an invasive presence south of the Alps, whose origins lay elsewhere in the more or less ill-defined world of northern Europe. But it was not this in and of itself that distinguished them from the other peoples of Italy. Origin myths or foundation stories involving migration or colonization were also ascribed to various groups inhabiting peninsular Italy, and they were not without their problems of moral justification, even when the Romans themselves were concerned. That even, or especially, in their case there was considerable potential for tension between the moral primacy of authochthony as opposed to the legitimacy of rule by conquest is vividly suggested by Vergil's Turnus and his violent, unreconciled, and unsettling death at the hands of Aeneas with which the *Aeneid* closes.[1] Nevertheless, the poem as a whole is clear on the point that, though there may sometimes be unfortunate and even regrettable consequences for those who get in the way, Roman power is, and from the beginning always has been, divinely authorized. The presence or absence of divine sanction is the point that, whatever the attendant uncertainties, allowed a good invasion or colonial venture to be differentiated from a bad one; and it was to the latter category that the Gallic invasion of Italy belonged according to most extant narratives, but not all. For the accounts of Livy and Justin have a somewhat different angle on the problem, the nature and reasons for which will form the subject of the latter part of this chapter.

[1] Verg. *Aen.* 12. 950–2: 'hoc dicens, ferrum adverso sub pectore condit / fervidus. ast illi solvuntur frigore membra, / vitaque cum gemitu fugit indignata sub umbras.' ('Saying this, in fury he [Aeneas] plunged the sword into his enemy's breast. His [Turnus'] limbs were loosed by cold and his soul fled angrily with a groan down into the shades.')

The story of the Gallic invasion of Italy is generally told in our sources as a prelude to the sack of Rome by the Gauls, as an explanation of how Gauls came to be where they should not have been, that is in Italy, in the first place. Not all accounts relate the two events to one another in the same way, whether causally or chronologically, and the differences between them in this respect are significant. The earliest extant references to the invasion story are to be found in Cato and Polybius. Extended accounts appear in Diodorus, Livy, and Plutarch, with Pompeius Trogus' version preserved in Justin's epitome, and a brief but illuminating reference in Pliny the Elder. In addition, fragments of the relevant sections of Dionysius of Halicarnarassus and Appian's *Keltika* survive.

How can we begin to make sense of the tradition on the Gallic invasion of Italy, both in and of itself and with respect to its internal dynamics? What does its nature as a myth of invasion suggest about ancient notions of the relationship between Celts and Romans, between Gallia and Italia? How can the variations observable between different accounts be explained? Source criticism will not suffice here.[2] There is no evidence that there was a literary source from which all subsequent accounts diverged. None of the accounts is exactly like any other, they all differ from one another in both detail and substance. Each one therefore represents the creative, sometimes innovative, response of its respective author to the totality of the tradition, or that part of it to which he had access, which will presumably always have consisted of a number of concurrent versions as different from one another as those that survive.

Simple stemmatic relationships cannot be used to interpret the literary tradition; neither, for the same reasons, can the chronological ordering of the authors. Narrative structures may be more helpful. Among the most useful in this context are the different kinds of cause which are put forward in explanation of the invasion, for not all the sources give the same reasons and two divergent explanatory strands emerge. Some authors propose an external agent inciting the Gauls to enter Italy, others put forward a purely internal cause, particularly social or environmental factors, to account for the initial migration. Both versions say something about how Greeks and Romans imagined the Celts and

[2] Cf. Ogilvie 1965: 702 on the sources of Trogus and Livy.

are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as will become apparent. Nevertheless, this divergence within the tradition serves as a useful tool with which to begin to make thematic, and therefore interpretative, sense out of the development and meaning of the tradition of the Gallic invasion of Italy.

1: CAUSATION AND MOTIVATION

Several sources treat the story of Arruns, an Etruscan nobleman whose family problems at home led him to seek mercenary help among the Gauls by tempting them over the Alps with an offer of the delights of civilization and booty as a reward. This tale occurs in slightly different versions wherever it appears.[3] Dionysius' account is fragmentary, but clear in outline.[4] In his version, Arruns was the guardian of the son of one Lucumo, an Etruscan noble in Clusium. He brought the child up without reward, but the boy proceeded to seduce Arruns' wife, and he shamed her in public as well as in private. Thus outraged, Arruns travelled north, pretending to go on a trading expedition. The boy provided Arruns with all his requirements, quantities of wine, oil, and figs, all things unknown to the *Keltoi* who at the time drank a foul brew of barley rotted in water and used matured pig's fat instead of oil, a substance of extraordinary taste and smell, as Dionysius mentions with evident disgust. Arruns' wares amazed the Celts, and he told them of the large, fertile territory that had produced them, and of its few and effeminate inhabitants. He encouraged the Celts to go straight to the source, and they marched directly on Clusium. From the surviving fragments of Book 13, it would seem that Dionysius went on to relate the Gallic sack of Rome as an immediate consequence of the events at Clusium, via the episode of the provocative behaviour of the Fabii, the envoys of the Romans, which Livy also relates.[5]

[3] See Sordi 1976–7. The story had a long afterlife. It reappears in Constantine Porphyrogenitus' confused account of the Lombard invasion of Italy and assault on Beneventum (*De Administrando Imperio* 27), according to which the general Narses, piqued by a critical letter from the empress Irene, invited the Lombards into Italy over the Alps with the promise of a land flowing with milk and honey to conquer, sending them fruits of all kinds.

[4] Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 13. 10–11.

[5] L. 5. 35. 4 ff. The excerpts of Dionysius' Book 13 are taken from a 15th-cent. Milan MS (Ambrosianus Q 13 sup.), ed. A. Mai in 1816, which preserves them in chronological order. There is a break between excerpt 11, which takes the story and

Livy also mentions the story of Arruns, only to dismiss it on the grounds of chronology.[6] He says that there is a story (*traditur*) that the Gauls were enticed into Italy with samples of wine by Arruns, a Clusine, in order to avenge himself upon his ward, Lucumo, who had seduced his wife. The Gauls were excited by the promise of fertile land and the pleasure of wine, which they had not known before Arruns' arrival in their midst. Livy's opinion on this story was that it might be true that Arruns or somebody else from Clusium brought the Gauls to Clusium, but he was certainly not the first to bring them over the Alps, for this had already happened two hundred years previously. He then goes on to tell the story of an earlier Gallic migration which is motivated less by the exotic allurements of Italian agriculture than by social and environmental pressures. We shall return to this later. Livy was aware of the existence of both types of causation, internal and external, and the traditions that went with them, and he consciously rejected the latter, not, however, on the grounds that the story of Arruns provided an unsatisfactory explanation, but for chronological reasons. For Livy, the story of Arruns of Clusium naturally belonged to the narrative sequence related to the sack of Rome, in which Clusium was also otherwise involved, but this could not tally with the reliable information he had from another source, the nature of which he nowhere specifies, that Gauls had first crossed the Alps in the reign of King Tarquinius Priscus of Rome. This chronological and geographical impasse would be resolved in a different manner by Plutarch, as we shall see later. But it is already clear that there was considerable divergence of opinion between the different authors who touched on the subject about how and when the Gallic invasion first occurred. Livy and Dionysius, near contemporaries in the Augustan period, gave very different accounts. So indeed did Cato and Polybius in the mid second century BC.

The fragment of Cato's *Origines* relating to the invasion refers to the detail mentioned above from Dionysius' account, that Arruns' wife was first shamed in secret and then her reputation was ruined in public too. No names are preserved in the citation from which the fragment comes, but the attribution to this story seems

the Gauls down into Italy and to Clusium, and excerpt 12, which deals with the Fabian embassy at Clusium. This strongly suggests that Dionysius placed the invasion immediately before the sack.

[6] L. 5. 33.

secure.[7] Aulus Gellius mentions that it comes from the second book of the *Origines*, which certainly contained other matters relating to the Galli of the north. If, as seems likely, the story of Arruns was related as part of Cato's narrative of the invasion, then it is most probable, reasoning from the detailed parallel that permits the attribution of the fragment to the story, that the rest of his account was similar to that of Dionysius as well, and that he therefore belonged to that strand of the tradition which regarded the invasion as incited by external agitation from Etruria. Whether or not he thought it took place directly before, and led immediately to, the sack of Rome is perhaps less clear.

Polybius' version, by contrast, took no account of Arruns' cuckolding. He gave instead a consciously demythologized and rationalized account of the Celtic invasion and its causes. Nevertheless, his account still attributes the invasion to external, rather than internal, causes. The temptations of the south are still present. He merely does away with the figure of the tempter. Before the invasion the Celts already lived in close proximity to the Etruscans, had dealings with them, and envied them their fine country in the Po Valley.[8] So, he says, they took advantage of an insignificant pretext and invaded unexpectedly with a large army, expelling the Etruscans from the land around the Po and taking possession themselves. Polybius draws no causal or chronological connection between the invasion and the sack of Rome which, he says, took place some time later.[9]

The distinctive character of Polybius' account can be explained in the light of his general distaste for the sort of legendary historical material which previous authors had written about the Celts and northern Italy.[10] No less important for the understanding of this passage are his opinions on how to treat the causation of wars, a topic which he also thought was often poorly handled by his fellow historians. In Polybius' view, other authors often confused the first event in a war with its first cause, and apportioned

[7] Cato *Orig.* 2. 5 Chassignet = 36 Peter ap. Gell. *N.A.* 17. 13. 4: 'neque satis habuit, quod eam in occulto vitiaverat, quin eius famam prostitueret' ('And he was not satisfied that he had shamed her in secret, but went on to disgrace her reputation'); cf. Peter 1914: 65 for the attribution of this obscure fragment to the story of Arruns.

[8] Vattuone 1987: esp. 88–9, for a detailed exegesis of the passage.

[9] Pol. 2. 17. 3; 2. 18. 1–2.

[10] Cf. Pol. 2. 16. 13–15.

the responsibility for starting the war on that basis.[11] In the light of this, it has been plausibly argued that Polybius' reference to the 'insignificant pretext' for the Celtic invasion is an oblique reference to the Arruns story which he has omitted because, given his views on how to account for the causes of wars, he considered it to be an insufficient explanation of why the invasion occurred: for, according to the Polybian system of analysing causation, the Arruns story could only constitute a pretext, *prophasis*, and not a real cause, *aitia*.[12] Whether Polybius was actually referring tacitly to Arruns, or perhaps to some other story, it does seem that he was offering at this point a reinterpretation of whatever account he himself had heard of the Celtic invasion, rejecting semi-mythical stories and looking instead for his preferred explanatory sequence of *aitia* (real cause), *prophasis* (pretext), and *arche* (first action). Polybius conceived of himself as searching for deeper and more coherent reasons for why wars happen than his predecessors. As mentioned already in Chapter 1, in this instance he recounted the history of the wars of northern Italy within its geographical context, and interpreted the narrative in terms of the long-term effects of natural wealth upon events and upon human morality.[13] Against this deep background, a story like that of Arruns, even if accepted as true, could only count for Polybius as an event shaped by wider environmental and historical factors, and not as an explanation of the invasion in itself. So Polybius left such material out of serious consideration, and out of his narrative.

The question of what caused the Gallic invasion had thus been a point of continuous discussion since the beginning of the Roman historical tradition. Polybius objected to simplistic explanations on the grounds of historiographical principle, while Livy's objection was factual, in that he thought that the Gauls had already been in Italy for two hundred years before the events at Clusium and the sack of Rome. Plutarch's account in the *Camillus* occupies an intermediate position between Dionysius and Livy with regard to causation, and he resolves the chronological problem that troubled Livy about the story of Arruns differently, by removing Arruns from Clusium and locating the story north of the Apennines.[14]

[11] Pol. 3. 6.
[12] Cf. Wolski 1956: 36; Walbank 1957–79: i. 182.
[13] See pp. 60–2.
[14] Plut. *Cam.* 15.

Plutarch begins his section on the Gallic invasion with an initial Celtic migration within transalpine Europe caused by over-population and an insufficiency of land. The migration, he writes, then headed in two directions, over the Rhipaean Mountains to the ends of Europe and towards the areas between the Pyrenees and the Alps, where the Celts settled for, as Plutarch says, a long time. Thus far the account has resorted to internal factors, environmental and social, to explain these preliminary migrations in the north. But Plutarch still has to get the Celts over the Alps, and here he brings Arruns into the story. Once again he has a score to settle with Lucumo, who in this version is a rich man who has stolen Arruns' wife. Arruns fails to receive justice in the courts, and so goes to the Celts with samples of wine, which they had not tasted before, and brings them over the Alps to help him in his struggle. They then occupy the Etruscans' territory in northern Italy, together with its eighteen prosperous cities. But Plutarch's Arruns does not come from Clusium, indeed his origin is never specified but he is probably meant to be a transapennine Etruscan. By taking Arruns away from Etruria, Plutarch is also able to separate the invasion chronologically from the sack of Rome. Indeed, Plutarch says that there was a long interval between the two, despite the fact that it is his narrative of Camillus' part in saving Rome after the sack that occasions his account of the original invasion. Why he chose to adopt this particular tack is perhaps unclear, but it is a neat way of dovetailing two previously divergent tendencies within ancient accounts of the invasion, the external explanation as exemplified by the story of Arruns, and endogenous explanations resorting to famine and land-hunger.

Plutarch's version also points up a problem in the story which each author had to deal with in his own way: the chronological and causal link between the invasion and the sack of Rome. If Arruns, as a Clusine, was the first person to bring the Celts into Italy, why did they only settle north of the Apennines and not in Etruria proper? The story of the Roman intervention at Clusium against the Gallic invaders provided an answer, suggesting that the Gauls had indeed tried to settle in Clusine territory, but that the Roman victory after the sack of Rome eventually confined them to transapennine Italy. If this answer was accepted, the invasion had to precede the sack immediately in the chronological organization of the tale. Plutarch solved the problem by connecting Arruns

with the invasion but not with the sack, omitting the link with Clusium, and introducing an interval of time between invasion and sack. There was evidently some confusion within the tradition as to how the Etruscans' two encounters with the Celts were related, both chronologically and causally: the first encounter which brought them over the Alps, and the second one in which the Celts assaulted Clusium and then Rome. From the diversity of opinion within the extant narratives on this point alone, it is apparent that the authors concerned constructed their accounts eclectically from a range of possible sources, rather than copying them out of one single source; and that they made up their own minds in each case as to how they were going to reconcile the evidence of the different renderings that were available to them.[15]

Appian's version is different again. He places the invasion immediately before the sack of Rome, like Dionysius, but, unlike both him and Plutarch, Appian does not use Arruns in his narrative at all. He resorts instead entirely to internal causation, and attributes the invasion to Celtic land-hunger and overpopulation in the region of the Rhine. Appian's Celts move straight from the Alps to Clusium, where they encounter the Roman envoys, those Fabii whose unacceptable behaviour provokes them into attacking Rome.[16]

Diodorus' account has a similarly short chronology. He also omits Arruns and curiously he seems to offer no explanation of any sort for why the invasion took place. But he does give a precise date for it, the year in which Dionysius I of Syracuse besieged Rhegium (387 BC).[17] Diodorus does not perhaps have the best reputation among ancient historians for chronological accuracy, because of his tendency to adapt thematically arranged sources into an annalistic form, thus distorting the true relationship of events in different areas, and it could be that he has done so here.[18] The same synchronism with the siege of Rhegium appears in Polybius as a means of dating the Gallic attack on Rome, but not the invasion.[19] This suggests that it was a recognized peg in the Greek historical tradition on which to hang the date of the sack of Rome, as one of the few events in Roman history of which the

[15] See Pelling 1979, 1980 on Plutarch's adaptation of his source material.
[16] App. *Gall*. fr. 2.
[17] Diod. 14. 113. 1–3.
[18] Cf. Klotz 1937: 213; Perl 1959.
[19] Pol. 1. 6. 2.

Greeks had any knowledge. It is not unlikely that Diodorus himself, or a previous author, has misunderstood it as applying to the invasion as well as the sack. Like Polybius, Livy, and Plutarch, Diodorus also has a few words on the previous Etruscan occupation of the Po Valley, but he does not give any particular reason, whether external or internal, why the Celts attacked the Etruscans. He does, however, go into some detail on the motivation of their attack on Clusium and Rome, and here he resorts to internal causation of a kind not unlike that used by other authors to account for the invasion itself. The Senones, he says, who held the area nearest the sea, were discontented with the region where they lived as it was extremely hot, and so went in search of new territory. They invaded Etruria with 30,000 young men and besieged Clusium. At this point he takes up the story of the sack of Rome.

Diodorus' account, then, shows definite affinities with others, but is also unique in various details. However, the same could be said for all the individual versions of this story. Both major themes and minor details seem equally negotiable in the tradition, as the brief account of Pliny the Elder also demonstrates.[20] He follows the Arruns tradition insofar as he too has the Gauls lured over the Alps by the sweet taste of Cisalpine produce, but instead of Arruns he names one Helico, an Helvetian blacksmith working in Rome, as the agent of their temptation. The transfer of the blame onto a Gaul, in particular a Helvetian Gaul, is strongly suggestive of a modified version created in the first century BC after the Cimbric invasions in which the Helvetii took part, or perhaps a few decades later in the period of Caesar's involvement in their folk migration in the late 60s and early 50s BC.[21] This sort of change and development is typical of an orally transmitted story, responding continually to contemporary circumstances and changing accordingly. It is characteristic of such stories that the names of the protagonists and places involved can vary, without changing the basic narrative structure in which they are set.[22] In the late Republic it seems that the story of Helico the Helvetian made more sense of the past to some people in the light of recent experience than the story of Arruns of Clusium. Nevertheless, despite its obvious appeal, the new version did not totally remove the older story from the literary tradition, and only enters it at one point, here in Pliny.

The literary tradition about the Celtic invasion of Italy as a

[20] Plin. *N.H.* 12. 5. [21] Cf. Hirschfeld 1913: 18. [22] Thomas 1989.

whole is internally very diverse. It seems a plausible conjecture that there were many more oral and written accounts, now lost, which varied just as much from the extent versions as they do from one another with regard to fundamental questions of causation, motivation, detail, and narrative.

2: THE MEANING OF THE TRADITION

What do the various invasion narratives have to say about ancient conceptions of Celtic behaviour and action? The two main tendencies identified here in the accounts of the causation of the invasion differ from one another considerably—external incitement as opposed to environmental pressure at home—but they are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as Plutarch's account shows, and together they exemplify a range of attitudes and responses on the part of Greek and Roman authors to the Celts. They do so not primarily through authorial comment but by dramatic characterization, in two ways. The narratives dramatize not merely the response of Italians to the arrival of the Celts, but also recount the Celts' reactions to the material products of civilized life in Italy. Both the response of the Italians to the Celts and the response of the Celts to the Italians are, thus, represented in the tradition. To see how Greeks and Romans imagined the thoughts and reactions of the Celts towards themselves is, of course, particularly revealing about their own attitudes. The Celts' response to the preliminary material evidence of the exotic products of Italy, wine, figs, and oil, is interpreted as fascination for the wonders of the civilized world coupled with a prospective contempt, encouraged by Arruns, for the softness of men who live off such luxuries. This is followed quickly by an unbounded desire to possess their place of origin in order to acquire its wealth. Once the Celts reach Italy, however, their actions demonstrate how incapable they are of doing so, because other, more destructive desires intervene. Far from living the civilized life characterized by the consumption of cultivated produce upon taking possession of the great plain, in their desire to occupy for themselves the land and its great fertility they destroy the very means of its most effective exploitation, the cities of the Etruscans that had previously stood in the north and, thus, fail to attain the enjoyment of the very things that had drawn them there in the first place. They are overwhelmed by an appetite

for arbitrary destruction and, of course, for immediate gain in the form of plunder when faced with the achievements of civilized life. The Celtic response to Italy is thus interpreted by the literary tradition of the story of Arruns in terms of an unrestrained desire for its material products, in tandem with an utter failure to understand the culture that produces them, resulting in a destructive incapacity to reproduce either of them. This is a point demonstrated in Polybius' description and narrative of the Celtic Wars. They drink the wine of Italy, but drink it to excess, often after a battle and with ruinous consequences. They occupy a plain of extraordinary wealth that had once supported a string of Etruscan cities, but spend their time in unsettled nomadism and fights over their twin prize possessions, gold and cattle.[23]

The story of Arruns dramatizes the violent reactions of Celts when confronted with civilization. But the narrative also focuses on the moral and cultural deficiencies of the civilized as well as those of the barbarians. For the Etruscans of the north had the reputation of having become a decadent and licentious people by the time of the Celts' assault, corrupted by the natural wealth of their surroundings and incapable of defending themselves.[24] The story of Arruns is a dramatic exemplification of this view, involving as it does adultery, deception, public disgrace, and civil discord. It is intended as a sordid tale redolent of moral depravity, characterizing its Etruscan actors as an irresponsible people thoroughly deserving the cataclysm which, in effect, they brought upon themselves by their fecklessness in general, and Arruns' lack of forethought in particular.

The internal explanations for the invasion which the literary tradition offered, irresistible social pressures leading to mass migration, offer a commentary on Celtic motivation and culture. The most prominent theme that emerges is the local instability that characterizes the livelihood of the Celts. Polybius stated it in his descriptive excursus; the migration story depicts it in narrative.[25] Their persistent tendency to change their abode is the physical counterpart to their moral *athesia*, their inability to stick to one position or abide by an agreement. Like animals, they move ceaselessly whether under the influence of environmental

[23] Pol. 2. 19. 4 on Celtic bibulousness; 2. 17. 11 on cattle and gold.
[24] See Ch. 1: 61–2 for references and discussion.
[25] Pol. 2. 17. 11.

pressures which they are incapable of dealing with except by flight or, the implication of the Arruns story, animated by their belligerence and self-destructive desire for plunder.[26]

Migration is not characteristic of the Celts alone, however. Many other peoples in antiquity believed that they had in the past moved from one place to another and conquered new regions, and a myth of origin featuring a legitimate and divinely authorized migration was nothing to be ashamed of. Various Greek colonization myths contain themes and details similar to those which appear in the myth of the Celtic invasion of Italy, but also with significant differences. In Greek myths the colonists, often as a result of penury at home, set out to take a rich, uncivilized virgin land, conquer it with symbolically virile force, and found a divinely ordained city on previously uncultivated ground.[27] But while these stories represent and implicitly justify the importation of Greek political order into what is perceived, by contrast, as an unordered landscape, the story of the Gallic invasion represents the inversion of this ideal. For the Gauls do not conquer in order to found cities but to destroy them while, extending the matrimonial metaphor, the fruit of their union with the great plain of the north, the period of their occupation, is the bastard offspring of barbaric violence and decadent Etruscan effeminacy, not the legitimate issue of virile civility and untainted virgin soil which characterized the foundation story of any self-respecting Greek colonial foundation.

The Celtic invasion story, in both its forms, carefully distinguishes the Celts' manner of entering Italy from the proper way to invade a new land. They are denied divine approval, their motives are nothing but perverse and base, the consequences of their actions are disastrous for the region they occupy and the people they conquer. There are, moreover, clear similarities between the accounts of the first Celtic invasion of Italy and those of later incursions, both in Italy and elsewhere. They too rely on

[26] Cf. L. 38. 16. 1 on the Gallic migration eastwards: 'Galli magna hominum vis, seu inopia agri seu praedae spe, nullam gentem, per quam ituri essent, parem armis rati, Brenno duce in Dardanos pervenerunt.' ('A large number of Gauls arrived in the territory of the Dardani led by Brennus, either driven by land-hunger or the hope of plunder, thinking that no people whose territory they would traverse would be equal to them in warfare.') See Kremer 1994: 50–2 on ancient animaline metaphors for Celts.

[27] Cf. Dougherty 1993: esp. 61–82, for an illuminating treatment of these myths.

external provocation and internal pressures to provide the motive cause for setting these massive folk movements in train that periodically swept down from the north and entered Italy and Greece. According to Polybius, the great invasion of 225 BC was initially caused by the Cisalpine Gauls who negotiated with their cousins over the Alps, offering them the wealth of Italy in payment for their help against Rome, much like Arruns;[28] while the Gallic intrusions into Venetia in northern Italy in the 180s and 170s BC are explained by Livy as resulting from internal instability among the Transalpine peoples due to a lack of land and an excess of population.[29] The analogies with the types of causation offered by Plutarch, Appian, and Livy for the Celtic invasion of Italy are clear. In the case of the Cimbric invasion at the end of the second century BC, contemporary opinions were divided as to the precise cause, but explanations tended towards the mass migration theory, that it was a folk movement caused by the inhospitable nature of the homelands of the Cimbri and by catastrophic floods which drove them and their allies south in search of a better life.[30]

Caesar's account of the proposed migrations of the Helvetii and Ariovistus' Germans also bears close similarities to all these invasion accounts. The Helvetii are incited by Orgetorix their leader to seek a more expansive region in which to dwell than their restricted domain between the Rhine, the Jura, and the Rhône. The Gauls are soon persuaded that their great numbers and success in war require more space and they aspire to conquer the whole of Gaul. The Germans, according to a speech of Diviciacus reportedly delivered to Caesar, were summoned as mercenaries over the Rhine to help the Arverni and Sequani against the Aedui. They then betrayed their employers, ordering the Sequani out of their lands which, he implies, they desired as being far superior to their own. The number of Helvetii and Germans involved is stressed again and again in Caesar's account. This is not merely to underscore the scale of Caesar's victories, but is a frequent *topos* in various narratives of Celtic invasion stories.[31]

It is surely not unlikely that explanations of the initial Celtic

[28] Pol. 2. 22.

[29] L. 39. 54. 5.

[30] Cf. Posidonius *FGH* 87f31 = fr. 272 Edelstein and Kidd; Plut. *Mar.* 11 for the differing views in antiquity on the origins of the Cimbri.

[31] Caes. *B.G.* 1. 2, 31. Kremer 1994: 28–30 for further ancient references to the huge size of Celtic armies and peoples.

invasion of Italy were elaborated in the light of contemporary conjectures on later incursions such as these: the figure of Helico the Helvetian in Pliny the Elder's version suggests that this is so. This is an uncontroversial point and is potentially true of any such account, but it is nevertheless worth making. For the detection of such recurring patterns within accounts of Celtic migration must also prompt caution in accepting them as reasonable representations of what actually happened on any one occasion. It does not necessarily mean that the imputed motivations of land-hunger or plunder-lust are wrong. They are, after all, perfectly plausible explanations in themselves, but their recurrence in several different accounts of Celtic invasion does suggest that they constitute stereotyped explanations arising from a generalized conception of how Celts tend to behave under certain circumstances. The tendency in these stories to characterize the Celts as invasive, unstable, and hostile, it will be argued in the final chapter, was an important ingredient in the formation of not merely Roman perceptions but Roman actions during the conquest and settlement of the North in the second century BC.

3: AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW?

There are two further accounts of the invasion not yet examined, which seem to stand in a different relationship to the literary tradition on the Celtic invasions of Italy from the others. They are the versions recounted by Livy and by Justin in his epitome of the *Historiae Philippicae* of Pompeius Trogus.

Justin reports Trogus' opinion that the cause of the invasion of Italy was persistent internal discord among the Gauls north of the Alps.[32] According to his account, the Gauls entered Italy in order to escape this difficult situation, and founded a group of cities upon arrival: Milan, Comum, Brixia, Verona, Bergomum, Tridentum, and Vicentia. Elsewhere in his work, Trogus described in greater detail the mass migration of the Gauls from an unspecified origin in northern Europe. Three hundred thousand in number, they set off, as on a *ver sacrum*, in search of new territory, because their homeland could not contain them. Some entered Italy, while others, following the auguries in which Gauls were particularly skilled, arrived in Pannonia, and then went on to

[32] Just. 20. 5. 7.

invade Greece.[33] They were a warlike people, Justin remarks, the first after Hercules to cross the Alps. This account of the invasion bears comparison with the ones we have already looked at and, importantly, even more so with Greek colonization stories. For while, as in other stories of Celtic migration, Trogus' Gauls suffer from overpopulation and internecine strife which drive them in search of new land, their migration is different because it is well organized and divinely approved. Moreover, Trogus' account of the Gauls' urbanism within Italy is a new variant and contrasts with the other versions, in which the destruction of the Etruscan cities of the north is key to the way in which they differentiated the Gauls' hubristic migration from Greek migration myths.

How then does this feature in Trogus' invasion narrative relate to the character of the rest of his work? In the epitome of Book 43, there is further material on the Gallic history for comparison. In relating the story of the foundation of Massilia by the Phocaeans, Trogus describes how the Gauls learned the arts and habits of civilization from the Greeks, and he seems to attribute a high degree of civilization to them at an early period: they learn from the Greeks how to cultivate the vine, live in walled cities, and live according to the rule of law not arms.[34] This optimistic assessment of Gallic capacities is compatible with his representation of the Gallic invasion of Italy in terms of a Greek or Italian colonial myth rather than as a ruinous barbaric intrusion, while the contrast with the negative picture of native Gallic culture present in other authors is apparent and significant.

Trogus' positive angle on the cultural history of the Gauls is certainly unusual but not unique. Other authors related the origins

[33] Just. 24. 4–5.

[34] Just. 43. 4. 1–2: 'ab his (sc. the Greeks) igitur Galli et usum vitae cultioris deposita ac mansuefacta barbaria et agrorum cultus et urbes moenibus cingere didicerunt. Tunc et legibus, non armis vivere, tunc et vitem putare, tunc olivam serere consuerunt, adeoque magnus et hominibus et rebus impositus est nitor ut non Graecia in Galliam emigrasse, sed Gallia in Graeciam translata videretur.' ('So the Gauls abandoned and softened their barbarous ways. They learnt from the Greeks the habits of a more civilized life, to cultivate the fields and surround their towns with walls. Then they accustomed themselves to live by laws not by arms, to trim the vine, to plant the olive-tree, and such a degree of polish was added to their human society and their culture that it did not seem as though Greece had emigrated to Gaul, but that Gaul had been transferred to Greece.') Contrast Str. 4. 1. 5, where the Gauls around Massalia only abandon barbarity after the Roman conquest.

of the Gauls to the exploits of Heracles and attributed to them, at least in their early stages, a degree of civility. According to Diodorus' account of Heracles' monster-killing journey around the Mediterranean he founded the city of Alesia for his Greek followers, and brought laws and culture to the benighted Gauls, slaying their barbarous rulers in the process.[35] The prominence of Alesia here is clearly not unconnected to the events of 52 BC involving Vercingetorix and, as in the case of Helico the Helvetian mentioned above, is suggestive of the ways in which mythical narratives adapted to new information derived from contemporary events. Diodorus goes on to say that the Greek inhabitants of the city subsequently became mixed up with the locals and the population declined into a state of barbarity, but Alesia remained, revered by the Gauls as a relic of their ancient civilization. According to Ammianus Marcellinus, the Gauls of his own day had adopted as their origin-myth the story of Hercules' conquest of Gaul, in which he defeated the local tyrant and went on to found a dynasty which ruled over Gaul. Ammianus also mentions the foundation of Massilia and the consequent spread of culture among the Gauls, guided by the Drysidae who formed Pythagorean brotherhoods and taught that the soul was immortal.[36] Speculation of this kind on the part of Greek intellectuals about the existence of philosophers, the so-called druids, among the Celts as among other kinds of barbarians was of long standing, though obviously not universally accepted. Polybius has nothing to say about them, but not much later, Timagenes, Posidonius, and Caesar included them in their accounts.[37]

There was, then, a more appreciative strand in Greek writings about Celts, and Trogus' account clearly belongs to it, even if it is not absolutely clear that he used either Timagenes or Posidonius as a source.[38] But Trogus' positive interpretation of Gallic history can also be located within the context of his work as a whole, as it is

[35] Diod. 4. 19. 1–2.

[36] Amm. Marc. 15. 9. 7 ff.

[37] See Piggott 1974: 76–104; Momigliano 1975: 59–60 for Greeks on druids; with Kendrick 1927: 213–21 for a useful conspectus of the literary references.

