National Identity as Fundamental to Creating a Long-lasting and Realistic Grand Strategy for States: The Success of Roman Grand Strategy

by

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Abstract

Grand strategy as we know it is the highest level of strategy, which seeks to coordinate all the resources at a state's disposal to win both the war and the peace, but in fact true grand strategy goes beyond the narrow scope of a certain war or limited time frame and instead is entwined with a state's character and national objectives throughout periods of time. What is meant by this is that a true grand strategy is developed out of a national character and guides the actions of a state throughout its existence. As such, this type of grand strategy has been a chimera for most states throughout history, while for a small number of other states, it has proven to be the key to their success; the Roman Republic being one of the first examples of such success. For Rome, grand strategy was created through a national identity that gave paramount importance to the acquisition of glory, giving her the expansionist drive that allowed her to become mistress of the Mediterranean.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank the faculty of Panteion University for giving me the chance to study at the University and for providing me with such a rich learning experience especially in a time of difficulties for academia and the country.

I want to thank my family for all the support they have provided throughout the years: my sister Lorrie for being my biggest motivator and my greatest critic, my mother Zoe for providing me with so many opportunities and so much love, and my father Antonios for being the best friend that I could always count on to be by my side, even now that he is no longer by my side to see the completion of the degree which he was so happy to see me follow.

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1   Introduction

Throughout history, there have been many examples of states which have become great powers, so much so that it would be difficult to find any period in recorded history where a premier power has not existed within the geographic confines of that specific time period. The road to becoming a great power is usually a long one, but using this metaphor can lead one to believe that such status is gained through a linear progression as devised from some grand strategy, with great power status being the obvious destination, when at closer examination this rarely (if ever) seems to be the case. As such, there exists a situation where many great powers reach this high status by accident, or rather, through no particular plan, therefore setting themselves up for future failure. If this description sounds overly negative it is not the intention, since many such powers which have had a great influence on world history have attained such influence by such means, but it is ultimately anchored by the expectation of failure.

As a clear example of this rise to power and influence, one can look to the initial Arab Conquests of the 7th Century, where a small but fierce group of warriors struck out of Arabia at precisely the moment the two great powers of the region, the Roman and Sassanian Empires, had exhausted each other in the great Roman-Sassanid War of 602-678. In addition to taking advantage of the military weakness of their enemies, the Arabs were also able to take advantage of the civic weakness of the Roman Empire in Egypt, where the religious intolerance from Constantinople led the Coptic population to look at the invading Muslims as liberators from the Chalcedonians, allowing for them to live without interference in their religious doctrine regardless of the secondary status that they would have as *dhimmi*, non-Muslims within a Muslim kingdom. This is not to say of course that the Arabs achieved their great conquests without skill of their own, since an opportune moment means nothing if it cannot be taken advantage of; and it is not to suggest that military weakness on the part of the Romans or Sassanids signified a lack of quality military leadership for the Arabs, as they were led by one of the great generals of Late Antiquity, Khalid ibn Walid. The early Arab Conquests of the Levant propelled both the Arabs and Islam on the world stage and lay the foundation for successive Muslim expansion and the creation of some of the great Muslim powers of the Middle Ages and Early Modern period, but the alignment of events that gave the initial conquerors such success meant that there was little in the way of grand strategy or long-term planning, and the newly-established unity of the Arabs as well as the novelty of

Islam meant that there was but a small sense of identity and a weak common legacy. This concurrence of events meant that the Rashidun Caliphate was not able to capitalize on its gains in a way that would allow it to continue as a great power; the military zeal of conquest led to overexpansion while the unity of the Arabs proved to be short-lived, leading to the collapse of the Caliphate within only thirty years of its foundation.

The short existence of the Rashidun Caliphate suggests that Arab statecraft was not yet mature enough to form a more stable state, but at the same longevity is not always an indication of grand strategy or of its successful implementation. When looking at the Ottoman Empire for example, its longevity might suggest successful grand strategy, and in fact many of the elements which allowed it to last as long as it did are shared with other successful great powers, but unfortunately for them there were too many elements missing from the equation as well. The Ottomans reached their apogee in the 16th Century thanks to their constant expansion in all directions which gave them access to the immense financial resources of their newly won territories. With the Ottomans we see elements of a core identity which allowed for such success, mainly the combination of the religiously motivated *ghazi* drive for expansion into the *Dar al-Harab* and the generous accommodation of non-Muslim conquered populations which made up the majority of their conquests in Europe. It was in the 16th Century, with the failure to conquer Vienna after its investment in 1529 and the defeat at Lepanto in 1571, that the conquering drive in the West came to an end, and with these defeats the Ottomans were unable to sustain their economic drive which had rested on acquiring plunder. The Ottomans would be in stalemate in the West against the Hapsburgs and the East against the Safavids, a stalemate that vastly diminished the earlier *ghazi* impulses of the Ottomans to carry out *jihad*, and which would result in the economic decline that would lead the Ottomans into becoming the "sick man of Europe," which in turn would lead to the repression and corruption that would alienate previously placated subjects in the Balkans and Middle East. For the Ottomans then there was a "national" identity which shaped their early grand strategy and allowed for early success, but which did not provide the means for that success to become sustainable.

What was missing from the Rashidun Caliphs and the Ottomans was a national identity that would have provided the means for sustained success through the formulation of either a conscious or subconscious grand strategy. A subconscious grand strategy appears to be a contradiction in terms as far as the understanding of what strategy is, since strategy requires a degree of planning, but if considered from the point of view that national identity

plays a decisive role in formulating grand strategy, the need for it to be formalized suddenly diminishes. National identity being shaped by reality is what helps each nation to establish their own grand strategy, whether it be formulated or not, which is why so many varied formulae for success can be seen within the patchwork of European nations of the Early Modern period until today; British and French or Spanish grand strategies not only differ throughout history because of the different geopolitical situations of the two countries, but because those people either formulating their respective grand strategies or those people implementing it unbeknownst to them are acting upon their own national impulses. It was this national identity that allowed the British to have far greater success in their imperial ventures in the New World, through better integration of subdued populaces, than the Spanish, but the same identity which allowed the French to develop the most formidable land armies in Europe for 500 years.

In this paper, it will be this blend of national identity with grand strategy that will be examined as a concept in Chapter 1, in which the terms "national identity," "grand strategy" will be defined, the former for the purpose of this study being entwined with the concept of "strategic culture." In Chapter 2, the primarily military history of the Roman Republic will be analyzed so as to present the context through which the Roman strategic culture was formed and to provide some general examples of it being on display. This will be followed by an analysis of Edward N. Luttwak's *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* so as to provide a framework for this study into the earlier Roman Republic. Chapter 3 will examine the specific elements of Rome's culture which played such a great role in influencing its strategic culture and then look at these elements in action through an analysis of Rome's major wars. Finally, an analysis of how Rome's culture affected its strategic culture will be put forward, as well as a suggestion of what Rome's actual grand strategy was.

2   Strategic Culture and Grand Strategy

2.1   National Identity and Strategic Culture

As a force that exerts itself upon and influences grand strategy, national identity for the sake of this paper and its focus on grand strategy shares much with strategic culture, whose study has fallen to those academics who place themselves within the field of strategic studies. In the study of strategic culture, the quest is to find what effect culture has on the development of strategy and grand strategy. In this study, national identity, or strategic culture, will not only be used to examine the grand strategy of states within a limited time frame, but will also attempt to show how it shapes the long-term grand strategy of a state and how it can do so not only on the conscious level, but on the semi-conscious and subconscious levels as well. In this section, the academic study of strategic culture will be analyzed in order to reveal the ebbs and flows within that field as well as more recent developments in order to tie it to the various concepts of grand strategy later on.

Before delving into the academic debates and definitions of what *strategic* culture is, *culture* itself ought to be defined. Without delving too much into sociology, what seems to emerge is that culture is a set of codes, scripts, assumptions, and images which are held onto by a certain group.[1] Sociologist Raymond Williams has posited that culture has three defining categories: the ideal, the documentary, and the social, suggesting finally that culture "is a description of a particular way of life which finds expression in institutions and ordinary behavior."[2] Current sociology however employs the concept of culture as a constitutive concept and not as an independent variable, with Adam Kuper stating that culture is hyper-referential and creates grand narratives when we should focus on knowledge or belief or art

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[1] Aaron Wildavsky, "Change in Political Culture," *Australian Journal of Political Science* 20 (1985) p. 95

[2] John Storey, *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture* (Harlow: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2006), p. 56

or technology or tradition.[3] This understanding of culture means that while it can be used to categorize many aspects of a certain group's behavior, that group should not be defined too rigidly within specific borders, and that culture itself cannot just be used as a catchall term for any phenomenon within a specified group.

The idea that a nation's culture shapes its strategic outlook is no recent idea. Writing on the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides references the speeches given just as the war between Athens and Sparta was about to erupt, in which the Athenian demagogue Pericles exalted Athens' strengths not only in capital, but also in its democratic character, to goad the Athenians into a war with Sparta.[4] In trying to avoid a war, Archidamus laid out the potential course of the war and how uncertain victory would be, but he also made sure to appeal to Spartan culture by reminding the Spartans that "our sense of good order is what makes us both brave in war and wise in counsel."[5] In Clausewitz's *On War*, one is constantly called on to abandon the strict theory-crafting that had gone into warfare and reminds the reader of the importance of the psychological aspect of warfare when he says that "fighting…is a trial of moral and physical forces through the medium of the latter."[6]

The idea that there is something especially important in history and tradition acting as a guiding light for strategy is especially strong in British literature that emphasizes their maritime heritage. Julian S. Corbett juxtaposes the "German or Continental School of strategy" with the "British or Maritime School" which he considers to be Britain's "traditional school."[7] Later, B. H. Liddell Hart would publish his book *The British Way in Warfare* in 1932 where he believed that Britain's maritime tradition meant that it should keep out of large scale continental commitments with her own ground forces, and in his 1939 book *The Defense of Britain*, Hart sees Britain as the heir of a culture which eschewed the offensive – which through six centuries of warfare he saw as a "supremely successful military

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[3] I. B. Neumann, "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice: The Social Roots of Nordic Defence," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40 (2005), p. 4, Adam Kuper, *Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999)

[4] Thucydides I.140-144

[5] Thucydides, I.80

[6] Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (New York: Knopf, 1993), p. 127

[7] Julian S. Corbett, *Principles of Maritime Strategy*, (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2004), p. 88

tradition" that had been abandoned with disastrous effect in the First World War.[8] In his magnum opus, *Strategy*, Hart is especially chastising of Britain's continental commitments during the First World War, admonishing the "Europeanization" of its military organization and how it led Britain to neglect "her historic exploitation of the mobility given by sea-power."[9] In the United States, Russel F. Weigley argues in his 1973 book *The American Way of War* that America had a tradition of warfighting which favored devastating offensives that employed the use of overwhelming firepower coupled with an inherent aggressiveness in seeking decisive battles,[10] attributes which were also present within the Roman Republic.

Strategic culture as the specific term referring to a phenomenon within the field of strategic studies first appeared in 1977 in Jack Snyder's study of Soviet strategic culture, especially in regards to their nuclear strategy, and it was in this work where the first definition of strategic culture as "the sum total of ideals, conditional emotional responses, and patterns of habitual behavior that members of the national strategic community have acquired through instruction or imitation and share with each other with regard to nuclear strategy" emerges.[11] This work sought to discover within the context of the Cold War whether the doctrine of Mutually Assured Destruction (*MAD*) was as convincing to the Soviets as it was to the Americans. Snyder did not believe that Soviet attitudes could in fact be traced to their distant history, but his study was succeeded by those from Colin Gray and David Jones, who believed that the reasons why *MAD* did not appeal as much to the Soviets as it did to the Americans was in-fact deeply rooted within the Soviet strategic culture, which they believed was something that could be traced back and defined within Russian history. Their conclusions were that American culture placed far greater importance on the value of life and so to American strategic planners, it appeared obvious that there could be no winners in a nuclear war where most or all life would be destroyed. For these reasons, Gray concluded that Americans at the time lacked any plans for actually winning a nuclear confrontation with the Soviet Union.