[38] On Trogus' sources, Momigliano 1934 doubts that Trogus used Timagenes as his source, a theory accepted by Ogilvie 1965: 702, following von Gutschmid 1882. Instead Momigliano derives Trogus' account of the Gallic invasion from Livy, an idea which Ogilvie (loc. cit.) is right to reject, on the grounds that there is much information in Justin's epitome which is not in Livy's account. See also Sordi 1982 on the work of Timagenes.

now clearer that his history was not, as was once argued, anti-Roman so much as universal in conception.[39]

It used to be claimed by those who saw Trogus' work as anti-Roman in content that he was a Gallic nationalist, on the basis of various passages on the Gauls in Justin's epitome.[40] Trogus may have been proud of his Gaulish ancestry, indeed in Book 43 he apparently related his family's history, tracing it back to his grandfather, a Vocontian who received Roman citizenship from Pompey, and mentioning his father who had served with Caesar.[41] But the relevant passage also demonstrates that he was equally proud of his Roman citizenship and his family's tradition of service in the Roman army. He clearly thinks civilization is a good thing, and he does not attempt to justify Gallic barbarity against Roman or Greek culture. But this need not necessarily preclude a moderate sense of local pride in the history of the Gauls whenever his theme touched upon it. Seen in this light, Trogus' attempt to integrate the history of the Gauls positively into Greek and Roman traditions about civilization and colonization makes sense, much as the chroniclers of the barbarian invaders of late antiquity, Paul the Deacon and Gregory of Tours, related with equal pride the early pagan histories of the Lombards and Franks, as well as their conversions to Christianity.[42] But while they were writing explicitly limited histories about their own peoples' rise to power and civilization, Trogus' work was universal, and it gave the histories of many different peoples a place in its wide scope. In this light, his optimism about native Gallic civilization, though personal, should also be interpreted in the broader context of his conception of civilization, and indeed history as a whole, as something not necessarily confined to Greeks and Romans.[43] His understanding of the history of the interaction between Gauls, Greeks, and Romans differs from that of other authors and this is not unlikely to be connected to the fact that he himself was both Gaul and Roman, identifying himself as such in his text. As a consequence of his personal vision of, and relationship to, this history Trogus trans-

[39] Cf. Alonso-Núñez for discussion on this point.

[40] See Urban 1982 for a convincing demonstration of the weaknesses of both these points of view.

[41] Just. 43. 5. 11–12.

[42] Cf. Wallace-Hadrill 1967: 43 ff. The attitude is similar to that satirized in Sellar and Yeatman 1930: 11, on the Ancient Britons: 'The Roman Conquest was, however, a *Good Thing*, since the Britons were only natives at the time.'

[43] Cf. Alonso-Núñez 1987: 69.

formed the Gallic invasion of Italy from a dreary tale of barbarian aggression and destruction into an inspiring story of divinely sanctioned migration and colonization, the tone of which is far distant from the accounts of Polybius, Plutarch, and Diodorus.

Livy's story in Book 5 presents a similar narrative of the events surrounding the Gallic migration and entry into Italy, with many points in common with that of Trogus inasmuch as it also shows the Gauls founding rather than destroying cities, and doing so with divine authorization. As in the case of Trogus, in order to understand the meaning of Livy's story, the elusive science of source criticism will prove to be a less fruitful approach than the examination of the contemporary political context within which it was written. Timagenes and Posidonius will probably be of less help here in making sense of Livy's story than the enduring controversy surrounding the enfranchisement of the inhabitants of the Transpadane region that lasted from the Social War until the 40s BC.

Livy, as we have already seen, rejected the story of Arruns as an explanation of the Gallic invasion of Italy primarily on chronological grounds, because he thought that it was an established certainty that the Gauls who attacked Rome were not the first to cross the Alps.[44] This, he claims, actually happened when Tarquinius Priscus was king in Rome.[45]

Along with Arruns, Livy omits the theme of the allurements of the produce of Etruscan civilization and the Po Valley altogether, and begins instead with an internally motivated *Völkerwanderung* tale, like Plutarch and Trogus. Ambigatus, he says, was king of the Bituriges and of the Celtae who constituted a third part of Gaul, in a passage which recalls, and may refer to, Caesar's famous description of the three parts of Gaul.[46] But Ambigatus' realm was afflicted with an excess of population because of the superabundant fertility of the land and its people, such that they seemed scarcely governable. To solve the problem, Ambigatus dispatched

[44] L. 5. 33. 5.

[45] L. 5. 34. 1.

[46] L. 5. 34. 1: 'Celtarum, quae pars tertia Galliae est, penes Bituriges summa imperii fuit' ('Supreme power among the Celtae, who form the third part of Gaul, lay in the hands of the Bituriges.'); Caes. *B.G.* 1. 1. 1: 'Gallia est omnis divisa in partes tris, quarum unam incolunt Belgae, aliam Aquitani, tertiam qui ipsorum linga Celtae, nostra Galli appellantur.' ('All Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which is inhabited by the Belgae, another by the Aquitani, and the third by the people who in their language are called the Celtae, in ours the Galli.')

his nephews, Segovesus and Bellovesus, with a section of the population, to migrate where the omens might lead them. Segovesus was taken to the Hercynian Forest, while his brother went to Italy, which was by far the more fortunate destination, as Livy remarks.[47] Contingents from a number of tribes followed Bellovesus south until they came to the Alps, which had never been crossed before except perhaps by Hercules in legend. Finding themselves unable to cross the mountains, they helped the Phocaeans found Massilia in obedience to an oracle they received, as a result of which they successfully found a way over the Alps and moved into Italy. They defeated the Etruscans and settled in an area called the Insubrian territory, which they took as a good omen as there was also a group from the tribe of the Aedui called the Insubres. There they founded the city of Mediolanium.[48] Various further migrations took place subsequently: the Cenomani, led by Etitovius and helped by Bellovesus, the Libui and Salluvii, and the Boii who crossed the Po in boats and drove out the Etruscans and Umbrians. Last of all came the Senones, who settled between the Rivers Clusius and Utens. Livy mentions that he has read that they were the people who attacked Rome, but he is not sure whether they did so alone or with the help of the other Cisalpine Gallic tribes.[49]

There are certain obvious similarities between Livy's and Trogus' narratives which also differentiate them from the other extant accounts, particularly the organized nature of the migration and the role played by auguries, religion, and omens in the direction taken by the Gauls, all of which are suggestive of divine approval of the Gauls' entry into Italy. Moreover, Livy's Gauls, again like those in Trogus, mark their occupation of the country with a well-omened city foundation as in a Greco-Roman colonization myth. Livy's migrating Gauls are of quite a different order from those in Dionysius or Plutarch, and indeed from Gauls that appear elsewhere in Livy's text, who tend to display a range of fairly familiar barbarian characteristics.[50]

[47] L. 5. 34. 4.
[48] L. 5. 34. 9.
[49] L. 5. 35. 1–3.
[50] Cf. Kremer 1994: 76–80 on Livy's hostile attitudes towards Gauls which, he argues, he inherited from his Patavine origins, citing L. 10. 2. 9: 'semper autem eos (sc. Patavinos) in armis accolae Galli habebant.' ('Their Gallic neighbours always kept the people of Patavium under arms.')

In an effort to make sense of the unusual character of both Trogus' and Livy's versions, two contrasting approaches have been proposed as to their sources: some have argued that their sources lie in previous Greek ethnographic accounts—Timagenes and Posidonius have been suggested as appropriate candidates—others that they represent genuine Celtic folk memories recalling the true sequence of events.[51] But these options represent a false dichotomy between classical fictions and indigenous authenticity. There is no reason to suppose that local memories are likely to have represented a true record of events. Neither should it be assumed that classical ethnographic fictions were only produced by Greek or Roman writers. Origin stories such as these had a widespread circulation in both literary and oral forms and, as the case of the Romans suggests, were on occasion adopted and elaborated by the very peoples about whom they had been originally created.[52] It is thus somewhat artificial to separate 'classical' from 'indigenous' in this manner. An alternative interpretation which dissolves this unreal distinction sees Livy's account essentially as an indigenous tale which was created and circulated within the literate classes of northern Italy in the first century BC. It resembles a Greek tale of origin because by that stage this was the appropriate idiom to adopt in the literary construction of such stories, whether they were written by Greeks about others or by members of the peoples concerned about themselves.

It is certainly clear that by this period historiography, antiquarianism, and literary culture in general, were flourishing in the cities of Transpadane Italy. There was clearly a significant group of individuals resident in the region who were widely read in both Greek and Latin literature, and a few of them went on to become some of the most prominent literary figures in mid first-century BC Rome. Livy himself was one of them, of course, not to mention Catullus, and Cornelius Nepos the historian also came from the near the Po.[53] He included in his history a tradition about

[51] Ogilvie 1965: 706–7 regards the story as a Greek myth, while Torelli 1987 attempts to justify Livy's story as a Celtic tradition and accepts his high date, adducing archaeological evidence to carry his point. For other treatments of the Livian story, see Hirschfeld 1913; Homeyer 1960; Le Roux 1961; Grilli 1980; Pauli 1985.

[52] See also pp. 76–7 for the adoption of Greek ktistic and origin myths by the indigenous peoples of Italy.

[53] Plin. *N.H.* 3. 127 calls Nepos a *Padi accola*; cf. Cic. *Fam.* 15. 16. 1; Plin. *Epp.*

the Gallic invasion not to be found in any other extant source, which mentions an otherwise unknown city, Melpum, sacked by the Boii and Senones on the same day that the Romans took Veii.[54] Against this background of a provincial, educated class of *litterati*, the Livian story, which does have obvious Greek, literary affinities and yet which also contains much local colour that cannot wholly be explained by interpreting it as a purely Greek literary invention, might find an appropriate intellectual milieu for its creation and formation.

It has been argued that Livy's version reflects a new Augustan, pan-Italian vision of Italy, on the grounds that it no longer accuses the Etruscans of having introduced the Celtic menace into Italy through their decadent behaviour and civil strife.[55] In Livy, the invasion is purely internally motivated and receives no encouragement from parties within Italy. But this approach fails to explain why the account of the Gallic invasion should also have been so morally improved; indeed it would require that Gauls be demonized yet further in order to distinguish them more clearly from the Italians. But this is not what happens. If anything, the story approves of their presence within Italy rather than abominating it. There is no reason why Augustan Romans should have so transformed the story of the Gallic invasion in this manner. There was, however, a motive for Transpadane intellectuals to create a more positive account of the origins of the Gauls of Italy than those which had circulated previously: their ambition to obtain the Roman citizenship.

The Transpadani were not granted the Roman citizenship until 49 BC, having only received the Latin Right in 89 BC, while Cisalpine Gaul remained a province until as late as 42 BC.[56] Indeed its establishment as a regular province probably dated back only fifty years or so.[57] The question of the Transpadanes' claim to the citizenship had been a political issue at least since the Social War,

4. 28. 1. See Wiseman 1979: 157–66; Zuffa 1978: esp. 149–50 on Transpadane intellectuals in the late Republic. Cf. Catullus' dedicatory poem addressed to Nepos: 'ausus es unus Italorum / omne aevum tribus explicare cartis' ('You dared, alone of the Italians, to recount the whole of history in three books') (1. 5–6).

[54] Cornelius Nepos fr. 8 Peter ap. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 125.

[55] Vattuone 1987: 92.

[56] Cf. Badian 1966*b*: esp. 906, 913; Brunt 1987: 166–72; Laffi 1992.

[57] This is usually attributed to Sulla. Càssola 1991: 30–40, argues for an earlier date soon after the Cimbric Wars; the evidence is inconclusive.

when what little evidence there is suggests that some, at least, of the Transpadanes fought with the Allies.[58] Their resentment may have been aggravated by the terms of the treaties concluded by the Romans with the Insubres and Cenomani. According to Cicero, these treaties explicitly excluded the possibility of any individual from these, and a number of other, Gallic peoples acquiring the citizenship, a clause which looks like an attempt to establish a barrier to the citizenship for Gauls in general.[59] The *lex Pompeia* of 89 BC may have repealed these clauses and given the Transpadani the same rights to the citizenship through holding a local magistracy as other Latin communities.[60] If so, this seems to have done nothing to assuage their ambition. The persistent re-emergence of the issue over the subsequent decades, and the fact that various prominent Romans took sides over it and exploited it politically, demonstrates that the denial of the Roman citizenship was felt keenly by those concerned, and that their frustration was audible in Rome.[61] The question was taken up by Caesar in 68 BC when, according to Suetonius, he attempted to raise an armed rebellion in the north.[62] Whatever the truth of Caesar's connection with the disturbances, the situation seems to have been serious enough for two legions to be kept within Italy until the north calmed down again. Crassus as censor in 65 BC tried to extend the citizenship north of the Po, but he failed against the opposition of his colleague, Catulus.[63] In the 50s BC, Caesar, as governor of both

[58] App. *B.C.* 1. 50 has *Galatai* on the side of the Allies. ibid. 1. 42, Plut. *Sert.* 4. 1 attest recruiting among Gauls by Romans; see also Sisenna frr. 29, 71, 72 Peter; *CIL* 1^2 864. See Gabba 1984: 219–20 for references, esp. n. 64 for an incident of uncertain date and context mentioned by Frontinus *Strat.* 1. 9. 3, in which Cn. Pompeius punishes some of his troops for killing the senators of Mediolanum, an episode which may refer to soldiers of Pompeius Strabo punishing the Milanese for supporting the Allied cause in the Social War.

[59] Cic. *Balb.* 32 mentions that the Romans had treaties with various groups of Gauls, including the Insubres, Cenomani, Iapydes, Helvetii, and likewise some *ex Gallia barbarorum*, all of which contained the stipulation that no member of these peoples could be given Roman citizenship. See Baldacci 1971–74; Luraschi 1979: 23–101, 1986: 44–5; Peyre 1979: 64; Gabba 1983: 44, 1986*a*, 33–4, 1990: 76.

[60] Ascon. 3 Clark. See Mouritsen 1998: 106–8, who argues that Asconius may be wrong on this point, and that this right was possibly not introduced until later in the century.

[61] Cf. Kremer 1994: 124 referring to Cic. *Phil.* 12. 10, praising the opposition of the province of Gallia, i.e. Cisalpine Gaul, to Antony, this despite the fact that they were thought to have been alienated from the Senate because of their long-standing exclusion from the citizenship ('propter multorum annorum iniurias').

[62] Suet. *Caes.* 8.

[63] Badian 1966*b*: 913 argues that both Gallic provinces were held by L. Murena

Gauls either side of the Alps, seemed willing to treat the Transpadanes as Roman citizens, probably recruiting from them for his legions and founding the colony of Novum Comum.[64] Certain senators clearly regarded all this as unacceptable and illegal, as M. Marcellus' notorious beating of an important member of the colony exemplified.[65] The political moves in the Senate against Caesar's command in 51 BC led to a frightening rumour which reached Cicero in Campania, to the effect that Caesar had ordered the Transpadani to appoint magistrates and form themselves into communities of Roman citizens.[66] Cicero seems to have taken this as a serious sign of impending civil war in Italy. The legal status of the Transpadani had thus been an issue of enduring political importance at least since the 60s BC, and in the late 50s it achieved a significance far greater than the mere desires of the inhabitants themselves because of the strategic importance of the area and the disputes surrounding Caesar's proconsulship.

The historical sources reveal how the *causa Transpadanorum* was debated and manipulated for various political ends.[67] But there is always more to legal disputes than mere rights and privileges, especially when questions of communal identity are at stake. And these issues were central to the question of whether or not the Latins of Gallia Cisalpina, who mostly lived north of the Po, could be granted the citizenship and thereby become Romans, and whether their region could be freed from its status as a province and become a part of Italy.[68] The extra-legal dimension to this controversy will have revolved around the extent to which Romans found the idea of admitting Gauls to their community repugnant, a debate which can be seen reflected in the variant accounts of the Gallic invasion of Italy in the sources. Myths of

and his brother Gaius as legate in 64–63 BC as a response to disturbances in the Cisalpine region in 65.

[64] Cf. Brunt 1987: 202, 698 who thinks it likely that Caesar enlisted not merely Roman citizens but also Latin Transpadanes from Gallia Cisalpina during the Gallic Wars.

[65] Cic. *Att*. 5. 11. 2; Plut. *Caes*. 29; App. *B.C*. 2. 26; cf. Gelzer 1968: 174–5; Luraschi 1979: 401–506 for extended discussion; Mouritsen 1998: 107–8.

[66] Cic. *Att*. 5. 2. 3.

[67] Cic. *Off*. 3. 88: 'male etiam Curio, cum causam Transpadanorum aequam esse dicebat, semper autem addebat "vincat utilitas".' ('Curio was acting poorly when he would admit that the cause of the Transpadanes was just but then add "let advantage prevail".')

[68] App. *B.C*. 5. 22, on the liberation of Cisalpine Gaul from provincial status; cf. Dio 48. 12. 5.

origin and descent were important in much ancient ethnography as they were thought to be reflective of the moral character of a people. This is why they were so hotly contested, quite apart from their inherent antiquarian fascination.[69] In the case of the Gauls, the most commonly occurring account represented their arrival as catastrophic and their presence as unwelcome. The versions represented in the narratives of Trogus and Livy set out to counter this tendency, in order to establish the legitimacy of the Gallic presence in the north. They emphasize the venerable antiquity of the Gallic presence in Italy through a synchronism with the thoroughly respectable foundation of Massilia in which, according to Livy, they assisted, and they also civilize the invasion, turning it into something more like a Greco-Italian migration or colonial narrative. Both of these aspects serve to neutralize the most obnoxious features of the origins of the Gallic presence in Italy, which other versions dramatized vividly. Gallic invasions were a very present danger in the first century BC, and were by no means merely a thing of the distant Roman past. The Cimbric invasion was still a recent event, the awful memory of which was exploited by Caesar in the 50s BC with his scare stories about the intentions of the migratory Helvetii and Ariovistus the German.[70] Pliny's character Helico shows how the story of the first Gallic invasion of Italy continued to react to stimuli from contemporary events which seemed to suggest that Gauls were still a threat and that they wanted to invade Italy again. None of this can have been helpful to those communities north of the Po who wanted to become Roman but were still called Galli by Romans, particularly the Cenomani of the region around Brixia and the Insubres of Milan. How could they dissociate themselves from the persistently vicious reputation of the transalpine Galli and redefine their history as less barbaric, and more Italian? They could not deny their past or pretend they were Trojans like the Romans, but they could give themselves a more civilized myth of origin, one which distanced the character of their entry into Italy from that of later would-be Gallic invaders and approximated them more closely to the Greek and Italian ideal.

The continued resistance on the part of some Romans to the

[69] See also pp. 75–9.

[70] Caesar *B.G.* 1. 10. 2 on the Helvetii; ibid. 1. 33. 3–4 for Ariovistus and the Germans compared with the Cimbri and Teutones.

idea of granting the citizenship to the Transpadani, which came to a head in the years before the outbreak of the Civil War, was more than simply a result of reactionary political manoeuvring about legal categories. It was closely connected to the important question of the relationship between Gallia and Italia in the region north of the Apennines, and the extent to which they were thought to be mutually exclusive regions in legal, ethnic, and moral terms. Caesar supported the claim of the Transpadani to the citizenship and, according to Appian, he was also in favour of including Gallia Cisalpina within Italy, a point which may be reflected in his customary usage in the *De Bello Gallico*, where he uses the term 'Italia' of his province south of the Alps much more frequently than 'Gallia'.[71] Given the abundant evidence for the controversy surrounding the issue, there was presumably an equivalent, opposite tendency among those, such as M. Marcellus, who opposed the granting of the citizenship, to draw a much harder moral boundary between Gallia and Italia along the legal boundary as an argument against Caesar's position that the Transpadani deserved the citizenship.

In the *Third Philippic*, delivered in December 44 BC, before the suspension of its provincial status, Cicero described the region as 'the flower of Italy'. This was still a controversial view with which not all Romans were in agreement. Indeed Cicero himself refers to it elsewhere in the speeches against Antony by its official name, provincia Gallia, though always in a laudatory manner on account of its stout resistance to his current arch-enemy. However, in order to distinguish it from Long-Haired Gaul over the Alps, some, including Varro and Hirtius but not Caesar, called the province Gallia Togata, a name which acknowledged the anomalous presence of a large number of Roman citizens within a Roman province.[72] It was nevertheless still felt appropriate in the

[71] Cf. App. *B.C.* 5. 3. See Chilver 1941: 13. For Caesar's usage, see e.g. *B.G.* 1. 10. 3; 2. 35. 2; 3. 1. 1; 5. 1. 1; 6. 44. 3; 7. 1. 1. Gallia Cisalpina is used only once: 6.1.2. Gallia—or provincia—citerior is employed more frequently, but not as often as Italia: see 1. 10. 5, 24. 3, 54. 3; 2. 1. 1; 5. 1. 5; 8. 23. 3, 54. 3.

[72] Cisalpine Gaul as part of Italia: Cic. *Phil.* 3. 13: 'flos Italiae, illud firmamentum imperi populi Romani, illud ornamentum dignitatis' ('The flower of Italy, that bulwark of the power of the Roman people, that ornament of our reputation'); Gallia Togata: *ibid.* 8. 27: 'Galliam togatam . . . remitto, comatam postulo' ('Togate Gaul I give up . . . but I demand Long-Haired Gaul'); cf. Hirtius *B.G.* 8. 24. 3, 52. 1; Varro fr. 320 Funaioli; Mel. 2. 4. 2; Plin. *N.H.* 3. 112; Dio 48. 12. 5; provincia Gallia: Cic. *Phil.* 3. 38: 'provinciam Galliam citeriorem, optimorum et

late Republic to ridicule northerners, even Romans, for their Gallic associations, as did Cicero himself, referring to Piso Caesoninus's trouser-wearing relations. Piso's mother came from the Calventii, who were presumably a respectable family from Placentia, a long-established Latin colony that had been Roman since the Social War. But Cicero went much further than this. In an interesting fragmentary passage of invective from his speech against Piso, Cicero seems to imply that his maternal grandfather was originally a Gaul—Asconius glosses this as meaning a Gaul from over the Alps—who had insinuated himself into the colony. Cicero says that he began as a 'Gallus', became a 'Gallicanus', an interesting and unusual term which seems to mean an inhabitant of the Roman province(s) of Gallia, and ended up a semi-Placentine.[73] Elsewhere, he accuses Piso of having Transalpine blood.[74] In the same vein Cicero gives him the rather laboured satirical name Caesoninus Semiplacentinus Calventius, and abusively calls him an Insubrian in a passage where he also extols the unanimity of Italia in supporting his own recall from exile.[75] Although the common name for the province they lived in remained Gallia, the contemporary inhabitants of the north were not usually called Galli in the late Republic, while even those north of the Po, many of whom still belonged to peoples considered Gallic by the Romans, tended rather to be termed

fortissimorum amicissimorumque rei publicae civium' ('the province of Nearer Gaul whose citizens are the finest and bravest and best disposed towards the Commonwealth'); 4. 9: 'laudatur provincia Gallia . . . ab senatu, quod resistat Antonio' ('the province of Gaul is praised . . . because it stands up to Antony'); 7. 11: 'provinciam . . . fidelissimam et optimam, Galliam' ('Gaul, the most faithful and excellent province'); duae Galliae ('the two Gauls'): Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 3 (cf. *Att.* 1. 19. 2); citerior Gallia ('Nearer Gaul'): Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 39: Gallia: *Att.* 1. 1. 2; *2 Verr.* 1. 34; Gallia Cisalpeina or Cis Alpeis ('Cisalpine Gaul' or 'Gaul this side of the Alps'): *RS* i. 461–77 (*CIL* I^2 592: the *lex Rubria* or *lex de Gallia Cisalpina*), Col. 1. l. 7, Col. 2. ll. 3, 26, 53–4. See Badian 1966*b*: 906–7.

[73] *Pis.* fr. 10 Clark ap. Ascon. 4 Clark. For *Gallicanus* as an adjective referring to legions in northern Italy, see Cic. *Cat.* 2.5 (*Gallicanis legionibus*); and to the transalpine province, see Cic. *Quint.* 15, 79 (*saltum Gallicanum*). See also Varro *R.R.* 1. 32. 2 where the location of the *Gallicani quidam* referred to as using a dialect Latin word for vegetables (*legarica* instead of *legumina*) is not specified. They must, however, be Latin speakers, and therefore inhabitants of the province of Gallia, whether north or south of the Alps, and not simply Gauls. Compare the term *Hispaniensis*, as opposed to *Hispanus*: cf. Mart. 12, *praef.*; Vell. 2. 51. 3.

[74] Cic. *In Sen.* 15.

[75] Cic. *Pis.* 53, 14, 34 respectively. See also frr. 11, 12 Clark for further insults playing on his northern background, with Syme 1937: 130–1.

Transpadani, at least by Cicero, Caelius, and Catullus, who identifies himself as one.[76] Yet even this may not have been simply a geographically descriptive name without any pejorative connotations. There was still space in the orator's repertoire for resurrecting old prejudices connecting the Roman inhabitants of the colonies and *municipia* of Cisalpine Gaul with the Galli of history and those who still lived north of the Alps. There were still those for whom anyone from north of the Apennines was little better than a trousered barbarian, whatever their background.[77]

It is within this context of tense political debate about the Transpadani lasting for several years that we might envisage the creation and circulation of Livy's story of the Gallic invasion. The origins of many of its more positive elements may lie in the efforts of Transpadane intellectuals to redefine their origins. Livy's story nevertheless contains within it tensions between differing views on the matter which reflect both sides of the debate as to the historical significance of the Gallic invasion and its relevance to the question of whether the two main groups of Gauls north of the Po, the Cenomani and Insubres (both of whom are numbered among the invading tribes in Livy's story and, at least in the case of the Insubres, were still in some sense existing as ethnic communities) could be admitted to the citizenship and become Romans.[78] An optimistic reading of the story would stress the Italian-ness of the

[76] Cic. *Fam*. 2. 17. 7 (mentioning *alarii Transpadani*, auxiliaries not taken to Cilicia), 8. 1. 2 (Caelius), 12. 5. 2, 16. 12. 4; *Att*. 5. 2. 3, 7. 7. 6; *Off*. 3. 88; *Phil*. 10. 10, where Cicero distinguishes between Gaul, the Transpadani and Italy among those who oppose Antony, unlike *Fam*. 12.5.2: 'praeter Bononiam, Regium Lepidi, Parmam totam Galliam tenebamus . . .' ('Besides Bononia, Regium Lepidi and Parma we held the whole of Gaul'); Caes. *B.C*. 3. 87. 4: 'coloniae Transpadanae' ('Transpadane colonies'); for an alternative incorporating the idea of Gallia, *Phil*. 2. 76: 'municipia coloniasque Galliae' ('the communities and colonies of Gaul'); Cat. 39. 10–13: 'si . . . esses . . . Transpadanus, ut meos quoque attingam.' ('If you were a Transpadane . . . to refer to my own folk'). For a later example of Transpadane local attachments, see Plin. *N.H*. 1, *praef*., quoting from 'Catullum, conterraneum meum' ('Catullus, my fellow countryman').

[77] Cf. the satirical verses quoted by Suetonius (*Caes*. 80. 2) relating to Caesar's supposed appointment of Gauls as senators, probably members of ancient Roman or Latin colonies with some perhaps from the newly enfranchized Transpadani: 'Gallos Caesar in triumphum ducit, idem in curiam; / Galli bracas deposuerunt, latum clavum sumpserunt' ('Caesar led the Gauls in triumph and into the Senate; the Gauls took off their trousers and put on the senator's toga'); with Syme 1939: 79; Foraboschi 1992: 105. For possible Transpadanes among Caesar's new senators, see Syme 1938: 15; Wiseman 1971: 20. Cf. also Cicero's jibes against Antony for wearing Gallic attire: *Phil*. 2. 76.

[78] Str. 5. 1. 6, 10 for the survival of the Insubres.

Gauls' entry into Italy, their city foundations, and their divine guidance, while a negative reading might equally well emphasize their close connections with Ambigatus' Bituriges and the other hostile tribes of Gaul mentioned in the story, that Caesar had just conquered. So long as the Transpadanes continued to represent themselves as descendants of invaders, it would always be an option for Romans to imagine them as barbarian outsiders. The fact that Livy uses the story as an introduction to the tale of the sack of Rome by the Gauls, which, if any, was *the* episode in Roman history that symbolized the enmity between the two peoples, is suggestive of how a rather more negative reading of even this positive version of the story was entirely possible.

How central a role such stories played within the political debate is not clear. Too little is known about the rhetoric employed on the occasions when the question was discussed in the Senate or before the people. But if there is enough evidence to suggest that the dispute over the claim of the Transpadani to the citizenship prompted a debate as to the status of its inhabitants and the region as a whole, stories such as Livy's may have played a part in shaping, or legitimating, a range of political attitudes towards the question in Italy and Rome. Who was, or could be, a Roman? Where did Italy stop and Gaul begin? These were difficult conceptual questions relating to profound issues of communal identity and geographical definition, answers to which could be framed only by recourse to myth and history. And the myths kept changing as attitudes shifted. During the 150-year period following the conquest of the north in the 190s BC, the inhabitants of Gallia south of the Alps ceased to be Galli, became Transpadani, and then Romans. At the same time as Caesar was conquering the Gauls over the Alps, and Cicero was stirring up memories of the atavistic hatred between Romans and Gauls in support of Caesar's command in 56 BC, they were on the way to becoming Romans.

4: THE GALLIC INVASION AND THE CREATION OF ITALY

That Gallia could become Italia and Gauls become Romans implies a remarkable change in the kinds of answers given by Romans to questions about the nature of their own community, surely inconceivable in the early second century BC. Yet the

boundaries of Italia had always been on the move and there was never one solid geographical concept of Italia on which all Romans agreed. Its solidity and significance were negotiable and symbolic, not physical and static. Italia in the Republic came to prominence as a symbol of Roman imperial control over other communities within it. It also came to imply a certain sense of community between all the peoples who lived there, Romans included, and who fought together in wars against common external enemies, such as the Gauls.[79] Eventually it was applied to all of Italy from the Alps to the southern tip of the peninsula, but for a long period in the late Republic there was considerable uncertainty as to whether Italia should include Cisalpine Gaul or not. This was in itself nothing new, but the reasons why it happened are significant.

Italy had a long history of changing its geographical definition and its meaning. Strabo cites Antiochus of Syracuse who in the fifth century BC had already noticed that the area covered by the term 'Italia' and by peoples called Italian had expanded outwards from the Straits of Messina up the coasts in each direction, to Metapontum in the east and the River Laus in the north. Tarentum was therefore not in Italia, but in Iapygia.[80] This tendency on the part of Greeks to extend the area included within Italia seems to have continued, and the word, along with the idea, at some period, perhaps in the fourth century BC, must have been adopted by the Romans under whose tutelage the extent of Italia continued to be enlarged.[81]

From what little is known, the Pyrrhic War seems to have been important in the development of the Roman idea of Italia as a symbol of Roman *imperium* over a wide area of land, far beyond the extent of Roman territory. Polybius remarks that it was at this time, the early third century BC, that the Romans began to lay hands on the rest of Italia 'as if it was their own possession and no longer a foreign country', and that it was in the aftermath of the Pyrrhic War that they finally subdued all the peoples of Italy,

[79] Cf. the *lex Agraria* of 111 BC (*FIRA* 1. 8: 21, 50) for the *locus classicus* regarding the military bonds between Rome, its allies, and Italia: 'socii nominisve Latini quibus ex formula togatorum milites in terra Italia imperare solent.' ('the allies or those of the Latin Name from whom the Romans are accustomed to require soldiers within the land of Italy according to the schedule of those who wear the toga.') Cf. Brunt 1988: 113–14.

[80] Str. 6. 1. 4; Antiochus *FGH* 555f3.

[81] Cf. Lackeit and Philipp 1918 for a general account.

except for the *Keltoi*.[82] Polybius' judgement is perceptive, if somewhat anachronistic in that the Celts of the north were probably not considered to belong to Italia in any sense in the early third century BC. At this time what lay beyond the Apennines was all Gallia, where the Galli lived, and beyond that, *terra incognita*. There is one tantalizing reference to an early picture of Italia, whether cartographic or figural is unclear, painted on the wall of the Temple of Tellus which was constructed probably in 268 BC or soon after by the consul P. Sempronius Sophus, in celebration of his victory over the Picentes in that year. Assuming that the depiction also dated to the foundation of the temple and was not a later addition, its association with Sempronius' triumph suggests that the victory in Picenum was regarded as signalling the completion of the conquest of Italia.[83] It would seem then that one prevailing idea among Romans, or at least in the mind of the dedicator of the temple, was that Italia was already an important geographical concept, and that the Romans had now conquered it by defeating the Picentes. The foundation of the colonies of Ariminum and Beneventum at either end of Italia in the same year seems to point in the same direction.[84] That there was, however, some uncertainty at the time about what exactly constituted the completion of the conquest of Italia is suggested by the fact that the next few years until the outbreak of the First Punic War in 264 BC were taken up by local campaigns against the Sallentini, in Umbria and at Volsinii in Etruria. Florus comments on the last of these that the Volsinians were the last of the Italians to come into the Roman alliance.[85] Perhaps the consuls who won these later victories also attempted to lend lustre to their achievements by drawing on the triumphal imagery of Italia.

By the 260s BC, then, it seems from the available evidence that Romans considered that Italia was geographically equivalent to the peninsula, that Gallia (i.e. everything beyond Picenum) was not included within it, and that they regarded Italia as in some sense theirs, insofar as they had come to exercise their hegemony over all of it. At this period in the early-to-mid third century BC they had only recently begun to operate beyond the Apennines.

[82] Pol. 1. 6. 8.