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[8] B. H. Liddell Hart, *The Defence of Britain,* (London: Faber & Faber, 1939)p. 111

[9] B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, (New York: Praeger, 1967), p. 220-221

[10] Russel F. Weigley, *The American Way of War*, (New York: Macmillan, 1973)

[11] Jack Snyder, *The Soviet Strategic Culture: Implications for Nuclear Options,* (Santa Monica: Rand Corporation, 1977)

Looking further into strategic culture itself, David Jones suggested that a state's strategic culture was affected by three different levels of inputs: the macro-environmental, the societal, and the micro level. The macro-environmental level consisted of geographical, historical, and cultural characteristics, while the societal level consisted of social, economic, and political structures that were to be found within a society. Finally, the micro level consisted of military institutions and the interactions that would exist between civilian and military authorities. When Jones applied these three level of inputs into Soviet strategic culture, he saw a culture that was based on repression and totalitarianism which would be much more accepting of civilian casualties so long as the apparatus of Soviet power and repression remained intact, and would therefore be more inclined to believe that victory in a nuclear confrontation was possible.[12]

In 1995, Alastair I. Johnston published an article in *International Security* where he put forward the idea that the study of strategic culture was up until that point divided into three generations.[13] This division of scholarship into separate generations has had the effect of solidifying his notion that there were indeed three generations, and so his article can be considered one the landmark works of strategic studies. For Johnston, the first generation of scholars was best represented by Snyder, Gray, and Jones, but he believed that despite the innovation in strategic studies these scholars had brought forth, their work had numerous shortcomings. First of all, the term "strategic culture" was used as too much of a catchall term, whereby any input such as "technology, geography, tradition, history, political culture, national character, political psychology, ideology and the international system structure" could all be relevant to the formation of a strategic culture, even though each of these elements on their own could be used to explain strategic choice.[14] The second problem that Johnson believes is present within the first generation of scholarship is the simplified conclusion that each nation had just one culture, whereas even within the context of planning for a nuclear war it is apparent that Strategic Air Command in the United States did actually

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[12] David R. Jones, "Soviet Strategic Culture" in *Strategic Power: USA/USSR* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1990), pp. 34-49

[13] Alastair I. Johnston, "Thinking About Strategic Culture," *International Security* 19 (1995)

[14] Ibid.

plan to win a nuclear war rather than just hope to avoid one altogether.[15] The final problem that Johnston identifies in the scholarship of the first generation is that its conclusions on how strategic cultures are formed are far too deterministic, since all the impetuses (geographical, political, cultural, and strategic experiences) could have produced alternate strategic cultures.

The importance of Johnston's work in creating the taxonomy of generations within the scholarship lends ever more importance to what has resounded as the biggest criticism of the first generation of scholarship, which is that it "rules out the possibility of a disjunction between strategic culture and behavior."[16] This criticism suggests that the first generation states that all choices that are taken are taken as a result of strategic culture and that all behavior is tied to it. The next generation of scholarship which would arise in the mid-1980s, the so-called "second generation," would seek to address some of these issues, but their scholarship would take strategic culture in a very different direction altogether.

The apparent gap between strategic culture and behavior led the scholars of the second generation, led mainly by Bradley S. Klein, to the conclusion that strategic culture was something that was used by the political hegemony to establish "widely available orientations to violence and to ways in which the state can legitimately use violence against putative enemies."[17] The example that Klein would use goes back to American nuclear planning during the Cold War, where there was a gap between actual strategy and declared strategy apparent when juxtaposing an operation strategy which placed emphasis in waging war to defend American interests against the declared strategy which had to be shaped by the political elite to mislead the public so that they would accept the operation strategy through a culturally acceptable means.[18] This generation of scholarship has numerous problem in actually determining whether the success of the supposed implication of this policy by political elites, and in general seems to deal less with actual strategic culture than it does

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[15] Ibid., p. 37

[16] Ibid., p. 38

[17] Bradley S. Klein, "Hegemony and Strategic Culture: American Power Projection and Alliance Defence Politics," *Review of International Studies* 14 (1988), p. 136

[18] Ibid., pp. 139-140

strategic preferences, which it believes should take the form of *realpolitik* across different nation political elites.[19]

Keeping with the generational taxonomy established by Johnston, we reach the third generation, which took shape in the 1990s. The main aspect which distinguishes this generation is its exclusion of behavior as an element of culture, though in other aspects this generation assigns largely similar levels of impetus into the forming of strategic culture. Two of the leaders of this third generation, Jeffrey W. Legro and Elizabeth Kier, place less emphasis on "deep" history and instead believe that culture is much more dependent on recent experience and that strategic culture changes according the domestic political context of each nation.[20] This generation, according to Johnston, takes aim at various realist models and tests them against their own models, something which has been criticized as a methodological weakness of the first generation which was not committed to competitive theory testing.[21] One of the weaknesses within this generation are that when testing against neorealist models, it does not take into account the plethora of state preferences which neorealist models suggest motivate states, from survival to power maximization, thus its' theory testing against neorealism is not truly complete.[22]

Having looked at the three generations Johnston categorized, he himself proposes his own modification of how to study strategic culture.[23] He sets forth his definition to strategic culture as:

> an integrated system of symbols (e.g., argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions

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[19] Ronald Lora and David Campbell, "Writing Security: United States Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity," *The American Historical Review* 99 (1994)

[20] Elton F. Jackson and Jeffrey W. Legro, "Cooperation Under Fire: Anglo-German Restrain During World War II," *Contemporary Sociology* 26 (1997)

[21] Johnston, p. 42

[22] Ibid.

[23] Alastair I. Johnston, *Cultural Realism*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995)

with such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious. [24]

Or in its shortened and more familiar form, as an "ideational milieu that limits behavioral choices" from which "one could derive specific predictions about strategic choice."[25] This "system of symbols" is comprised of two parts: the first part is based on reducing the uncertainty about the strategic environment based on historical sources and relates to what the role of war is considered to be within human affairs, the nature of adversaries and the threat that they pose, and about how effective the use of force is in dealing with these threats; this is considered by Johnston to be the central paradigm (see figure 1). The second part relates to how to operationally deal with these threats based on how a group answers the three questions concerning the threat environment.

The crux of Johnston's reimagining of strategic culture therefore suggests that strategic culture affects behavioral choices directly, leading to a ranked set of grand-strategic preferences in each society.[26] By ranking preferences, Johnston's model shows the multiple cultures that can be present within a society and also shows which ones are dominant based on how the strategic options are ranked within that society, and if these ranking preferences are consistent across time then that means that a strategic culture exists and persists. A further benefit of ranking for Johnston is that it leads to testing which can be falsifiable by providing empirical predictions that can be tested against other models of choice.

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[24] Johnston, "Strategic Culture," p. 46

[25] Johnston, *Cultural Realism*

[26] Johnston, "Strategic Culture," p. 48

Figure 1. The Central Paradigm of a Strategic Culture
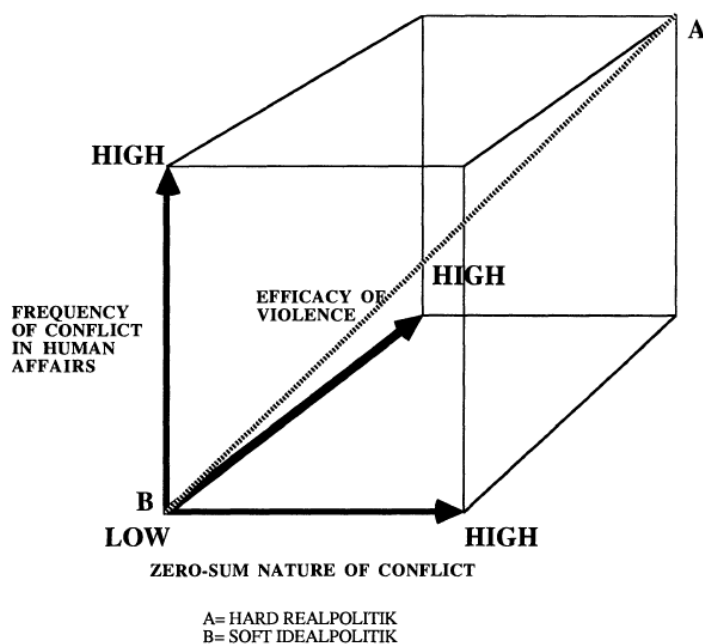
Colin Gray, one of the prominent scholars of the first generation, published an article in the *Review of International Studies* in 1999 where he attempts to defend the first generation from Johnston and to also point out the faults with Johnston's own arguments with particular vigor.[27] His defense of first generation scholarship at first attempts to rectify some of its shortcomings, which were unavoidable in a new field of study – he makes it clear that there can be multiple strategic cultures within a society or that strategic culture does not manifest itself in everything a security community does. The great distinction that Gray wants to make vis-à-vis Johnston's propositions is that strategic culture cannot in fact be considered distinctively from behavior to study the influence of the former upon the latter. Behaviors, for Gray, are shaped by culture and culture is shaped by behavior.[28] The problem apparent in this methodological approach by Johnston is that it ignores the nature of strategy and its paradoxical nature by seeking to analyze each aspect of strategy in isolation without

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[27] Colin S. Gray, "Strategic Culture as Context: The First Generation of Theory Strikes Back," *Review of International Studies* 25 (1999)

[28] Gray, p. 54

analyzing the final product of strategy produced by this synergy.[29] While Johnston tries to reduce strategic culture to the study of every element that can go into culture, Gray advocates for a more convincing "stew of ingredients" in which the common heritage of a certain group creates cultural features, even if they may vary across time and produce different cultures within the same time period.[30] An apparent contradiction to strategic culture would for example be the continental commitments of the British to the British Expeditionary Force in Europe during the First World War which went against the apparent maritime strategic culture of Britain, but even this commitment was within the grander British strategic culture, answering to an immediate problem, while at the same time pursuing the traditional maritime role with the Royal Navy's blockade in Europe and actions against German coaling stations across the world.

In 2005, the article "Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice: The Social Roots of Nordic Defence" published by Iver B. Neumann and Henrikki Heikka in *Cooperation and Conflict: Journal of the Nordic International Studies Association*, a summary of the preceding generations is presented, as well as one of Johnston's landmark work, and the conclusion reached is that there is too wide a gap between actual sociology and their studies on culture with studies on culture presented by academics of strategic studies and international relations.[31] This gap is apparent in the first and third generations as they seek positivist explanations as they seek to make strategic culture testable and see behavior as a dependent variable,[32] while the second generation's conclusions were considered to be too generalizing.[33]

Neumann and Heikka want to present a newer model which is more in tune with present day anthropology and sociology and to go beyond the exchange between ideas and behavior and suggest that culture, first of all, is a dynamic interplay between discourse and practice, citing Theodore Schatzki that "discourse is being, while practice is the becoming

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[29] Edward N. Luttwak, *Strategy*, (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 3

[30] Gray, pp. 58-59

[31] Neumann, p. 5

[32] Ibid., p. 8

[33] Ibid., p. 10

from which discourses result and to which they eventually succumb."[34] In order to fit this model into the concept of strategic culture, Neumann and Heikka examine concepts of grand strategy, moving it from the "realm of explicitly formulated doctrine to the realm of *preconditions for* formulating such doctrines," and suggesting that grand strategy is a phenomenon which "may or may not be consciously held."[35] With grand strategy seen as the preconditions for an entity to take action at a given point in time and as existing in a manner that allows it to be actualized, the authors go on to specify the three most important practices that work in interrelation with grand strategy, these being the practices of doctrine, civil-military relations and procurement.