[83] See also Wiseman 1986: 91. On the conquest of north-east Italy, see Brizzi 1995.

[84] Purcell 1990*b*: 10.

[85] Florus 1. 16.

They had already effectively conquered the Senones in the 290s and 280s, and had begun to fight against the Boii. But they had not yet crossed the mountains into their territory, and would not do so until 225 BC in the wake of the Battle of Telamon. The Gauls were at this stage still mostly outside the range of Roman armies and orders, while the Alps were very far away, if there at all on Roman maps. If, then, everything beyond the Apennines was still undifferentiated Gallia at this stage, there will have been no need for a migration story to explain the Gauls' presence south of the Alps. For the story of the Gallic invasion is surely predicated upon the need to explain why there were Gauls living on soil which had once been inhabited by Etruscans and had thus in some sense once belonged to Italia. If, in the early third century BC, the conceptual boundary between Italia and Gallia simply rested on the Apennines, there would have been nothing to explain.

A suitable context for the development of stories about a former period of Etruscan domination in the north overthrown by Gallic invasions might be sought in the late third and early second centuries, when the Romans themselves started to move into the north in earnest and began to annex Gallia to Italia. The idea would be that these came to prominence among Romans as a means of explaining anew the historical relationship between the great plain of the north, then coming under their control, and the Italia they had already conquered, and, perhaps, as a legitimation of this conquest as the recovery of a lost part of Italia. The experience of the great invasion of 225 BC which, according to Polybius, involved the combined forces of Gauls from both north and south of the Alps acting in concert in an attempt to invade Italia should have been formative in this regard. Polybius singles it out as the first occasion on which the Italians felt that they were fighting to defend themselves from a common danger, and not merely to help the Romans.[86]

Between 268 and 148 BC, when they were not fighting against Carthaginians or Greeks, the Romans were constantly active in the north, fighting wars, founding colonies, centuriating the land, building roads. At the start of this period, the evidence suggests that Italia did not include the north. At the end, it seems, from Cato and Polybius, that it did. But not in every sense, for legally at least the north continued to be excluded from Italia until 42 BC.

[86] Pol. 2. 23. 12; cf. Mazzarino 1966: 101.

Why was this the case? The previous history of the concept of Italia shows that it had never simply been territorially defined as a country with fixed borders. It had always been a flexible entity and variant conceptions of its extent had presumably always been in circulation. There was one, administrative boundary between Italia and Gallia in the late Republic the significance of which was undisputed, yet even so not absolute. For the Rubicon was not an international boundary between two mutually exclusive lands, so much as the southerly terminus of the authority of those magistrates who had Cisalpine Gaul assigned to them as their province. Italia could, and did, therefore, extend beyond it in the imagination of the Romans, and sometimes in their terminology too, before the abolition of the provincial status of the north in 42 BC.

What factors led to, and limited, the change from Gallia to Italia in the Romans' perception of the north? Why did it happen, and why did it take the apparently uncertain course that it did? The term 'Italia' as it appears in our sources seems to have a variety of legal and symbolic meanings. The question of how the north became part of Italia has tended to be approached from the legal perspective.[87] But laws can only explain when and how the change occurred, not why or why not, which are by far the more interesting questions. To understand why Gallia had started on its journey to becoming Italia by the second century BC and yet why this change did not receive legal recognition until the end of the Republic, we need to unpack the symbolic significance of Italia, and investigate how its imagined boundaries related to administrative geography.[88]

In one of the first large-scale treatments of Cisalpine Gaul, Chilver posited a difference in kind between the terms 'Italia' and 'Gallia', as between regions geographically and ethnographically defined.[89] The change from Gallia to Italia in the north, he argued, was effected by the steady change in its culture with the spread of urbanism and the Latin language which made it look less Gallic and more like the rest of Italy.[90] By the end of the Republic, the

[87] Cf. Luraschi 1979 for an exhaustive treatment of the issues; with id. 1986 for further reflections on the significance of the constitutional aspects of the Romanization of the north.

[88] For recent treatments of this theme, see De Libero 1994; Massa 1996: 9–44 on Cato, Coelius Antipater, Calpurnius Piso, and Italia.

[89] Chilver 1941: 13–15.

[90] Cf. Ewins 1955: 77 ff.; Brunt 1987: 169.

transformation was complete and the provincial status of Gallia was consequently abolished. There is clearly much truth in this approach, but there is more to the problem than just a story of unproblematic, evolutionary development. There were different conceptions of Italy in currency at the same time and by the late Republic they were increasingly in competition with one another, as revealed in the bitter conflict engendered by the claim of the Transpadani to citizenship.

The earliest suggestion of ambivalence about the relationship of the north to Italia appears in the fragments of Cato's *Origines*. For, despite many uncertainties, it is probable that two different usages of 'Italia' are detectable among the scanty remains of his work. Cato's claim that the Alps were the wall of Italy does not necessarily mean that Italia extended right to the Alps: a wall need not be equivalent to a boundary. On the other hand, it is an indication that he saw the Alps as a physical feature of some symbolic importance to Italia, as did others at the same time. Events in the 180s and 170s BC concerning the Romans' involvement with Galli attempting to cross the Alps and settle in Venetia also suggest that the Alps were in this period beginning to be conceived as a barrier against the threat of Gallia, and therefore as a protective wall for Italy.[91] This remark of Cato's can be taken together with another possible fragment of the *Origines* which may, with some caution, be interpreted as suggesting that Cato thought that there had once been an ancient Etruscan empire over almost all Italy.[92] If, as seems feasible, Cato, like Polybius, knew and wrote about the Etruscan period of domination in the plain of the Po, it might follow that Cato meant it to be included within his conception of ancient Italy. This argument is admittedly constituted from a series of shaky inferences from very uncertain evidence, but, on the other hand, it seems not entirely implausible. If these fragments seem to suggest that Cato had a notion that the north had once been united with Italia through the Etruscan presence before

[91] See also pp. 55–6.

[92] Cato *Orig.* 1. 13 Ch. = 62 Peter, ap. Serv. *ad Verg. Aen.* 11.567 describes the expulsion of the Etruscan king Metabus of the Volsci, and Servius adds 'in Tuscorum iure paene omnis Italia fuerat.' ('Almost all Italy was under the sway of the Etruscans.') This may not therefore be a piece of genuine Cato, but it is nevertheless plausible that it represents his picture of ancient Italia. See Plin. *N.H.* 3. 50, 112–13 for more on the ancient history of northern Italy involving Umbrians, Pelasgi, Siculi, and Liburni as predecessors of the Gauls; cf. Str. 5. 1. 10.

the advent of the Gauls and was therefore in some sense still part of Italia, there is another fragment, also unfortunately not ideally clear in its reading or in its implications, which may suggest that elsewhere he adopted a different, perhaps in reality older, concept of Italia, according to which the Apennines were the significant natural limit and everything the other side was simply Gallia. In the fragment on the Insubres and their trade in pigs, he seems to say, if the most recent changes to the text are correct, that they transported the animals *into* Italy, which would imply that he thought that the Insubres did not live within Italy.[93]

In the fragments of the *Origines*, then, the two variant definitions of the meaning and extent of Italia which we meet in the later Republic may already be present. They may also be reflected in Livy's nomenclature for the *provinciae* given to magistrates who fought in the north, if we accept that his terminology reflects usage current in the early second century BC. For some are said to be given 'Gallia', others 'Italia'. 'Ariminum' was another alternative, a synecdoche for the province as a whole referring to its chief town and military base.[94]

Polybius, our other potential source for second-century BC ideas of Italia, seems on balance to have regarded the north simply as a part of it. He introduces the area as 'the most northerly plain in the whole of Italia'.[95] In the course of the narrative, however, he occasionally adopts a more typically Roman terminology and uses 'Galatia'.[96] In his view Italia is primarily a descriptive term

[93] Cato *Orig*. 4. 10 Chassignet = 85 Peter on the Alps; *Orig*. 2. 9 Chassignet = 39 Peter for the Insubres outside Italy, as amended in Cornell 1988; on this fragment, see further pp. 51.

[94] In 198 BC Sex. Aelius Paetus was allotted Italia as his province, while the praetor C. Helvius received Gallia (L. 32. 8. 4–5), but they both went off to the north together (Livy 32. 9. 4, 26. 1–3) Similarly, the *provincia* of the consuls for the next year is also named as Italia, and they too campaign in the north (Pol. 18. 11. 2, 12. 1; Livy 32. 28. 8–9, 29. 5); cf. Brunt 1987: 567–9 on Cisalpina as a consular province: 'Italy in fact meant the north.' See Amat-Seguin 1986: 100 on 'Ariminum' as the name of the northern province, attested in a cluster of references in Livy to operations in the Second Punic War: L. 24. 44. 3, 28. 38. 13 ('Ariminum—ita Galliam appellabant') ('Ariminium—this was the name they used for Gaul'), 30. 1. 9. Mel. 2. 4 (on Ariminum): 'inter Gallicas Italicasque gentes quasi terminus interest.' ('It stands between the peoples of Gaul and Italy like a boundary'). See also Oebel 1993: 129–30 on the different names of the *ager Gallicus*.

[95] Pol. 2. 14. 7. See Tozzi 1976: 40 n. 38 for a list of Polybius' terms for the north, and in general for Cato and Polybius on northern Italy.

[96] Pol. 2. 19. 9, 21. 7; 18. 11. 1, 12. 1.

denoting a particular geographical region, the extent of which he describes in detail in Book 2 where the plain of the Po is included.[97] At 1. 6. 6, Polybius calls the Celts of the north simply 'those *Keltoi* living in Italy'. He seems to have had no problem in including Celts within Italia because from his perspective its boundaries were uncontroversial and physical, rather than symbolic and problematic. Polybius' feel for Italia was thus not that of a Roman. Just as he thought that the fertility of the Po Valley was a natural fact quite independent of the culture and cultivation introduced by the Romans, so he thought that the north was, and always had been, naturally and incontrovertibly a part of Italia, independently of and prior to the spread of Roman arms and civilization. He understood that it had become Roman because of the Romans' deliberate military enterprise to make it so, but he did not think that Italia itself was a product of the Roman will or a Roman construction. Neither was it for Cato, of course: to deconstruct 'Italia' as a concept was not an option open to either of them. Cato may also have thought that Italia had a significance independent of, and anterior to, the advent of the Romans, but this was for historical and cultural, rather than geographical, reasons.

Further reflections upon the meaning of 'Italia' may also be found in Appian, where they are also couched in historical rather than geographical terms, though his approach represents a different conception yet again. In a somewhat obscure passage, he says that Italia proper consists of only the Cisapennine region, while the region on the other side of the mountains, though it too is called Italia in the same way that Etruria is now so called, is in fact inhabited by Greeks who live around the Adriatic and by the *Keltoi* who had once burnt Rome and were driven back over the Apennines by Camillus. Hence this part of the country, he writes, is still called *Italia Galatikē*, which is presumably meant to be a rendering of the, non-existent, Latin term, Italia Gallica.[98] Appian regarded 'Italia' as a term of changing geographical application, expanding within the peninsula in the wake of Roman conquest. He knew from his reading that in an earlier period Italy had extended only as far as the Apennines. He was also aware that Italians were people of many different origins, Romans, Gauls, Greeks, Etruscans, and that Italia should simply be defined as the area inhabited by all those who were called Italians. His percep-

[97] Pol. 2. 14. 4–12. Cf. Tozzi 1976: 49. [98] App. *Hann*. 8.

tion that the area covered by the term 'Italia' was not fixed is fundamentally the same as that which Antiochus had at the very start of the literary tradition. Perhaps this was a view only possible for Greek outsiders who could realize the truth about the changing history of the term, in contrast to the Roman or Italian insider who had too much invested in the idea of Italia as currently constructed to be able to take the diachronic approach.[99] Cato, like Vergil later, seems to have an idea of Italia that was antiquarian and mythical rather than historical, in the sense that for him the origins of Italia receded into the semi-legendary past and were not recoverable by means of historical inquiry into its previous meanings, or at least he was not interested in doing this. As a result he, and other Romans like him, were unable to deal with the question of what Italia was and, as a corollary, who could be Italian, in any other way than by appealing to prejudice, legend, and extreme antiquity which, it might be argued, is the way in which such issues have tended to be treated ever since, and in many places still are.

Was Cisalpine Gaul part of Italia? Could Galli become Romans? These two distinct but related questions were at the bottom of the problems that many Romans had with the enfranchisement of the Transpadanes, quite apart from any constitutional, political, or financial reasons.[100] To the first, the answer was uncertain. Some regarded Gallia and Italia as in principle the antithesis of one another. Yet usages varied and Italia was sometimes allowed to extend up to the Alps. Antiquarian justification was sought in the stories of an ancient Etruscan occupation, and the even more ancient Umbrians and Pelasgians, which showed that the north had once participated in the same ethnic ebb and flow that had affected the rest of Italia too.[101] The meaning of 'Gallia' thus changed from simply being a blanket term for all lands beyond the

[99] Cf. Thuc. 1. 3 for similar ideas on the expansion of 'Hellas' and 'Hellenes' as ethno-geographical terms, drawing on the testimony of earlier authors, Homer in particular.

[100] If enfranchised, the Latin Transpadani would no longer have had to bear the cost themselves of paying and feeding the troops which they were bound to provide for the army; this may have entailed a considerable burden of direct taxation which, as citizens, they would be freed from: cf. Brunt 1988: 120–1 on possible financial grievances among the Allies before the Social War. Their enfranchisement might therefore have carried with it a considerable further obligation for the Roman treasury and for that reason have been another cause of opposition among Romans: the north was a fertile recruiting ground in the Republic: see ibid. 276 for references (adding Cic. *Fam.* 2. 17. 7).

[101] Plin. *N.H.* 3. 112–13.

Apennines inhabited by Galli to being a contingent designation, at least for the area south of the Alps, for it came to be believed, perhaps in the period of the Roman conquest in the late third and early second centuries BC, that there had been a time before it had become Gallia, when it had been part of Italia. Yet it was undeniable that there were Galli still in residence, and this takes us on to the second question raised above, could Galli ever become Romans? Many seem to have thought that this was not possible, just as many also recoiled from the notion that the north could be part of Italia, for if Galli could not become Romans, then Gallia, where Galli lived, could not be Italia.

But attitudes changed. By the mid first century BC there were many among the Galli of the north who wanted to belong to the Roman Italy by which they had been conquered, and there were even some Romans who thought this would be a desirable change. There had been no further wars against the Gauls of the plain either side of the Po, and no revolts after the conclusion of the conquest in the 190s BC. The Cenomani were ordered to disarm in 187 BC, but on appeal to the Senate their weapons were soon restored.[102] Presumably they had used them faithfully in the service of the Roman army as auxiliaries ever since;[103] and perhaps never more so than in the great struggles against the Cimbri and Teutones which reached their dénouement among the Transpadani at the battle of Vercellae in 101 BC. Both northern and Roman attitudes seem to have changed as a consequence. The Transpadani themselves, along with the rest of the allies south of the Po, developed a desire for the citizenship, and wanted to identify themselves with Italia as Romans. Their aspirations, however, were not met when the rest of Italy became Roman as a consequence of the Social War.

On the other side, Roman opinions changed in some quarters. A century of peace and military co-operation will no doubt have helped as indeed will evidence of increasing civility and other factors like the spread of Latin in the emerging towns of the region like Mediolanum, Brixia, and Verona. It will have become increasingly difficult simply to identify the Galli of the north with

[102] L. 39. 3. 1–3.

[103] Evidence is poor for the 2nd cent. BC, but for an early example, see L. 41. 1. 8 and 5. 5–11 on M. Junius, cos. 178 BC, who levied troops in Gallia against the Istrians. In the event they were dismissed without fighting. Cf. Gabba 1986*a*: 36 on Gallic auxiliaries as a medium of Romanization.

those over the Alps. The vivid and immediate contrast with the appearance and aggressive behaviour of the Cimbri, who for Romans were also Galli of course, should have helped in this direction, and at least opened up the possibility for some Romans in the last decades of the Republic to imagine the Gallic peoples who lived north of the Po, not to mention the Veneti and Ligures, as part of the political community of Italia, rather than as complete outsiders or as the enemy within.[104] The change was not absolute or universal. In principle, Galli continued to inspire fear, or at least loathing, and this was a source of much of the opposition to the change in their legal status south of the Alps. That is why Caesar went off to conquer them north of the Alps. It may also explain why he and others were so keen that the Transpadanes should become Romans, in order to re-establish, this time on the Alps, the moral boundary between Gallia and Italia which was blurred by the ambivalent status of the Transpadani, so clearly crystallized in the oxymoron *Gallia Togata* which, interestingly, Caesar avoids in his writings. His triumph over Gallia and his support for the cause of the Transpadani were clearly not inconsistent positions, and they may even have entailed one another.

CONCLUSION

The stories that dealt with the Gallic invasion were deeply implicated in the faltering reinvention of Italia as a region that could include within it the Galli of the north. Most versions portrayed them as barbarous invaders, others, probably originating among the Transpadanes and other Romanized Gauls like Pompeius Trogus, were more sympathetic. The creation of a new kind of origin myth, which radically deviates from and takes issue with all previous versions told about the invasion, is an indication of the sort of cultural journeys taken by people in northern Italy on their way to becoming Roman. At first, they found themselves the prisoners of an imposed Gallic identity which there is no reason to suppose had existed among the inhabitants of the Po Valley before the Roman conquest. In other words they only became 'Galli' in the wake of the conquest, when they learnt to call themselves by

[104] For the Cimbri as Galli, see Sall. *B.J.* 114. 1–2; cf. Gabba 1984: 219–20, 1990: 77.

the name given to them by the Romans.[105] In the new Latin-speaking cities of northern Italy in the first century BC they also learnt what Greek and Latin writers had been saying about *Keltoi* and Galli and, as members of their élites came into closer contact with ideas current in Rome, they no doubt picked up what the metropolitans thought about them—the stories, the jokes about trousered northerners—and learnt about their awkward historical association with invasion and barbarity.

The Roman conquest which had created the context for the propagation of myths about the Gallic invasion had also created the political context for the eventual inclusion of the Gallic north into Italy, as Transpadanes identified themselves increasingly with Italia and tried to persuade Romans to accept them, while Romans began, in part at least, to change their minds too. In order to ease the problems entailed by finally allowing Galli into Italia, the Romans had to give them a new name, and they picked upon 'Transpadani'. Insulting connotations may still have adhered to it, but they were perhaps more akin to insinuations of boarish provinciality than evidence of outright xenophobia. This useful, blandly descriptive term allowed the unwelcome Gallicness of the Insubres and Cenomani to be forgotten and Gallia to disappear from the map of Italia. The names of the Ligures and the Veneti both survived to become the titles of two of Augustus' new regions, but all reference to the Galli was dropped in favour of the inoffensive and thoroughly Roman Transpadana and Aemilia. In the end, this had to happen, for the idea of Gallicness was still very unwelcome to Romans, a point out of which Caesar had made much capital.

Invasions continued to be closely associated with northern Italy. Apart from those of Polybius and Cato, all of the extant accounts of the Gauls' invasion were written in the imperial period. But they ceased to have any contemporary significance for the characterization of the Transpadanes. What they represented was the persistent Roman fear of the invasion of Italia by other Galli like the Helvetii at the start of the Gallic War in 59 BC, or by other groups entirely, like Ariovistus' Suebi and innumerable later hoards of Germans down to the fifth century AD.[106]

[105] For the adoption of externally imposed identities by ethnic groups, see Ardener 1989: 69–71.

[106] For Romans on Germans, see Trzaska-Richter 1991.

The idea of the invasion of Italy was one of the most profound and enduring of Roman fears. But what gave this fear its special piquancy was the prospect that any such invasion would, like the original Gallic invasion, be followed by the even more dreadful sequel—the capture and destruction of the city of Rome itself.

4

Myth and History II: The Sack of Rome

INTRODUCTION

The sack of Rome by the Gauls was an event of cardinal importance in the Romans' perspective on history. It orientated their relationship with their past, both chronologically and emotionally. For Polybius, it was the starting point for the Romans' rise to world dominance: because, as he says, from that time on they had won a continuous succession of victories over their enemies in the Italian peninsula and the Mediterranean.[1] For Livy the recovery of Rome from the disaster of the sack was like the rebirth of the city, a refoundation to a greater future of conquest and glory, and as a date it was, like the city's first foundation, a milestone from which later years could be reckoned.[2] In Livy the sack represents the return of Rome to its starting point, to the beginning of the city itself, from which the Romans set out once more to conquer, with the determination never to suffer the same fate again. The sack was, in a sense, the start of modern Roman history for the authors of the late Republic, for thereafter their sources were obviously fuller and more reliable. The path from the present into the past seemed clear up to that point, but not beyond. Some Romans told themselves that this was because all the records from the early Republic had been destroyed in the fire started by the Gauls, though there was some debate about this point.[3]

[1] Pol. 1. 6. 3–4.

[2] Livy 6. 1. 3, 7. 18. 1; Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 1. 74. 4–6.

[3] L. 6. 1. 2. Cf. Plut. *Num.* 1.1–2 who mentions the hypercritical work of one *Klōdios* (usually identified with the late second-century BC historian Claudius Quadrigarius) entitled *Elenchos Chronōn*, which argued that all records of the period before the sack were later forgeries. The discovery by Licinius Macer in the early first century BC of the *Lintei Libri*, which he supposed to be a genuinely ancient source, represents an optimistic attempt to re-establish the authenticity of the Roman past before the sack: see Frier 1979: 121–4, 152–9. The debate over the credibility of early Roman history, and the effects of the Gallic sack upon the survival of sources, has a long pedigree.

The Gallic fire represented for many the unbridgeable historical gulf that separated the Romans of the later Republic from all that had happened beforehand. They imagined moreover that the city itself, which was the living, monumental record of the Roman past, had looked quite different before the sack, that the irregular pattern of streets that made Rome look so unusual, so unlike any of its colonies and most other cities in the ancient world, was the result of a hurried programme of rebuilding after the Gauls' expulsion.[4] Many Romans in the late Republic thought that they were not even living in the same city as had existed before the fire. They were not worshipping in the same temples or looking at the same buildings. So much seemed to have been lost in the radical destruction of the city by the Gauls. The most important architectural relic of the period before the sack to endure into the late Republic was the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol, dedicated in the first year of the Republic, which stood until it was itself burnt down in 83 BC. We shall return later to this temple and the role it performed in shaping the traditions related to the sack of Rome by the Gauls.

The traditions relating to the sack can be approached in various ways: as sources for an event in Roman history, important in its own right and for the understanding of the rise of Rome in Italy in the fifth and fourth centuries;[5] or as a case study in the sources and transmission of early Roman history.[6] They have also been treated as a source for Roman religious thought and practice. So many aetiological tales cluster around the story of the sack and so much of the material is clearly legendary, if not exactly fictional, that it provides fertile ground for the historian of the religious structures of early Roman and even Indo-European religion.[7] More recently the sack and related stories have also been investigated as a literary theme in both ancient and modern historiography on early Rome.[8] But there is more to say about the historiographical significance of

[4] L. 5. 55. 5.

[5] e.g. Cornell 1989: 302–8, with further bibliography. For an attempt to make history out of the traditions, see Martinez-Pinna 1978; Càssola 1982: 735–8 on the question of the date.

[6] In particular Mommsen 1879*a*, still the most thorough study; Nap 1935: esp. 7–11; Wolski 1956; Werner 1963: esp. 70 ff., 183.

[7] Cf. in particular the various curiosities on the subject contributed by Gagé 1954, 1962; with Dumézil 1980; Palmer 1970: 162–4, 227–32.

[8] See Miles 1986*a*, 1986*b*; Levene 1993: 195–207; Kraus 1994; Edwards 1996; Grandazzi 1997: 177–8, 181–3; Jaeger 1997: 57–93.

the story as a commentary on the characterization of the Gauls in the Roman tradition and in Roman history.

The deep impression left on the Roman historical consciousness by the sack of their city was expressed in the form and content of their oral and literary traditions on the matter. It is apparent from the extant versions that the tradition of the sack was constantly remade, and at any one time circulated in a number of different versions. This is in itself nothing unusual. It was also clearly the case for the tradition on the Gallic invasion. But from the observable directions taken by the traditions relating to the sack, something can be concluded about the literary influences and contemporary circumstances that drove them, and also about changing Roman views both on the significance of the city of Rome and on the Gauls. In short, it is a story of the transformation of a memory of defeat and capture into victory and rebirth. The means and stages by which this happened, and why, are what this chapter will discuss.

1: THE SOURCES

The fullest narrative account of the Gallic sack of Rome is to be found in Livy, with similarly full but by no means identical accounts in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Plutarch, and Diodorus.[9] There are subsidiary versions elsewhere, notably the interesting references in Polybius, Appian, and Dio Cassius, all of which illustrate the complexity of the transmission of the story and its diverse sources.[10] In addition, there are brief accounts in Florus, Eutropius, and the *De Viris Illustribus*.[11] All these versions are in agreement on certain basic points of the narrative: after a severe military defeat at the Allia, the city of Rome was captured and razed by the Celts, except for the Capitol which survived a long siege before their eventual departure. There are, however, differences in other points of detail and substance between all the above versions.

Most accounts conclude with the rescue mission of Camillus who successfully drives the Gauls away and recovers the ransom

[9] L. 5. 33–50; Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 13. 6 ff.; Plut. *Cam.* 15–30; Diod. 14. 113–17.

[10] Pol. 1. 6. 2–4, 2. 18. 1–4, 2. 22. 4–5; App. *Gall.* frr. 1. 1, 2–9; *Ital.* fr. 8. 2; Dio fr. 25, with Zon. 7. 23.

[11] Florus 1. 7. 13–19; Eutr. 1. 20; *De Vir. Ill.* 23.

paid to the Gauls by the Romans. In Polybius' version, by contrast, the Gauls get away unharmed and undefeated. This has reasonably been taken as an indication that Camillus' part in the tradition was a later addition to the tradition. Aside from this, Polybius' account is at one with the other narrative sources on the second main focus in the narrative, the survival of the Capitol.[12]

Camillus' intrusion into the tradition is only the most obvious indication of its many-layered development. In addition to the above-mentioned narrative accounts, there are a number of passing references to the Gallic attack in other authors. They occasionally preserve interesting variants which further illustrate the multifarious character of the tradition. One such is the version preserved only in Suetonius' *Tiberius*, according to which the first Drusus as propraetor killed in battle an enemy chieftain called Drausus, took his name, and also recovered the gold taken in ransom by the Senones from Rome. This, as Suetonius comments, contradicts the story of Camillus.[13] The chance survival of one family tradition reveals something of how heroic narratives about earlier Roman history circulated within noble families and were propagated by them as part of the continuous and competitive monumentalization of their past. Some of these stories will have caught on and been taken up by historians, while others, like this one, failed to gain a wider currency for whatever reason and were confined to a purely familial stage, perhaps being brought out only on certain occasions for public rehearsal at family funerals and other suitable occasions.[14] There were presumably several other stories about the sack of this kind in existence at any one time, each with their own variants and emphases, and many more than ever

[12] See Mommsen 1879*a*, 1879*b* for detailed treatments of the literary tradition, arguing that Diodorus used Fabius Pictor as a source and that the other accounts derived from later annalists of the 2nd cent. BC. See, against this view and in favour of a later annalistic source for Diodorus as well, Niese 1878; Beloch 1926: 126 ff.; Klotz 1937; Wolski 1956.

[13] Suet. *Tib*. 3. 2: 'Drusus hostium duce Drauso comminus trucidato sibi posterisque suis nomen invenit. traditur etiam pro praetore ex provincia Gallia rettulisse aurum Senonibus olim in obsidione Capitoli datum, nec, ut fama est, extortum a Camillo.' ('Drusus won his name for himself and for his descendants when he killed Drausus, the enemy leader, in single combat. Tradition relates that it was he who, as propraetor, brought back the gold from the province of Gaul that had once been given in ransom to the Senones during the siege of the Capitol, and that it was not wrested from them by Camillus, as the story has it.')

[14] See Cornell 1986*b*, 1986*c*; Ogilvie and Drummond 1989: 23–4 for wise words on the formation of the historical tradition of early Rome.

made it into the literary tradition. This should be borne in mind when considering the many internal differences on points both of substance and detail which the tradition displays.

Such divergence of opinion about the people and events of the past, who did what and when, was no doubt characteristic of much of the tradition relating to early Roman history, especially crucial episodes like the sack of Rome where so much was at stake. It may also be a particular feature of catastrophe narratives. With reference to the historical tradition on the Ionian Revolt, Murray has suggested that, while victories tend to produce unified traditions, defeats typically give rise to diverse renditions that degenerate into conflicting attempts at self-justification and mutual accusation among the defeated parties.[15] In Ionia, the participant cities were the sources of the different versions of their defeat which are evident in Herodotus' account. In Rome, competing family traditions might be conceived as having played a similar role within the creation of the various narrative elements that go to make up the totality of the literary tradition as we have it.

From the various literary remains of the traditions relating to the sack of Rome, one particularly interesting deviant tradition has been reconstructed. Skutsch has proposed, reasoning from a group of admittedly often obscure references in various ancient sources, mostly poets, that there was a strand in the tradition which specifically mentioned the fall of the Capitol to the Gauls, an emphasis which would have put it in direct opposition to the main literary tradition in which the survival of the Capitol played such a central role.[16] In spite of the tenuous nature of these references taken indi-

[15] Murray 1988: 471–2.

[16] For the central argument, see Skutsch 1953, 1978. The evidence cited by Skutsch is as follows: Ennius fr. 227 Skutsch (= fr. 164 Vahlen) 'qua Galli furtim noctu summa arcis adorti / moenia concubia vigilesque repente cruentant' ('where the Gauls assaulted the tops of the walls of the citadel secretly in the first sleep of night and suddenly slaughtered the guards'); Varro *De Vit. Pop. Rom.* 2, fr. 61 (Nonius 498) 'ut noster exercitus ita sit fugatus ut Galli Romae Capitoli sint potiti neque inde ante sex menses cesserint' ('How our army was put to flight such that the Gauls took control of the Capitol and did not leave before six months were up'); but cf. also fr. 62 which refers to the women's contribution, later returned, towards the ransom of gold, which seems to belong to the other tradition; it is not impossible that Varro knew and wrote about both or had some otherwise unknown version which contained both details; Silius 1. 625 f., 4. 150 f., 6. 555; Tac. *Ann.* 11. 23, which Skutsch 1978 amends so as to refer to the capture of the Capitol, although elsewhere (*Hist.* 3. 72) Tacitus implies that the Capitol did not fall; Lucan

vidually, their cumulative effect is to suggest the existence of a tradition, mostly oral in its transmission, in which the Capitol was taken.[17] Now, what this means is another matter. It does not necessarily mean that this was the true version, merely because it represents the *lectio difficilior* of the episode, though it might be, but what really happened is not the question at issue here. More interestingly, it might suggest that there were other renderings of the tradition in which the role of the Capitol and its inviolate resistance, which are otherwise so central, were not such crucial elements. This gains in plausibility in the light of certain other pieces of evidence which together indicate that one early version of the tradition explained the survival of the city through the continuity of the rites of the Vestals in the Etruscan city of Caere rather than the survival of the religious centre of the city on the Capitol. This then raises the question why at some point the Capitol became so important in the tradition about the Gallic sack.

Where and when did the literary tradition of the sack of Rome begin? Traces of non-Roman traditions about the sack have been detected by modern scholars. Etruscan, Sicilian Greek (Philistus and Timaeus), and even Massalian versions have plausibly been identified among the literary accounts as we have them.[18] The fall of Rome was certainly an event noticed by contemporary Greek authors in the fourth century BC. Theopompus made a passing reference to it, and Plutarch mentions two other early references,

Phars. 5. 27: 'Tarpeia sede perusta Gallorum facibus Veiosque habitante Camillo, illic Roma fuit' ('When the Tarpeian sanctuary was consumed by the torches of the Gauls and Camillus dwelt at Veii, Veii was Rome'); id. fr. 12 Morel: 'Tarpeiam . . . cum fregerit arcem Brennus' ('When Brennus conquered the Tarpeian citadel'); Tert. *Apol*. 40. 9: 'cum ipsum Capitolium Senones occupaverunt' ('When the Senones occupied the Capitol itself'); Plut. *Rom*. 17. 6–7 cites verses from an otherwise unknown poet, Simulus, who wrote a poem in which Tarpeia betrayed the Capitol to the Gauls, not the Sabines as was the usual version. See McGann 1957 on the Lucan fragment; Horsfall 1981 on the geese; Clarke 1967 on Tertullian; against all of whom, see Ogilvie 1965: 720, 734 who regards the stories of Manlius and the geese etc. as unshakeable, and in themselves proof that the Capitol did not fall.

[17] Cornell 1995: 313–18 doubts the existence of this alternative tradition, arguing that there is anyway no inconsistency between it and the version in which the Capitol survived because, though rescued, it was surrendered.