In terms of doctrine, the authors cite Barry Posen and Elizabeth Kier's debates on the organizational culture, in which Posen believes that militaries are stuck within their own culture and try to influence politicians to employ the military's doctrine's rather than advancing the political aims of any conflict, and that states are ultimately saved from their military's policies because "[c]ivilians somehow [find] ways to overcome the limits of their own military knowledge and get around the bureaucratic shenanigans of their military organizations."[36] Elizabeth Kier is an antipode to Posen's derision of military culture, believing that civilians are most interested in defense policy that addresses their domestic political power and coming into conflict with a military that organizes doctrine based on what is possible.[37] The importance of this debate for the authors is to show that grand strategy cannot develop solely on account of military necessities but also that a grand strategy will never be likely applied in its entirety.[38] The practice of civil-military relations in relation to grand strategy further tries to show the interrelation between the two by seeing what influence civilian control has over military, particularly in democratic states, while the practice of procurement is important to understand the role that a military industry has on the formation of grand strategy, as well as the greater value given to weapons such as

[34] Theodore R. Schatzki, *The Practice Turn in Contemporary Theory*, (London: Routledge, 2001), p. 44

[35] Neumann, 13

[36] Barry Bosen, *The Sources of Military Doctrine* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), p. 223

[37] Neumann, p. 16

[38] Ibid.

dreadnoughts.[39] The dynamic of the interplay between these practices and grand strategy is part of what leads to the formation of a strategic culture according to Neumann and Heikka. The final "layer" that the authors apply to their model is to place it within the international system and to account for the interplay between the maturity of states within the anarchical society, thus creating their fully fledged model as can be seen in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Strategic Culture Understood as Transnationally Nested Dynamic Interplay between Grand Strategy Understood as a System for Formation of Statements and the Practices of Doctrines, Civil-Military Relations and Procurement
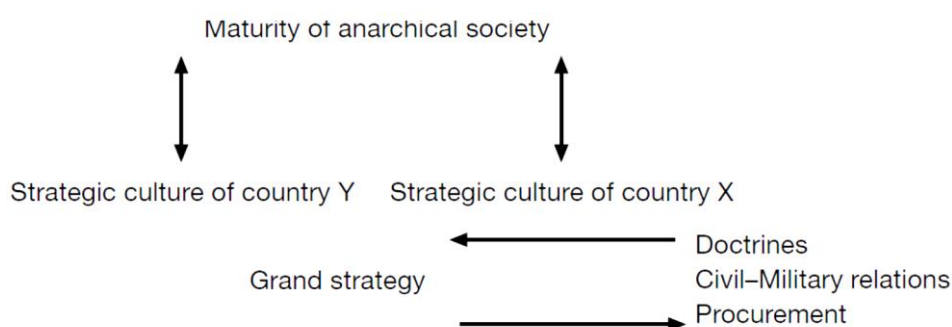
Reprinted from Iver B. Neumann and Henrikki Heikka, Grand Strategy, Strategic Culture, Practice, 2005

This overview of strategic culture has aimed to highlight the main schools of thought within the field, though for the sake of brevity it does not go too in depth in analyzing each "generation," nor is there an attempt on the author's part to introduce his own modification to an existing model nor to present a unique model. This is in large part because even with the divides in the field of strategic culture, there are some clear unifying factors, such as the sources of strategic culture being geographical, historical, political, and social, and because within the academic community, the divisions are not as fundamental as those in international relations, with "few cultural scholars believe that this really is an either-or theoretical debate,"[40] leading to a field that is more open to middle-of-the-road approaches. Within the analysis of Republican Rome, the main impetus will be in identifying the unique "ideational milieu" of each society and suggesting how that milieu led to their successful grand strategies.

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[39] Ibid.

[40] Jeffrey S. Lantis, "Strategic Culture: From Clausewitz to Constructivism," *Defense Threat Reduction Agency: Advanced Systems and Concepts Office* (2006), p. 14

2.2   A Smattering of Elemental Strategy

The study of strategy is a new field, relative to the Romans that this study examines. During the classical period, there was no strategy as we know it today; instead, the military arts were either martial maxims or teachings on stratagems, which essentially amounted to ruses of war. The true father of modern strategic studies is of course Carl von Clausewitz, and so to define strategy it is only proper that his is the first definition: strategy is the use of engagements for the object of war.[41] Unfortunately, this does not actually provide much of a scientific definition, and that is in essence Clausewitz's point – that strategy is not an empirical science, as authors such as the Baron de Jomini tried to suggest. If strategy was the use of engagements for the object of war, then the object of war was famously described to be an extension of policy by other means. In this understanding of what war meant, or what it should mean, Clausewitz subordinates military goals to political ones, and without saying it (largely because the term did not exist yet), he is describing the basis for grand strategy.

Clausewitz of course has not been the only one to study strategy, but he has been the one that is universally acknowledged as the starting and in some cases finishing point of strategic studies. The contrast with Jomini's definition of strategy is stark: strategy is the art of making war upon the map, and comprehends the whole theater of operations.[42] The French strategist is more eager to offer the dicta of warfare, which while potentially useful to the 19th Century general, do not have the transcending quality of Clausewitz's approach to war. The best encapsulation of Clausewitz's general approach, summed up in a small and easily manageable definition, comes from B. H. Liddell Hart, with the irony of course being that Hart was convinced that the Clausewitzian obsession with "the battle" was a deadly approach to warfare, as had been witnessed in the First World War. His definition is as follows: the art of distributing and applying military means to fulfill the ends of policy.[43] While one can cite many problems with Hart (as strategist, historian, and perhaps even as an individual), he formed the first true definition of grand strategy.

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[41] Clausewitz, p. 146

[42] Antoine Henri Jomini, *The Art of War* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1971), p. 46

[43] Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, p. 321

"The role of grand strategy…is to co-ordinate and direct all the resources of a nation…towards the attainment of the political object of the war,"[44] says Hart in his book *Strategy*, published shortly after the Second World War. The important corollary to this definition comes just a few sentences later, "while the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace."[45] By defining grand strategy as the highest level of strategy, it is incumbent to look upon the rest of the levels, and here it is best to refer to Edward N. Luttwak and his levels of war as found in *Strategy: The Logic of war and Peace*.[46]

When looking at the levels of strategy, it is necessary, as Luttwak warns, to remember that "each level has its own reality but is rarely independent of other levels above and below it."[47] What this means practically is that a nation can see success on multiple levels of strategy and still ultimately fail to achieve its grand strategy: one example of this can be seen in Ryan Goldsworthy's study on Canada's Hundred Days offensive in 1918, in which Canada is astonishingly successful on the tactical and operation level, but achieves these objectives at such a cost that the ultimate grand strategic goals Canada had set for itself were not met.[48] Luttwak defines the levels of strategy as: the technical level, the tactical level, the operational level, the theater level, and the level of grand strategy.[49] Briefly, the technical level concerns what types of weapons are used and the tactical concerns those who directly employ the weapons on the battlefield. The operational is the coordination of an area within a theater of war, while the theater level concerns the strategies at a theater-wide level, with the theater being a part of a conflict which is autonomous and independent of other theaters.[50] For Luttwak, the highest level of strategy, grand strategy, is "a level of analysis, in which we

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[44] Ibid., p. 322

[45] Ibid.

[46] Luttwak, *Strategy*

[47] Ibid., *Strategy*, p. 87

[48] Ryan Goldsworthy, "Measuring the Success of Canada's Wars: The Hundred Days Offensive as a Case Study," *Canadian Military Journal* 13 (2013)

[49] Luttwak, *Strategy,* p. 87-88

[50] Ibid. p. 87-90

examine the totality of what happens between states in peace and war."[51] Having looked at both what constitutes strategic culture and grand strategy, an examination of these two facets of Republican Rome follows.

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[51] Ibid., p. 208

3   The Roman Republic

A study of the Roman Republic as an exemplar of strategic culture leading to a successful grand strategy may seem to be somewhat odd for a few reasons. First of all, Rome's expansion, as some Romans themselves viewed it and as many historians later agreed, was a haphazard expansion done mainly for the purposes of defense – hardly the stuff grand strategies are made of.[52] Second, if there was a grand strategy, it would be hard to consider it successful due to the ultimate fate of the Republic. This work will attempt to show that, in keeping with the model of strategic culture affecting grand strategy, the Romans were pushed along by their cultural identity to form a semi-conscious or subconscious grand strategy that was inclined towards intensional expansion. To set the context for the cultural factors which affected Rome's grand strategy and for the analysis of that grand strategy, there will be quick foray into an overview of the Republic's history followed by a frontal attack on Luttwak's *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, by which it is hoped to expose the methods by which grand strategy during this time period should be studied. The pitched battle will then be to define the Republic's strategic culture and to identify the grand strategy that it formed, and assuming it will not merely be a Pyrrhic victory, the mopping up operations will deal with the question of success.

3.1   A Mari Usque Ad Mare

The historical context for the development of a strategic culture has already been demonstrated to be of vital importance from the various models which exist in the field, and so the historical context of the Roman Republic must be understood before any attempts to explain its strategic culture are undertaken. It is also important to go through a brief narration of Roman history, or at least the parts most relevant to this study, for the purpose of familiarizing an audience outside the realm of classical studies with the course of the

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[52] Adrian K. Goldsworthy, *In The Name of Rome* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003) p. 36, Arthur M. Eckstein, *Rome Enters the Greek East* (Malden: Blackwell Pub, 2008), Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976) p. 38

Republic's history, as it is not one of the states commonly dealt with by scholars of international relations.[53] For this work, the vital starting point at which many elements of Roman strategic culture either begin to appear or begin forming is the Second Samnite War, which began in 327 BCE, as it was one of the first major wars of the Roman state and by the conclusion of its successive war, the Third Samnite War, Rome had firmly established itself as the dominant power of the Italian peninsula. The conclusion will come in 79 BCE with the resignation of Sulla. The history of the remaining years of the Republic will be mentioned, but the events that led to the fall of the Republic had as a catalyst the forces that had been unleashed earlier, and in any case were of such constant complexity that it would require a study of its own. Within this time period, Rome's empire had reached "from sea to sea" by stretching from the Atlantic in the West, containing nearly all the Mediterranean, and touching both the Black and Red Seas.

The founding of the city of Rome was traditionally dated to 753 BCE, a date which can appear as being rather plausible with archaeological finds on the Palatine Hill and with a little bit of generous rounding out of dates; in fact, much of this early history of Rome is steeped in myth, and so must be taken at least with a grain of salt. The eventual unification of all the hills in the area, once separate tribes, created the city of Rome. For its early history, the city was ruled by the Etruscan Tarquin monarchs, and the influence of the Etruscans was strong within Rome both then and later on in their history, as they provided numerous Roman deities, the urban grid plan, the layout of Roman homes, as well as the symbols of Roman power such as the *toga praetexta* and the *fasces*, which were initially carried by the king's entourage. The expulsion of the Tarquin kings, itself an event steeped in symbolism and lore for the Romans, would lead to the founding of the Republic in the mythically precise date of 509 BCE. Though the narrative that was constructed for that event that became known to all Roman elites may have been highly fictionalized, it created the morality and culture that many Romans would consider "ideal," binding Marcus Junius Brutus to save the Republic in 44 BCE that his ancestor, Lucius Junius Brutus, founded in 509 BCE.

The first war of the young Republic would be against the Latin League, which was an alliance of the settlements of Latium along with the ousted king, Tarquinius Superbus. The

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[53] While some emphasis is made in regards to events in Roman history which exemplify the Roman national character, this narrative of Roman history does not stray off of the beaten path.

league was defeated at the Battle of Lake Regillus in the early 5th Century, and it was here where Rome's novelty within the Mediterranean world first became apparent: the Romans opted to make the Latins allies, according to them the *ius Latii*, which gave the Latins the *ius commercii*, *ius migrationis* and the *ius connubium*, which allowed the Latins to own land, form and enforce contracts with their citizens, gave citizenship in other places of Latin status, and allowed them to make lawful marriages with residents of other Latin cities. Furthermore, the Latins were considered to be under the protection of Rome and so were defended by Rome, to which they gave men for its armies, all while not having to pay any monetary tribute. This arrangement was novel in the Mediterranean world in that it created an alliance rather than a non-aligned tributary state, and it allowed Rome to expand beyond the confines of the traditional city-state by giving it a much larger pool of manpower, which would increase as Rome expanded.

A shock for the nascent Republic came in 390 BCE when the Gauls made their way into Italy and sacked Rome. This event would be traumatic for the Romans not so much for its actual damage, as the city quickly recovered, but for the fact that it had been allowed to happen in the first place. In the 4th Century, what was ultimately to be of more importance was to be the Samnite Wars. The first of these wars was not much more than small engagements which resulted in expansion beyond Latium, making Capua both an ally and a tributary with less rights than the Latins. In the Second Samnite War, the Romans would demonstrate another one of their unique traits in their zeal to win after a disastrous defeat at the Caudine Forks in 321 BCE invigorated the Romans to raise a new army and defeat the coalition of Samnites, Gauls, Etruscans, and other Italians at the Battle of Sentinum in 295 BCE.

With the Samnites defeated, Rome's influence spread south in Magna Graecia, leading to the city of Tarentum to call for aid from the east, to which Pyrrhus of Epirus answered by bringing over his army of 20,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. Though superior to the Romans, each of his victories proved to be especially costly, especially that at Asculum in 279 BCE, forcing Pyrrhus to regroup in Sicily. When he returned in 275 BCE, he was defeated at the Battle of Beneventum by the Romans, and by 270 BCE, Magna Graecia had been incorporated into the Roman alliance.

From 509 to 270 BCE, the Roman state had also gone through numerous political transformations. At the founding, the citizenry were divided into patricians (*patres*, or

fathers) and plebeians, with the patricians being those aristocrats of important familial descent, such as the Claudii, Julii, and Cornelii, and the plebeians essentially being those who did not come from such illustrious stock.[54] This division into orders would define Roman internal political struggles for almost the entirety of Republic's entity, being called the Conflict of the Orders.

Already in 494 BCE problems had arisen when plebeians refused to go on expedition with the army as they were bound to, as the constant warfare had meant that they needed to incur debts to keep their farms functioning while they were on campaign, and the patricians who were in charge of the law courts offered these citizens no reprieve from their obligations. With their abstention from the campaigning, they forced from the patricians the First Secession of the Plebs, which gave the plebeian order the right to form their own assembly, the *Concilium Plebis*, and to elect their own tribunes, the tribune of plebs. Roman law at this point was unwritten and its interpretation came from the patricians, which again led to numerous abuses against the plebeians, resulting in the erection of the Twelve Tables in 450 BCE, so that the laws could be known to all. By 287 BCE, under the *Lex Hortensia*, the plebeians were given the right of plebiscite, by which a decree which had been passed by the *Concilium Plebis* would be binding on all orders. At this point, the aristocracy of Rome could largely be said to have consisted of both patricians and plebeians, especially since plebeians could run for consulship from 367 BCE and had to occupy one of the two consul's chairs according to the *Lex Licinia Sextia*.

It was by this point that the three structures of Roman government could clearly be defined: the magistrates, the Senate, and the popular assemblies. The offices of the magistrates in the middle Republic were generally by occupied by aristocrats in a sequence that is known as the *cursus honorum*, starting from quaestor, leading onto aedile, praetor, and ultimately consul, who was the highest magistrate of Republic. The consul presided over the Senate and could propose laws to the assemblies; he wielded *imperium* and was in charge of the Roman armies, a fact which meant that beyond being an office which increased renown, it also offered the chance for greater *laus* and *gloria*, elements that were key to forming the Roman drive for expansion. Of the other magistracies, the tribune of plebs was tasked with

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[54] The distinction between the two orders was mainly based on lineage at this point in Roman history, as opposed to an economic division of classes. Plebeians could be wealthy, and patricians could end up impoverished, but they would still be members of their order.

defending the rights of the plebeians, was given the right to veto other magistrates, and the right to propose legislation to the *Concilium Plebis*, while he himself was considered sacrosanct, and the censor was tasked every five years to assess the number of citizens and their property as well as their conduct, especially in the Senate. All these magistracies had limited powers and were always in check by having more than one person per magistracy. In periods of crisis, a *dictator* would be appointed to put the affairs of the state in order and could hold the office for the maximum of six months or until the crisis ended, whichever came first.[55] The magistracies were however ultimately more responsible for the daily running of the city and later of its territories, since matters of policy were in the hands of the Senate. The official task of the Senate was to advise the assemblies, but in essence their advice was always listened to by the *Comitia Centuriata* and the *Concilium Plebis*. Despite the fact that there were numerous types of elections and elected officials as well as forms of popular representation and ideas of popular sovereignty, the Roman Republic was not a democracy, especially not in the Athenian sense, thus managing to steer clear of the whims of the average citizen.

Returning to military matters and the expansion of the Roman Republic, the 3rd Century would see the beginning of the epic confrontation between Rome and Carthage known as the Punic Wars, in which many of Rome's unique traits would be best put on display for admiration and for study. The First Punic War began with an intervention by Rome on behalf of an ally in Sicily, an area which was considered to be in the Carthaginian sphere of influence.[56] The first years of the war went badly for the Romans as they had no navy and the Carthaginians were the dominant naval power of the Western Mediterranean, equipped with the best warships of the period, the quinquireme. The chance running aground of one of these ships onto Roman lands would set the stage for one of the great feats of Roman history: within 60 days, the Romans built and manned a fleet of 120 quinquiremes,

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[55] Cincinnatus epitomized the ideal citizen in time of need; an aristocrat with a small farm which on which he worked, he was called upon by the Roman Senate in the war against the Aequi to lead Rome's armies as *dictator*. Defeating the Aequi at the Battle of Mons Algidus in 458 BCE, he returned to Rome, gave up his dictatorship just fifteen days after it was first bestowed upon him, and returned to work his farm. Those who eventually would become *dictatores* in the Republic's later years were not as prepared to relinquish their authority.

[56] This intervention on behalf of the Mamertines fits well with the traditional theory of defensive expansion, as the Romans intervened because *fides* to their ally demanded it. As is the case with most wars, the reasons were ultimately more complex, and will be examined further when Rome's strategic culture is analyzed.

which they used to defeat the Carthaginians at the Battle of Mylae in 260 BCE. The prows of the ships would go on display in the Roman Forum on the *rostra*, a lasting tribute to the victor of that battle for all Romans to see.[57] Natural disasters however cost the Romans two fleets and somewhere around 100,000 men and so the war eventually returned to a stalemate, until the Romans were able to finally levy severe extra taxes to finance another fleet, which ultimately defeated the Carthaginians and forced them to sue for peace. This peace was bitter for the Carthaginians – they lost Sicily, had to pay huge indemnities, and the Romans took advantage of the peace by conquering another Carthaginian holding, this time in Sardinia. What the war had successfully demonstrated was the willingness of the Roman state and people to endure hard setbacks in order to achieve victory, as well as exemplifying a spirit that had already been demonstrated in the willingness to copy something foreign if it was seen to be better, and even then attempting to improve upon it.

The Carthaginians, bereft of their Sicilian holdings and financially diminished on account of the tribute they had to pay to Rome turned their attention to their holdings in Spain, which they expanded upon in order to incorporate more of that region's mineable resources. Rome looked on with worry and envy, and reached an agreement with the Carthaginians that their respective spheres of influences would end at the River Ebro, but simultaneously they entered into an alliance with the town of Saguntum, within the agreed-upon Carthaginian sphere. When the Carthaginians attacked – as they were almost certainly expected to – the Romans responded by declaring war on Carthage.[58] The Romans began their mobilization to attack Spain and North Africa, until out of the Alps descended Hannibal, bringing with him Spanish and African infantry, Numidian cavalry, and most famously, elephants. The shock of Hannibal's sudden appearance was accompanied by his tactical mastery, and in the a few months Hannibal defeats the Romans thrice, at the River Ticinus in November of 218 BCE, at the River Trebia in December, and the next year at Lake Trasimene, leaving the Romans with a gruesome body count of some 30,000 men. At this

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[57] The Romans not only copied the ship design in record time, they also trained the men that were to man them in record time as well. With no especially strong naval tradition, potential oarsmen trained on dry land in the capture Carthaginian quinquireme. The rapid construction of a navy was a great feat on its own, but the Romans even improved the design for their own needs by adding the corvus, a plank with a spike that would attach onto an enemy ship and allow Roman soldiers to fight a land battle at sea, allowing for Rome's already strong martial tradition on land to be exploited at sea.

[58] Intervening on behalf of an ally may have been a demonstration of *fides*, but entering such an alliance in the first place does not give the most "honorable" image to the Romans.

point, Quintus Fabius Maximus was appointed *dictator*, but this choice would prove massively unpopular with the Roman populace, as Maximus decided not to risk a pitched battle and instead built up his forces while attrition took its toll on Hannibal's, leading to the derisive nickname of "Cunctator" or delayer.[59]

Disappointed with how their *dictator* had handled the crisis, the Romans elected as consuls Lucius Aemilius Paulus and Gaius Terentius Varro, who would lead Rome's army to Cannae and into the annals of great military disasters as Hannibal perfected his double-envelopment and slaughtered 50,000 Roman troops. It was at this point that the road to Rome lay open before Hannibal, a road he famously decided not to take. Were Hannibal facing any other Mediterranean state, such a march to the capital would have been unnecessary; Rome had previously lost some 30,000 men, and in a single day it lost another 50,000, so capitulation would have been the most logical Roman move by the standards of warfare in the 3rd Century.

This was not the average Greek city-state or Hellenistic kingdom, however, and the Romans did not capitulate to Hannibal.[60] Instead, they returned to the tactics of the Cunctator until they managed to assemble a total of 200,000 men to fight in what was a world war by the standards of the time, with forces being deployed in Spain and Sicily as well as 50,000 to follow Hannibal in Italy and deprive him of reinforcements and supplies. In Spain, Publius Cornelius Scipio distinguished himself to such an extent that he was elected consul in his twenties and given command of the expedition against Carthage, where he would meet the recalled Hannibal at the Battle of Zama in 202 and pay him in kind, defeating Carthage and her vaunted general. It was also during the Spanish campaign that the Romans seem to have adopted their famed short sword, the *gladius*, likely copying a local design, again displaying that willingness to adopt anything which was shown to be superior. This time, beyond the huge tribute that was to be paid, Carthage also relinquished all of its territory outside of North Africa. Still uneasy about Carthage's position, the new Mediterranean power of Rome

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[59] The author cannot help but draw a comparison with that "great" delaying general of American history, George B. McClellan, who was even in his own day derisively referred to as Fabius McClellan Cunctator for his approach in Peninsula Campaign of 1862. Regardless of his capabilities, it seems that American's had inherited the Roman desire for confrontation and glorious victory. Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008) p.430.

[60] Those who did capitulate to the Carthaginians were mainly Rome's Greek allies, while most of her other allies remained loyal.

finished Carthage off in 146 BCE, in a war which is hardly worthy of being called the Third Punic War, and Cato the Elder could be happy knowing that Carthage was finally and destroyed. Meanwhile, the Macedonians had made the mistake of allying with Carthage, and after a series of wars the Romans end up incorporating Macedonia into their empire. These wars proved the effectiveness of both the manipular reforms brought in by Scipio and that of the *gladius*, a weapon that was especially feared among those in Greece who had been accustomed to fighting with spears, arrows, and javelins, and whereby they could not handle the sight of "bodies chopped to pieces by the Spanish sword, arms torn away, shoulders and all, or heads separated from bodies, with the necks completely severed, or vitals laid open, and the other fearful wounds."[61] The Greeks, mindful of their freedom and liberty as usual, rebelled against Rome's as-of-yet informal dominion, inviting Lucius Mummius to bring a Roman army into that land, which yielded all too easily, giving the conqueror the title of Achaicus and leaving Corinth an ashen ruin, its' epitaph being the simple words of "*Corinto deleto*," which would adorn the victor's temple in Rome, the city which was now mistress of the Mediterranean.