[18] For a review of the alternatives, Sordi 1960: 31–6, 43–9. For the possibility of an Etruscan influence, see Bayet 1954: 169; Sordi 1960: 48 n. 1, 1972: 781–2; with Harris 1971: 24–5 for the possibility of a Caeretan source mediated to Strabo by Posidonius; for Sicilian Greek influence, Sordi 1976–7; and for the possible influence of a Massalian version, Bayet 1954: 170.

from Aristotle and Heraclides Ponticus.[19] Aristotle's version, contained in an unknown work, puzzled Plutarch, as he seems to have written that Rome was rescued by a man called Lucius.[20] Plutarch was confused by this detail because Camillus' *praenomen* was Marcus and he was unaware of any tradition on these events other than the one involving Camillus. We shall return to this point later. Turning to Heraclides Ponticus' account, Plutarch says that he told of Hyperboreans from the west who attacked a Greek city called Rome situated somewhere around the 'great sea'.[21] Plutarch does not think much of his version, but whatever its quality as history, taken together with that of Aristotle, it is useful as an indication of the variety in the reception of this significant event in Roman history within the Greek world of the fourth century BC. As Rome itself grew in importance in the fourth and third centuries, so interest in its history grew among the Greeks, as the fragmentary remains of Timaeus' detailed investigations into Roman history and religion suggest.[22] We need not say with Heurgon that the sack was an event of massive significance in the Greek world.[23] But the fall of Rome to Celts was perhaps the one thing a Greek might know about Roman history; and in the light of the Greeks' own intimate experiences of war against them in the third century BC, it is not unlikely that the sack was something a curious writer like Timaeus would be interested to know more about.

The literary tradition about the sack of Rome began as early as the fourth century BC among Greeks, more than a century before the Romans themselves began to write history. The fact that the earliest written material on the sack was composed by Greeks might provide a useful explanation for some of the variant details that appear in Diodorus and Strabo, which seem to suggest an Etruscan, more specifically Caeretan, source. Greeks could as easily converse with Etruscans as Romans after all, and are perhaps more likely to have done so and incorporated Etruscan traditions into their own accounts than Romans were. Strabo attributes both the defeat of the Gauls after the sack and the

[19] Theopompus *FGH* 115f317 ap. Plin. *N.H.* 3. 57; Plut. *Cam.* 22. 2–3.

[20] Aristotle fr. 610 Rose. Rose, it should be mentioned, doubted the authenticity of the fragments attributed to Aristotle.

[21] Heraclides Ponticus fr. 102 Wehrli.

[22] See Timaeus *FGH* 566f42–61.

[23] Heurgon 1980: 299.

retrieval of the gold to the Caeretans rather than to Camillus or any other Roman, while in Diodorus a group called the *Kerioi*, probably a garbled reference to the Caeretans, defeated the Gauls after the victory of Camillus.[24] Their emphasis on Caere's military role in rescuing the Romans is in sharp contrast to the later Roman tradition as it appears in Livy, in which Caere was merely the place to which the Vestals and the Roman's most sacred objects were evacuated.[25]

The possibility of a native, Etruscan historiographical tradition is a subject of some debate.[26] But the idea that the Caeretans created a particularly favourable version of their role in saving Rome from the Gauls which found its way into the Greek literary tradition is not so problematic. Their assistance in Rome's hour of need was one of the reasons given for their subsequent special relationship with the Romans as *cives sine suffragio* ('citizens without the right to vote'), in the view of Strabo and Gellius at least.[27] The Caeretans themselves presumably also believed that they had received this status as recognition for their services against the Gauls.[28] That Romans and Caeretans came to remember different things about these events is not perhaps surprising. The Caeretan tradition would understandably have tended to exaggerate any service they had once performed, perhaps to the extent that they also represented themselves as Rome's saviours on the battlefield as well as the guardians of the Vestals. Strabo, for one, seems

[24] Str. 5. 2. 3; Diod. 14. 117. 6. See Sordi 1960: 32–3.

[25] L. 5. 40. 10.

[26] Sordi 1960: 177–82 and Heurgon 1961: 305–9 believe in it, unlike Cornell 1972: esp. 271–81, who concludes that there is no evidence for history writing among the Etruscans, and that the mention of Caere in Strabo could have come as easily from a Greek as an Etruscan source.

[27] Str. 5. 2. 3; Gell. *N.A.* 16. 13. 7. Livy records merely a grant of *hospitium publicum* ('right of public hospitality'): L. 5. 50. 3.

[28] Cf. also the scholiast on Hor. *Ep.* 1. 6. 62, who has two accounts of the Caeretans' status as *cives sine suffragio*, one dishonourable to the Caeretans, the other complimentary. The first story was that Caere originally had a grant of full citizenship, but was deprived of the *suffragium* after a rebellion. This story explained why the list of the names of the disfranchised was called the *tabulae Ceritum*. The second version was that after the sack of Rome, Caere was given the citizenship as a reward for looking after the *sacra*, 'ita tamen ne suffragium ferret' ('with the condition that they should not have the right to vote'), i.e. they had always been *cives sine suffragio*, and that it had originally been a mark of honour. Whatever the truth of the matter, the scholiast says that Horace intended his words—*Cerite cera*—to denote the shame incurred by those who had been disfranchised for disgraceful behaviour.

completely convinced that this version of events is the correct one. He comments pointedly on the apparent ingratitude shown by the Romans towards the Caeretans, considering all that they had done for Rome in the past in defeating the Gauls, returning the booty, and keeping the Vestals safe. This, he says, contrasted with the high regard in which the Greeks held Caere, because of its reputation for courage and justice, for refraining from piracy and dedicating a treasury at Delphi.[29] It seems that Strabo was under the impression that Romans also accepted the version which he related, and which he believed to be true, in which the Caeretans retrieved the booty from the Gauls. This interesting misconception on Strabo's part illustrates the complex diversity of traditions relating to the sack of Rome. For Strabo himself seems not to have had any idea of what Romans actually thought about the role of the Caeretans, and he himself still had access to quite a different tradition which he found within Greek literary sources.

Romans, of course, did not tend to think that they had been saved by the Caeretans. They did remember with some gratitude the safe keeping of the Vestals at Caere, as is clear from Livy's account. But the Roman tradition was in general not keen to ascribe a prominent military role to the Caeretans in the salvation of their city from ignominy. This makes sense, particularly in the light of the later deterioration in relations between the two cities. War broke out in the 350s which was concluded with a hundred years' truce, interrupted by the obscure events of 274–273 BC when, it seems, Caere was finally defeated and incorporated into Roman territory.[30]

Several important characteristics of the tradition about the Gallic sack may now be discerned. It described an event of more than purely local significance, news of which had a fairly wide circulation from the fourth century BC onwards. The earliest literary accounts were written by Greeks who drew on both Roman and non-Roman sources, a feature which may be deduced from later Greek accounts which preserve variant details not present in Livy that attribute a much more significant role to Caere. Furthermore, these early Greek accounts preserved versions of the tradition that lacked some of the improvements introduced at a later stage: Polybius' omission of Camillus is the clearest example of this. The Romans' own traditions were thus

[29] Str. 5. 2. 3. [30] Livy 7. 19. 6–20. 9; Dio fr. 33.

not the only ones available and, as Strabo's account shows, they never exerted a monopoly either over narrative or reception. This was because of the enduring vitality and importance of Greek historical writing about the Romans, and the fact that later Greek authors continued to exploit their predecessors who had written about Rome as sources of information.

To return to the fragment of Aristotle mentioned above, Sordi has suggested that the Lucius mentioned by Aristotle as the saviour of Rome was not a simple mistake for the great Marcus Camillus as Plutarch thought, but an accurate reference to another character entirely, Lucius Albinius.[31] In Livy he appears as the saintly man of the people who gave up his wagon to the Vestals and the *sacra* on their journey to Caere.[32] He may also be the subject of a fragmentary *elogium* text from Rome about a character, whose name is lost from the inscription, who took the Vestals with the *sacra* to Caere during the Gallic siege and saw to their continued observance and safe return to Rome.[33] In Livy, this is merely a quaint story of humble piety, but if Aristotle's saviour Lucius was the L. Albinius who looked after the *sacra* and conveyed them to Caere, it would follow that the story which Aristotle heard had less to do with the survival of the Capitol than with the safe preservation of the Vestals and the *sacra* at Caere. This convincing suggestion can also be taken together with the version of Skutsch's proposed deviant tradition in which the Capitol seems not to have been saved. Plutarch's puzzlement at Aristotle's account can thus be resolved. It seems to emerge then that one of the earliest versions of the story of the fall and revival of Rome in circulation in the fourth century BC focused on the virtuous deeds of L. Albinius and the continuity of the religious rites of the city in exile at Caere rather than on the unbroken occupation of the Capitol; and that in this account the Capitol either fell by violence, as the references cited by Skutsch seem to suggest, or was simply abandoned to the enemy along with the rest of the city and played no significant role in the story at all. Meanwhile the Gauls got away unharmed, as they do in Polybius, with a large ransom for giving back the city after some months of occupation.

[31] Sordi 1960: 49ff.; cf. also Wikén 1937: 170ff.; followed by Cornell 1989: 306–7.

[32] L. 5. 40. 9–10; cf. Plut. *Cam*. 21. For Caere as protector of the *sacra*, see also Florus 1. 7. 12; Val. Max. 1. 1. 10; Paulus ex Fest. 38 Lindsay.

[33] *II*. 13. 3. 11, for the text.

The tradition of the Gallic sack as a whole was clearly not a uniformly developing cycle of legends stemming solely from the oral and written traditions of Rome. It was a consistently diverse and changing story, comprising many concurrent versions of various origins, geographical and chronological, within which conflicting traditions, old and new, could and did co-exist, at some points intersecting, at others continuing in isolation from one another, as the example from Strabo mentioned above suggests. Deviant renditions flourished, indeed they are not properly called deviant, because there was no authorized account. Lucius Albinius survived the introduction of Camillus as a minor player, while the Caeretans were demoted from centre stage to spear carriers, though they managed to convince Greeks that they had once performed sterling deeds for the Romans on the battlefield. But the spotlight shifted from Caere to the Capitol. Religion was still the dominant theme—it was the gods and Roman piety that saved the day in both cases—but now continuity of place as well as of cultic observance became important as Romans found it less and less easy to contemplate the utter abandonment of their city, Capitol and all, to the Gauls.

2: THE RESURRECTION OF ROME

Where and why did the story of the Capitol's survival first appear? Polybius is the earliest source to mention it in the extant literary record, and he may have got it from Fabius Pictor, if a literary source is required, so it was already around by at least the middle of the second century BC.[34] One reason why Caere's role in the tradition diminished in significance has already been mentioned: its estrangement from Rome in the fourth and third centuries BC coupled with its gradually declining importance in proportion to Rome's ever-widening horizons. In the late Republic it did not make sense any longer to have the continuity of Rome solely dependent on the good offices of an obscure and rebellious Etruscan city. Accordingly, the part played by Caere decreases until in Plutarch the Vestals merely flee to an unnamed Greek city.[35] But what led the Romans to establish the Capitol as the unbroken seat of resistance and the final proof of the continuity of Rome's history instead of, or at least as well as, the *sacra* at Caere?

[34] See Walbank 1957–79: i. 184. [35] Plut. *Cam.* 22. 3.

The invention of the Capitoline theme has already been treated by scholars looking for literary historical models from which the Romans might have taken the idea and the details of the narrative. It has often been remarked that the story of the siege of Rome in Livy echoes in several important respects the narrative of the Persian siege of the Acropolis in Herodotus.[36] Sordi has argued that Fabius Pictor's reading of Herodotus inspired him to invent the story of the survival of the Capitol. There are, indeed, apparent thematic similarities between the Athenian and Roman traditions.[37] The citadels' defenders are few in both cases, though not of the same types, the very poor and the temple stewards in Herodotus, the remains of the Roman army and the younger senators with their families in Livy.[38] Both Mardonius and the Gauls refrain from destroying the places they are besieging in the hope of persuading the Athenian navy and the defenders of the Capitol, respectively, to surrender;[39] and both Gauls and Persians make their attacks at the place in the defences where they would be least expected.[40] But these may merely be commonplaces, and are perhaps not as indicative of a Herodotean origin for the Roman story as Sordi and others have thought.[41] Be that as it may, Sordi goes on to suggest that Fabius Pictor created the story of the Capitol's survival in order to redeem the reputation of his Fabian ancestors, by countering the implication in the existing tradition that the three Fabii at Clusium had gratuitously provoked the Gauls by taking part in the battle, thereby violating their status as neutral envoys, and had thus caused the sack of the city.[42] The hand of Fabius Pictor is also detected behind various elements in the later Roman tradition which emphasize the heroic roles of individual Fabii: the story of the pious Fabius Dorsuo who strode

[36] Cf. Ogilvie 1965: 720, 726.
[37] Sordi 1984.
[38] Hdt. 8. 51 .2; L. 5. 39. 9.
[39] Hdt. 9. 13. 1–2; L. 5. 42. 1–2.
[40] Hdt. 8. 53. 1; L. 5. 46. 9, 47. 2.
[41] In his narrative of Antiochus III's siege of Sardis, for instance, Polybius (7. 15. 2–3) mentions, as a tactical commonplace, that positions are frequently taken by their most difficult approaches because of overconfidence in their impregnability.
[42] For the sin of the Fabii at Clusium, L. 5. 36. 4–11; Plut. *Cam*. 17; Appian *Gall*. frr. 2–3; Dion. Hal. *A.R*. 13. 12. 1. They all go on to identify these Fabii with the generals who lose the battle of the Allia. Diodorus 14. 113. 4–115. 2, by contrast, does not connect the Fabii to either event, which Mommsen 1879*a*: 304 ff., 343–4, took as evidence that he used the account of Fabius Pictor, rather than those of the later annalists.

through the Gallic lines to make a customary sacrifice;[43] the pontifex Fabius who carried out the ceremony of *devotio* for the aged senators;[44] and the positioning of the date of the *dies Alliensis*, 18 July, to coincide exactly with that of the Fabian heroic disaster at the Cremera in 477 BC, so as to suggest that the Fabii had paid in advance for their sins at the Allia.[45] Sordi thus presents the theme of the resistance on the Capitol as largely a fiction on the part of Fabius Pictor, modelled on Herodotus' account of the siege of Athens and intended to give his *gens* a more impressive role in the story. Fabius is also put forward as the original source of the notion that the eternity of Rome depended upon the inviolability of the Capitol, a theme supposedly exemplified in his account of the siege and elsewhere in his work too.[46]

There are some reasons to be hesitant about accepting Sordi's hypothesis. First, there are substantial problems with the idea that Fabius Pictor used Herodotus' story of the Persian siege of Athens as a literary model for the reinvention of the story of the sack. While there are similarities between the accounts of the two sieges, they are clearly different in other important respects. One obvious difference lies in the salient fact that the Acropolis did actually fall to the Persians, so the Fabian theme of the inviolable eternity of the sacred citadel for which Sordi argues cannot obviously be traced to Herodotus' account of the siege of Athens.

Rather than resembling the story of the Capitol's survival, the Athenian tradition in Herodotus has more affinities with the alternative, perhaps earlier, version of the sack of Rome, which seems to have implied that the city's survival was guaranteed by the continuity of its religious rites at Caere, and not by the successful resistance of the Capitol. Herodotus' narrative states clearly that it was accepted by Athenians at the time that Athena herself had

[43] L. 5. 46. 1–3; Val. Max. 1. 1. 11; Florus 1.7.16. Appian (*Gall*. fr. 6) mentions a *Kausios*, presumed to be Cassius Hemina, as his source for the story (= Cassius fr. 19 Peter).

[44] Plut. *Cam*. 21. 2. Livy (5. 41. 3) probably also had a Fabius as the pontifex in this story, but some manuscripts have Folius. Cf. Bayet 1954: 167; Ogilvie 1965: 726.

[45] Fabii and Cremera: cf. Münzer 1909: esp. 1879, suggesting that the date of the Cremera was altered to suit the *dies Alliensis* rather than vice versa; with Mazzarino 1966: 246–9; Richard 1990: esp. 186 ff.

[46] See Sordi 1984: 91 referring to Fabius Pictor fr. 12 Peter, which mentions the legend of the discovery of the *Caput Oli*, as a further indication that Fabius' work represented the Capitol as the guarantee of Rome's inviolability; cf. Ogilvie 1965: 211–12.

already abandoned the Acropolis in the face of the oncoming Persians, when they learnt from the priestess that the sacred snake on the Acropolis had not eaten its usual monthly honey-cake. They abandoned the city in better spirits as a result.[47] This tradition is to be associated with another story in Herodotus, that of the miraculous olive shoot which sprouted from the charred olive tree in the Erechtheum on the day after the Persian burning of the Acropolis.[48]

These two stories together symbolize the continuity of the spirit of the city in spite of the destruction of its greatest shrine. Those among the Athenians who, against Themistocles, had construed the famous 'wooden wall' in the oracle from Delphi as referring to the walls of the Acropolis rather than the ships were very much mistaken, as events went on to demonstrate. Nevertheless, the debate in Herodotus about the meaning of this oracle itself shows that it was not immediately obvious to all that Athena had left the city, or that she wanted her people to do the same.[49] In Athens, as in Rome, the citadel was a focus for ideas of continuity and divine protection. Themistocles had to work hard to persuade the Athenians to believe otherwise, as did Pericles fifty years later when, with difficulty, he led the Athenians to abandon their villages and shrines in the countryside of Attica where they had lived continuously for generations.[50] In the end they both succeeded, and on each occasion the Athenians were persuaded to abandon their ancestral shrines to the enemy for the sake of strategic advantage, a point on which the subsequent tradition never equivocated. The Romans, by contrast, eventually came to the opposite opinion, that they themselves could not have abandoned their most sacred temple when they had been in a similar situation, and the tradition of the sack of Rome changed accordingly. The Acropolis was thus not the invariable home of the gods, the capital and summit of imperial power that the Capitol came to be in the eyes of the Romans.[51] Athena would return to her sanctuary and Athens would rise again, as the olive shoot promised but, unlike Roman Jupiter, the goddess did not seem to mind being a temporary refugee in the face of danger. There are, then, a number of similarities between these two stories of defeat into victory, both of detail and of meaning, but they are

[47] Hdt. 8. 41. 2–3. [48] Hdt. 8. 55. [49] Hdt. 7. 142–3.
[50] Thuc. 2. 15. [51] L. 5. 39. 12, 54. 7.

better accounted for in terms of the similarity of the situation and of the Romans' later reflections upon their own history rather than direct, literary borrowing or translation of motifs from the Greek to the Roman context on the part of Fabius Pictor or another author.

Let us return to the olive shoot on the Acropolis. It is the symbol of the promise of restoration after catastrophic defeat. Moreover, it is an omen stemming from the oldest extant Athenian relic, the olive planted by Athena herself in her contest with Poseidon which signalled the divine foundation of the city. As a reference to the moment of Athens' divine inauguration, it is also a symbol of its refoundation in the very midst of its deepest crisis. There are close parallels here with the Roman story of the burning of their city. For the sack of Rome came to be similarly conceived as the beginning of a new stage in Roman history. The Romans grew to believe, wrongly as it appears, that the whole city had been utterly destroyed in the fire apart from the Capitol, and it is possible that the invention of the complete destruction of Rome was influenced by the Herodotean story about Athens.[52] The Athenian story of the sacred olive tree has a suggestive parallel in the tradition of the discovery of the *lituus* of Romulus, the augur's wand with which he inaugurated the city, in the ashes of the temple of Mars after the Gallic fire. The latter is related by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who remarks on the similarity, and Plutarch.[53] The first extant reference to this story is in a fragment of the historical work of Lutatius Catulus, the victor of Campi Raudii, preserved in the *Fasti Praenestini*, but it does not appear in Livy.[54]

The significance of this ominous discovery is obviously the same as the appearance of the olive shoot on the Acropolis. It is a symbol of the rebirth of the city with divine favour in its time of greatest need. The possibility of a direct literary borrowing from

[52] For references to the complete destruction of Rome by Gallic fire, cf. L. 5. 42, 55. 5, 6. 1. 2; Plut. *Cam*. 31. 1, *Num*. 1. 2; Dion. Hal. *A.R*. 13. 12. 2; Diod. 14. 115. 6. See Roberts 1918 for a sensible attempt to criticize this tradition from other literary evidence. On the archaeology, cf. Gjerstad 1941: esp. 149; id. 1953–73: i. 75, 78; ibid. iii. 82, 220, 294, 308, 314, 334, 354, 356; ibid. v. 14 n. 1. Gjerstad claimed to have found a destruction level dating to the period of the Gallic sack. This dating has been convincingly refuted by Coarelli who places it in the sixth century BC: see Coarelli 1977: esp. 181–2; id. 1978; id. 1983: 129–30.

[53] Dion. Hal. *A.R*. 14. 2; Plut. *Cam*. 32. 6–8.

[54] Lutatius fr. 11 Peter; cf. *II* 13. 2. 17, with Torelli 1978.

Herodotus exists, both in the case of the burning of Rome and the discovery of the *lituus*. But the invention of the general conflagration of the city could as easily be explained as a by-product of the intensifying focus in the tradition on the Capitol as the sole surviving place of resistance, and as a means of emphasizing the abasement of the city in order to highlight the miraculous, phoenix-like revival of Roman fortunes subsequently, which was, of course, divinely authorized, as attested by the rediscovery of the founder's augural staff. The *lituus* itself may similarly be explained in terms other than the purely literary, or at least other than as a modified borrowing from Herodotus. The legend of the Palladium of Troy, for instance, would provide an equally suitable alternative source, whose details are likely to have been better known in Rome than those of Herodotus on the Persians at Athens. According to one version, the Palladium was sent down from heaven to the founder of Troy, Dardanus, rescued from the burning city, and taken to Italy by Aeneas, where it was later lodged in the temple of Vesta in Rome.[55] But perhaps the search for a particular source of inspiration for this story is misdirected. Roman religious sentiment, no less than Greek, attached profound importance to foundation myths and to the preservation of antiquities associated with them. Romans were just as liable to invent myths of this sort as were Greeks, and they did not need to borrow motifs from them in order to do so.

If this is right, the developing character of the Roman tradition of the sack should be approached not as the derivative literary creation of Fabius Pictor or another single author, but as the narrative expression of indigenous religious themes and historical ideas not necessarily requiring an external source for their explanation. The importance of religion for the Romans' conception of history is evident in Livy's story of the sack of Rome. The victory of the Gauls at the Allia and their capture of Rome is traced to the sin of the Fabii at Clusium, and the whole of Book 5 expands to include the capture of Veii and the banishment of Camillus in a chain of events linked morally and religiously, all leading to the

[55] Dion. Hal. *A.R.* 1. 68 on Dardanus; Cassius Hemina fr. 7 Peter ap. Solin. 2. 14 for the earliest mention in a Roman source for the Palladium in Rome; Cic. *Scaur.* 48 for the Palladium as the 'pignus nostrae salutis atque imperii' ('the guarantee of our safety and our empire'). For a full account of this extremely complex tradition, see Ziehen 1949; Koch 1960*b*: 163.

disastrous fall of Rome and its eventual resurrection.[56] Livy was also deeply affected by the idea that Rome was in some way fated to suffer a great fall and rebirth in that particular year, the three-hundred-and-sixty-fifth year of the city, the end of the first *magnus annus* ('great year') of the city's existence.[57] Whether attributed to the *sacra* at Caere or the Capitol at Rome, continuity of religious observance and maintenance of the customary pieties in the face of adversity was the explanation of their survival that most appealed to later Romans and found its consummation in Livy's grand narrative.[58]

But why did the role of the Capitol gain in importance in comparison with the other version, such that it all but eclipsed it? Sordi has argued that the third century BC saw a change in the religious significance of the Capitol, within the context of a growing belief among Romans that their city was destined to rule the whole world.[59] Certainly by the late Republic the Capitol was the locus of an important nexus of cults and ideas connected with Roman power and its boundaries in time and space. The cults of Terminus and Iuventas in particular, both of which were observed on the Capitol, symbolized these concepts. Cato, Varro, Livy, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus recount in slightly differing forms a tradition concerning the reorganization of the cults on the Capitol by Tarquinius Superbus in preparation for the building of the temple of Jupiter. When consulted, the auguries indicated that neither deity was willing to be moved from its established place on the hill which, according to Dionysius, was taken as an omen indicating that the power and prosperity of Rome would be limitless and everlasting.[60] This tradition clearly shows that the Capitol had become a powerful religious symbol, and hence divinely ordained

[56] Cf. Bayet 1954: 134–7, 166; Miles 1986*a*, 1986*b*: 5–13; Levene 1993: 195–203.

[57] L. 5. 54. 5; though elsewhere he is not always exact: cf. L. 5. 40. 1, 360 years after foundation, and L. 5. 45. 4, almost 400 years after. Cf. Miles 1986*b*: 19–20; Edwards 1996: 49 for the interesting idea that, following Livian chronology, the sack also takes place 365 years before 27 BC, the date of the Augustan refoundation of the city, and the probable publication date of Livy's first pentad.

[58] Levene 1993: 195–207.

[59] Sordi 1984: 91.

[60] Cato *Orig*. 1. 25 Chassignet = 24 Peter; Varro *Ant. Rer. Div*. frr. 40, 41 Cardauns (see Cardauns 1976); Dion. Hal. *A.R*. 3. 69. 5–6; L. 1. 55. 3–5 (Terminus alone mentioned, followed by the discovery of the head on the Capitol, taken as an omen that Rome would be the *caput rerum*; but cf. 5. 54. 7 where Iuventas is also mentioned); cf. Whittaker 1994: 28–9.

guarantee, of Roman power, as well as the inviolable citadel of the city itself.[61]

It may not be clear when exactly this theme became prominent within Roman stories about the city's past and ideas of its future. That Fabius Pictor mentioned the story of the discovery of the *caput Oli*, the head whose unearthing during the building of the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was interpreted as an omen of Rome's future greatness (and supposedly gave the Capitol its name) may, as Sordi argues, suggest that he invented it, or more probably that the story and the associated idea of the eternity of the Capitol were already in circulation by the late third century BC.[62] There is clearly an implicit conflict between any such notion and a version of the Gallic sack in which the Capitol fell or played no particularly central role. This tension may perhaps have provided the stimulus for a different version of the Capitol's part in the story of the sack to be developed, to suit a changing religious conception of Roman historical continuity.

Much of what appears in the developed tradition of the sack can be better explained with reference to changes in Roman conceptions, religious and historical, rather than as the fruit of literary remodelling. This is not to exclude external influence upon the Roman tradition, so much as to suggest that it should not be conceived of in purely historiographical terms. There was clearly much more to the creation of early Roman history than the succession of early historians and annalists from Fabius Pictor onwards. Yet the historical tradition of Rome, though *sui generis* and not simply derivative, clearly interacted with and reacted to contemporary events and ideas thrown up in other contexts. One such, which is of particular interest for the understanding not only of the Roman tradition of the Gallic sack but also of Roman ideas about the Gauls in general, is the story of the sack of Delphi by the *Keltoi* in 279 BC.

[61] Cf. Edwards 1996: 74–88. Cf. Koch 1960*b*: 161 on the formula used by those taking oaths: ' si sciens fallo, tum me Dispiter *salva urbe arceque* bonis eiciat ut ego hunc lapidem' ('If I knowingly lie, then may Dispiter throw me out of my worldly goods as I throw this stone, only let the city and the citadel remain unharmed') (Paulus ex Fest. 102 Lindsay).

[62] Sordi 1984: 91 with Fabius Pictor fr. 12 Peter.

3: DELPHI AND ROME

According to Propertius, on the ivory doors of Augustus' new temple of Apollo on the Palatine, dedicated in 28 BC, were depicted the Gauls being cast down from the summit of Parnassus by the god.[63] Apollo's defeat of the Gauls at Delphi was pregnant with visual and cultural symbolism for the Romans of Augustus' day as an instructive antecedent to Augustus' own victory over foreign barbarians at Actium, also won under the patronage of Apollo. But this was not the first time that the Delphic story had been exploited by Romans to interpret their own history for themselves and others. The doors of the temple interpreted it archetypally as a representation of Apollo's and, by implication, Augustus' victory over all foreign enemies. But in previous centuries, Romans had already come to incorporate various Delphic and other Celtomachic themes into the traditions associated with their struggles against the Gauls of Italy. This can be observed from the ways in which Romans presented themselves and their history to Greeks in the initial period of their interventions east of the Adriatic, the late third and early second centuries BC, and is also connected with the rise of the Capitol within Roman traditions about the sack of Rome.

In third-century BC Greece the traditions surrounding the invasions of Greece by the *Keltoi* or *Galatai*, and particularly those about the miraculous salvation from Brennus' hordes of the shrine at Delphi, were invested with profound cultural symbolism. Thematic parallels with the events of the Persian Wars were sought and invented. After the initial invasions subsided, many Greek states and kings started to make grandiose claims about their various victories over the enemy, and attempted to validate them by drawing an analogy with the victories of the Persian Wars.[64] The assault on Delphi was central in creating the typological link between the two barbarian assaults on Greece, and it is clear that the tradition surrounding the events of 279 BC was

[63] Prop. 2. 31. 12–13. Hardie 1986: 120–5 has made the interesting suggestion that the *lactea colla* of the Gauls assaulting the Capitol depicted on the Shield of Aeneas in Virgil (*Aen.* 8. 660) were inspired by the depiction of the Gauls in ivory on the doors of the temple of Apollo.

[64] See, in general, Nachtergael 1977 for a detailed treatment of the literary and epigraphic evidence for the development of the theme of Celtomachic triumphalism in the 3rd cent. BC; with Hannestad 1993 for a recent review of the sculptural evidence.

formed after the model of the story of the Persian attack on Delphi as narrated famously by Herodotus. In 480 BC, in the face of the Persian invasion, Apollo delivered an oracle to the Delphians to the effect that he would look after his own property. The subsequent account in Herodotus tells of the various miraculous ways in which this promise was effected: the sacred weapons that moved outside the temple of their own accord, the epiphanies of various heroes, the lightning, and avalanche of rocks from Parnassus.[65] In 279 BC, according to the sources, there was a remarkable replay of these events.[66] The same oracle was again delivered to the Delphians, the natural phenomena accompanying the expulsion of the Gauls from the sanctuary were repeated with some variations, in this case a snowstorm, and heroes reappeared, though not the same ones as in Herodotus.[67] The Amphictyons, Aetolians, and Phocians all attempted subsequently to claim the title of having been the human saviours of Apollo's shrine.[68]

The two main focuses of the story are the sacred inviolability of the temple, and the all-sufficiency of the god to defend himself, themes which are already reflected in the first extant reference to this episode, dated to the summer of 278 BC. In an inscription from Cos recording a thank offering to Delphi for rescuing the Delphic sanctuary and the Greeks, we read that the god himself and 'the men who came to defend it during the barbarian incursion' had punished the transgressing Gauls, had despoiled them, and decorated the temple with the booty.[69] The Coans gave thanks to Apollo in person for manifesting himself to protect the temple and the Greeks. This formulation seems to correspond to the story of the oracle mentioned in the sources about the god's ability to protect his own, and probably reflects an early attempt by the temple authorities at Delphi to claim for the god, and therefore for themselves, all the credit for saving the shrine. But Delphi did not have a monopoly on the tradition or its reception by other Greeks. There were also conflicting versions being put about by other

[65] Hdt. 8. 37–9.

[66] Paus. 1. 4, 10. 19–23; Diod. 22. 3–5, 9; Just. 24. 4–8.

[67] Cf. Parke and Wormell 1956: 1. 254 ff.; Nachtergael 1977: 21–5, 154–64.

[68] Nachtergael 1977: 193–5 on the Phocians' exploitation of the opportunity offered by their role in the defence of Delphi, thereby securing their return to the Amphictyonic council from which they had been excluded after their behaviour in the Sacred War; ibid. 195–205 on the Aetolians.

[69] *SIG* 398. 8–10.

interested parties. The Aetolians, who had clearly taken some part in the actual defence of Delphi, tried to capitalize on it by associating their role with the past glories of the Persian Wars. They dedicated some of the captured Gallic shields in the temple of Apollo and hung them close to the shields taken from the Persians at Marathon which, according to Pausanias, they closely resembled. Later in the century the Aetolians also came to dominate in the Amphictyonic Council, and took over the organization of the *Soteria*, the pan-Hellenic festival originally founded by the Amphictyons to celebrate the victory over the Celts.[70]

As further victories were won by Greeks over the Celts in the third century BC, triumphal celebration of the victorious Hellenistic kings in the cause of Hellenism against the barbarians became a prominent theme in their self-representation. They bathed in the glory of their victories over the common Celtic enemy, while at the same time employing them as mercenaries in their wars against one another. It was important to claim a part in the great defeat of Brennus' hordes in company with one's fellow kings, to demonstrate that one had performed one's duty in the Greek cause against the ever-present barbarian threat. Antigonus Gonatas' victory over the Gauls at Lysimachea made him master of Macedonia; Ptolemy Philadelphus was allowed some sort of flattering credit by Callimachus for doing away with a troublesome force of Celtic mercenaries;[71] in his wars with Gonatas, Pyrrhus defeated a force of Gallic mercenaries in 274 BC, which, according to Plutarch, he considered the most glorious aspect of his victory.[72] The reputation of the Attalid kingdom of Pergamum was built on the great victory over the Celts on the Caicus in the 240s BC, after which Attalus I assumed the title Soter, following Antiochus I who took the title after his Gallic victory in the famous Elephant Battle of 275 BC.

The Romans' earliest and closest royal contacts in the Greek world were the Attalids of Pergamum whose own cultivation of

[70] Paus. 10. 19. 4. Cf. Nachtergael 1977: 435–47 for the surviving inscriptions recording the acceptance of the Aetolians' festival by various Greek states. They all tend to associate closely the piety of the Aetolians in establishing it with their victory over the Gauls, the enemies of the common pan-Hellenic shrine and of all the Greeks.

[71] Call. *Hymn*. 4. 172–87.

[72] Plut. *Pyrr*. 26. 9. Cf. Momigliano 1975: 60–2; Nachtergael 1977: esp. 176 on the political significance of Celtomachy in the Hellenistic period; ibid. 184–90 on Ptolemy; 168 n. 192, 177–81 on Antigonus Gonatas; 191–3 on Pyrrhus.

Celtomachy was profound.[73] It was perhaps more highly developed in monumental architecture and political imagery at Pergamum than anywhere else in the Greek world. While other individual Hellenistic monarchs used these themes in celebration of particular victories, the Attalid kindgom owed its rise to prominence under Attalus I to the victory on the Caicus. He and his successors in the second century BC, Eumenes II and Attalus II, continued to emphasize their victories over the Celts of Asia Minor in their buildings and dedications in Pergamum and elsewhere in the Greek world.[74] What seems to have characterized Attalid Celtomachy in particular was a profound emphasis upon a highly intellectualized, cosmological, and allegorical style of interpreting the Celts' role as the archetype of all that was inimical to order on both divine and human planes.[75] Yet the theological development of Celtomachy in this vein is not especially characteristic of Republican Roman art or thought. There was Celtomachic imagery produced in Republican Italy, but the extent of any specifically Pergamene artistic influence upon it has perhaps been overestimated.[76]

The theme of Celtomachy, expressed in literature, architecture, and other monuments, was a symbol that worked for all Greeks as a communal demonstration of the eternal triumph of Greek culture over barbarism, and for individual kings and states as a means of asserting competitively their claim to be the saviours of that culture from the deadly threat posed by the Celts. All this happened in the very period when the Romans were first coming into direct contact with the states of the Hellenistic world. The events at Delphi were one of the most potent focuses of this theme for both Greeks and Romans and one of the most important narrative means whereby Romans learnt about Celtomachy and about

[73] Hardie 1986: 124.

[74] On the building programme undertaken by the Attalids in commemoration of their victories, see Roux 1952: esp. 142–4, suggesting that there was a Celtomachic emphasis to the grand dedication at Delphi; followed by McShane 1964: 101; but denied flatly by Allen 1983: 71 n. 142. Hansen 1971: 292–4 connects the Delphic terrace rather with the early legends of Pergamum. The Attalid dedications at Delos and Athens are more securely Celtomachic in character; cf. Hansen 1971: 290 n. 147; Allen 1983: 31 n. 8; Hardie 1986: 133; Hannestad 1993. See Green 1990: 140 Fig. 54 for a terracotta of an elephant trampling what looks like a Celt, probably commemorating the Elephant Victory of Antiochus I.

[75] See Hardie 1986: 125–43 for a comparison of Pergamene and Augustan Roman gigantomachy.

[76] See p. 169.

contemporay Greek ideas about Hellenism and barbarity. These were lessons that would serve them well in facilitating their path to military dominance in the Hellenistic world, as they turned the cultural tables on their major opponents within Greece, Philip V and Perseus of Macedon, and Antiochus III, by succesfully positioning themselves in the imagination of certain Greeks as their civilization's greatest protectors against the barbarians, among whom they included not merely Celts and Illyrians but Macedonians as well.

Since the first Roman campaign in Illyria against Queen Teuta in 230 BC and the subsequent invitation to participate in the Isthmian games with the rest of the civilized world, the Romans had frequently and deliberately undertaken wars against barbarians on behalf of Greeks, and gained great success and popularity as a result. Manlius Vulso's campaigns, according to Polybius, were welcomed by the Greek cities of Asia Minor less because he had liberated them from Antiochus' rule, than because he had released them from their fear of the Galatian barbarians and their hubris.[77] Manlius was clearly well aware of the political and cultural value among Greeks of claiming the Celtomachic laurel. It helped to range the Romans on the side of Apollo rather than the Giants, and as outsiders they needed to make their position in this regard very clear. Romans were not unaware of their own ambivalent status in Greek eyes. Both Plautus and Cato knew that Greeks sometimes viewed Romans as barbarians. Plautus made a joke out of it, but Cato took offence.[78] They also exploited persistent Greek uncertainties about the Hellenism of the Macedonians to their advantage, culminating in Flamininus' declaration of the freedom of the Greeks at the Isthmus in 196 BC, which was a more-than-covert suggestion that the Macedonians were not Greek. Macedonians were not proper Greeks, while those who had gone abroad to Egypt or Syria had become degenerate easterners.[79] Such as these were not suitable protectors

[77] Pol. 21. 40. 2.

[78] Cf. Dumont 1984 on Plautus' consciousness that Latin was a 'barbarous' language for Greeks: 'Plautus vortit barbare' ('Plautus has done the play into barbarian', i.e. translated it from Greek to Latin) (*Trin.* 19); Astin 1978: 169–73 for Cato's hostility to Greek attitudes towards Romans: cf. Pliny *N.H.* 29. 13–14, quoting Cato as taking particular exception to Greek doctors who, as he thought, had sworn to kill all barbarians and insultingly called the Romans *Opici*.

[79] Cf. L. 38. 17. 11, from Manlius Vulso's battle speech in 189 BC, arguing that

of the Greeks, while the Romans, of course, were. Even the Romans' greatest enemies, Pyrrhus and Philip V, admitted, upon due reflection on their military organization, that they could not be barbarians.[80] In the 170s things were taken a stage further. Philip and Perseus were accused publicly at Delphi of consorting with barbarians, Celts and Bastarnae, against the Greeks, Romans, and the shrine.[81] Aggressive philhellenism had been the agenda in the Second Macedonian War, with a view to dissociating the Macedonians from the Greeks, while yet preserving the Macedonian state as a defence against the barbarians of the north.[82] But at the outbreak of the third, the impression seems to be that Romans were intending Greeks to associate the Macedonians with the barbarians, Celts included, as their joint enemies. Polybius believed a lot of this, or professed to. He too complemented the Romans on the neatness of their camps and battle order.[83] It also suited him to stress the differences between Greeks and Macedonians in his attempt to excuse their support for Perseus' cause against the Romans;[84] and, as is well known, he never calls Romans barbarians when writing *in propria persona*.[85]

Many Greeks in the second century BC, for a variety of reasons no doubt, either colluded with or were persuaded by Roman philhellenism and by the notion of a more than purely military association between Macedonians and barbarians, aimed against both Greece and Italy. History as well as the present were mobilized on both sides in support of this paradoxical notion, that

the Macedonians of Alexandria, Seleucia, and Babylonia had degenerated into Syrians, Parthians, and Egyptians; cf. also Juv. 3. 58–125 for an extended treatment of the theme, with Green 1990: 318–19.

[80] Plut. *Pyrr.* 16. 5 (Pyrrhus); L. 31. 34. 8 (Philip V).

[81] *SIG* 643 for a fragmentary Delphic inscription recording a letter in which the Romans outlined their accusations against Perseus, including the charge of having marched with barbarians on Delphi. In his final years, Philip V had enlisted the Bastarnae against his enemies the Dardani and married one of his sons, probably Perseus, to a Bastarnian princess (L. 40. 5. 10). This seems to have filtered through to Roman sources as a plan, inherited by Perseus, to invade Italy with the aid of barbarians (L. 39. 35. 4; 40. 57. 2–58. 8; Just. 32. 3. 5). Cf. Pol. 25. 6. 2–6, 29. 9. 13; L. 41. 19. 4–11, 44. 26. 2–27. 3, on Perseus' supposed involvement with Bastarnae and Gauls.

[82] Pol. 18. 37. 9.

[83] Pol. 6. 19–42.

[84] Pol. 27. 10. 3. Cf. pp. 82–4 on Polybius and *athesia*, a characteristically barbarian vice attributed to Philip V.

[85] Walbank 1957–79: ii. 176; but cf. Pol. 5. 104. 1, 18. 22. 8, and esp. 9. 37. 6, all from speeches from the mouths of Greeks.

Romans were actually closer to Greeks than were Macedonians. Perseus was accused of being hand in glove with the common enemy of humankind. Romans, by contrast, had an unblemished record of opposition to the assaults of the barbarians, not merely within Greece, but throughout their own history. It was partly to communicate this point that Polybius devoted so much attention to the history of the Romans' wars against the *Keltoi* in the excursus in Book 2, and why in the concluding chapter he commended it to his Greek readership as a lesson in how to deal with the barbarian threat.[86] The clear implication is that if Greeks need to learn from Romans how to fight barbarians, then Romans cannot be barbarians themselves.

There were other things too, of course, that could persuade a Greek that Romans were not barbarians: their constitution, politics, their laws, and their cities all distinguished them from run-of-the-mill barbarians. But within the context of the contemporary Hellenistic world, where Celtomachy was such an important theme in both culture and politics, the Romans' history of conflict with the barbarian Celts must have been an attractive point for those Greeks who sought to debarbarize the Romans, one that was not lost on at least some Romans who used it to their own advantage in garnering support among the Greek states against Perseus in the late 170s. This is not to suggest that the assimilation of Greek Celtomachy as a cultural theme was entirely cynical and late, or that it was merely a device with which to manipulate Greek sensibilities. Romans did not, and could not, reject or stand apart from current ideas about barbarity and civility. They implicitly believed themselves to be a very civil people. If some Greeks were seduced by the notion that Romans were their stonghold against their enemies the barbarians, then so too were Romans.

From the very start of the period of their more intimate involvement in Greek affairs, it appears that Romans had begun to pick up on the connection between Delphi, Apollo, and Celtomachy. Individual Romans had visited the shrine at Delphi from an early period, or so they believed, and contacts seem to have increased in the late third century.[87] After the victory over the Gauls at

[86] Pol. 2. 35.

[87] Cf. the story in L. 1. 56. 4–13, about Brutus' visit to Delphi, where he discovered his vocation to found the Republic, and L. 5. 25. 10 on the Roman dedication to Apollo in celebration of the capture of Veii in 396 BC, which was kept in the Massalian treasury.

Clastidium in 222 BC when Marcellus won the *spolia opima*, the Romans dedicated a large wine mixing bowl;[88] while a golden crown of 200 pounds and silver representations of the spoils weighing 1000 pounds were offered to the god after the victory on the Metaurus in 207 BC, where Gauls formed a major part of Hasdrubal's armies.[89] Cultic matters also provoked embassies to the oracle. The historian Fabius Pictor was sent to Delphi after the disaster at Cannae in 216 BC to inquire what rites should be carried out to placate the gods; while in 205 the Romans applied to Delphi for advice as to how to introduce the cult of the Magna Mater to Rome: the shrine passed them on to Attalus of Pergamum who was obliging.[90] By this stage, and perhaps much earlier too, Romans had successfully learnt to use the temple of Delphi very much in the same ways as Greeks, as an international stage on which to demonstrate their piety and monumentalize their victories, and also as a source of religious counsel in a crisis. The shrine responded in kind to the new masters of Greek affairs, offering sacrifices and celebrating gymnastic contests in honour of the Romans, or their patron goddess, as attested in a consular letter to the Delphians of 189 or 188 BC.[91]

Delphi was central to the Romans' stance of aggressive philhellenism in which Celtomachy also played a significant role. By the time of the outbreak of the Third Macedonian War, they even seem to be posing to Greeks as the defenders of the temple, this time against Perseus and his barbarian cohorts. By this stage, the myth of the defence of Delphi from the Celts had been elaborated by various interested parties to exclude any suggestion that the temple had been sacked or a ransom paid. The same, of course, was happening in the Roman story of the assault on their city by the Gauls. In the case of Delphi, there is some independent evidence suggesting that money was handed over to make the Celts go away, which takes the form of an unusual series of seven decrees issued by the Amphictyons after 279 BC thanking individuals who had informed the temple as to the whereabouts of missing property. The reason for its original loss is not mentioned in any of

[88] Plut. *Marc*. 8.

[89] L. 28. 45. 12.

[90] Pictor's mission: L. 22. 57. 5; 23. 11. 1–6; App. *Hann*. 27; fetching Magna Mater: L. 29. 10. 4–11. 8.

[91] *SIG* 611. 7–8; Parke and Wormell 1956: i. 265–81 on the Romans and Delphi in the Republic.

the inscriptions, but they have been plausibly interpreted as referring to articles of temple treasure taken by the Gauls.[92] If the ransom had somehow found its way into other hands, it is perhaps unlikely that the Delphic authorities would have mentioned the fact in their public records, in the light of their own story about the divine salvation of the temple.[93] Apollo at Delphi was, in reality, perhaps no more successful in defending his shrine than he was at Didyma, where the surviving temple accounts tell us that after a visit from the Celts, the god's treasury was left with one silver cup and a silver-plated bull's horn.[94]

The traditions about the sack of Delphi seem to have improved upon events in much the same ways as did the tradition of the sack of Rome. Equivocation about ransom payments, denial of any suggestion of surrender and attestations of divine salvation are characteristics common to both. Much of this can no doubt be accounted for as the result of parallel but independent developments within the respective traditions, both responding to, and attempting to palliate, similarly humiliating events. Yet the obvious borrowing of the name 'Brennus' from the Delphic into the Roman traditions for the leader of the Gauls suggests that the latter may have been influenced by the former in various other respects as well, perhaps including the increasing significance attributed to the divinely assisted survival of the Capitol within Roman accounts of the episode.[95] The inviolability of the shrine of Apollo, the idea that the Celts never set a single impious foot within it and had been driven away by divine agency with human help, is crucial to the developed Delphic myth. Similarly, the unique inviolability of the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol becomes indispensable to the stories told by Romans about the Gallic assault on Rome. The influence exerted by the Greek on the Roman tradition need not have been solely literary in character, however tempting it may be to call upon Fabius Pictor, historian and Delphic envoy, as its *fons et origo*. He may perhaps have been its first literary expositor, but by the time of his writing, Roman connections with Delphi were already becoming more frequent. Pictor should be

[92] Nachtergael 1977: 98–9 n. 332; Parke and Wormell 1956: i. 258–9.

[93] On the question of whether the Gauls got away with the loot and the various traditions about it, see Segrè 1927, 1929; Flacelière 1937: 100–2; Nachtergael 1977: 94–9.

[94] See Wiegand 1958: 257, no. 426. 6–8; Parke 1985: 55.

[95] Ogilvie 1965: 719.

taken as only one, rather than the one and only, example of Roman contacts with Delphi in the late third to early second century BC.

The theme of the inviolability of the Capitol is itself attractive and it is not hard to see why Roman tradition was adapted to incorporate it. But its inclusion also implies something about the Roman interpretation of the history of their various Gallic entanglements, that they were coming to be viewed by Romans as an actual and moral counterpart to Greek opposition to the Celtic threat, in terms both real—by appeal to synchronisms and analogous experiences—and symbolic, that is, as a parallel resistance to the barbarian threat, Jupiter and the Romans were playing the same role in their context as did Apollo and the defenders of Delphi in theirs. In his Celtic excursus in Book 2, Polybius mentions the Celtic attack upon Delphi in conjunction with the Roman victories over the Boii and Etruscans in 283–282 BC. He dates these battles by reference to the destruction of the Celts at Delphi, and goes on to say that the events of these years suggested that Fortune had afflicted all Celts everywhere at once with a sort of war epidemic.[96] The chronological parallel immediately suggests a symmetry of culture and intention between Romans and Greeks: an affinity that appealed to those Greeks who for various reasons took, or professed to take, an optimistic view of the Romans and sought to create attractive historical and cultural links with them and on their behalf for the benefit of their fellow Greeks (among whom we may number Polybius himself); and which also appealed, perhaps far more so, to Romans, for whom an association with Apollo and his shrine was desirable in and of itself, quite apart from its instrumental usefulness in winning Greeks to their cause in the late third and early second centuries BC.

The story of the Gallic attack on Delphi continued to play a role in Roman traditions but in a different context, such that the very essence of the story itself was transformed to meet new narrative requirements provoked by the circumstances of the Cimbric Wars at the end of the second century BC. Several later literary accounts of the attack on Delphi concede that the sanctuary of Apollo was sacked, and that the Gauls had actually got away with the booty.[97] The earliest evidence for this rather unexpected development

[96] Pol. 2. 20. 6–7.

[97] Livy 38. 48. 2; Diod. 5. 32. 5; Str. 4. 1. 13; Dio fr. 90; Just. 32. 3. 6–9; Orosius 5. 15; cf. Nachtergael 1977: 100–1.

within the tradition comes from Strabo, who reports on a learned debate between two Greeks on a point of Roman history. There was apparently a divergence of opinion between Posidonius and Timagenes on the subject of the *aurum Tolosanum*, the Gallic gold which Q. Servilius Caepio took from the sacred lake at Toulouse in 106 BC. Timagenes held that the Tectosages who lived around Toulouse had taken part in the raid on Delphi and, upon returning home, had dedicated their takings in the lake, that Caepio's plunder was therefore of Delphic origin, and that he and his daughters all suffered miserable ends because of this sacrilege. Posidonius argued against the Delphic provenance of the gold, offering various sophisticated reasons to justify his position but, as Nachtergael points out, he did not use the decisive argument that Delphi had not been sacked in the first place.[98] The terms in which the debate is couched give the impression that the idea of the sack of the Delphic sanctuary by the Gauls was a generally accepted version of events by the first century BC, and its propagation has plausibly been connected to the scandal and accusations surrounding the case of Caepio which served to lend it widespread currency and acceptance.[99] The development of the tradition in this rather pessimistic direction, emphasizing Gallic successes rather than their failure to despoil the god, might perhaps be comprehensible as a reflection of the pervasive fear of the Cimbric threat, which hung over Italy for more than a decade.[100] Doubtless related to it in some sense is the confused account in Appian's *Illyrika* of the joint attack on Delphi by the Cimbri together with the Illyrians. As a punishment the god drove them from their homes, which eventually caused them to invade Italy.[101] According to this tradition, the Cimbri were identified with the Gauls who had assaulted Delphi, and their European migrations attributed to the revenge inflicted upon them by the god.

This version of the tradition about Delphi is unprecedented either in previous Greek narrative tradition or in the evidence of

[98] Posidonius *FGH* 87f33; Timagenes *FGH* 88f11, ap. Str. 4. 1. 13. See Nachtergael 1977: 102–4 for discussion.

[99] Nachtergael 1977: 105–6.

[100] Cf. Just. 32. 3. 11 where the Cimbric war is connected to the sacrilege of Caepio: 'Romanos quoque Cimbrici belli tumultus velut ultor sacrae pecuniae insecutus est' ('The emergency of the Cimbric War also pursued the Romans like an avenger of the sacred treasure').

[101] App. *Ill*. 4.

various items of material evidence stemming from Italy itself. There exist a number of artistic representations of what appears to be Gallic temple-robbing dating to the Republican period. They comprise a series of ceramic medallions from Cales depicting Gauls in the act of pillaging temple furniture, on some of which Artemis is preventing the theft; a group of funerary urns from Etruria showing Celtomachic scenes, with Furies often aiding the victorious human opponents of the Gauls; and finally the relief of the temple at Civitalba, showing Gauls seemingly being chased by various divinities from a temple they have just ransacked, and letting their booty fall from their grasp in the process.[102] Nachtergael's conclusion on the derivation of these scenes is that they owe little directly to Greek representations, and that they are not meant to be depictions of the attack on Delphi, or indeed any other Greek shrine.[103] He argues that they rather represent scenes of Gallic temple-robbing in Italy. A similar suggestion had already been made by Peyre, who argued that the Civitalba frieze does not refer to the attack on Delphi, but to events in Italian history, and particularly to the temple of Juno at Pyrgi which was sacked along with the rest of the town in 384 BC by Dionysius I of Syracuse and, as Peyre argues, his Celtic mercenary allies.[104]

But these attempts to identify particular temples, Greek or Italian, as the subject of these scenes are unsuccessful. It is more appropriate to look for a symbolic rather than specific historical reference for these pieces. These are not Gauls attacking this or that temple, so much as representations of the stereotyped Gallic barbarian assaulting the temple of civilization, and being duly defeated by the gods of that world. It is in this sense that these scenes are Delphic, and it is with this Delphic tradition that Romans in the third and second centuries BC wanted to identify themselves, and with which they wanted to be identified by Greeks. The elaboration of the theme of the inviolability of the Capitol after the pattern of that of Delphi represents the outcome

[102] Nachtergael 1977: 107–8 on the medallions, 108–12 on the urns, 112–14 on Civitalba, 114–23 for discussion. See further, Höckmann 1991; Holliday 1994 on the urns. Zuffa 1956; Pairault-Massa 1978 on Civitalba. See Segrè 1927, 1929, 1934 generally on Italian depictions of Celtomachy.

[103] Segrè 1929: 616–18 had suggested the temple of Didyma, arguing that the Roman story about the sack of Delphi grew out of a confusion with the story of the Gauls' sack of Apollo's main shrine in Ionia; Segrè 1934: esp. 138–9.

[104] Cf. Diod. 15. 14. 3–4; Polyaen. *Strat*. 5. 2. 21; Ael. *V.H*. 1. 20; Serv. *Ad Verg. Aen*. 10. 184; with Peyre 1970.

of this cultural ambition for the development of Roman historical tradition, as well as the indigenous development of religious ideas at Rome about the Capitol as the ultimate symbol of the eternity of Roman power and the continuity of Roman history from the distant past to the present and, vitally, into the future.[105]

4: THE GALLI, THE CAPITOL, AND THE END OF ROME

The triumphant exaltation of the Capitol into its status as symbol of the eternity of the city *par excellence* had certain implications and corollaries, for, not unreasonably, Romans too had a sense that nothing, not even Rome, lasts forever. Two related notions are involved in the creation of talismans meant to guarantee the security of a people or a place, and they inevitably stand in tension with one another. The first consists of a confident declaration of the unconditional durability of the chosen symbol. The second, which follows immediately, is a tacit and fearful recognition of the contingency inherent in any material symbol of eternity, and therefore of the eternity which is intended to be symbolized thereby. Within any claim to everlasting dominion is implicit the fear of its demise. Anxieties of this sort may manifest themselves in a rhetoric of decline—such as has characterized much of political and intellectual life in Britain from the late nineteenth century onwards and to which the Romans themselves were no strangers[106]—or, more dramatically, they may be constructed into a myth of ultimate destruction and ruin. Though Roman religion did not provide a consistent eschatology, Romans were nevertheless prey to this second kind of response, expressing quasi-millennarian fears of the violent annihilation of their city.[107] They attempted to ward off these fears through the invocation of such ever-present symbols as the Capitol and the *sacra* of the Vestals, and by including instances of their potency within traditions about the Roman past, the most palpable instance of which is to be found in the stories told about the Gallic sack.[108] This in itself is signifi-

[105] Cf. Hor. *Carm.* 3. 30. 8–9, Verg. *Aen.* 9. 446–49 for the two *loci classici* of the Capitoline eternity of Rome.

[106] Pöschl 1956.

[107] See Sordi 1972; Baudy 1991; Kroymann 1961; Koch 1960*b* on Roman millennarianism and *Roma aeterna*.

[108] Koch 1960*b*: esp. 160–5 on the Capitol, the Vestals, the *ancilia*, and the Palladium as the guarantees of Rome's *salus*.

cant, as other indications suggest that, during the late Republic and for some time after, the people most frequently envisaged as the agents of the final doom of Rome were the Gauls.

Romans were very much afraid of Gauls. *Metus Gallicus* was not a technical term in antiquity as it has become in modern historiography, but literary references to the particular dread with which Gauls were regarded abound.[109] It was institutionalized in the form of a special decree by which, in the event of a sudden attack launched by Gauls, the Senate was able to declare a state of military emergency, a *tumultus Gallicus*, and authorize immediate troop levies. A similar decree existed for cases involving Italians, the *tumultus Italicus*. Both were only used in extraordinary circumstances occasioning panic and unusual danger for the city: it is indicative that customary Latin etymology wrongly derived *tumultus* from *timor multus* ('great fear').[110] But a *tumultus Gallicus* was regarded as the more serious of the two sorts, for on such occasions, according to Appian, even priests and old men, usually exempted, were required to serve.[111] There were particular features which made the Gauls frightening to confront in battle: their gold ornaments, their nudity, their war cries, and trumpets. But Romans could accustom themselves to these particular features by the accumulation of practical experience.[112] What gave the fear of the Gauls its special durability and piquancy was its intimate connection with Roman anxieties about the future of the city, which the story of the sack and salvation of Rome attempted to dissipate, yet succeeded merely in perpetuating.

Romans tended to be moral optimists about the distant past,

[109] Cf. Pol. 2. 23. 7; 18. 11. 2; Cic. *Font*. 44; *Phil*. 5. 37; L. 5. 37. 5–6, 39. 8, 42. 1; 6. 28. 6; 6. 42. 7; 7. 12. 7; 9. 29. 2; 10. 10. 12, 26. 13; 21. 25. 3, 13; 23. 25. 1; 37. 18. 7; 38. 16. 11–13, 17. 1, 37. 3; Tac. *Hist*. 4. 54, 58; Just. 38. 4. 9; Plut. *Marc*. 3. 4, with Bellen 1985: esp. 10; Kremer 1994: 66–8; Kneppe 1994: 54–7.

[110] Bellen 1985: 10, citing Serv. *Ad. Verg. Aen*. 2. 486; Isid. *Etym*. 18. 1. 7; Cic. *Phil*. 8. 3.

[111] Cf. App. *B.C*. 2. 150; cf. Cic. *Font*. 46: 'ut oportet, bello Gallico . . . nemo est civis Romanus qui sibi ulla excusatione utendum putet.' ('As ought to happen, in a war against Gauls . . . no Roman citizen thinks he can take advantage of any excuse not to fight.') Cf. Cic. *Att*. 1. 19. 2 on the levies ordered by the Senate in 60 BC prompted by fears of war against the Gauls, with none of the usual exemptions allowed; it was therefore presumably a *tumultus Gallicus*.

[112] Cf. Pol. 2. 29. 7–9 for the Romans' initially fearful reactions to the Gauls' appearance at Telamon, from which they soon recovered; Plut. *Mar*. 16, where Marius allow his men time to get used to the Gauls' appearance. See Kremer 1994: 21–30 for further references.

while on the whole being pessimistic about the recent past, present, and future. The mid to late second century BC in particular seems to have been characterized by a pervasive pessimism about the moral health of the Roman body politic and the *res publica*. Some of this comes across from Polybius, whose comments reflect contemporary Roman anxieties about the corruption of the moral fibre of the aristocracy and the people at large, expressed most forcefully by Cato.[113] Moral conservatism of this sort also underlay the fears expressed by Tiberius Gracchus about the ills of the commonwealth and of its citizens, and it reached its zenith in the last decade of the second century with the series of prosecutions undertaken against generals defeated in the Romans' disastrous wars against the Gallic Cimbri, in which military catastrophe and increasing evidence of corruption at the highest level revealed the Roman nobility and people as debased and enfeebled.

The events of these years reflect the same kinds of fears as are exemplified in the story of the Gallic sack. Both illustrate how the fear of the Gauls actually worked on Romans, and how historical tradition and political action interacted. For in both instances, the two main strands of Roman anxiety about the future, moral and military, come together. This is the point at which Roman historical pessimism intersected with fears of impending military catastrophe brought on by the Gauls and threatening the city itself. In the story of the defeat on the Allia and the fall of the city, it was the sin of the Fabian envoys at Clusium that provided the motive cause that led to, and explained, the extraordinary disaster, the scale of which caused the 18 July to be named the *dies Alliensis* and declared a day on which no public business could be conducted.[114] In Livy's account, the moral perspective was expanded to include a more deep-seated malaise within the people caused by the capture of Veii which led to civil discord, the unjust banishment of the hero Camillus, and ultimately the defeat on the Allia, and the fall of the city.[115] Likewise, in the search for a moral cause for the unprecedented series of military disasters at the end of the second century BC against Jugurtha and the Cimbri, populist politicians fixed upon corruption and incompetence within the Roman nobility.[116] One by one, the defeated consuls and pro-

[113] Pol. 6. 57; 31. 25
[114] L. 6. 1. 11.
[115] Bayet 1954: 134, 166.
[116] See esp. Sall. *Jug.* 31, the speech of Memmius.

consuls were brought before the people and prosecuted for their failure. In 107 BC, C. Popillius, legate of consul L. Cassius, was defeated in Aquitania by the Tigurini but saved the lives of his troops at the cost of their being made to go under the yoke.[117] In return for this humiliation he was prosecuted by a tribune C. Coelius before the people's assembly. Cn. Papirius Carbo was prosecuted for the disaster inflicted upon him at Noreia when consul in 113, as, in 104 BC, was M. Junius Silanus for his defeat during his year as consul in 109, accused of attacking the Cimbri without the authority of the people.[118] In 103, probably, Saturninus carried his law *de maiestate* which was aimed to secure condemnations in just such cases and, in the same year, he also passed a *plebiscitum* to secure the banishment of Cn. Mallius Maximus because of his responsibility as consul for the disastrous defeat at Arausio in 105 BC, while Q. Servilius Caepio, consul in 106, had his *imperium* as proconsul abrogated in 105 for failing to co-operate with Mallius and was expelled from the Senate. He was then prosecuted for stealing the gold treasure taken at the capture of Tolosa in 106 (reputedly the booty taken from Delphi by the Celts[119]), and went into exile.

This extraordinary rash of capital prosecutions of prominent individuals was followed by the equally unprecedented solution to the Cimbric emergency of Marius' series of five continuous consulships between 104 and 100. Both phenomena taken together represent the same pattern as is represented in the narrative of the Gallic sack: corruption engenders catastrophe, which in turn provokes a moral and military revival overseen by a strong and upright leader who wins the victory, averts disaster, and curbs the descent of the commonwealth into turpitude. The analogy was drawn at the time: at his triumph Marius was hailed as the third founder of Rome, after Romulus and Camillus.[120] And the crucial leitmotif that underpinned the similarity between Camillus' and Marius' achievements was, of course, the presence of the Gauls as the hated and defeated enemy in both cases.

In this same period, the Romans also resorted to a peculiar rite

[117] Caes. *B.G.* 1. 7. 4, 12. 5–6.
[118] *iniussu populi*: Ascon. 80 C.
[119] See above, pp. 167–8.
[120] On Marius' moral character, see esp. Sall. *Jug.* 63. 2; with Plut. *Mar.* 27. 9 and Rawson 1974 on Marius as the new Camillus, hailed as the third founder of Rome.

of human sacrifice which consisted of the burial alive of a pair of Gauls and a pair of Greeks, a man and a woman in each case, in the Forum Boarium. Commenting on an earlier occasion on which it was carried out, Livy describes it as unusual and not at all Roman. Its interpretation is still very problematic.[121] This much at least is clear. The three occasions on which we know the Romans performed this sacrifice—228 BC shortly before Telamon when the Romans were already preparing for the prospect of a Gallic invasion,[122] 216 BC after Cannae, a battle in which Gauls played a large part on Hannibal's side,[123] and 114 BC when Galli Scordisci were defeating Roman armies in Macedonia[124]—were all critical years in which the Romans felt themselves to be under threat from Gauls. There also seems to have been some sort of connection with the accusation and execution (also by burial alive) of Vestals for unchastity which coincided with the sacrifice in 216 and 114, and perhaps on the first occasion as well.[125] Whether there was a necessary connection implied in the rite itself is unclear. Perhaps it is more reasonable to interpret both of these extremely unusual religious events as a response to contemporary anxieties about Gallic invasions in each case, forming a ritual pattern which repeated itself on the model of each previous occasion. The extraordinary nature of the rite corresponded to the extraordinary nature of the fears which the Gauls occasioned at Rome, fears not merely of defeat but of final ruin and capture. In all versions of the story of the sack of Rome, the saving of the Vestals and their maintenance of the *sacra* at Caere was regarded as important for preserving the city's life in its darkest hour.[126] The discovery of Vestal

[121] L. 22. 57. 6: 'sacrificia aliquot extraordinaria facta . . . minime Romano sacro.' The bibliography on this topic is extensive, reflecting the puzzling nature of the rite. See Reid 1912; Schwenn 1915: 148 ff.; Cichorius 1922; Fabre 1940; Arnold 1957; Bémont 1960; Latte 1960: 257; Mazzarino 1966: 212–14; Dumézil 1970: 449–50; Rawson 1974; Briquel 1976; Bloch 1976; Fraschetti 1981; MacBain 1982: 60–4; Eckstein 1982; Perl 1982; Bellen 1985: 12–21, 37–9; Urban 1991: 141; Beard 1994: 733–4; Cornell 1995: 325; Beard *et al*. 1998: i. 80–2.