Rome and her allies however were not made up of an endless supply of men. By the middle of the 2nd Century, various cracks were starting to show within the Roman edifice: aristocrats and *equites* amassed huge fortunes from the waging of war and governing of newly acquired provinces and an exponential increase in the number of slaves available led to the rise of the large fields (*latifundia*), operated by the aristocrats, which harmed small farmers. Though normally willing to go to war, the ongoing conflict to pacify Spain had proven especially unpopular due to its ferocious nature, and the consuls were twice thrown in prison by order of the tribunes of the plebs. To make matters worse, former farmers had been driven out by the *latifundia*, thus making them ineligible for military service as *assidui* since they did not possess sufficient land. The tribune Tiberius Gracchus saw the need to change the situation as it was, and using his tribunician power and with much hullabaloo passed the *Lex Sempronia agrarian*, which would give small farmers much of the public land held by

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[61] Livy XXXI.34.4: "id metum pigritiamque incussit; nam qui hastis sagittisque et rara lanceis facta vulnera vidissent, cum Graecis Illyriisque pugnare adsueti, postquam gladio Hispaniensi detruncata corpora, bracchiis cum humero abscisis, aut tota cervice desecta divisa a corpore capita patentiaque viscera et foeditatem aliam vulnerum viderunt,"

the state (*ager publicus*) and utilized by the aristocracy.[62] Gracchus had gone against the entirety of the Roman aristocracy and kept on challenging previously held customs about how many terms could be served and the procedure of bringing a vote directly to the people, and when he stood for reelection in 133 BCE, riots broke out in Rome, resulting in hundreds of deaths, including Tiberius Gracchus himself, who became a floater down the Tiber. His brother, Gaius Gracchus, instituted many more reforms to help ease the social unrest through the office of the tribune, and again caused such an uproar to the established order that riots again broke out during elections, at which point Gaius committed suicide. Though noble in their efforts, the Gracchi helped undermine the values which had kept a check on glory-chasing and excessive greed, which is why their period is usually seen as the beginning of the end for the Roman Republic.

The increasing corruption of the senatorial elite manifested itself in the incompetence displayed in dealing with Jugurtha, the king of Numidia, in the Jugurthine War of 112-105 BCE. The man who played the biggest role in defeating Jugurtha was Giaus Marius, a *novus homo*, so-called because he was the first in his family to become a consul. His services were called upon again when the invading Cimbri and Teutones, Germanic tribes migrating westwards in large numbers, defeated a Roman force at Arausio in 105 BCE, inflicting 80,000 casualties upon the Romans. With his African victory complete, Marius was elected consul from 104 to 100 BCE and defeated the Germans at the Battle of Aquae Sextiae in 102 BCE and Vercellae in 101 BCE. His political and military success again raised the ante in the aristocratic competition for *gloria*, but his legacy in reforming the Roman military secured his own position of glory among historians. Recruits could now join as volunteers and possess no land, serve in legions with state-funded equipment for a long period of time, and receive a farm at the end of their period of service. The result of this reform was to make the Roman legions into the efficient machine of war that all know of, but it also ended the ideal of a citizen militia, and with the service, rewards, and well-being of the soldiers being tied to the generals who led them, legions now became loyal to generals rather than to the Senate or state.

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[62] For a comprehensive study on the *ager publicus*, see Saskia Roselaar's *Public Land In The Roman Republic*. Interestingly, much of the *ager publicus* actually appears to have been utilized by the local populace from which the land had originally been taken by the Roman state, as opposed to large aristocratic landowners.

The last century of the Republic saw the Italian allies, subdued so long ago, rise up to claim greater political powers in Roman government, and this they won with the conclusion of the Social War (social coming from the Latin *socii*, "allies") in 88 BCE. The enfranchisement of the Italian people through the extension of Roman citizenship would set the pattern under which Roman citizenship would be granted for many centuries to come, eventually leading to the Antonine Constitution of 212 CE which gave Roman citizenship to all free people within the Empire. The troubles would continue as Lucius Cornelius Sulla was stripped of command of his legions before leading an expedition against Pontus, and with the legions now personally loyal to their commanders and the quest for *gloria* at an all-time high, Sulla did the unthinkable and marched upon the city of Rome in 88 BCE.

Sulla's priority at this point was to deal with the crisis that had been brewing in Roman Asia with the Mithridatic invasion, but by the time he returned he found that his enemies had rallied against him, and so in 83 BCE, with the help of Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gnaeus Pompey, Sulla marched on Rome a second time, defeating his enemies at the Colline Gate. This time, Sulla formalized his rule over Rome by taking the extraordinary position of *dictator*, declaring he would hold it indefinitely, and then instituted what would lead to his eternal revilement in the form of the proscriptions, which allowed anyone on the lists he published to be killed or exiled and their property seized. The irony of this harshness is that Sulla also acted in a way to restore stability to the Republic by increasing the authority of the Senate and formalized the *cursus honorum* and its age restrictions while also curbing the powers of the tribunes of plebs. By 79 BCE, Sulla felt that he had completed his reforms and voluntarily laid down his offices, though his reputation to posterity was ruined in spite of this Cincinnatan act.

This brief examination of the history of the Roman Republic served a few purposes. The primary goal here was, through the most major examples, to highlight certain enduring and unique traits that the Romans displayed in their military affairs, those being a dedication to victory even through severe adversity and the driving motivation of *laus* and *gloria* in achieving military success in order to take part in the great aristocratic competition for prestige. Certain unique political and cultural aspects also emerge, such as the willingness to incorporate to varying degrees conquered peoples and to readily adopt anything which was felt as being superior.

3.2   The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire

To borrow one of his most commonly used words, studying Luttwak's *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* might seem to be a paradox when attempting to study the grand strategy of the Roman Republic, but it helps this particular study in numerous ways. First, acknowledging that Luttwak is much more of a strategist than he is a historian, his models for grand strategy can be applied to the study of the Roman Republic. Keeping Luttwak's background in mind, the criticisms leveled against his work by classicists can also be taken into consideration here so as to avoid the problems Luttwak encounters. Finally, despite its many faults, Luttwak's work was essentially the first to truly address Roman grand strategy, and therefore its arguments have largely shaped subsequent scholarship.

In his 1979 work *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire*, Edward N. Luttwak claims that the grand strategic goal of the Roman Empire was "to provide security for the civilization without prejudicing the vitality of its economic base and without compromising the stability of an evolving political order."[63] Looking at this history of the Roman Empire from the 1st to the 3rd Centuries CE, Luttwak divides Roman grand strategy into three distinct phases. The first phase, which he considers superior, was under the Julio-Claudians and relied on an "economy of force" when dealing with enemies and maintaining client kingdoms as buffer states to external threats. This grand strategy is replaced by that which was followed between 68 and 211 CE, in which the Empire expanded in order to reach natural boundaries which would serve for a better defense, and in cases where such expansion was not possible, with the erection of "scientific" boundaries in the form of walls. Under this system, the legions were posted across and directly on the frontiers of the Empire to attack invaders at the moment of their invasion, lacking any kind of significant strategic reserves. Finally, with the Crisis of the Third Century, the Romans again switched grand strategies, this time favoring a defense in depth and fortifications that would channel enemies rather than prevent them from crossing. This switch mainly occurred because having full-strength legions stationed across the imperial frontiers was ultimately too costly to maintain, while the biggest disadvantage of a defense in depth was that it gave the enemy time to pillage some land.

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[63] Luttwak, *Grand Strategy*, p. 1

In order to draw these conclusions, Luttwak has made six assumptions according to Kimberly Kagan:[64] that legionary deployments and fortifications met defensive objectives, that the Roman Empire expanded in order to have more defensible frontiers, that the purpose of each type of fortification can be deduced by archaeology alone, that the frontiers were fixed and identifiable, that there existed a single cogent system that was uniform across the Empire, and that the systems he defined were constant within the time periods he has set for them, meaning that individual emperors had little influence over these systems. All of these assumptions, as shown by a wealth of classicist rebuttals, are incorrect.

One of Luttwak's key assumptions is that the overall military strategy throughout the period of the Empire was intentionally defensive, however much of the Republican zeal for conquest and glory can be seen in the Empire, especially in the period of the Principate. In *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate*,[65] Susan P. Mattern argues that the desire for glory was a strong element in imperial military planning and that this quest for glory was a continuation of that which occurred during the years of the Republic. This glory would be seen when referring to places that had been conquered by a successful general or in achieving something especially exceptional, especially reaching some perceived geographical frontier.[66] Another important motivator was the desire for revenge against perceived or actual slights, something which was also a large motivation during the time of the Republic. As the emperors eventually consolidated their powers, they also made sure that they were the sole recipients of glory, fully knowing that if any other general gained too much of it they could pose a threat to the emperor's rule.[67] Luttwak's assumption that imperial conquest was defensive could also come from the slow pace of conquest during the Principate in comparison to Republican conquest, but this was a realization of the ever increasing constraints imposed on a military that had to be stationed across an even larger area.[68]

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[64] Kimberly Kagan, "Redefining Roman Grand Strategy," *The Journal of Military History* 70 (2006)

[65] Susan P. Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999)

[66] Ibid., 166,

[67] Ibid., 201

[68] Ibid., 208

The assumption in *Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* that the Roman legions were utilized and deployed according to defensive needs has also been placed under scrutiny by classicists. In *The Limits of Empire* by Benjamin Isaac and *The Roman Near East* by Fergus Millar,[69] the role of the army especially in the east is seen much more as being one of pacification of local populaces than of protecting against an external enemy, even though Rome's eastern frontiers bordered the only other major state of that time period, the Parthian Empire. In Judea this was most apparent with the constant revolts in that province. Furthermore, when speaking of the Roman frontiers, Luttwak considers them to be well-defined and recognized, but even this does not appear to be the case.[70] Looking at the archaeology of the Roman artificial barriers along the frontiers, the *limes*, Luttwak sees only a defensive purpose, but this is something that is not supported by the sources or by classicists, who find that the *limes* had a primary role of creating manageable checkpoints for the imposition of trade tariffs.[71] Continuing this examination of Roman frontiers, Luttwak believes that the Roman policy was to expand until natural defensible frontiers, but this is likely a logical train of thought based on the viewing of a modern map of the Roman frontiers. In the classical world, the world's geography was perceived as being vastly different from what it is now and so the actual geographical "logic" would have been different as well, were that the policy that the Romans were pursuing. Even here though this seems unlikely, as the Romans rarely knew what lay beyond their own frontiers, as cartography was essentially only carried out within the Empire, and even then, the Roman expansion into Dacia defies the logic of setting up a geographic defensible frontier once they had crossed onto the northern bank of the Danube.[72]

The classicists, especially by examining Roman frontiers, have provided a wealth of reasons as to why Luttwak's assumptions were all erroneous, and why therefore his conclusions were also incorrect. In the debate on grand strategy though, the classicists find themselves removed from their element much in the same way Luttwak is removed from his

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[69] Fergus Millar, *The Roman Near East, 31 BC – AD 337* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993)

[70] C. R. Whittaker, *Frontiers of the Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), pp. 25-42

[71] Alan K. Bowman, *The Vindolanda Writing-Tablets* (London: British Museum Press, 1994)

[72] Mattern, pp. 39-60, O. A. W. Dilke, *Greek and Roman Maps* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1985)

when discussing classical studies. Classicists have argued that the Roman Empire did not have a grand strategy due to the lack of sources which would suggest that there was ever a defined grand strategy or even long-term planning on the part of the emperors. It would seem as though Luttwak here was wrong in defining a Roman grand strategy the way he did but for the right reasons, as there is much to be said about the Empire's strategic approaches. Kagan believes that imperial grand strategy, though not defined, could be inferred largely through the deployment and redeployment of legions within the empire.[73] An alternate approach to assessing the Empire's grand strategy would be to refer to the models of strategic culture already put forward, which suggest that a state's grand strategy need not be defined and that it need not be followed explicitly as it can exist within the semi-conscious and subconscious realms.

What the actual grand strategy of the Roman Empire was is not the topic of this study, and so there will not be an attempt to define it. The importance of this section was demonstrate the most popular approach that had been taken in studying grand strategy during the periods of classical and late antiquity and to highlight the merits and weaknesses of such an approach. In the study of Republican grand strategy therefore, the attempt will be made to "bridge the gap" between strategic studies and classical studies.

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[73] Kagan, pp. 354-362. By looking at how legions were shuffled around, Kagan shows what provinces were always considered to be at risk of internal turmoil as they constantly need a legionary presence and what provinces were considered to be under exterior threat and could not afford to be denuded of their legions.

4   Republican Culture

4.1   Cupido Gloriae

Having looked at Republican history and the problems of strategic analysis in the period of classical antiquity, the "ideational milieu" that led the Romans to make their strategic choices will be analyzed. Through an analysis of Roman strategic culture, the attempt will be made to explain how it led one small city in the Italian Peninsula to rise to greatness, subduing the established powers of the Mediterranean world. The specific attributes of the Roman strategic culture during the Republican period which drove them to reach such greatness were their need for *laus* and *gloria*,[74] while the success of their campaigns stemmed from both their drive for glory and from a much more bellicose society which valued total victory. Once the specific pertinent aspects of Roman society have been identified, the various wars of the Republic will be examined to show how these attributes affected Rome's decisions.