[122] Dio fr. 50. 1; Zon. 8. 19; Tzetzes on Lycophron *Alex*. 603; Plut. *Marc*. 3; Orosius 4. 13. 1.

[123] L. 22. 57. 6.

[124] Plut. *Quaest. Rom*. 83; Obsequens 37. Various texts call the Scordisci of Macedonia Galli: Just. 32. 3. 8 says they were descended from the Gauls who attacked Delphi. Fraschetti 1981: 80–4; and Bellen 1985: 37–9 discuss the references.

[125] 216 BC: L. 22. 57. 1–6; 114 BC: Plut. *Quaest. Rom*. 83; L. *Epit*. 63; Ascon. 45–6 C; 228 BC (less certain): L. *Epit*. 20.

[126] Cf. Beard *et al*. 1998: i. 53–4 on the Vestals as a symbol of Rome's eternity.

unchastity coinciding on at least two instances with fears of a Gallic invasion and the performance of the burial ceremony is highly suggestive of the intensity of the dread that such fears tended to prompt. An unchaste Vestal was as sure a sign of impending doom as a Gallic attack, and both of them were powerful portents of the destruction of the city. Dio mentions a Sibylline prophecy in connection with the first known occurrence of the rite, which warned that the Gauls would occupy the city if a thunderbolt should ever strike the Capitol near the temple of Apollo. Slightly variant versions of the prophecy are given by Tzetzes and Zonaras involving Greeks as well—their inclusion in any such oracle would at least expain why they were sacrificed, for which there is no other obvious reason, unlike the Gauls.[127] As for immolation of members of both sexes, this may perhaps be interpreted as a sort of ritual damnation or nullification of the reproductive fertility of the Gauls that gave rise to the immense size of their populations, a theme that crops up again and again in Greek and Roman historical narratives.[128]

Warfare against Gauls seems, then, to have been identified as having a different quality from that against other peoples. This difference was marked in various ways, by the performance of unusual rituals and by the unique powers given to magistrates under the terms of a *tumultus Gallicus* decree. At the end of his narrative of the war against Jugurtha, Sallust mentions the great Roman defeat at Arausio by the Gauls and comments that the Romans considered they could win wars against every people through their *virtus* except for the Gauls: for the Romans of his own day still said that war against them was a struggle for survival, *salus*, rather than for glory.[129] In a strikingly similar passage of the *De Officiis* concerning just action in warfare, Cicero distinguishes between wars waged against foes engaged with the Romans in a competition for power and glory, such as those against the Latins, Samnites, Sabines, Carthaginians, and Pyrrhus, and the wars against the Celtiberi and the Cimbri where the issue at stake was not which side would win but which would survive.[130] Here the distinction is not between Gauls and all the rest so much as

[127] Cf. Beard *et al*. 1998: i. 82.

[128] See Kremer 1994: 28–30 for references; I am grateful to John North for this suggestion.

[129] Sall. *Jug*. 114. 2.

[130] Cic. *Off*. 1. 38.

between barbarian and civilized enemies, whose aims and ambitions in warfare are so distinct as to merit different degrees of moral consideration from the Romans. But the burden of the two passages is the same: where Gauls are concerned, *salus*, not *gloria*, is the key.

The reasons which Romans would have given for this widespread feeling about the nature of warfare against Gauls are not far to seek in the literary evidence. Gauls characteristically behave like inhuman monsters in battle, and have a peculiar penchant for destruction. The Cimbri, again, exemplify the general point: according to Plutarch they decided, after their initial victories, not to stop until they had destroyed Rome and ravaged the whole of Italy.[131] In the Roman imagination, the Gauls hated them deeply;[132] and, most crucially, they longed for the final ruin of the city of Rome, having come so close to achieving it once before. In Florus' brief account of the wars of 225–222 BC, the Gauls are said often to have sworn not to remove their body armour until they had scaled the Capitol; Dio has a similar story.[133] Polybius' account of the speech of the envoys from the Cisalpine Celts to the Transalpine Gaesati before the great invasion of 225 BC has a similar emphasis, recalling their previous success against the Romans and urging them to repeat it.[134] Romans feared for the physical safety of their city, for its *salus*, when they thought about warfare against Gauls, and the principal focus of these fears was the Capitol, the ultimate symbol of Rome's physical permanence as represented in the developed story of the sack.

The nexus of anxieties that linked the Gauls, the Capitol, and the future of Rome persisted after the Cimbric Wars into the late Republic and beyond. In 83 BC, when the temple of Jupiter on the Capitol burned for the first time since its dedication, it was interpreted—whether at the time or with hindsight is unclear—as a sign of impending civil war and the capture of the city.[135] The Gallic fire came more directly to mind when Rome burned under Nero in AD 64: for it was found that both fires had started on the same date

[131] Plut. *Mar*. 11. 8. Cf. Orosius 5. 16. 9–20 for a vivid description of the wild behaviour of the Cimbri and Teutones in battle.

[132] Kremer 1994: 67 for Gaulish hatred of Romans, citing L. 10. 10. 7, 21. 25. 2, 38. 47. 9; Pol. 3. 34. 3, 40. 8, 67. 8.

[133] Florus 1. 20. 3; Dio fr. 50. 4; Zon. 8. 20.

[134] Pol. 2. 22. 2–6.

[135] App. *B.C*. 1. 83.

and that there were the same number of years, months, and days from the foundation of Rome to the Gallic fire as from that calamity to the present.[136] A few years later in AD 69, again during a time of civil war, the Capitol burned for a second time. This, above all else, Tacitus stresses, made people believe that the end of Rome's *imperium* had arrived, for even when the city had fallen to the Gauls, Jupiter's temple had survived intact. Rumours spread that the Druids were predicting that its destruction portended the anger of heaven and that the control of human affairs would now pass to the peoples north of the Alps.[137] Elsewhere, Tacitus dwells on the awful irony that the destruction of the Capitol, the *pignus imperii*, which had survived the occupations of both Porsenna and the Gauls, should have been caused by Romans of all people.[138]

This theme of paradoxical role-reversal, powerfully suggestive of a world turned upside down in the chaos of impending civil war, was anticipated by Cicero in the tense days of December 63 BC, when he was bringing to light the awful plans laid by the Catilinarian conspirators for the utter destruction of the city. Fears for the safety of the Capitol resurfaced, together with fears of a Gallic invasion. In the third and fourth of his speeches against Catiline, Cicero combines these two basic Roman fears into a highly effective piece of rhetorical scaremongering and self-promotion. In his description of the attempt by Lentulus and his fellow aristocratic conspirators to gain the support of the Gallic Allobroges in their plans to take power in Rome, Cicero dwells on the perverted morality of these noble Romans who had dared to conceive a plan for the destruction of Rome itself by fire, and accuses them of intending to settle the Gauls amidst the ashes of the city and the empire. What the Gauls themselves had not achieved hundreds of years before would be done on their behalf by Romans, and nobles at that.[139] In the third speech against Catiline, delivered to the people, Cicero expands upon the revelation of the plot as a demonstration of divine agency and favour. This, he claims, had first shown itself in the thunderbolt, which in

[136] Tac. *Ann*. 15. 41.

[137] 'sed nihil aeque quam incendium Capitoli, ut finem imperio adesse crederent, impulerat. captam olim a Gallis urbem, sed integra Iovis sede mansisse imperium. fatali nunc igne signum caelestis irae datum et possessionem rerum humanarum Transalpinis gentibus portendi superstitione vana Druidae canebant' (Tac. *Hist*. 4. 54).

[138] Tac. *Hist*. 3. 72.

[139] Cic. *Cat*. 4. 12–13; cf. Stockton 1970: 126.

65 BC had struck the Capitol and the statue of the Wolf and the Twins located there. It had been interpreted by *haruspices* at the time as portending civil war and general ruin. Cicero mentions the special games which had been celebrated in that year to placate the gods, and the commissioning of a new statue of Jupiter for the Capitol to overlook the Curia and the Forum which, he declares, had just been erected that very day. This extraordinary coincidence, according to Cicero, proved beyond doubt that Jupiter Optimus Maximus had been looking after the safety of his city, a claim confirmed by the fact that it was the evidence given by Gauls of all people to the Senate which made the conspiracy public. Who would have expected, he exclaims, that Gauls should show more concern for the safety of Rome than Roman patricians such as Catiline and Lentulus, and turn down the chance of imperial power freely offered to them by the conspirators.[140] Gauls behave like noble Romans, noble Romans behave like Gauls: a complete moral inversion, with Cicero as the agent of divine revelation and the re-establishment of the status quo; *parens patriae* ('father of his fatherland'), as he was later proclaimed in the Senate, succeeding Camillus and Marius as the saviour of Rome from internal moral collapse and the Gallic threat.[141] He would try the same tactic in 44–43 BC, insinuating that Antony was co-operating with the recently conquered Gauls to bring about the conquest of Rome.[142] Once again, the suggestion gained in plausibility because it played on genuine fears of a Gallic revolt in the wake of the death of Caesar.[143] In the years after 63 BC, Roman armies had been involved in putting down insurrection in southern Gaul among the Allobroges and fears of a major Gallic invasion from the Helvetii, compounded by news of further insecurities in the north involving Ariovistus and the Germans, resurrected memories of all previous

[140] Cic. *Cat*. 3. 19–22, esp. 22: 'homines Galli ex civitate male pacata, quae gens una restat quae bellum populo Romano facere posse et non nolle videatur' ('These Gallic men from a barely pacified tribe, the one remaining people that seems to be able and not unwilling to make war on the Roman people'); cf. Sall. *Cat*. 52. 24; Kneppe 1994: 64; Kremer 1994: 81–132 on Celts in Cicero, esp. 105–10 on the Catinilarian speeches. Cf. also Cic. *Fam*. 10. 8. 3, 6 on loyal Gauls and faithless Romans in 43 BC.

[141] See L. 5. 36. 1, 38. 4–5 for similar moral inversions leading to the disaster on the Allia with Kremer 1994: 37 n. 5; Dauge 1981: 734–5. See Vasaly 1993: 77–80 on Cicero the new Romulus and Camillus, with Cic. *Pis*. 6; Plut. *Cic*. 23. 3.

[142] Cf. Kremer 1994: 128–31, citing Cic. *Phil*. 5. 37; 7. 3; 13. 37.

[143] Cic. *Fam*. 10. 4. 4; *Att*. 14. 4. 1.

Gallic invasions, presumably involving the same exaggerated fears for the safety of the city of Rome. Caesar's portrayal of the dangers represented by the Helvetii and Ariovistus after the model and recent precedent of the Cimbric Wars, to which he often refers in the opening chapters of the *De Bello Gallico*, clearly points in this direction.[144] Caesar was able so successfully to present the Gallic threat as putting Italy itself in peril because his Roman audience was ready to believe it, for the reason cited by Sallust: Gallic wars were never thought to be just normal campaigns against a foreign people, they were life-and-death struggles, with the future of Rome itself at stake. This also accounts for the rhetorical hyperbole that Cicero bestowed on Caesar's victories in his speech *De Provinciis Consularibus* of 56 BC, declaring that Caesar's apparent victory in Gaul had removed Italy's last remaining enemy between the Alps and the ocean—the Alps themselves could now collapse for there was nothing left to fear.[145]

Gaul was finally conquered, but the tendency towards disproportionate responses to military setbacks north of the Alps remained. In the early imperial period, two military crises north of the Alps resuscitated an atavistic fear of a transalpine invasion, the *clades Variana* when Varus' three legions were destroyed by the Germans under Arminius in AD 9 and the Gallic revolt of Florus and Sacrovir of AD 21. After the catastrophe in Germany, according to Suetonius, Augustus had extraordinary watches placed throughout the city to guard against any *tumultus*, reorganized the frontier commands, and vowed great games to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, as had been done previously in the Cimbric and Social Wars. He observed the date in the calendar religiously as a personal *dies ater* ('black day').[146] But Dio adds crucial detail to Suetonius' account, for he reveals that what Augustus worried about most was not the safety of the provinces but an invasion of Italy, which he was convinced was about to take place. Dio tells of the emergency recruitment measure implemented to raise an army in defence of Italy which met with such indifference that Augustus apparently instituted a system of disfranchising citizens by lot for draft-dodging and went so far as to put some to death. He feared that the Germans and Gauls resident in Rome, many indeed

[144] See p. 1 for references; Callies 1971.

[145] *Prov. Con.* 34.

[146] Suet. *Aug.* 23. The *dies Alliensis* was, of course, one of the most famous of such days: cf. L. 6. 1. 11.

serving in his bodyguard, would also revolt so he had them removed from the city and the guards sent away to various islands. He continued acting in this manner until the news reached him that the Germans had not even attempted to cross the Rhine, at which point he recovered his poise and calmed down. The scale of the disaster led Augustus to the belief that it must have been caused by divine agency. What convinced him that an invasion of Italy was imminent was, according to Dio, a series of horrendous omens including the usual array of comets and thunderbolts, but also two particularly suggestive portents, for it was reported that the peaks of the Alps had been seen to collapse and to project three columns of fire, while a statue of Victory erected in the province of Germany so as to face the enemy had miraculously turned around to face Italy.[147] The character of the Alpine omen reveals the enduring tension between the Alps' symbolic, quasi-mythical significance as the protecting wall of Italy, on the one hand, and the undeniable evidence provided by the Brennus story and the Cimbric invasion of their qualified impermeability. Romans believed in them, but implicit in this was a suppressed fear, never made explicit except in portents and omens, that their faith might ultimately be misplaced. The combination of the resurfacing of this fear with the awful prospect, suggested by both the disaster itself and the omen about the statue, that Victory had finally deserted the Romans and gone over to the enemy, clearly relates to the nexus of anxieties revealed in the stories about the Gallic invasion of Italy, the disaster on the Allia, and the sack of Rome. Crisis on the frontier involving Gauls and Germans immediately tended to provoke a panicky overreaction in Rome about the nature and scale of the problem, with accompanying fears that the barbarians would be at the gates the next day planning how best to burn the Capitol down. If our sources are at all to be trusted, then Augustus was no less susceptible to such fears than the ill-informed mass of the population of Italy—this was not merely a fear born of stupidity or ignorance but one which came with being a Roman of an averagely superstitious and credulous sort.

According to Tacitus, the same thing happened in AD 21 during the north Gallic uprising led by Florus and Sacrovir. He reveals it as essentially a limited affair involving only the Gallic peoples of the Treviri and the Aedui, whose causes were simply the familiar

[147] Dio 56. 23–4.

ones of excessive debt and dissatisfaction with the way the provinces were being governed. He also reveals how people in Rome overreacted to the news, imagining that the whole of Gaul had defected with the Germans as their allies, and that Spain too was about to fall.[148] At the first sign of trouble in Gaul or, after Caesar, anywhere north of the Alps, Roman reactions tended towards panic and hysteria, magnifying a local difficulty into a major catastrophe portending the end of the empire. Twenty-seven years after the revolt of Sacrovir, in AD 48, an embassy of leading Gauls applied to Claudius for the right to compete for magistracies at Rome. The reaction of the senators was hostile. Admitting Gauls to the Senate would be *velut captivitas*, like the fall of Rome itself. Italy was not so short of men that it could not supply the Senate, and was it not enough that the Veneti and Insubres had already broken into the Curia? With all their wealth, they would exclude poor senators from Latium from the honours. These were the men whose ancestors had besieged the Divine Julius at Alesia, and what of the memory of those who died defending the Capitol and the Arx from them?[149] To this mixture of unreflecting ethnic contempt and a more rational anxiety about the prospect of increased competition for magistracies, Claudius replied in what, according to the extant record at least, are entirely unprecedented tones about the historical record of the Gauls. Beginning by recalling the Sabine origins of his own family and the foreign roots of other noble *gentes* (in the official version in the *Tabula Lugdunensis*, he gives other examples), Claudius shows how the Roman name had spread throughout Italy, even up to the Alps, not merely by including individuals within it one by one but whole peoples and regions, a policy he traces back to Romulus himself. Even if the Gauls did capture Rome, he argues, Etruscans and Samnites had also inflicted shameful defeats on the Romans. Moreover, Gaul was conquered more quickly than anywhere else, since which time there had been continual peace and unbroken loyalty. What seemed to be new and unwelcome would in time itself become established and traditional.[150] As a result of the emperor's taking up the twin causes of the Gauls and historical change, the Aedui were admitted to the Senate, their fellow tribesmen's

[148] Tac. *Ann.* 3. 40–6.
[149] Tac. *Ann.* 11. 23.
[150] Tac. *Ann.* 11. 24; for the *Tabula Lugdunensis*, *CIL* 13. 1668 = *ILS* 212.

involvement in the revolt of Sacrovir conveniently forgotten. In advancing the proposition that the record of the Gauls was not so much worse than that of other peoples that they should be forever beyond the pale of acceptability, Claudius was introducing a salutory note of common sense and historical perspective into Roman ideas about Gauls, inviting his audience to come to terms with the fact that Gauls from Gallia Narbonensis and Transpadane Italy had actually been serving as worthy senators for decades already. He clearly went some way to changing matters, but did not manage to persuade everybody that the Gauls were not a crowd of murderous wreckers intent on destroying Rome and taking control for themselves. In Seneca's satirical work *Apocolocyntosis*, the goddess Fever accuses Claudius of acting like the native Gaul (*germanus Gallus*) he was, having been born at Lugdunum, and doing what comes naturally to a Gaul, capturing Rome.[151]

CONCLUSION

This chapter began with the importance of the date of the sack of Rome as 'Year 0' in later Roman chronologies, and it ends with Roman fears of the future consummation of their history in a dreadful reprise of the original event. The apparent ring composition is more than fortuitous, as it demonstrates clearly the ways in which the simple fact of the Romans' fear of the Gauls actually contributed towards shaping their conceptions of the past and future of their city and empire. They were not just afraid of Gauls, they were in some sense convinced that their fate was intimately bound up with them and that their ultimate end would be brought about by them. There is even a suggestion in the omens quoted by Dio after the Varian disaster and in the rumours recorded by Tacitus after the burning of the Capitol in AD 69 predicting that world power would pass over the Alps, that these fears were refined into a Roman version of the Greek theory of the succession of empires, with the Gauls and other transalpine peoples eventually succeeding to their position of power over human affairs.[152] This is a conception of history that combined a

[151] Sen. *Apoc*. 6. 1: 'Lugdunum natus est . . . germanus Gallus. itaque, quod Gallum facere oportebat, Romam cepit.' ('He was born at Lugdunum . . . an actual Gaul. And so he did what a Gaul should do, he captured Rome.') See Urban 1999 on the theme of rebellious Gaul.

[152] Cf. Pol. 1. 2; App. *praef*. 8–9 for Greek examples.

conviction that all earthly powers are yoked to a cycle of rise and fall with a strong sense of the mutability of fortune.[153] Calendrical coincidences and chronological symmetries were interpolated into, and extrapolated from, the historical record to lend a sense of awful inevitability and predictability to the uncertain future. The Gauls stood at the start of Rome's rise to its zenith, and they would bring about its final downfall. Such, it seems, was the belief of many in the Republic who expected a second Brennus in the news of every fresh Gallic war and on each occasion sought a new saviour to ward off their inescapable fate once again, until the next time. In our period, Marcellus, Marius, Cicero, and Caesar all benefited to varying degrees from the Camillus effect.

The Gauls collectively constituted an important character in the drama of Roman history and were given a crucial role to play in Roman conceptions of their destiny. So successful was this characterization in fulfilling a persistent need for a fearful nemesis that the Germans succeeded to the position after the conquest of the Gauls. But a partial characterization is what it was, not a simple representation of reality. The sack of Rome did not happen as the stories recounted it. The city was not utterly destroyed by Brennus' transalpine hoards, the Capitol was not the sole surviving relic from the first century of the Republic, northern Europe was not populated by a huge, homogeneous population of Gauls all plotting the overthrow of the temple of Jupiter. These are all obvious figments of the Romans' historical imagination, yet they have continued to exert a powerful influence upon the modern historical imagination. Underpinning them all is the common ethnic identity and culture imposed upon the inhabitants of Europe north of the Apennines by most ancient authors before Caesar. He was perhaps the first to disseminate the idea of internal regional differences within Gallia, though his reasons for doing so were pragmatic rather than academic.[154] The 'Gallic' or 'Celtic' ethnic category foisted on the varied groups of Iron Age northern Europe by Greek and Roman authors has survived more or less intact into the modern period, and its status as a valid term with which to describe the ethnic identity of the peoples of continental

[153] Cf. Pol. 29. 21 on the rise and fall of empires and the power of fortune.

[154] Caes. *B.G.* 1. 1. 1: 'hi omnes lingua, institutis, legibus inter se differunt.' ('They all differ among themselves in language, institutions and laws.') Cf., e.g., Müller 1972–80: ii, 68 ff.; Bell 1995 on Caesar's Gallic ethnography.

Western Europe in the Iron Age is mostly still unquestioned whether in academic or public discourse. The advantages and disadvantages of this situation for the archaeology and history of the Gauls of northern Italy are the subject of the concluding chapter.

5

Archaeology and History

INTRODUCTION

Traditionally the academic study of Celtic northern Italy has divided into two strands—Celtic prehistory and Roman history. The former has dealt principally with the evidence for the presence of the Celts in Italy. It has used this evidence to treat such questions as the explanation and dating of the original Celtic presence within Italy, the continuing relations between the Italian Celts and the Celts north of the Alps, and their progressive integration into the world of Italy. Celtic prehistorians have also addressed themselves to tracing Celtic survivals in the culture of northern Italy after the Roman conquest. The evidence employed in answering these questions is substantially archaeological in nature—the grave-assemblages from cemeteries ascribed to Celts have been crucial in discussions of chronology and in identifying the changing cultural affinities of the Celts of the north, sandwiched between the twin influences of transalpine Celtic Europe and Mediterranean Italy. Philological evidence, in the form of a handful of inscriptions in Celtic, has also played an important part in identifying the presence of Celts throughout the period. The framework within which the questions posed by the material evidence for Celtic prehistory have been asked has, primarily, been that provided by the literary record. This has worked in two ways, chronologically and ethnically. First, the sequence of dated events in the history of northern Italy as recorded in ancient literary sources, such as the Celtic invasion, the Battle of Sentinum, the Roman conquest, and the Cimbric Wars, has furnished the structure within which the archaeological evidence for the history of the Celts of Italy has been approached, dated, and explained. Secondly, the vital ethnic category which is fundamental to any inquiry into the Celts of Italy, that of 'Celtic' itself, is likewise an inheritance from the ancient sources, whose validity and

appropriateness for the interpretation of the archaeological evidence, let alone as an adequate description of the ethnic identity of the 'Celtic' populations of the north, is in the main not called into question.

The Celtic prehistory of northern Italy, therefore, constitutes an archaeological inquiry which is based on dates, facts, and concepts derived from ancient literary sources. There is nothing wrong with this procedure in principle—it would obviously be wrong dogmatically to exclude the use of literary evidence in archaeological interpretations on the grounds that it is 'historical' and therefore irrelevant per se. But any textual evidence adduced in support of an archaeological hypothesis should receive a sensitive and rigorous examination similar to the material itself, and should not be allowed to determine the interpretation of the archaeological record simply because it is there.[1] Moreover, it is clearly as inappropriate for a text to be excerpted from its literary context as it is to cite an object as evidence without consideration of its archaeological context. The previous chapters have sought to show how important a full appreciation of literary and historical context is for the understanding of the information contained in the literary sources about the Gauls of northern Italy. Successful history cannot be written by piecing together fragments of information of disparate kinds on the expectation that they can be used in support of one another in order to create explanations of complex historical and archaeological phenomena. The temptation to adopt this method is great, particularly in a case such as this where the evidence available, whether literary or archaeological, is so scanty, and a realistic sense of its quality so hard to achieve. What currently supplies the gaps left by the fragmentary nature of the evidence is the category of 'Celtic' which tends to be used to provide an all-purpose context—historical, cultural, ethnic—within which sense is made of the material evidence. But logically speaking 'Celtic' only has the status of a hypothesis, that is, a proposed interpretation of the meaning of the evidence, and therefore it cannot be used as though it were a fact in constructing further hypotheses about the material or the period in question. The argument runs the serious risk of being circular.[2]

Similar caveats concerning the use of literary evidence can be levelled at the second of the two strands mentioned above, that of

[1] Cf. Millett 1981: 529. [2] Cf. Williams 1997: 77.

Roman history. The dominant theme for Romanists has been the progress of the Roman conquest and the subsequent colonization of the Po Valley, for which the sources are mostly literary. Archaeology is beginning to make a significant but still limited contribution: the Republican levels of the towns of the north are hard to find but are starting to emerge slowly. The information provided by the texts concerning the major dates and events in the history of the conquest of the north are obviously an indispensable source, without which our understanding would be greatly impoverished. But the military and political focus of these sources has tended to restrict the nature of the questions asked of them and the explanations given of the events to which they refer. Yet a re-reading of the texts, as sources of ideas as well as facts, can assist in explaining some of the things that happened in this period of the history of northern Italy: why for instance it took so long for the citizenship to be extended to the Transpadani and why this was so contentious an issue, as discussed in Chapter 3.[3] A fuller appreciation of the stories, ideas, and images that Romans had in their minds when they thought about the peoples and places of the north should add a new ingredient to our interpretations of how Romans conducted themselves in relation to the peoples they called Gauls, and why the progress of the conquest and occupation of northern Italy took the form that it did.

The main theme of what follows is how to use ancient evidence, literary and material, differently in writing the history of northern Italy. In the field of Celtic prehistory, the dominance of dates and ethnic categories derived from textual evidence needs to be challenged, though not necessarily relegated from consideration, while the history of the Roman conquest needs to be reconsidered in the light of stories such as those examined in the last two chapters, and of the fears and hopes for the future that they represent, and not merely taken as a sequence of battles and colonial foundations.

1. CELTS: LANGUAGE, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND ITALIAN ORIGINS

The problem with which most current treatments of the Celts of Italy begin is that of their origins.[4] This is generally perceived as a

[3] Cf. pp. 120–7. [4] Cf. Williams 1997: 73–6.

problem requiring explanation in a way that the origins of other peoples of Italy (apart from the Etruscans) are not, because, as we saw in a previous chapter, the ancient sources, followed almost universally by moderns, insist on the point that the Celts were not indigenous to Italy but migrated across the Alps from Central Europe at some point before the sack of Rome in the early fourth century BC. When did the first Celts enter Italy? And where did they come from? These issues have been, and continue to be, widely debated in books and articles on the subject. Since 1870, when de Mortillet first identified a group of graves at the Etruscan site of Marzabotto as indicating the presence of Celts on the grounds of their contents, archaeology has played a crucial role in the academic debate on these issues.[5]

The answers given to the first of these questions have largely been conditioned by the options available in the literary evidence.[6] Among the ancient authors who wrote about the Celtic invasion there was a fundamental difference of view between those who placed it immediately before the sack of Rome in 387 BC, others, such as Polybius, who were more vague, and Livy, who argued for a higher date for the initial invasion of *c.* 600 BC. Scholars have tended to favour one or other of these options on the basis of their interpretations of the archaeological and linguistic evidence.[7] But the implicit starting point for these archaeological interpretations has always been, and still largely remains, the framework of dates and events proposed by the textual sources. Where they agree, as they do on the occurrence of an invasion, so do modern authorities, where they differ from one another, as they do on the date, so do the moderns. This is not to imply that every detail of the literary narratives is credulously believed, but it is certainly generally accepted that they mediate an important kernel of truth which is also detectable within, and reconcilable with, the material record. On this basis it has also been widely held that it should be possible to find out which date transmitted by the sources is likely

[5] de Mortillet 1870–1.

[6] For discussion of the literary sources, see pp. 102–27.

[7] In favour of *c.* 400 BC are Grenier 1945: 107; Wolski 1956: 31; Peyre 1979: 126–7; De Marinis 1981: 252–7, 290–2; Kruta 1988: 268 ff.; Legnani 1994. For a starting date *c.* 600 BC, see Mansuelli 1978; Pallottino 1978; De Simone 1978*a*; Bernardi 1981: 14 ff.; Negroni Catacchio 1983; Torelli 1987; Grassi 1991: 12. For an intermediate date of *c.* 500 BC, contemporary with the beginning of the La Tène period, cf. Bayet 1954: 160–1; Hatt 1959, 1960; Grilli 1980.

be the correct one, a problem to which the datable archaeological and linguistic material should, it is thought, hold the key.

Until recently, the low date of *c.* 400 BC tended to receive most support, on the grounds that the archaeological evidence for the presence of Celts in the areas where the literary texts located them does not become really abundant until the fourth century BC. But a new epigraphic discovery, in the form of a graffito on a pot datable to the sixth century BC, apparently written in a language identifiable as Celtic and in an alphabet commonly called Lepontic or Luganese, has lent fresh support to Livy's high date of about 600 BC. This, together with a longer one-line inscription on stone (from Prestino, near Como) and a few other pieces of evidence for the existence of Celtic-looking names in northern Italy in the sixth and fifth centuries BC, has led to the conclusion that there was a substantial Celtic presence there long before the sack of Rome. The area later inhabited by the Insubres, modern Lombardy, is taken to be the main locus of this Celtic presence in the north, a proposition which some buttress with reference to Livy.[8] For instance, in his account of the migration of Bellovesus, Livy tells how the Gauls came across a region in north Italy called the Insubrian territory (*ager Insubrius*) where they founded the city of Mediolanum; this coincidence they took to be a good omen as Insubres was also the name of one of their own tribes. In modern accounts this detail is rationalized as an authentic narrative reflection of an early Celtic presence in Italy which can be separately demonstrated through the evidence of archaeology and linguistics.[9] Text and archaeology appear, therefore, independently to be telling the same story about the early presence of Celts within Italy which, it is supposed, must for that reason be the right one. The local early Iron Age archaeological 'culture' of the area around the north Italian lakes, named after the important cemetery site at Golasecca, has, as a result, now been generally confirmed as Celtic, having once been mostly regarded as Ligurian.[10] Before the discovery of the new linguistic evidence,

[8] See De Simone 1978*a*, 1978*b*; Torelli 1987; Prosdocimi 1986, 1987, 1991. On the Prestino inscription, apparently a dedication in the dative, see Lejeune 1971: esp. 111–23; Peyre 1979: 114–16 preferred a later date for it, but the sixth-century BC graffito provides support for the higher dating: see Gambari and Colonna 1988.

[9] L. 5. 34. 9; cf. Grassi 1991: 21.

[10] See De Marinis 1988*d*: 169 ff.; 1991: 93 ff. on recent developments in Golaseccan studies.

attempts to establish the Celticity of the 'Golaseccans' (and make sense of Livy's early invasion) had rested on archaeological evidence for the presence in the region of artefact and burial styles more typical of transalpine than local practice, a stylistic anomaly which, it was argued, suggested the early presence of intrusive warrior Celts from over the Alps among the indigenous peoples of the north.[11] But the archaeological approach never won universal assent. Arguments for the existence of a Celtic population in early Iron Age northern Italy on linguistic grounds have, by contrast, won much wider acceptance.[12]

There are difficulties with the identification of the 'Golaseccans' as Celts on several grounds. First, accepting for a moment the premises of the argumentation involved, the decisive evidence is not overwhelming in quality or quantity—one single-word graffito, a one-line inscription, and a handful of Celtic-looking names from various parts of northern Italy. Perhaps it begins to look more plausible when compounded with the archaeological evidence collected previously and, of course, Livy's story of an early Gallic invasion. But the identification rests on a mistaken presumption that externally imposed linguistic, archaeological, or ethnic categories like 'Celtic' are the same thing as real human communities, which, probably in most cases, they are not.