The widely held belief, or at least the widely promulgated belief, in both the Republic and in modern scholarship has been that Rome's expansion was not coordinated or planned, and that it occurred by means of defensive imperialism,[75] with Cicero stating in the late 1st Century BCE that Rome had "now gained power over the whole world by defending its allies."[76] It is true that many Roman wars were begun under the pretense of either defending the Republic or its allies, but as this work will show, the primary motivation was not faithfulness (*fides*) to allies, though as a factor that cannot be discounted. Furthermore, the bellicose nature of Roman society meant that even if they were to intervene and expand in order to preserve their state or those of their allies, they would be doing so in a way unique to the Mediterranean – defense is what states make of it.

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[74] A thorough analysis of what *laus* and *gloria* meant exactly would detract from the topic of this work, as the concepts on their own are not too foreign for even the modern reader, although the importance placed on attaining them was something unique to Rome, which neither a modern reader would be able to immediately understand and which perplexed even the Greek contemporaries of Rome.

[75] William V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), p. 4

[76] Cicero, De Republica III.35: "Noster autem populus sociis defendendis terrarum iam omnium potitus est"

For the young Republic, war was constant. Almost every year until the 2nd Century, the Republic would find itself in a state of war, and in the eighty-six years from 327 BCE, the Republic was at peace for only five single years. For the Romans, the twelve year peace between the war with King Perseus of Macedon and the later campaigns in Macedonia were considered excessive and created the fear that the Italians would become "effeminate owing to the long peace."[77] For later generations of Romans looking back, they would see ancestors that "distinguished themselves" in wars that "were waged almost continuously."[78] The popularity of warfare itself will be examined later, but in the quest for glory by the Roman aristocracy, it was the ultimate means by which it was attained.

From a young age, the men of the Roman aristocratic families were taught chiefly the martial arts, and according to Polybius, to hold a magistracy required completion of ten annual military campaigns.[79] In a romanticized look back on the earlier Republic, Sallust was to exclaim that this pervasive quest for glory strengthened the state and created generations of virtuous men.[80] This training in the arts of war would be the dominant aspect of a young Roman's life until the later Republic, during the generation of Caesar and Cicero, where aristocrats were taught things like oratory, philosophy, and Greek. There were those few males who did not participate in the military campaigns of Rome and could achieve some level of good reputation by practicing law before moving politics, but even during Cicero's more cultured age, he would ask "who would not put the *imperator* before the orator in any ranking of the skills of illustrious men as judged by the usefulness or greatness of their achievements?"[81] During their military service, the young aristocrats would compete to be elected as *tribunus militum* within their respective legions in order to attain their first true military achievements and as a prerequisite for further offices.

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[77] Polybius, XXXII.13.5-8: "τούς τε κατὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν ἀνθρώπους οὐκ ἐβούλοντο κατ᾽ οὐδένα τρόπον ἀποθηλύνεσθαι διὰ τὴν πολυχρόνιον εἰρήνην: ἔτος γὰρ ἦν τότε δωδέκατον ἀπὸ τοῦ πρὸς Περσέα πολέμου καὶ τῶν ἐν Μακεδονίᾳ πράξεων."

[78] Cicero, de Officiis, II.45: "Prima est igitur adulescenti commendatio ad gloriam, si qua ex bellicis rebus comparari potest, in qua multi apud maiores nostros extiterunt; semper enim fere bella gerebantur."

[79] Polybius, VI.19.1: "ἐπειδὰν ἀποδείξωσι τοὺς ὑπάτους, μετὰ ταῦτα χιλιάρχους καθιστᾶσι, τετταρασκαίδεκα μὲν ἐκ τῶν πέντ᾽ ἐνιαυσίους ἐχόντων ἤδη στρατείας, δέκα δ᾽ ἄλλους σὺν τούτοις ἐκ τῶν δέκα."

[80] Sallust Cat. VII.3: ": tanta cupido gloriae incesserat."

[81] Cicero, De Oratore, I.7: "Quis enim est, qui, si clarorimi hominum scientiam rerum gestarum vel utilitate vel magnitudine metiri velit, non anteponat oratori imperatorem?"

The path of the Roman aristocrat would almost inevitably lead to politics, and that would mean going through the *cursus honorum*, whose highest ordinary magistracy was the consulate. Attaining the consulship was itself a great honor that would lead to everlasting praise within the family of the consul, and also visible in the Roman calendar, whose dating convention identified years based on the consuls who were in power during that time (as opposed to the more common regnal years). As has already been described, the consul held the positions of highest authority within the Republic, but his principal task, especially before the 1st Century, was to lead the Roman army into battle, and it was this opportunity to ultimately prove oneself on the battlefield that would be the "real kernel of the office."[82]

The consul, the leader of the state, "had to be nourished on glory," according to Cicero, and this glory was always martial in the period of the middle Republic.[83] As the examination of conflicts will indicate, the competition over consulships and generalships in times of war or with the possibility of war was great, and the most successful generals and consuls would receive the Roman state's ultimate endowment of *gloria* in the form of the triumph. The pomp and circumstance of a triumph all reflected the crowning of the *triumphator* with *gloria*, as he entered the city adorned as Jupiter, leading his men and parading the subdued captives and the spoils that they had surrendered, ultimately reaching the holiest of Roman religious sites, the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, to conduct a sacrifice to Jupiter Optimus Maximus.[84] The honor which a triumph bestowed upon its celebrant was so great that fifteen out of the nineteen non-consular generals who celebrated a triumph between 227 BCE and 79 BCE became consuls, and the desire to attain one was great enough to lead one consul in three during the time of the middle Republic to celebrate one.[85]

The drive for *gloria* was not just apparent in the triumph, but could be seen all around the city of Rome as it gradually would become adorned with various monuments to victory: temples, fora, columns, statues, triumphal arches, and the golden prows of the Carthaginian

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[82] Harris, p. 15

[83] Cicero, de Republica, V.9: "principem civitatis gloria esse alendum."

[84] Though many accounts of the ceremony survive, many of its most "well-known" elements have been distorted or fabricated in modern times, the greatest of these being that the *triumphator* was meant to represent Jupiter himself. A thorough analysis of the triumph and the misconceptions around it can be seen in Mary Beard's *The Roman Triumph*. Mary Beard, *The Roman Triumph* (Cambridge: Belknap, 2009)

[85] Harris, p. 32

navy which were so prominently displayed at the *rostra*. All these monuments bore inscriptions, telling the world in whose honor they had been built and for what reason. Other glorification came in the rarer form of being given an epithet to commemorate a subjugated people, by which we get Scipio *Africanus* for his conquest of Carthage and Mummius *Achaicus* for his conquest of Achaea. These names could also be inherited in some cases, as is best seen in the case of Nero Claudius Drusus *Germanicus*, who inherited the agnomen of *Germanicus* from his father before eventually becoming Germanicus Julius Caesar.

As the Republic expanded and its political structure matured, competition over *gloria* extended to both the plebeian and patrician classes, though each class sought it for different goals: the patricians needed to demonstrate an illustrious continuity with their ancestors, while the rising plebeians sought it in order to improve their rising status within Roman society. With the ever-expanding formal and informal frontiers of the Republican empire, the chances for riches and plunder increased, while at the same time those being brought back were already beginning to have a dramatic effect on the Republic. Beyond the economic incentives of conquest that will be analyzed later, this was once again another way of gaining glory, as plunder from a campaign would often go to the building of temples and monuments to immortalize victory.

In recounting this period, Polybius is by far the most valuable source, taking on the historian's mantle which had been last worn by Thucydides. His narrative of Roman history attempts to make connections between all the events and to explain what effect they had on later circumstances. The supreme question was as to why the Republic had reached such apparent internal degradation by the time of Polybius' death in the late 2nd Century, and here Polybius found the culprit: the competition over *gloria*.

> When a commonwealth, after warding off many great dangers, has arrived at a
> high pitch of prosperity and undisputed power, it is evident that, by the
> lengthened continuance of great wealth within it, the manner of life of its
> citizens will become more extravagant; and that the rivalry for office, and in
> other spheres of activity, will become fiercer than it ought to be.[86]

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[86] Polybius VI.57.5: "ὅταν γὰρ πολλοὺς καὶ μεγάλους κινδύνους διωσαμένη πολιτεία μετὰ ταῦτα εἰς ὑπεροχὴν καὶ δυναστείαν ἀδήριτον ἀφίκηται, φανερὸν ὡς εἰσοικιζομένης εἰς αὐτὴν ἐπὶ πολὺ τῆς εὐδαιμονίας συμβαίνει τοὺς μὲν βίους γίνεσθαι πολυτελεστέρους, τοὺς δ᾽ ἄνδρας φιλονεικοτέρους τοῦ δέοντος περί τε τὰς ἀρχὰς καὶ τὰς ἄλλας ἐπιβολάς."

As will be seen through the examination of Rome's major wars during the middle and early late Republic, *gloria* was a driving force for Roman conquest, but with Polybius' passage it is also clear that it was the greatest apparent flaw in Roman culture, which would lead to the decline and fall of the Republic.

Secondary to the quest for lauds was the quest for wealth. As each generation of scholars has come and gone and depending on the economic theories that are in vogue, the importance of wealth as motivation for Roman expansion has varied, from those who saw some avarice but did not see greed as motivating anything to the Marxists who pinned the entire plan of expansion on wealth and the desire for slaves. This work will take a middle ground, suggesting that economic interests were influential, but that they only moved state action if it was in the cause of defending the national interest.[87]

During the earlier years of the Republic, the senatorial elite lived rather rustic lives, and the first conflicts in Italy offered little in the way of enriching themselves, but from the onset the acquisition of plunder was a given. The paltry pickings of this time period would later help form the image of the virtuous early fathers of the Republic, who lived free of *luxuria* and *avaritia*. The first major wars, those fought against the Samnites, would see the enslavement of 60,000 Italians between 297-293 BCE for the service of a citizenry of 200,000, and by the time of the Second Punic War, Rome's territory had expanded from 948 square kilometers to 9,00 square kilometers. Even so, the plunder in this time period was not enough to enrich one to the point of luxury, and the main perceptions of what constituted enrichment were the traditional acquisition of land, plunder, and slaves, as opposed to mercantilist prospects.[88]

During the course of the First Punic War, which had been started to defend the freedom of the Mamertini, the Romans launched an expedition to conquer Sicily. When debating this in the Senate, the argument used that won the day suggested that "besides these national advantages to be gained by the war, the military commanders…would get manifest

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[87] Stephen D. Krasner, *Defending the National Interest* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978). A closer comparison between the United States and the Roman Republic is nigh impossible due to the huge gap in what comprise the power of each state, but in broad strokes, the author believes that even within the Roman Republic, which had a much weaker state and much more powerful economic "lobby," there was an ordering of priorities which subordinated the benefits of the plutocrats to the state's national interests.

[88] Harris, pp. 58-68

and important benefits from it."[89] The biggest economic draw in Sicily – its grain production – would have been well-known to the Romans, and it was certainly the single greatest defining feature of that province even through the days of Empire, when it became, along with North Africa and Egypt, the "breadbasket" of the Empire. In fact, Sicily would remain one of the most popular provinces for magistrates who wished to enrich themselves, as would Spain with its rich mining income. Therefore by the middle Republic and going into the 1st Century, the Roman elite had managed to massively enrich themselves to the point where it cannot be seriously argued that Rome's wars had no economic motivation. Beyond the now-established exploitation of provinces, war was also profitable in the number of slaves it returned to the Republic, with the island of Delos supposedly being able to handle up to ten thousand slaves a day.[90] Regardless of the benefits to individuals, both plebeian and patrician, it is still hard to find evidence that they guided Roman expansion with avarice as their chief guide.

It is at this point that Roman expansionist policies can be examined, in order to determine whether it was planned or whether it was "defensive imperialism" as the Romans and later scholars believed. Though the actual conflicts of the Italian Wars may have been defensive (the source material is not especially enlightening), it is clear from both thought and deed that the Romans, after unifying Latium, had set their sights on the conquest of the Italian Peninsula. When speaking of Rome's wars against the Italians, Polybius describes the Romans as already viewing Italy as something that belonged to themselves.[91] The desire to expand was also seen in the way the Romans fought the war, which saw the Sammnite aggressors fighting mainly on their territory while the Romans fought across Samnite lands, the lands of their allies, and even unrelated third parties.

Throughout the Punic Wars, there are many indications that expansion was yet again the aim. After having relieved the Marmetini, the Roman Senate realized that

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[89] Polybius I.11: "ἅμα δὲ τοῖς ἄρτι ῥηθεῖσι περὶ τοῦ κοινῇ συμφέρειν τὸν πόλεμον καὶ κατ᾽ ἰδίαν ἑκάστοις ὠφελείας προδήλους καὶ μεγάλας ὑποδεικνυόντων τῶν στρατηγῶν, ἔκριναν βοηθεῖν."

[90] Strabo XIV.668: "ἡ Δῆλος, δυναμένη μυριάδας ἀνδραπόδων αὐθημερὸν καὶ δέξασθαι καὶ ἀποπέμψαι"

[91] Polybius I.6.6: "τότε πρῶτον ἐπὶ τὰ λοιπὰ μέρη τῆς Ἰταλίας ὥρμησαν, οὐχ ὡς ὑπὲρ ὀθνείων, ἐπὶ δὲ τὸ πλεῖον ὡς ὑπὲρ ἰδίων"

they were not content with having saved the Mamertines, nor with the advantages gained in the course of the war; but conceived the idea that it was possible to expel the Carthaginians entirely from the island, and that if that were done their own power would receive a great increase.[92]

When exhorting his soldiers to win the day on the battlefield of Zama, Scipio told his troops that their victory would not only make them masters of Libya, but would also place Rome in the position of undisputed lordship of the world.[93] Polybius, who aimed at writing his *Historia* to also inform the Greeks of what Rome "was all about," attempted to dispel any notions of accidental hegemony by saying "it was not by mere chance or without knowing what they were doing that the Romans struck their bold stroke for universal supremacy and dominion, and justified their boldness by its success."[94] These statements were no flukes, as the literature of the time period also reveals praise for anyone who could be seen to expand the empire, with Cicero seeing a Republic that is supreme,[95] or with Plutarch later assigning Tiberius Gracchus to having recognized the Romans as being "κύριοι τῆς οἰκουμένης."[96]

Another argument that is more attributable to modern scholarship is that the reluctance of the Romans to expand is evidenced in how few provinces they actually incorporated into their empire, choosing instead to set up a system of client states. This imposes a much more modern view of what an empire is than what existed at the time, since the Romans viewed their empire as not just the places which were within their borders, but over the areas where they exercised supreme authority and were recognized in doing so.[97]

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[92] Polybius I.20.1-2: "περιχαρεῖς γενόμενοι καὶ ταῖς διανοίαις ἐπαρθέντες οὐκ ἔμενον ἐπὶ τῶν ἐξ ἀρχῆς λογισμῶν οὐδ᾽ ἠρκοῦντο σεσωκέναι τοὺς Μαμερτίνους οὐδὲ ταῖς ἐξ αὐτοῦ τοῦ πολέμου γενομέναις ὠφελείαις, ἐλπίσαντες δὲ καθόλου δυνατὸν εἶναι τοὺς Καρχηδονίους ἐκβαλεῖν ἐκ τῆς νήσου, τούτου δὲ γενομένου μεγάλην ἐπίδοσιν…"

[93] Polybius XV.10.2: "καὶ λαμβάνειν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ὅτι κρατήσαντες μὲν τῶν ἐχθρῶν οὐ μόνον τῶν ἐν Λιβύῃ πραγμάτων ἔσονται κύριοι βεβαίως, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς ἄλλης οἰκουμένης τὴν ἡγεμονίαν καὶ δυναστείαν ἀδήριτον αὑτοῖς τε καὶ τῇ πατρίδι περιποιήσουσιν"

[94] Polybius I.63.9: "ἐξ ὧν δῆλον τὸ προτεθὲν ἡμῖν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὡς οὐ τύχῃ Ῥωμαῖοι, καθάπερ ἔνιοι δοκοῦσι τῶν Ἑλλήνων, οὐδ᾽ αὐτομάτως, ἀλλὰ καὶ λίαν εἰκότως ἐν τοιούτοις καὶ τηλικούτοις πράγμασιν ἐνασκήσαντες οὐ μόνον ἐπεβάλοντο τῇ τῶν ὅλων ἡγεμονίᾳ καὶ δυναστείᾳ τολμηρῶς"

[95] Cicero, Divinationes, I.45: "rém Romanam públicam sumám fore."

[96] Plutarch, T. Gracchus IX.5

[97] Harris, p. 105

This is evidenced in the Treaty of Apamea in 188 BCE, where it is forbidden to Antiochus to enlist soldiers from territory subject to Rome.[98]

With the motivations of glory, financial gain, and extending the empire established as being motivation for Roman expansion, the cultural factors that allowed the Romans to be so successful in their expansion must now be examined, though they will be expanded upon more in individual examples. As can be seen from their very first major conflicts, the Romans were prepared to sustain huge losses to achieve victory at a time when the Hellenistic kingdoms fought battles whose aim was to produce as small a number of casualties as possible. This defiance meant that the Roman state was uniquely placed in the Mediterranean to resist what would appear to be superior forces, as can be seen in both the First and Second Punic Wars. War was popular not only for the aristocrats seeking glory but for the common soldier as well, and until the 3rd Century, the Roman armies were made up of an extremely large number of citizens, up to 45% according to census data,[99] while the rest of the manpower came from the Italian allies. This was not an unlimited pool, but it was a significant reserve for the Roman state until the 2nd Century when the popularity of serving in the military declined rapidly, especially in relation to the pacification of Spain, whose unpopularity was increasing as the horrific conditions of warfare became known.[100]

The author here does not find it necessary to go through the details on Roman discipline as contributor to victory mainly because of how well known it is in its generalities, which are harder to apply in the 3rd and 2nd Centuries BCE but are nonetheless important in the battle success of the Roman armies. Instead, an emphasis will be placed on the harshness of Roman warfare, to a degree which surpassed that of other Mediterranean states. The greatest brutality that the Romans would display would be after a successful siege, where "towns captured by the Romans" not only had "human beings who have been put to the

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[98] Polybius XXI.43.15: "μὴ ἐξέστω δὲ Ἀντιόχῳ μηδὲ ξενολογεῖν ἐκ τῆς ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίους ταττομένης μηδ᾽ ὑποδέχεσθαι τοὺς φεύγοντας."

[99] Harris, p. 43

[100] Polybius XXXV.4.4. Polybius tells us that it was at this point that volunteering for the army met a large reversal, something that had not been experienced in the past.

sword, but even dogs cloven down the middle, and the limbs of other animals cut off."[101] Polybius is probably accurate in suggesting that this Roman custom is done to strike terror, but in a society which placed such value on martial prowess and which had for centuries seen wars year after year, it is not hard to imagine a society which had been especially desensitized to the brutality of war.

4.2 Bella, Horrida Bella

In this section, most of the major wars of the Republic will be analyzed to see the reasons for which they started and how they were fought so as to ascertain if the quest for *gloria* and land were primary motives and if the waging of the war showed Rome's unique martial aspects. By doing so, it can be established whether Rome's strategic culture was one based on competition for recognition from the elites and on a doctrine of total victory.

Italian Wars

In these conflicts, it is hard to tell which side was the aggressor due to a lack of source material, but the most likely scenario would place the Samnites as the aggressors. In the Samnite Wars, the quest for *gloria* was most visible in the attempts to wage as many battles as possible and to capture as much land as possible, with the Romans engaging the Samnites on their own territory and constantly moving to incorporate them into their Italian alliance. The motive for revenge also appears after the defeat at the Caudine Forks invigorated the Romans to increase their efforts, and in Rome's ultimate victory a willingness to sustain casualties disproportionate to the city's stature was displayed.

First Punic War

The unification of the Italian Peninsula meant that the Romans could live in the expectation of relative peace as they had no enemies except for the Gauls. This peace meant that individual Romans could not achieve any martial glory, thus not only cutting them off from major political advancement, but also subjecting them to the pressure of undermining their family's honor. The alliance with the Mamertini, a faction on Carthaginian-dominated Sicily, was almost certainly a calculated move by the Romans to bring themselves into conflict with

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[101] Polybius X.15.4-5: "διὸ καὶ πολλάκις ἰδεῖν ἔστιν ἐν ταῖς τῶν Ῥωμαίων καταλήψεσι τῶν πόλεων οὐ μόνον τοὺς ἀνθρώπους πεφονευμένους, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς κύνας δεδιχοτομημένους καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων μέλη παρακεκομμένα."

Carthage. As has already been pointed out, Sicily was well-known for its profitability, but here Polybius (in an allusion to Thucydides perhaps) tells us that the Romans grew fearful of Carthage's expanding power and that they would find themselves surrounded by "dangerous neighbors."[102] While this explanation would lend credence to the "defensive expansion" theory, again the actions of the Romans betrayed their true motives: the intervention was to defend the Mamertini, but once they were relieved following the Battle of Agrigentum in 262 BCE, the Romans continued their drive to conquer Sicily. Even once the war was over, the Romans threatened to begin it afresh if the Carthaginians did not pay a new indemnity and hand over the island of Sardinia, a territory which had never been part of the Roman plans for the war. The chance to go to war after the pacification of Italy gave Rome's aristocracy a jolt to seek glory through the various military campaigns and expansion of the Republic and the taste of larger plunder than they knew led them to extort Carthage for the double prize of an indemnity and an island.[103] As far as waging the war was concerned, the Romans initially overcame the setback of not having any navy or naval tradition to become the greater of the two naval powers and still persisted on creating a new fleet to great economic and human strain after the previous two were destroyed in storms.

Second Punic War

Polybius ascribes the blame for the Second Punic War to the Carthaginian humiliation by the Romans in their previous confrontation, especially in their conduct in seizing Sardinia.[104] This created a need to prepare for conflict and outdo Rome by expanding and exploiting land in Spain, something which Rome regarded with understandable concern. Around the same time, Rome took two actions in response: it agreed with Carthage that their spheres of influence would meet at the River Ebro, and separately it signed an agreement with Saguntum, a town within the Carthaginian sphere. The order in which these events happened

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[102] Polybius I.10.5-6: "οὐ μὴν ἀγνοοῦντές γε τούτων οὐδέν, θεωροῦντες δὲ τοὺς Καρχηδονίους οὐ μόνον τὰ κατὰ τὴν Λιβύην, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς Ἰβηρίας ὑπήκοα πολλὰ μέρη πεποιημένους, ἔτι δὲ τῶν νήσων ἁπασῶν ἐγκρατεῖς ὑπάρχοντας τῶν κατὰ τὸ Σαρδόνιον καὶ Τυρρηνικὸν πέλαγος, ἠγωνίων, εἰ Σικελίας ἔτι κυριεύσαιεν, μὴ λίαν βαρεῖς καὶ φοβεροὶ γείτονες αὐτοῖς ὑπάρχοιεν, κύκλῳ σφᾶς περιέχοντες καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς τῆς Ἰταλίας μέρεσιν ἐπικείμενοι."

[103] In this instance, the Roman aristocracy seem to resemble the aristocracy of 10th-11th Century Europe, who only knew how to wage war and would do so to the great detriment of the populace and the land, resulting first in the Church attempting to limit the destruction through the Peace and Truce of God movements, and then directing the bottled-up martial appetite to the Levant and the Crusades.

[104] Polybius III.9.6-12.6

is unclear, but in either case the Romans were well aware of Saguntum's position, and of the fact that it was a small state that could do little to help Rome, while at the same time it was not located near to any Roman interests. The predictable result was that when Saguntum was attacked for acting too aggressively (likely as the result of some Roman budging), Rome intervened on behalf of its ally and declared war on Carthage.