Categories may frequently correspond to communities in some degree or may, under certain circumstances, give rise to them where none previously existed, but they are not identical with one another and should be carefully distinguished from one another. This is especially true in prehistory where no contemporary evidence exists for the self-conscious, subjective criteria by which ethnic groups constituted themselves.[13] A recognition of the importance of this conceptual, and often real, difference between categories and communities can be crucial even in more recent periods where the evidence for the nature of ethnic communities is good—say, modern Russia, a state wherein a multitude of ethnic

[11] Primas 1970: 102; Guidi 1983: 62 ff., referring particularly to 3 extraordinary warrior graves at Como and Sesto Calende containing apparently transalpine Hallstatt-style (and therefore Celtic) material. For the Ligurian thesis, see Rittatore Vonwiller 1969, 1972, 1974; and, for a summary of his views, see id. 1975: esp. 239. Ligurians had also long figured as the previous inhabitants of southern France before the Celtic invasions: see Jullian 1920: 175–88; Barruol 1969: 148 ff.; Luraschi 1970–3: 219 ff.

[12] Cf. Williams 1997: 75–6.

[13] Hall 1997: 131.

communities exists, of which outsiders are mostly oblivious through lack of knowledge, and on which the generic category of 'Russian' tends to be imposed in most instances by foreigners. Modern scholars are, effectively, in the same position with regard to the ethnic communities of early Iron Age Europe as the average contemporary observer is with regard to those of Russia or China, one of ignorance and misinformation: ignorance because first-hand evidence for Iron Age identities is largely unavailable, and misinformation because of an undue reliance which tends to be placed on ethnic categories (i.e. 'Celts' or 'Gauls') and ethnic narratives (of invasions or migrations) imposed by external observers in antiquity, as a means of discerning and designating ethnic communities. The implicit error is then frequently compounded by the imposition on the archaeological record of a further, usually stylistically defined, category as the material reflection of its ethnic counterpart, on the mistaken presumption that the fact that the two categories appear to be geographically coterminous both reflects and proves the existence of an ancient ethnic community.[14] In this case, the equation of the Insubres with the Golaseccan culture, and the identification of both as Celtic, has essentially been arrived at by an aggregation of various sorts of evidence from Celtic linguistics, Hallstatt (i.e. early Iron Age transalpine) artefact styles, and literary narratives about Gauls. The question of how, or indeed whether, these different sources can actually be used to refer to one another, or whether any of them legitimately refers to the question at issue, the existence of a Celtic ethnic community in early Iron Age northern Italy, has, by and large, not been raised.

What appears to be a stylistic or ritual affinity in the realm of material culture between one region and another may or may not represent the existence of a single ethnic community in both regions.[15] It certainly does not constitute proof of the existence of one. The same must in principle go for apparent linguistic affinities. What does it mean, in any case, to identify the language and names contained in the relevant inscriptions from northern Italy as Celtic? If it cannot be said, on the basis of the available evidence, that it means anything more than, say, classifying English

[14] See Renfrew and Bahn 1996: 443–8 for an introduction to the problems of culture-historical explanations in archaeology; Jones 1997: 1–39 for more detail.

[15] Cf. Hodder 1978, 1982 for the theory.

and Swedish as Germanic—and given how little is actually known about Celtic languages in the sixth and fifth centuries BC this seems unlikely—then it clearly cannot be taken as a straightforward indicator of ethnic community. There is, of course, the possibility that the consciousness of ethnic community may arise, or be invented, from perceived linguistic affinities. It is not in principle inconceivable that one day the English and the Swedes might discover a new affinity by reinterpreting the common philological roots of their two mutually unintelligible languages ethnically: ethnolinguistic pan-Germanism in other areas is, after all, a familiar phenomenon in twentieth-century history.

Indeed something similar has been argued to account for the rise of Celtic in northern Italy and Europe. Rightly rejecting what he calls the 'Brennus model' for explaining Italian Celticity, that is, the appeal to mass movements of population, Prosdocimi has substituted a notion of gradual Celtic ethnogenesis set in motion by a gradual realization of the mutual affinities subsisting within what was previously an agglomeration of disparate peoples all speaking similar, Celtic, languages. This change was itself caused by a concomitant realization of their differentness from other groups, particularly the Romans. The Celtic speakers south of the Alps participated in the rise of this common ethnic consciousness along with the rest of the Celtic-speaking world, thus creating a genuine ethnic community of Celts on both sides of the Alps. The linguistic basis of this community, it is argued, is reflected in their consistent choice of alphabet used to write the common language, the form of north Etruscan script often called Lepontic, which turns up on Celtic inscriptions from the sixth century BC (those mentioned above) and was used again in the second and first centuries for stone and coin inscriptions on issues from northern Italy, southern Gaul, and Noricum.[16] The criterion of sameness and difference on which most emphasis is laid here is language, which is explicitly taken to be the primary component of ethnicity. This hypothesis constitutes an important contribution to the debate on the Italian Celtic question, as it implicitly recognizes that there is a difference between 'Celtic' as linguistic category and 'Celtic' as ethnic community while trying to justify the notion of a Celtic ethnic community on linguistic grounds. The process invoked to account for it is one that is most reminiscent of the rise

[16] Prosdocimi 1991: 56.

of certain modern European ethnic identities, particularly those of Italy and Germany. In both these countries a developing sense of cultural and linguistic unity gave rise to a new consciousness of ethnic community among the speakers of Italian and German, which in turn led eventually to political unification.[17] While this kind of modern, and nationalist, ethnogenesis may or may not be thought to be appropriate to the conditions of Iron Age Europe, it nevertheless has the great merit of recognizing that the notion of an ancient Celtic ethnic community needs to be problematized and explained, unlike most other treatments which appear to conceive of it essentially as a given. But the singling out of language as determinative of ethnic identity is a mistake. Within certain groups it may be posited as such, and this may also have happened at some time among some of the communities that spoke Celtic languages in Iron Age Italy. But language does not of itself determine ethnicity, linguistic groups do not inevitably become ethnic communities and, consequently, a consciousness of ethnic community cannot automatically be deduced from discernible linguistic affinities.[18]

So, returning to the 'Golasecca Celts' of northern Italy, it is highly probable that some of those who lived in the region in antiquity spoke a language that would be philologically classifiable as Celtic. But this says nothing certain about their ethnic identity, or about any ethnic bonds they may have felt with transalpine speakers of other similar languages, even when supported with extensive evidence for the importation of transalpine artefact styles and the transmission of Golaseccan and other Italian styles northwards via the passes leading over the Alps from the Golasecca area.[19] Ethnicity is subjective. This does not mean that it is simply an easily manipulable state of mind that can be changed by an act of will like a piece of clothing. But it does mean that it is constituted according to different criteria in different circumstances, and is not a static objective phenomenon easily detectable from without with reference to an obvious set of indicators such as language, artefact styles, or physiognomy. Since this

[17] Hobsbawm 1992: 102–3.

[18] Cf. Hall 1997: 21–2. Cf. Hdt. 8. 144. 2; Cic. *Off.* 1. 53; Str. 5. 3. 6 (remarking on the unusual fact that the Oscan language had persisted longer than the people themselves: on which, see Laurence and Berry 1998: 100) for ancient references to language as an ethnic marker. On Celtic ethnicity and genetics, see Bodmer 1992.

[19] pace De Marinis 1991: 97.

is the case, it may well be that the chances of using any, or all, of the above to identity ethnic communities in the past accurately are actually rather slim, especially in a situation where there is no contemporary evidence of any other sort to tell us what people felt about their identities.[20] In the case of the Italian Celts, the ancient literary tradition is used as though it offered such evidence but it does not, at least not at all directly. Livy's account of the Gallic invasion may tell us something about how the inhabitants of northern Italy reacted to the predicament caused by their Gallic identity in the late Republican period, as was argued in Chapter 3, but prima facie it does not constitute a good source either for historical events or for ethnic identities in early Iron Age Lombardy. Of course, to show that Livy and the Celts are strictly irrelevant to the understanding of what was going on in northern Italy in the early Iron Age does not mean that nothing like what Livy relates took place at some time around 600 BC. Later, better attested instances of transalpine intrusions into the Po Valley such as the invasion of the Cimbri and Teutones, not to mention any number of similar events in later imperial Roman history from the second century AD onwards, show that the Alps were periodically crossed by peoples from continental Europe in large numbers in antiquity; and, for that matter, the Roman conquest of northern Europe shows that the same could happen in the other direction. But it does mean that an invasion cannot be assumed to have taken place simply because the ancient literary tradition says so.

Invasions, and Celts for that matter, can only be put forward as hypotheses to account for the available archaeological and linguistic evidence. Thus they have to take their chances alongside other hypotheses available to explain change in material culture and language, of which there are many to hand. This is, however, not the status that they currently enjoy in most modern accounts. Far from being hypotheses, they hover somewhere between the article of faith and the premise, neither of which positions is legitimately theirs.[21]

[20] Hall 1997: 142.

[21] Clark 1966; Collis 1994*b*: 138–40 on invasion hypotheses in British prehistory; cf. Mellars 1992 on the analogous debate among historians of human origins in Europe; and Hamerow 1994 on the post-Roman migration period in Britain (esp. 174–5). On the relationship between invasions and culture/language change, see in general Renfrew 1987, with criticism from Anthony and Wailes 1988; Ehret 1988; Mallory 1989; cf. Collett 1987.

The same observation applies to the next major issue in academic debate on the Celts of Italy, the question of the supposed invasion of *c.* 400 BC. Here too archaeology and ancient literature are essentially used to validate each other in constructing an account of the migration of transalpine peoples into northern Italy leading to the domination of the whole of the Po Valley and the northern Adriatic coast by the Celts. In this case, the decisive material indicators of a Celtic presence are the decorative styles, artefact types, and funerary rites associated with the period and archaeological culture named after the late Iron Age site of La Tène in Switzerland. There is no epigraphic or linguistic evidence to speak of. The peoples concerned are generally supposed to have been Celtic speakers. The earliest appearance of the La Tène style in northern Italy consists of a group of decorated metal belt clasps, together with some other articles of weaponry. The clasps in question are mostly found north of the Po in Italy, but they also have a considerable distribution in north-eastern France and the Rhineland with outliers at Ensérune in southern France, and in Slovenia, Austria, and Poland.[22] After this brief appearance in the late fifth century BC, there is no substantial evidence of La Tène material culture until the appearance of groups of inhumation burials in the Senonian and Boian regions south of the Po containing weaponry and other metalwork of La Tène style. These are generally thought to begin no earlier than the mid fourth century BC.[23]

The obvious scarcity and the uneven distribution pattern of La Tène material dated to the late fifth and early fourth century BC in the Po Valley has led some scholars to see the Celtic invasion as a gradual process, beginning slowly in the fifth century BC with the intrusion of a few bands of warriors perhaps serving as mercenaries in Italy, rather than as a single event in the early

[22] Cf. Frey 1987, 1991: 144–6; De Marinis 1988*a*: esp. 237 ff. Both interpret this evidence as indicating early 5th-cent. Celtic migrations from over the Alps. Kruta 1982*a*, 1988: 268 on the other hand, on the basis of the motifs and distribution pattern of the clasps, prefers to see them as originating in northern Italy and spreading northwards over the Alps. For the earliest La Tène weapons in northern Italy, cf. Negroni Catacchio 1971–2, 1978, 1983; Trucco 1978; Molli Boffa 1988 on Gravellona Toce, tomb 15 (Val d'Ossola) containing an Etruscan beaked flagon, Golaseccan pottery, and an early La Tène sword, dated to the late 5th cent. BC.

[23] On the archaeology of the Senonian region, see Zuffa 1978; Kruta 1981, 1988: 284–5, 290–1; Landolfi 1991*a*, 1991*b*; Grassi 1991: 65–80 for a recent summary. On the Boii, see Kruta 1980, 1988: 292, 301; Kruta-Poppi 1974, 1983*a*, 1983*b*, 1984; Peyre 1992; Vitali 1978*a*, 1978*b*, 1986*a*, 1986*b*, 1986*c*; 1992; Grassi 1991: 80–101 for a summary.

fourth century immediately preceding the sack of Rome. As with the previous debate about the Golasecca Celts and Livy's early invasion, here too the literary evidence for the Celtic invasion and the date of the sack of Rome, 387 BC, serve as orientation posts around which the meaning of the archaeology is established. The accounts may be modified to the extent that fifth-century La Tène material within Italy is taken to indicate that some Celts at least may have reached Italy earlier than some ancient sources suggest, but the basic idea that this material is evidence of some sort of Celtic invasion, essentially if not exactly as the sources represent it, is not generally called into question.[24]

Further confirmation of the Celticity of the new inhabitants is sought in the evidence for change in the settlement patterns of northern Italy in the fifth to fourth century BC. In many regions of the Po Valley just before the fourth century BC, there seems to have been a settlement pattern characterized by nucleated settlements. In Emilia there appears to have been an important Etruscan centre at Bologna, both in the early Iron Age Villanovan and the subsequent Orientalizing periods—important cemetery sites have been discovered there dating to both of these periods. Clearer evidence for specifically urban development is provided by the site of the orthogonally planned city at Marzabotto in the valley of the River Reno, which is also thought to have been an Etruscan settlement. Other urbanized centres of significance were Adria and Spina on the Adriatic coast, both Greek foundations. North of the Po, there is the recently discovered site at Forcello in the valley of the Mincio near Mantua, where substantial evidence of Etruscan-style material culture and settlement has been found. In the Veneto there were also significant settlements, for example at Este and Padua.[25] Further north and west there are the major Golaseccan centres at Como and Sesto Calende, and there is recently discovered evidence, mostly in the form of Golaseccan pottery, for the presence of fifth-century BC settlements at centres

[24] Cf. e.g. De Marinis 1988*a*: 237; Frey 1991: 144.

[25] For a recent general account of the Etruscans in the Po Valley, cf. Malnati and Manfredi 1991: esp. 167–246 on the 5th cent. On Marzabotto, cf. Sassatelli 1989; on Spina and Adria, see briefly Boardman 1999: 228–9, with extensive bibliography in Malnati and Manfredi 1991: 276–7. On the pre-Roman phase in the Senonian region, see Luni 1995, 1996. On Forcello and its role in transalpine trade, cf. De Marinis 1988*c*, 1988*d*, and the other articles in the same volumes. For recent reviews of Venetic culture, see Chieco Bianchi 1988; Capuis 1993.

in the Po Valley itself, at Milan, Bergamo, and Brescia and elsewhere.[26] Without drawing any conclusions about the various ethnicities of the people who lived in these localities, there seems to be sufficient evidence to suggest that there were a number of genuinely urbanized centres north of the Apennines in the fifth century BC as well as a number of smaller quasi-urban settlements in other regions. Many of these seem to have gone into decline in the fifth century BC. Marzabotto is again the most striking instance, its well-built city structure apparently falling largely into disuse in the latter part of the century, a development which seems to have taken place in Bologna as well. The evidence of Golaseccan material at the various sites in the Po Valley mentioned above also seems to cease in this period.[27]

The later fifth century BC in the Po Valley seems to be characterized by an apparent abandonment of a nucleated settlement pattern, at the same time as La Tène material begins to turn up in Italy.[28] These two developments are generally understood to be causally related to one another within the narrative structure provided by the textual evidence, the wearers of the belt-clasps being the Celts who sacked the cities of the north and then attacked Clusium and Rome. Migratory movements among the Celts of continental Europe in the fifth century are often cited as the decisive factor which first undermined the economic system of long-distance trade routes over the Alps on which, it is argued, the urbanized wealth of the Etruscan settlements north of the Apennines had been based; and then, on spilling over into Italy, they wrecked the cities and settlements themselves.[29] There are various problems with explanations that lay such particular stress on the importance of long-distance trade links as a factor determining the rise and fall of settlements or archaeological 'cultures'. Recent trends in archaeological explanation have rightly tended to look more at local factors—social, economic, technological, environmental—rather than long-distance economic links with

[26] For the development and decline of Golaseccan proto-urban centres in the Po Valley in the 5th cent. BC, cf. Mirabella Roberti 1970, 1990; Rittatore Vonwiller 1980; Tizzoni 1985*b*: 81–3; De Marinis 1988*a*: 213 ff.; Ceresa Mori 1990: 504–6; 1990–1, 1995.

[27] Cf. De Marinis 1988*a*: 238; Malnati and Manfredi 1991: 247 ff.

[28] See Malnati 1990 for an interesting discussion of the 'urban crisis' in northern Italy; and esp. 46, Fig. 2 for a tabular representation of the decline in the number of settlements between the 6th–5th and 4th–3rd cents. BC in Central Emilia.

[29] Cf. De Marinis 1988*a*: 238; Kruta 1988: 268.

the Mediterranean world to account for observed change in the material culture and settlement patterns of Iron Age Europe.[30] More significant, however, is the point that the premise, omnipresent in archaeological accounts of this period, that there were fifth-century BC migrations and other upheavals involving Celts within continental Europe who then spread outwards in various directions, is entirely based on the evidence of Greek and Latin literary accounts such as those of Plutarch or Livy, whose extended, circumstantial narratives of Celtic wanderings within northern Europe ought to inspire scepticism rather than confidence.[31] These narratives are simply not historical accounts on which much reliability can be placed, either for events (invasions) or concepts (Celts). It is therefore misguided to attempt to seek confirmation of these narratives in archaeological correlates. As has been argued in Chapters 3 and 4, there are other, more interesting ways in which Livy's and Plutarch's accounts can be read which reveal much about what Greeks and Romans thought about Gauls or Celts, namely, that they were generally regarded as illegitimate intruders into Italy, and which also reveal the insecurity of these texts as sources of historical information. Conversely, the material record ought not to be structured according to the chronological framework suggested by the literary record. Liberated from the constricting inheritance of the classical tradition of Celtic migrations, we can begin to compare the usefulness of different hypotheses, including migrations, in accounting for the material evidence. But migrations should come at the end of the process as one possible explanation among others, rather than at the beginning as though they were historical fact.

Returning to northern Italy, what is apparent archaeologically is a general decline in nucleated settlements in the fifth and fourth centuries, most clearly revealed at Etruscan Bologna and Marzabotto. It is in the vicinity of these towns that some of the earliest La Tène burials are to be found, those conventionally attributed to the Senones and the Boii. The traditional account associates these two facts and regards the urban crisis as having been caused by the arrival of the transalpine occupants of the

[30] For the long-distance trade model, see Kimmig 1969; Frankenstein and Rowlands 1978; Wells 1980, 1984; Nash 1985; Cunliffe 1988: 32–5. For various critiques, see Bintliff 1984: esp. 174 for a summary of his important views; Gosden 1985; Dietler 1989, 1990; Woolf 1989, 1990, 1993*b*; Audouze and Büchsenschütz 1991: 171–5 for a useful summary.

[31] Plut. *Cam.* 15–16; L. 5. 34–5.

burials. But set aside both the invasion premise and the unjustified equation of La Tène-style material with the presence of Celts, and other equally plausible hypotheses may be advanced. From the significant changes which are undeniably observable north of the Apennines, and the new divergence in cultural patterns which they introduced between Emilia and Etruria, where the tradition of urban settlement continued with no disruption, we might proceed to infer that this was a period of substantial internal development and perhaps ethnic change among Transapennine communities. The radical abandonment of an urban way of life which was still characteristic of Etruscan culture south of the Apennines might in and of itself be held to imply a shift away from previous ethnic affinities with that culture among the communities of Emilia, and the development of new identities within the Po Valley, based on forms of ethnic and social criteria different from those of the Etruscan city state.

However, the question of whether the appearance of transalpine styles of decoration and burial within the region represents the material remains of the invasive human cause of the change in settlement pattern, or whether it should rather be interpreted as a material reflection of a new set of criteria according to which indigenous social and ethnic groups were re-constituted in the wake of the settlement change, is another matter. The spread of La Tène styles in Italy might just as well represent the spread of a fashion for certain forms of social organization or religion of which they were regarded as particularly emblematic, as the presence of an invasive population from over the Alps. Of course, these are not mutually exclusive options. Groups of La Tène-using Transalpines could perfectly well have crossed the Alps and conquered parts of northern Italy, carving out kingdoms for themselves and supplanting former polities in the region. The existence of plausible alternatives does not prove that this did not happen. But, conversely, the presence of La Tène material in northern Italy, even with the backing of Polybius, Livy, and Plutarch, does not prove that it did. Surely the likelihood is that the situation was extremely complex. Even if there were transalpine immigrant groups arriving in the north in the fifth and fourth centuries BC, and there may have been, they probably buried themselves in various different ways according to local circumstances. This is an inescapable conclusion even for those who accept the idea of a

Celtic invasion of the Po Valley in or before the fourth century, for the reason that La Tène artefact and burial styles are mostly absent north of the Po until the third century. If the Po Valley was largely Celtic from the early fourth century onwards, then all Celts were not burying themselves in the same way. So, if Celts buried themselves in various different ways, sometimes according to transalpine customs, sometimes perhaps according to local custom, sometimes not according to any detectable custom, then presumably so could the indigenous inhabitants for whom new, that is La Tène, rites and customs might have held a particular attraction for whatever reason, perhaps as an expression of association with powerful neighbours using the same style, or of dissociation from social inferiors. But the north was never Celtic in the sense that that has been understood by many commentators, that is, linguistically, ethnically, and culturally. It is not possible to prove the presence of transalpine invaders by the presence of La Tène material alone, and it is highly unlikely that invasions will provide a sufficient explanation for the complexity that is apparent even in the scanty archaeological evidence available from northern Italy in the later Iron Age period.

It might be objected at this point that in more recent treatments there is definite evidence of an increasing recognition of the ethnic and cultural complexity of the post-invasion Po Valley, as, for instance, exemplified by the interpretations offered of the cemetery and settlement site at Monte Bibele in the valley of the River Idice, which constitutes the most significant addition to the corpus of grave assemblages containing La Tène material from Italy since the nineteenth century.[32] The particular feature of the site is that it extends in a more or less clear chronological sequence down the side of a hill. The earliest graves at the top lack weapons and some contain pots inscribed with Etruscan names, while the later graves further down the hill include Celtic, that is La Tène-style, elements. They show the characteristic ensemble of weapons and helmets decorated in a La Tène style together with items of Etruscan ceramic and luxury metalwork, including wine-drinking services, vases, ointment jars, and strigils, a mixture which is typical of other rich graves in Emilia and paralleled also in those attributed to the Senones where Greek imports also proliferate

[32] See Vitali 1978*a*, 1983: esp. 83–212, 1984, 1985, 1987, 1991: 231–3; Vitali and Dall'Aglio 1983; Grassi 1991: 86–93.

among the grave goods. It has been concluded from this that the site at Monte Bibele attests the coexistence of Celts and Etruscans within a single community. One detail which has been regarded as particularly salient is the appearance of an Etruscan female name scratched on a pot found in a burial which also contained La Tène weaponry. This, it has been suggested, constitutes vivid evidence for intermarriage between Celtic men and Etruscan women.[33] Similar conclusions have been drawn from the cemetery at Bologna attibuted to the Boii. At this site, some rich male graves contain similar assemblages to those at Monte Bibele, including weapons and luxury goods of various sorts. The male members of the community represented in the cemetery are consequently thought for the most part to have been Celts. The most spectacular of these graves is perhaps tomb 953 of the Benacci cemetery, dated to the late fourth to early third century BC, which contained a diadem of golden olive leaves of Etruscan manufacture, a decorated bronze helmet and sword, spearheads, a strigil, and other articles of non-La Tène Italian finery.[34] By contrast, the diverse contents of the female graves at Bologna, some containing Etruscan elements such as bronze mirrors or imported ceramics, others including La Tène elements like glass or bronze arm-rings or bronze brooches (*fibulae*), are interpreted as indicating that the female population was of mixed origin, some Celtic, some Etruscan.[35]

In one sense, the explanations offered for the mixed assemblages of material found at these two sites do represent a step forward in understanding, insofar as they recognize that the supposed Celtic invaders probably coexisted with previous inhabitants, and possibly even intermarried with them. This replaces a previous tendency to imagine that the Celts expelled the Etruscans wholesale from the Po Valley, and to explain the presence of Greek and Etruscan goods in Celtic graves either as the proceeds of mercenary service for Italians or as war booty won in raids on Etruscan cities across the mountains such as those on Clusium and Rome recorded in the literary tradition.[36] Increasing evidence for Etruscan continuity after the supposed Celtic invasion, that is,

[33] Grassi 1991: 90; Vitali 1991: 233.

[34] See Sassatelli 1978 for a catalogue of the contents of this grave. See now Vitali 1992: 283–94. Cf. Grassi 1991: 84–5.

[35] Cf. Grassi 1991: 82–6 for a summary.

[36] Cf. e.g. Grassi 1991: 61; Peyre 1992: 16–17: '[une] sorte de mosaique ethnique.' See Chevallier 1962: 367 for an early attempt at a broader interpretation, with Amat Sabattini 1995.

more finds of Etruscan material in fourth- and third-century BC contexts, has led archaeologists to reassess the picture inherited from the literary sources of the complete overthrow of Etruria Padana, and interpret the relevant sites, and the history of the period, less monolithically. But the premise on which the new picture is based, that Etruscans can be detected and distinguished from Celts within Celtic cemeteries on the evidence of their grave goods, is not new, and is essentially flawed. The weakness of the so-called culture-historical approach to archaeological interpretation has been well demonstrated in cases where the ethnic identities of the occupants of a cemetery are known and can be shown not to have any necessary or exact correlation with grave contents or burial style.[37] This is not to say that burial styles are meaningless or that they never correlate to ethnic identity, but it does imply that this is by no means always the case, and therefore that funerary archaeology cannot be used as a certain or even probable indicator of ethnic identity. Gender, status, and individual taste, are likely to be as determinative of what people put in the grave of a dead relative as ethnicity. The profound change in burial styles which is evident at Monte Bibele certainly means something, and it is legitimate to inquire speculatively into the various options, among which change in ethnic identity, with or without a population shift, is clearly to be counted as one possibility. But it is not the only conceivable answer.

This is a point that might be easily conceded but for the evidence of the literary texts which speak so unequivocally of a Celtic invasion of Italy just at the time when transalpine styles appear for the first time, and appear to endow the archaeology with an authentic context for establishing historical interpretations and ethnic attributions. In this vein, it has also been suggested that the presence of large quantities of imported Italian goods in Celtic graves constitutes the archaeological corollary of the alliances between Celts and Italian peoples against the Romans which resulted in the Senones' participation in the battle of Sentinum in 295 BC and in co-operation between the Boii and the Etruscans later in the 280s mentioned by Polybius among others.[38] The problem with all such attempts is essentially that they are simple,

[37] See Hall 1997: 130 for examples.

[38] Vitali 1986*a*: 30–5, 1986*b*: 316; Kruta-Poppi 1983*a*: 34; cf. Heurgon and Peyre 1972; Zuffa 1980.

in the sense that they rely on one interpretative method, the reconciliation of the material with the texts in order to produce an explanatory grand narrative. But human behaviour on the level of the individual or the local community is not simple, it is complex, and it is this level of behaviour to which the archaeological evidence for burial practice in late Iron Age northern Italy actually attests, not massive invasions or military alliances. Literary narratives, on the other hand, such as those of Polybius and Plutarch, are superficial and simple because that is how external observers of complex changes in the distant past tend to represent such events, out of ignorance and/or prejudice. The attempt simply to reconcile these two types of evidence is, therefore, bound to understate the complexity of what really happened and, in this case, produce misconstrued, because too simple, explanations of changing burial practice in fourth-century BC Emilia. Even if we accept the Celtic invasion premise, it would not be possible to say with certainty that *all* males who were buried with weapons were Celts and that *no* locals adopted the La Tène style for themselves; and if we doubt the invasion as a premise, it is an open question whether *any* of the individuals buried with La Tène material were Celts, and one which can only be resolved by testing the hypothesis of an invasion against the evidence.

The very different archaeological situation north of the Po causes particular problems for advocates of the La Tène Celtic invasion theory, because there is no La Tène material where there ought to be in the regions attributed to the Celtic tribes of the Cenomani and the Insubres until well after the invasion is meant to have taken place, that is, no later than the early fourth century BC. The majority of the available La Tène finds from the region of the Cenomani seem, according to published dates, to belong to the third century BC.[39] The situation in the western area of the Po Valley is different again. After the apparent disappearance of Golaseccan material in the late fifth to early fourth centuries BC from sites in the Po Valley, there is a significant lack of archaeological material of any sort, whether Golaseccan or La Tène, from the fourth and third centuries BC in the area where the classical sources located the Insubres.[40] Reconciling text and archaeology

[39] On the archaeology of the Cenomanian region, see Scuderi 1975; Grassi 1991: 101–11, esp. 104–5 on the cemetery of Carzaghetto, with De Marinis 1978.

[40] On the archaeology of the Transpadane region of this period generally, see

in this case requires a certain amount of special pleading. Its apparent lack of early La Tène material has been taken as implying that this area was not conquered by Transalpine Celts, that the previous Golaseccan Celtic population continued in residence and that it was they who in due course emerged into history as the Insubres.[41] The other supposed peculiarity of the Transpadane region is that it seems to show the indigenous growth of nucleated settlements before the Roman invasion. The two most important of these seem to have been Mediolanum (Milan) and Brixia (Brescia). They both figure in narratives of the Roman campaigns in the north, and recent excavations have also begun to reveal something of pre-Roman Milan from the second century BC.[42] The apparent difference in this respect between the two regions either side of the Po has, furthermore, been attributed to the ethnic difference between the peoples inhabiting them: invasive Transalpine Celts south of the Po who lacked a tradition of nucleated settlement, and indigenous Golasecca Celts to the north who had one.[43] The problems with these interpretations of the peculiarities of the Transpadane region in the pre-Roman period are essentially those already mentioned above. They merely serve to underline the insuffiency of current approaches and the need for a different direction in handling the evidence, one which is able to take account of complexity in the archaeological record and in historical explanation.

How could complexity be built into the interpretation of the archaeology of Iron Age northern Italy? First, by distinguishing more carefully between imposed categories such as Celtic language, La Tène artefact style, and geographical origins, and the issue of Celtic identity, on the grounds that identity cannot be

Negroni Catacchio 1974, 1978; Arslan 1976–8, 1978, 1984, 1991; Kruta 1988: 306–8; Grassi 1991: 101–25, esp. 122–5 on the recently discovered cemetery sites at Dormeletto and Oleggio, which have raised the date for the appearance of La Tène material and burial styles (inhumation) in the Insubrian region to the late 3rd cent. BC.

[41] Cf. Kruta 1988: 307.

[42] Cf. Frey 1984, 1986 on the phenomenon of north Italian settlements in general; Ceresa Mori 1990, 1990–1, 1995 for discussion of recent excavations in the centre of Milan; with Mirabella Roberti 1990. On Brescia, see Mirabella Roberti 1970; Arslan 1972–3, 1980; Tozzi 1973. Cf. Woolf 1993*a* for a recent review of *oppida* studies.

[43] Kruta 1988: 307. Cf. Peyre 1979: 59–60, 1987, 1992: 41–2 on Bologna, arguing that it had no strategic significance, unlike Brixia or Mediolanum, and that the tribal state of the Boii was less centralized than those north of the Po.

deduced from any one of these categories or all of them together. This done, there are two options which arise: either to abandon the attribution of ethnic identity entirely as a question incapable of final resolution, or to advance hypotheses which take account of the problems and uncertainties, and proceed to offer suitably complex answers based on the sorts of things that might have happened to bring about the changes observed in the archaeology. The latter option is certainly the more interesting one and is the one that prehistorians have begun to follow in other areas of the European Iron Age.

The apparent decline in the number of detectable settlements dated to the fourth and third centuries in northern Italy seems to suggest a general shift away from nucleated to dispersed settlement patterns. If correctly divined, such a profound change in the orientation of a whole region is perhaps unlikely to have been caused simply by an invasion of Transalpines, however chaotic in its effects. The problem in this instance is that there does not seem to be the evidence available to propose alternative hypotheses with any certainty. A decline in other forms of economic activity, which some have proposed in the theory of the collapse of the transalpine trade routes mentioned earlier, could be advanced to account for the change. But it is perhaps as unlikely that the settlement pattern of the whole region depended solely on the continuance of long-distance trade as that its overthrow was caused by an invasion of Celts. In such cases, changes in local environmental conditions affecting economic activity are often invoked, and evidence sought for them, to explain the rise or fall of a particular settlement pattern. But here the relevant evidence is lacking, for whatever reason. In later Roman Britain, where a decline in urban life and a population shift away from the towns and into the countryside have also been inferred from the archaeological record, the most recent explanations offered tend not to resort to barbarian invasions, but to changing patterns of élite residence and improved agricultural techniques which, in short, made urban life a less attractive prospect than rural life and resulted in the relative decline of towns as centres of political and economic importance.[44] There is, unfortunately, no evidence to suggest anything similar in the context of late Iron Age Italy. All one can say is that it is a

[44] Cf. Millett 1990*a*: 181–211.

hypothesis of this level of complexity that is required to account for changes of this kind.