The dubious nature of the war being defensive again is revealed through how the war was fought. Once Hannibal had been contained in Italy, the Romans engaged in the ancient world's first world war, by sending legions over to both Spain and North Africa. Neither of these campaigns were required to secure Italy's borders, and it has already been seen how the alliance with Saguntum essentially made a war inevitable. Spain's wealth was well known, and its acquisition by the Romans certainly lends credence to the idea that there was a strong financial motivation, while the motivations for *gloria* can be seen best in Scipio Africanus, who defeated the undefeated Hannibal and expanded the empire, all while in his twenties, allowing him to be elected consul without going through any of the *cursus honorum*. The Second Punic War is also the greatest display of Roman determination for total victory as well as of their harshness; by the time they lead expeditions into Spain, the Romans had already lost upwards of 70,000 men and numerous consuls in humiliating defeats, and with Hannibal within a day's march of Rome following the defeat of Cannae, they still did not capitulate. In Spain, the Romans showed an excessive brutality in their sieges of the local towns, and once they had killed Hannibal's brother, they made sure to let him know by throwing his severed head into the Carthaginian general's camp.

The Macedonian Wars

The First Macedonian War appears to have been largely defensive in purpose. Philip, king of Macedon, had allied with Carthage and had been promised Illyria, but his small attempts at a naval confrontation left him humiliated by the superior Roman navy. The Romans eventually invaded Greece and sacked a few cities, but once a treaty had been signed with Philip they retired. With resources already committed to the West, it is difficult to imagine what Rome could have allocated to a new theater, but the response to Philip's threats was quite Roman in its volume, with Philip humiliated and Rome's status as a major power recognized within the Greek world.

In the second Macedonian War, there are difficulties in assessing whether it was defensive or not. Philip V of Macedon had entered into a secret alliance with Antiochus of

the Seleucid Empire during a phase of weakness in the most powerful Greek kingdom of the Ptolemies, which was a rival of the Seleucids. Philip attempted to expand his control over Greece and the Aegean and an appeal was sent to Rome to protect Greece. This appeal was sent as the Aetolian League was allied with Rome since the First Macedonian War, but in reality Rome had shown very little interest in the eastern Mediterranean until now. Declaring that they were fighting for the "freedom of all Greeks,"[105] Rome dispatched armies under the philhellene Titus Flaminius, who soundly defeated the Macedonians at the Battle of Cynoscephalae in 197 BCE. The subsequent peace called for the surrender of Philip's navy, but did not establish any permanent Roman presence in Greece, and so it would appear that it was a defensive war, until it is considered that it was a war fought on someone else's behalf in an area initially beyond Roman control, and by the end of which Rome was the acknowledged as the dominant power in Greece, signifying that although Rome could not claim any revenues outside of Macedon's indemnities, it could rightly be considered the overlord of the region, fitting with the perception previously mentioned that the empire included lands not formally controlled by the Romans.

Continuing down the list of these wars, the Third Macedonian War was the hardest of the three wars as yet to justify as being defensive, as the Macedonians had done little in the way of aggression towards Rome or any of its major allies. The Senate claimed that the new king of Macedon, Perseus, had inherited war-plans from his father Philip but this claim was not backed up by Perseus' non-aggressive stance. The only threat that was posed was one in which Perseus' influence was expanding, but this was hardly the pretext for war that would be required to claim that it was defensive; instead, what seems to be likely is that as the campaign in Spain and Liguria were dying down, a new front was needed to sustain Rome's constant warfare. In 168 BCE, under the leadership of Lucius Aemilius Paullus, the Romans soundly defeated the Macedonians at the Battle of Pydna, dividing the area of Macedon into separate client republics.

The Third Punic War

Following the first two Punic Wars, Carthage had been reduced to a shell of its former self, though it was still likely one of the richest states in Rome's proximity. Polybius, who was by

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[105] Polybius XVIII.36.6: "τὴν εἰρήνην ἢ τοῖς Ἕλλησι"

that point active in politics himself, suggests that planning for the war had already been going on long before it actually began.[106] Carthage's requirement to pay tribute to Rome over the course of fifty years had ended, and apparently the city had started to see some recovery, enough to cause concern among the Romans and most famously to Cato, who concluded upon seeing its newfound prosperity that "*Carthago delenda est.*"[107] This recovery was seen in 149 BCE when the Carthaginians surrendered a large number of their weapons upon the request of the Romans, but here the more important fact is that the Carthaginians so willingly surrendered their arms rather than risk antagonizing the Romans. The *casus belli* was Carthage's attack against Numidia, which was in any case provoked by the pro-Roman Numidian attack on Carthage earlier.

Despite the factual absence of any evidence suggesting that Carthage was anywhere near its former military capabilities, it is logical to expect some fear over any improvement in its capabilities, but no assessment of Carthaginian capabilities would have rendered unto them the threatening status of their Second Punic War predecessors. Instead, Carthage offered an ideal prize from many aspects: the glory of defeating this great enemy of Rome would be great, as would be the glory for those who expanded the empire, and the promise of plunder and an easier fight that what had been going in Spain was sure to attract all classes. Rome delivered to Carthage an impossible ultimatum in the manner of the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum to the Serbs, calling for the Carthaginians to destroy their own city and move it 10 miles in-land, cutting them off from direct access to the sea. No such ultimatum had ever been demanded of a potential enemy before; it was clear that the Romans wanted war. When the siege ended, the Romans destroyed the city of Carthage and incorporated North Africa as a province.

The Achaean War

In 146 BCE, the same year Carthage was destroyed, Rome sent an envoy to the Achaean League demanding that they contribute troops for Rome's warfighting. When most the members of the league refused to do so, the Romans demanded that it be disbanded, though in later missions to Greece they would tell the members that this was not the case, which was

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[106] Polybius, XXXVI.2.1.

[107] Appian, Punic Wars, X.69: "Κάτωνα δ' ἐξ ἐκείνου φασὶν ἐν τῇ βουλῇ συνεχεῖ γνώμῃ λέγειν, Καρχηδόνα μὴ εἶναι."

according to Polybius a ruse to buy more time until the situation in Carthage had been resolved,[108] suggesting that intervention in Greece was a foregone conclusion. Having already been involved in the area directly in the previous four Macedonian Wars, it is likely that the Romans had finally decided to pacify the region by conquering it, but having been so well acquainted with the region also meant that the benefits of such a conquest were well-known. In any case, with the situation in Carthage resolved, the Senate dispatched Lucius Mummius to Greece to subdue the Achaean League, and in the process Mummius destroyed the city of Corinth, revealing again the possible brutality of the Romans, as Corinth was no ancient enemy of Rome as Carthage had been.

4.3   The Grand Strategy of the Roman Republic

The culture of Republican Rome steeped itself in the acquisition of honor. This pursuit was more than just something to which the Romans paid lip service – it was a defining feature of their society. A Roman male aristocrat was expected to be in the pursuit of glory since a young age, and this glory was most prestigious when gained on the battlefield. The achievements of one person were not just intended to honor them, but their entire family (*gens*) and the Roman state as well. What this work has attempted to do is to show how this drive for glory became embedded within Roman culture, and how it would form part of their strategic culture and ultimately their grand strategy.

Laus and *gloria* were driving motivations for the wars the Republic faced, since in most cases as has been shown, the wars were initiated by the Romans. The goal of the individual was entwined with the goals of the state, since pursuit of individual honor did not contradict the expansionist policy that it has been shown the Romans actually have. This expansionism was not based on the notion of defense, as the Romans themselves justified it, but the cultural need for the enemy to be the aggressor made it so that the Romans had to create justifiable pretexts before attacking. Through listing the series of conflicts the Republic fought until it achieved hegemony over the Mediterranean, it can be seen that these pretexts

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[108] Polybius XXXVIII 9.7

were much more realistic as Rome expanded in strength, but as it reached the status of hegemon and as its elites became enriched off of glory and plunder, the pretexts gradually declined in their defensive "quality," with the Third Punic War and the Achaean War looking more like wars the Romans fought because they could, rather than because they had to. Here one could make the comparison with the model presented by the second generation in strategic history and suggest that while the image presented by the elites was one of defensive expansionism, this was in-fact masking the clear imperialism of the middle Republic.

If one was to analyze the success of Roman strategy based on the levels of strategy put forward by Luttwak, it would emerge that at all levels the Romans offered something unique and superior to what was found around the Mediterranean. At the technical level, Rome initially did not differ from the other city-states of the time period. It started off with traditional hoplite warfare, evolved later into heavy spearmen or *triarii*. Spears and javelins were the weapon of choice in the Italian Peninsula, but Rome's Italian enemies also employed heavy infantry, which would from that point on be used in the service of Rome. The armored infantryman would gain his most potent technical advantage in the form of the *gladius* and *pilum*, the short sword and the unique Roman javelin. The short sword was incorporated from Rome's Spanish campaign onward, and would have a devastating effect on Greek phalanxes.

The tactical level of Roman warfare would be at its most superior form when using the manipular system developed under Scipio Africanus, which would eventually morph into the legionary cohorts of Gaius Marius. This tactical system required organization, training, and discipline, much more than that of the traditional phalanx. With the advantage at the technical level in weaponry and at the tactical level with superior training, organization, and higher mobility, the Romans trounced the Greek phalanxes at Cynoscephalae and Pydna. The operational level would be defined by Roman mastery of logistics and grand operations, though the most iconic example of this would come during the time of the Empire (the military was largely still the same as that during the time of Marius) with the Siege of Masada, in which a Roman legion besieged the Jewish rebels at their mountain fortress, supplying their forces in the field while the enemy was invested and all the while building a giant ramp to allow the Romans to assault the fortresses' walls. This mastery of logistics would prove itself at the theater level as well, where Romans were able to combine numerous armies across a theater in coordination with maritime operations, far exceeding the capabilities of contemporary states.

The grand strategy that would develop out of Rome's strategic culture was, of course, never defined. The lack of a defined grand strategy however is not an indication of its absence, as classicists would argue, since the models presented in strategic culture clearly demonstrate that a grand strategy can exist on the semi-conscious or subconscious level. The other great limitation would naturally be the one that classicists would be inclined to point out, in that almost all pre-modern states lacked the structure and stability to promote such long-term planning. In the case of the Roman Republic, grand strategy existed on a semi-conscious plane: the dramatic emergence of the Romans as a world power during the Second Punic War provides sources which indicate how important expansionism was for the Roman state and psyche. If Roman grand strategy had to be defined, therefore, it would be one of imperialist expansion and internal integration and consolidation.

5   Conclusion

Within the field of international relations, especially if speaking to any form of realist (except perhaps a classical realist), explaining the rise of the Roman Republic and its successor, the Roman Empire, through an analysis of its culture would seem grossly off-putting. For a classicist and a historian, such an approach would be more accepted if it did not have a certain "appeal to morality" in the form of framing the narrative as tale of morality, with pride and hubris ultimately leading to destruction (the author does not attempt to make any value judgments on the morality of the Roman aristocracy, however).

The study of strategic culture offers much promise in giving insight to how grand strategies are formed. Originally, before realizing how demanding such a task would be and how out of proportion it would be for such a task, the author intended to study British strategic culture as well. In this strategic culture, one could identify many of the things which made the Romans great, but even better for the British, one could not as easily identify the Roman "vices" in the building of Empire (without saying of course that there were none). The field is mostly utilized of course to study the strategic cultures of present day countries, which is natural for the field of strategists and political scientists, but it is a field that should be better examined by those classicists and historians who wish to combine an excellent knowledge of sources and historical relationships with models that can better explain strategic choices of ancient states. The biggest limit here is the reluctance to enter into the field of other academics (historians and archaeologists in general do not seem to get along, so perhaps relations with broader academia would be tough) and of course the limits imposed by the availability of numerous and dependable sources.

Through writing this paper, the author has tried to abandon his classicist biases when looking into the field of ancient history and relating it to strategic studies. This was something that was achieved largely thanks to his short dive into the studies on strategic culture and grand strategy, which seemed as though they were the fields best suited for a historian to delve into. The constructivist nature of strategic studies is much less problematic for someone who has not immersed himself in the various debates in international relations theory for as long as some of his colleagues, and the approach seems to appeal to the historian's tendency to avoid grand theories which attempt to explain everything.

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