Rather than barbarian occupation and destruction, a narrative which has more in common with Roman fears about the future than complex archaeological explanation, an explanatory account along these lines might be proposed. There was a general decline in the importance of towns in the fifth to fourth century in the Po Valley for a range of reasons, probably both environmental and social, the exact nature of which are unclear. This resulted in social and perhaps ethnic changes within the populations of the region, as a consequence of which burial and artefact styles were adopted in some areas, south of the Po mostly, to mark new concepts of status and ethnic affinity which were no longer centred on towns but revolved around the rural habitations of the local élites. It is possible that these new styles were communicated by transalpine immigrant groups or individuals who may well have come to exert power within certain regions over local populations within northern Italy. In other areas north of the Po, these new styles were at first not adopted for whatever reason until the third century when there was also a resurgence in nucleated centres. These centres may have been towns or they may have been central places for economic or religious activity. Ethnic identities among the communities of the north were not structured in terms of massive tribal units such as the Boii or the Insubres, still less in terms of Celts or Gauls. More appropriately for a society of dispersed rural dwellers, people belonged mostly to relatively small-scale communities whose identities were created around local aristocratic groups and conceived in terms of real or imagined bonds of kinship and clientship.[45] These aristocratic élites in turn may in a similar manner have formed lateral connections with one another through which wider ethnic affinities were able to be constituted on their level.[46] These, or something like them, may have been the groups that the Romans recognized and called the Insubres, Senones, and so on, while evidence for local ethnic communities of the sort proposed might possibly be sought in Cato's reference to the 112 *tribus* ('clans') of the Boii, or the *vici*

[45] Cf. Williams 1997: 78.

[46] Cf. Smith 1991: 52–9 on lateral aristocratic *ethnies* as core groups in the formation and maintenance of wider ethnic communities.

('villages') of the Cenomani in Livy.[47] Greek and Roman observers certainly misconstrued much about the nature and history of the communities of the Po Valley, but they also had long years of close familiarity with them in war and, in the Transpadane region at least, in peace, and their categories will not have been entirely wrong, even if they did not constitute full or accurate descriptions of the identities of the peoples they called Galli.

3: ROMANS AND CELTS: HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY, AND INTERPRETATION

The Romans represented the Gauls of northern Italy to themselves in two main ways: by circumscribing them within in a generic category, that of Galli, and dividing them into groups, Senones, Boii, Insubres, and so on; and, secondly, by ascribing to them as a group a collective historical narrative consisting of the invasion story and the sack of Rome followed by a dated series of campaigns against the Romans, at first aggressive and then defensive, terminating in their capitulation to Roman conquest and domination. Such was the history of the Gauls of Italy for the Romans. It was specific to the Gauls and different from the histories which Romans attributed to other Italian peoples, not merely in respect of the particular events which it involved, but because of the character of the memories which it evoked, and which gave it its peculiar flavour of panicky fear and loathing coupled with exaggerated triumphalism. New historical experience informed and reshaped historical memory to an extent—Helico the Helvetian is one example of this[48]—but, more interestingly, memory also informed action and decision making in the conquest of the north. This, in turn, inflected the ways in which society and culture developed in the different areas of the post-conquest Po Valley.

The Roman conquest of the Po Valley proper might be said to have begun in 225 BC, when Roman armies crossed the Apennines into the territory of the Boii for the first time. Before this, however, the southernmost group of Gauls, the Senones, had been defeated and the Boii engaged with in the wars of the 280s. Post-conquest settlement consisted of the foundation of two colonies, Sena Gallica and the far more important Ariminum, in the 280s

[47] Cato *Orig*. 2. 13 Chassignet = 44 Peter; L. 32. 30. 6 on the Cenomani.
[48] See p. 108.

and 268 respectively, followed a generation later by the controversial viritane allotments organized by C. Flaminius in 232 BC.[49] In the aftermath of the Gallic attack of 225 BC which ended in defeat at Telamon, a succession of Roman consuls marched northwards and engaged victoriously with the two major groups of Po Valley Gauls either side of the river, the Boii and Insubres, winning the Cenomani and Veneti as allies. What looks very much like a planned series of aggressive campaigns, intended eventually to encompass the whole of the northern region, reached the Alps for the first time in 220 and moved into Illyria in 219.[50] In 218 BC, two important colonies were founded close to one another either side of the Po right in the middle of the plain, Cremona to the north and Placentia to the south.[51] Whether these foundations would anyway have marked an end to this phase of campaigning is unclear, as the interruption of the Hannibalic War introduced a new element into the Romans' calculations. Their difficulties were compounded by the fact that Hannibal was successful in drawing recruits for his armies among the Gauls. Under his leadership, Romans were again faced with Gauls on the attack all over Italy: they may have contributed up to a half of Hannibal's army of 50,000 at the battle of Cannae.[52] In the light of this sudden reversal in fortunes which the Romans had suffered so soon after what in 218 must have seemed like a final victory, the fact that Roman armies returned to the conquest of the peoples of the north in 201 BC almost immediately after the conclusion of the Hannibalic War and, having started, campaigned there every year until 190 BC, begins to make sense. The conclusion of this second extended phase of conquest was not, however, the end of the whole process. Consuls continued to be sent to Gaul with their armies, the Ligurians in the mountains now being the focus of active campaigning. Down in the plain, road building and colony foundation became the main preoccupation of public figures such as M. Aemilius Lepidus and C. Flaminius, both consul in 187 BC and

[49] Clavel-Lévêque 1983: 216–33; Amat-Seguin 1986; various essays in Calbi and Susini 1995: esp. Tramonti 1995 and Ortalli 1995 on the colony of Ariminum. On Flaminius and the Flaminian settlements see, *inter alia*, Gabba 1979; Hermon 1989; Oebel 1993; Caltabiano 1995; Cenerini 1995; Bottazzi 1995.

[50] Zon. 8. 20 on the Alpine expedition of 220 BC.

[51] Tozzi 1983.

[52] Hannibal reached the Po with 26,000 men according to Polybius (3. 56. 4); at Cannae, he had 40,000 infantry and about 10,000 cavalry (3. 114. 5). The difference was probably made up mostly by recruits from the north. See Walbank 1956–79: 1. 439. Cf. Pol. 3. 68. 8 for enthusiastic Celtic support for Hannibal.

both road builders of distinction, the Via Aemilia stretching from Ariminum to Placentia, the Via Flaminia across the mountains from Bononia to Arretium. A series of special three-man senatorial commissions *coloniis deducendis* (for founding colonies) instituted a programme, or at least a series, of colonial foundations. The two existing colonies on the Po were reinforced in 190, followed by a new Latin foundation at Bononia in 189 and two more Roman colonies at Parma and Mutina in 183 located on the line of the Via Aemilia. This sequence of colonial ventures came to an end in 181 BC with the foundation of Aquileia, located far away from the others at the head of the Adriatic. In 173 BC, viritane allotments were made to Roman citizens and Latins of unoccupied land in Gaul and Liguria.[53] At the same time, minor settlements grew up along the line of the road—Polybius passed through them on his travels northward—which later developed into larger towns situated in between the colonies.[54] On the other side of the Apennines, Luca and Luna were founded in 178 and 177 respectively. Colonies were also being founded elsewhere in Italy at this time, and the developments in north Italy should, of course, be seen in their wider context, but this context also shows how exceptional these developments actually were.

The persistence and intensity of Roman activity in northern Italy, both military and colonial, attested by the literary sources between 200 and 170 BC is without parallel or precedent. But what renders the north Italian experience of Roman conquest really extraordinary is the evidence provided by the landscape itself, which still bears witness to the wholesale reorientation of large tracts of the region south of the Po by the application of the Roman science of land division known as centuriation. Colonial foundations and roads were merely the infrastructure around which the area previously occupied by the Boii was substantially reordered. Centuriation itself as a technique was not new, but centuriation on this scale with such profound and lasting effects was unprecedented:[55] the Spanish Wars of the second century BC lasted a long time, but they were not followed by a massive importation of structural change into the landscape or by such widespread immigration on the part of Romans and other Italians. The

[53] For a succinct narrative of this period, see Harris 1989.
[54] Ruoff Väänänen 1982 on the *fora*.
[55] Bandelli 1988; Purcell 1990*b*.

north of Italy was unusual in this respect and, within the region itself, the area south of the Po was different from the Transpadane zone.[56] The two deliberately implanted instances of Roman settlement north of the Po in the early second century, Aquileia and Cremona, scarcely had the same effect on the landscape as did the string of colonies and colonists to the south. In 148 BC, the Via Postumia, another long-distance axial road of the same order of magnitude as the Aemilia, joined Aquileia to its distant neighbours in the central Po Valley and continued on over the Apennines to Genua, not yet a colony but already an important destination and military base. Unlike the Via Aemilia, its construction was not followed by colonial foundations, though it passed through existing Transpadane towns like Verona and Vicetia. Eporedia, founded in 100 BC, stands out in the north as an exception in the landscape, not integrated into a new structure as were the new towns south of the Po. But its position and the date of its foundation provide a clue to the theme that underlies and explains much, if not everything, about the events and the extraordinary character of the Roman conquest and settlement of northern Italy. For Eporedia was founded, probably by Marius himself, in the aftermath of the Cimbric invasions and was clearly intended to be an advance post against any further transalpine incursions.[57] Fear of invasion motivated this official act of colonial foundation in a new area north of the Po, and similar fears had motivated much of what had gone before it to the south. The unpredecented nature of the settlement corresponds with, and is best explained in relation to, the exceptional quality of the anxiety which war against Gauls engendered in Romans. It has been argued that the threat of invasion from Philip V of Macedonia was the principal motivating factor behind the construction of the line of the Via Aemilia as a defensive wall for Italy.[58] In the Gauls a geographically much closer and historically more acute fear is to hand to account for the changes instituted particularly in the regions directly over the Apennines, which, in the view of later observers, effectively eradi-

[56] Cf. Whittaker 1994: 18–27 relating the different patterns of centuriation either side of the Po to the doctrines of the Roman *agrimensores*.

[57] Vell. 1. 15; Eporedia founded by Marius. Str. 4. 6. 7 says it was intended to keep a watch on the Salassi. This must be wrong. Saturninus also legislated on the allotment of lands in the north (App. *B.C.* 1. 29–31), and a new colony was founded at Comum in 89 BC. (Str. 5. 1. 6).

[58] Brizzi 1987; Dyson 1985: 1–41.

cated the Gauls from the landscape in those areas. According to Strabo and Pliny, the Boii and the Senones who had once lived there were simply no longer in existence.[59] In their place was established a new order represented by centuriation, *limitatio*, which replaced the undifferentiated chaos in which the Gauls had lived, full of uncultivated marsh and treacherous woodland, and restored the ancient landscape of cities that had once dominated the north in the days of the Etruscans, beginning with Bononia, founded, as tradition recalled, on the site of the Etruscan city of Felsina.[60]

The intense loathing which Romans felt for Gauls accounts reasonably for the complete change which they wanted to effect in the landscape and people of the region bounding the Apennines after the conquest. The annihilation of the Boii—as of the Senones before them—which left only old men and boys alive, or so their conqueror P. Nasica claimed, was intended as an act of revenge as well as policy, revenge for invading Italy, for the sack of Rome, for two centuries of fear and warfare, and for their most recent acts of treachery in the Hannibalic War.[61] But were the Boii really extirpated as the boastful general claimed? Could even the Romans wipe out a whole population over such a large area? Did they, despite Nasica, ever really intend to do so? The Gauls had, after all, only been mulcted of half their territory; even if this comprised the best-quality land, it suggests that a substantial population was left in possession of at least some of its lands after the conquest.[62] Some modern commentators have indeed doubted whether the Boii were physically removed *en masse* as Strabo reports.[63] Current readings of the archaeological evidence stress destabilization and discontinuity in the history of the Gauls from the third century onwards. It appears to show a decline in the presence of imported luxury artefacts in graves containing La Tène material attributed to Celts. In the Boian region, a complementary increase in the proportion of La Tène material with

[59] Str. 5. 1. 6, 10; Plin. *N.H.* 3. 116.

[60] L. 33. 37. 3, 37. 57. 8 on Felsina, later Bononia. Cf. Str. 5. 1. 11 for drainage works in the Po Valley in the later 2nd cent. BC. Cf. Pol. 3. 40. 12; L. 23. 24. 7, 33. 37. 4, 34. 22. 1–3 for the woods of the pre-Roman Po Valley, commonly appearing as scenes of treacherous Gallic ambushes or places for cowardly escape.

[61] L. 36. 40. 5.

[62] L. 36. 39. 3.

[63] Str. 5. 1. 6; Baldacci 1986: 94; Vitali 1991: 235. Cf. Pol. 2. 35. 4 for another exaggerated estimation of the expulsion of the Celts from the plain.

stylistic affinities to contemporary Central European developments also has been detected. This change is generally explained as attributable to the cessation of opportunities for mercenary service among the Gauls with the Etruscans and the Greek cities of southern Italy after their defeat by Rome in the early third century. This, it is argued, led to the pauperization of Cispadane Celtic society in the decades before the final Roman conquest of the north.[64] The final disappearance of La Tène material from the Cispadane area in the second century BC is, in turn, explained by the expulsion of the Senones from their lands in the settlements of 232 BC, and the subjugation of the Boii after the final defeat of 191 BC. The weakness in this explanation is that it resorts to what is essentially a Greek and Roman preconception, that is, that Gauls were habitual mercenaries. Perhaps the disappearance of Italian and Greek artefacts among grave goods is a case of exclusion rather than absence. It may just be the result of a change in burial style, or it may have been motivated by a conscious choice to use artefacts and burial practice as an indicator of a new sense of cultural, perhaps also ethnic, difference from communities south of the Apennines and of newly invented connections with others to the north, in the wake of increased confrontation with the Romans in the wars of the 280s.[65] Whether this ought to be envisaged as a spontaneous development among the inhabitants of the Cispadane region, or rather as a reaction engendered by an increased awareness of the hostility with which Romans tended to regard them through identifying them as Gauls, is hard to say, but both views should be canvassed.

As to the final disappearance of La Tène material in the second century BC, there are also alternatives to extirpation and expulsion as reasonable explanations. The unremitting wars and the later conquest and settlement of the half century after 225 BC must have caused profound destabilization among the societies of the region as a whole as a large section of the population was without doubt dispossessed, enslaved, and killed by the Romans. But whether the changes in the burial evidence, indeed the disappearance of burial evidence, reflect this or another change, perhaps religious or social, is entirely uncertain. In many areas of northern Europe,

[64] Cf. Zuffa 1978: 142; Kruta 1981: 23 ff.; 1988, 291; Kruta-Poppi 1984; Vitali 1978*a*; Vitali 1992: 380–90, 403.

[65] Cf. Hodder 1982: 13–36.

including Hungary, southern Germany, and Switzerland, burial evidence also tends to disappear in the second and first centuries.[66] It could be argued that the Cispadane region was participating in a change in funerary rites archaeologically towards non-visible forms of burial. Again, the demonstration of the existence of alternatives does not of itself invalidate the previous hypothesis, but it at least performs the useful service of liberating mortuary archaeology from the subsidiary status of merely reflecting military and political history, a role to which it is not best suited. Absence of burials does not necessarily mean the absence of people. Attempts have been made to detect evidence for Celtic continuities in the Cispadane region into the Roman period in the form of identifiably Celtic religious practices, particularly associated with water and springs, the sorts of places where Celts are supposed to have carried out their religious rites.[67] While it is likely that there were continuities of both population and religion, it is unlikely that these can be identified in the form of Cispadane Celtic springs.

Strong probability, then, and some evidence suggest that there was a large population of Gauls remaining in the Cispadane region after the conquest. According to Livy, 1,500 of the Boian élite had already given themselves up to the consuls in 192 before the final surrender.[68] Perhaps they were rewarded with continued tenure of their lands, or some portion of them. It is possible that the disappearance of the Boii from later ethnic surveys of Italy indicates the thorough disruption of ethnic communities in the region. But as it is unclear to what extent, or in what ways, the Roman category of 'Boii' ever corresponded to a real ethnic community, this need not necessarily betoken ethnic or national dissolution so much as the successful integration of local communities into a new identity, that represented by the new colonies and landscape associated with the Latin-speaking population of the region in the second century. *Prima facie*, it is highly probable that there were groups of Gallic *accolae* ('non-citizen inhabitants') living in communities like the suggestively named Forum Gallorum, whose descendants eventually became Roman citizens along with the rest of Latin and allied Italy south of the Po in 89 BC. Perhaps already

[66] Collis 1984: 48–9.

[67] Cf. Chilver 1941: 183 ff.; Susini 1965; Peyre 1979: 111; Chevallier 1983: 429–39.

[68] L. 35. 22. 4, 40. 3.

by this stage, there were no Senones or Boii recognizable to Roman observers because they had by and large become Latins over the course of the second century. Had they not done so, like the Cenomani and Insubres north of the Po, their name might have survived, and we would perhaps hear more about them from later authors.

The Transpadane situation was different in various respects. An oft-quoted passage of Cicero's *Pro Balbo* reveals that the Romans made treaties with the Insubres and the Cenomani, as well as the Helvetii and Iapydes. It is reasonably assumed that these treaties were concluded after the completion of the Northern Wars of the 190s. We know nothing of the terms, save the one stipulation mentioned by Cicero that no member of these peoples could be granted the Roman citizenship. This effectively prevented exceptional grants of citizenship to individual Transpadanes, for example for distinguished service in battle, yet the terms on which the two peoples were to render auxiliary service to the Roman army were in all probability set out in the same treaty. Whether this was intended, or felt, as a deliberate disability has been debated. However, the fact that the same clause was, according to Cicero, included in treaties with other tribes of Gauls and some other barbarian peoples might suggest that it was intended to exclude individuals of undesirable origin from obtaining the privileges of citizenship, while at the same time imposing upon them all the other obligations usually associated with a treaty relationship with the Romans. The effect of this exclusion may well have been to promote the stability of the pre-existing social structure, as Gabba has argued, and thus encourage the persistence of the Insubres and Cenomani as communities into the late Republic. Whether this was deliberate policy is another matter.[69] Indeed, more than perpetuating previous structures, it is not unlikely that the new treaty relationship encouraged the development of *new* ethnic orientations north of the Po. First of all, the communities of the region will have learnt from their interaction with the Romans that they were Galli—there is no reason to believe that this term corresponded to any pre-existing identity.

[69] Cic. *Balb*. 32. Str. 5. 1. 6, 9 for the Insubres and Cenomani in the 1st cent. BC. See Baldacci 1971–4; Luraschi 1979: 23–101; 1986: 44–5; Peyre 1979: 64; Gabba 1983: 43–4; 1984: 214; 1986*a*: 33–4 on the question of whether this clause was intended as a disability or to preserve the stability of local hierarchies.

They may also have learnt that they were, above all else, Insubres and Cenomani, and that these were the critical terms by which the newly important question of their status in relation to the Romans was defined according to the terms of the treaty and also in subsequent practice. The legal imposition of these essentially Roman categories effectively created a new sense of ethnic identity among the communities of the Transpadane region.[70] Lower level, local identities dependent upon family or village doubtless persisted, but in the post-conquest world they will have become of largely parochial importance. The centres of power had shifted, to Rome above all, and then to the two new local centres that developed in the Po Valley in the second century BC, Mediolanum and Brixia, one for each of the two newly defined Gallic communities of the north.

In discussions of the Romanization of the Transpadane region, much emphasis is laid on the importance of these two towns and other centres such as Comum and Verona in the mediation of Roman material culture and Latin language northwards, brought by immigrant populations from the Italian peninsula. The first is demonstrated by the increasing presence of imported artefacts such as articles of Campanian black glaze ware deposited in graves dated to the second century BC.[71] Recent excavations in the city centre of Milan have also revealed some evidence for the development of urban structures in the second century; slightly later, in the early first century BC, a Roman-style Capitolium was erected at Brixia.[72] The spread of Latin in the communities of the north during the second century would appear to be a necessary precondition to explain the flourishing Latin literary culture that was in existence there by the middle of the first century; as indeed would a substantial immigration from the Italian peninsula, for which Gabba has consistently argued as a major factor underlying the Romanization and Latinization of the north.[73] Auxiliary service in the Roman army by the men of the north, it has been suggested,

[70] Cf. Ardener 1989: 69–71 on how external categories can become communities. Cf. Millett 1990*a*: 67–8 for a similar account of the formation of the *civitates* in Roman Britain.

[71] Cf. Arslan 1976–8, 1978, 1991; Vannacci Lunazzi 1978, 1985; Piana Agostinetti 1972, 1983; Trucco 1978; Tizzoni 1983, 1985*a* for archaeological treatments of the Romanization of the north. Tozzi 1972 on centuriation and Romanization.

[72] Tizzoni 1986: esp. 351–2; Mirabella Roberti 1990; Ceresa Mori 1990: 499–500, 1990–1, 1995; Rossignani 1990; Arslan 1990*a*: 72 ff., for local urban developments.

[73] Cf. Gabba 1975, 1978: 19–20, 1983, 1984: 217, 1985: 41, 1986*a*: 36, 1990: 73–7

also encouraged the adoption of peninsular styles and language. In addition, a substantial contingent of the Roman army was probably stationed in the north for most of the second century.[74]

All the above are extremely reasonable suggestions to account for the indisputable fact that by the middle of the first century BC, the Transpadane region was inhabited by a significant population of Latin-speaking people with Roman names who earnestly desired to become Romans, which represented a significant change from the situation which pertained 140 years before at the conclusion of the Northern Wars. The focus of most accounts of Romanization in this region, be they historical or archaeological in character, has tended to be on the the gradual spread of Italian culture and the decline of local styles and local languages through the means outlined above. Roman historians, understandably, are particularly interested in tracing the integration of the north into Italy, while archaeologists and prehistorians have, perhaps less understandably, tended to read the archaeology of the last two centuries BC as the final chapter of the story of autonomous Celtic culture in the region and of its decline and final submersion within Roman Italy in the first century BC, measured against the successive stages of the granting of the Latin Right in 89 and the integration of the northern province within Italia in 42. As a consequence, insufficient attention has been given to explaining the evident continuities in material culture and language with the pre-conquest period or, better, to accounting for the ways in which local culture in the north developed idiosyncratically after the conquest, partly, at least, as a result of its marginal position both geographically and politically speaking, being very much bound to the Roman system and yet excluded from it in express legal terms. For instance, the fact that burials from the countryside show the persistence of traditional rites including the deposition of weapons in the graves, and the continuity of local pottery styles into the first century BC, at the same time as Mediolanum and Brixia were beginning to develop their first Italian-style public buildings, has been attributed to the slowness of the penetration of Romanization from the towns into the countryside.[75] This is in itself a reasonable

who argues for large-scale emigration from southern Italy to the north and elsewhere. Grilli 1990 on the Latin culture of the Transpadana.

[74] Brunt 1987: 567–9.

[75] Cf. Arslan 1978: 83, 1991: 464. Cf. Binaghi Leva 1986; Tizzoni 1983, 1985*a*;

hypothesis so far as it goes. Towns do after all tend to be centres of experimentation and innovation relative to their hinterlands, particularly when the towns themselves are an innovation as is probable in this case, whereas rural communities tend to be relatively conservative in their ways. Nevertheless this need not simply be explained as a function of rustic backwardness. The persistence of traditional forms of burial in the Po Valley countryside might more positively be interpreted as an indication of passive resistance to the onset of new ideas or ways of life represented by the towns. Equally well, the same people who were buried with their swords in a traditional manner in their home village might well have put on a toga and spoken Latin when they went up to town.[76] Neither of these suggestions is susceptible of proof, but as hypotheses they have the merit of acknowledging that there was more to the culture of life, and death, in the Transpadane region of the last two centuries BC than local decline and the inevitable advance of Romanization.[77]

The main disadvantage of Romanization as an interpretative concept is that it is teleological, whereas history is not. Romanization knows from the start where things were leading and interprets the evidence accordingly.[78] It might be a useful term with which to describe the historical process of change revealed in the material

Vannacci Lunazzi 1978; see also ead. 1985 for discussion of the cemetery at Valeggio Lomellina (Pavia), which shows the gradual 1st-cent. BC decline in local funerary rites, the disappearance of local pottery styles and of weapons from the graves in the transition from so-called La Tène period D1 to D2. Grassi 1991: 107–11, 114–25 for a summary of the evidence from the Cenomanian and Insubrian areas respectively.

[76] For the idea, see Hdt. 4. 78–80 for the story of the double life of the Scythian king Scyles among his own people and among the Greeks of Borysthenes. Cf. various essays in Mattingly 1997 on the theme of resistance. See also Campanile 1981; Lejeune 1988: 11–24 on the 1st-cent. BC inscription from Briona near Novara, written in a Celtic language and recording the names of 3 brothers, sons of *Tanotalos*, one of whom is called *kuitos lekatos*, presumably a local worthy who adopted a Roman name, i.e. Quintus Legatus. The names of his brothers, *Anokopokios* and *Setupokios*, are still definitely of local provenance. Is it possible to say merely from the names whether Kuitos was buried in a more Roman fashion than his brothers?

[77] The continued flourishing of an indigenous coinage tradition in the post-conquest period is clear testimony to this: on which, see Pautasso 1962–3, 1984; Arslan 1990*a*, 1990*b*, 1992–3 (with full bibliography), 1993; see Crawford 1984, 1985: 75–83 for a different approach to the chronology of this series.

[78] For recent discussions of Romanization as a concept, see Woolf 1992; Freeman 1993; Hanson 1994; essays in Webster and Cooper 1996; Mattingly 1997; Laurence and Berry 1998; Woolf 1998.

evidence, but being an essentially retrospective verdict delivered with the benefit of hindsight, it is not capable of fully describing the complex motives of the people who actually put the goods in the graves and used the artefacts in life, motives which need to be taken account of in some way. A less negative assessment of the creative viability of local cultures and identities is also required to account for the persistence of the Insubres and the Cenomani into the late first century BC as ethnic categories recognizable to external observers, and probably as real communities as well, a fact which is otherwise hard to explain. There had always been considerable ambivalence among Romans about admitting the Gaulish inhabitants of Transpadane Italy to their community. In the early second century, this feeling seems to have manifested itself in the citizenship exclusion clause written into the treaties, while in the late Republic it almost became the cause of civil war. Obvious Roman intransigence of this sort might be invoked as a reason to account for the stubborn survival of Transpadane identities against the apparent trend of the material evidence towards Roman forms. These two tendencies would not after all be inconsistent with one another, for the reason already proposed, that grave goods are not reliable barometers of ethnic sympathies.

The difference between the experiences of the inhabitants of the regions either side of the Po was to a large extent determined by the terms of the immediate post-conquest settlement imposed by the Romans. South of the Po, there was confiscation of land, expulsion of people, and colonization. But there was also integration of individuals and communities into the framework of the new landscape. Later Romans thought they had sent all the Gauls back over the Alps in the early second century. More probably they were living with their descendants as fellow citizens of the colonies and communities of the Regio Aemilia. North of the Po there were no major confiscations or colonizations outside the regions around Cremona and Aquileia. Instead there were treaties to regulate the relationship between Gauls and Romans which established a legal barrier between them, thereby perpetuating the existence of communities identifiable as Gauls in what was increasingly identified as part of Italy into the late Republic, and storing up troubles for later generations of Romans when the time came to accept them as part of the in-group.

CONCLUSION AND EPILOGUE

'Celts' and 'Romans' are categories which have been taken from the literary evidence and, together with a range of dates, have been imposed wholesale upon the archaeology of northern Italy. They tend to prejudice the terms in which questions are asked and answers given, not merely concerning the meaning of the material evidence but also the historical events to which the literary evidence itself refers. In finishing with a consideration of the problematic relationship between text, archaeology, and history in pre-Roman northern Italy, it is earnestly hoped that such criticism as has been levelled at existing approaches has not been purely negative, and that positive, if tentative, alternative hypotheses have been proposed in the light of observations made. Opening up an interpretative gap between literary narratives, ethnic categories, and material evidence, such that they no longer all tell the same story of Celtic invasion followed by Romanization, is the indispensable prelude to achieving a better understanding, first, of the methodological question of how history and archaeology might relate to one another in a different way and, more interestingly, of what happened in northern Italy in the latter half of the first millennium BC.

The substance of this book deals with how Greeks and Romans imagined the Gauls of Italy and the places where they lived, and with the stories they told about them. Leading on from there, it also attempts to show what effects these images and stories had in history, how they affected Roman actions as well as inflecting their thoughts, and how they continue to affect modern interpretations of the history and archaeology of the last centuries BC in northern Italy.

It goes without saying that revealing the traditional, perhaps tralatician, character of many preconceptions, both ancient and modern, about the Gauls of Italy, does not prove that they were, or are, entirely misconceived. Most prejudices have some grain of truth buried within them, but this is almost incidental. They do not depend on correspondence with reality in order to survive and prosper. They merely require plausibility, to seem to cohere with what is already established and generally believed by the group among whom they are current. In consequence, while beliefs traditionally held by the members of one group about the

character or culture of another need not be entirely wrong, they are likely to be generally unreliable as sources of information from which to construct a realistic account of the people constituting the object of the preconception.

It might be argued that a distinction can be maintained between factual information concerning realia, about tribal divisions, customs, clothing, settlement patterns, and language, and opinions on such matters as temperament and moral character. There is some distinction to be drawn here, clearly. It would be wrong to dismiss as false per se all ancient testimony about such subjects as what Gauls wore or what shape their swords were. Nevertheless, even points like these are likely to have been selectively made and inherently generalizing, chosen primarily because they cohered attractively with some aspect of the group of moral preconceptions through which Gauls were perceived.[79] So, the point Polybius makes about Celtic swords being too long for close-quarter fighting and tending to buckle easily after the first blow clearly reflects his views of Celtic character, of which the Celtic sword is the material equivalent: fearsome but poorly constituted, and liable to fall apart after the initial onslaught if resolutely resisted.[80] Doubtless, Celtic swords did buckle and bend in battle but it is unlikely that they *all* did so all the time or else Celts would have stopped using them. To which Polybius would probably reply that stubborn persistence in sticking to plainly ineffectual weaponry is just what you would expect from Celts.

Apparently factual remarks in the literary sources therefore require cautious handling as evidence for three reasons. First, what Polybius or Cato have to say about the material aspects of Celtic life is not to be considered value-free and reliable simply because it appears to convey information rather than opinion. The two are deeply implicated in one another. Secondly, what they wrote cannot be considered to convey a *full* picture of ancient reality. Facts can be selectively omitted, or denied, as well as included. Polybius on Celtic towns is a case in point. He misses them out, indeed denies their existence in his sketch of Celtic life in Book 2, but then proceeds to include a number of them in his subsequent narrative of the Romans' wars against the Celts.[81]

[79] Cf. Dench 1995: 23–4 on selective seeing in the creation of stereotypes about the peoples of the Central Apennines.

[80] Pol. 2. 33. 2–3 on Celtic swords and temperament.

[81] See 80–1.

Whether he was right to consider them as towns in the proper sense is of course an entirely different matter, and this brings us to the third caveat about the use of Greek and Roman literary evidence in reconstructing the realia of life in pre-Roman northern Italy. Anything said by the relevant Greek and Roman authors about the alien and, for most of them, the past world of the Celts in Italy may simply be factually wrong, a consequence of misinformation or misunderstanding, the opportunities for which will have been manifold.

The applicability of the literary evidence to developing an understanding of the realities of life in pre-Roman northern Italy is limited. Far more interesting is what evidence of this sort has to say about Greeks and Romans themselves, on which it is extremely informative. To know that the Romans thought that the Gauls had invaded Italy and burned Rome, and that it was instinctively believed that they wanted to have another go at both, or that Greeks like Polybius thought that Celts habitually lived in unwalled villages and slept on beds of leaves, is extremely useful information for helping to form an understanding of history, of why certain things happened as they did in Republican northern Italy: why the area south of the Po was so thoroughly restructured in the twenty years after the conquest to an extent unparalleled in any overseas province in the Republican period, why it took so long for the Transpadanes to be enfranchised, why Marius was elected consul an unprecedented five times in a row during the wars against the Cimbri, why Julius Caesar invaded Gaul in 58 BC, which, conveniently, brings us back to where we began.

People, wrote Sir Lewis Namier, when discoursing or writing about history, tend to imagine the past in terms of their own experience and, when trying to gauge the future, cite supposed analogies from the past, such that, by a double process of repetition, they imagine the past and remember the future. But, he continues, the imagination of the past and the projection of memory into the future is not merely an abstract matter of writing and discourse. It has a profound effect upon how people think and plan and, therefore, how they act.[82] It helps to make history. The imagined past in the form of the Gauls' invasion of Italy and sack of Rome bore heavily on the Romans' ideas about their future: it gave them nightmares which lasted for centuries, long after the

[82] Namier 1942: 69–70.

conquest of the Gauls themselves. For this very reason it still exerts an extraordinary fascination over many archaeologists and historians who think and write about it in the present day. This being so, perhaps it is time to think again.

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