1 Introduction

1.1 OVERVIEW

In March 58 BC, the great orator and statesman M. Tullius Cicero left the city of Rome and went into exile. A few weeks after his departure, a distraught Cicero wrote to his friend Atticus of his remorse for having chosen exile instead of death: “The fact that you encourage me to live prevents me from harming myself, but you are not able to stop me from lamenting my decision and my life.” Cicero’s letters during his eighteen-month exile are peppered with similar expressions of grief concerning his situation, as well as reports of his efforts to attain a recall from exile. Not all Roman exiles reacted in such distraught fashion, however. T. Albucius, an exile of a previous generation, seemed to flourish as a banished man. With his public career cut short by exile, Albucius did not lament the loss of his homeland and political aspirations, but reveled in his freedom from work and indulged his passion for philosophical study.

Although Cicero and Albucius had dissimilar reactions to their banishment, both had voluntarily chosen exile when faced with the potential of criminal prosecution. In this action, they were not unique: elite Romans pursuing public careers were always vulnerable to prosecution for their official conduct. When charged with a crime in Republican Rome, such men had a choice concerning their fate. They could either remain in Rome and face possible conviction and punishment or go into voluntary exile and avoid legal sentence. Thus exile was not a formal legal penalty contained in statutes, although it was the practical outcome of most capital convictions. Indeed, due to the custom of allowing voluntary exilium, there are relatively few recorded instances of death sentences actually being carried out against Roman citizens during the Republican period. Once a citizen had fled Roman territory, a decree of aequae et ignis interdictio (interdiction...
from fire and water) was generally enacted by the consilium plebis (plebeian citizen assembly) to bar the exile from ever returning to his homeland. Once he was outside of Roman jurisdiction, the exile was free to settle where he wished and live out the remainder of his life without interference from Rome. Exile was not always permanent; beginning in the late second century, there are examples of Roman citizen assemblies granting restoration from exile to specific individuals.3

This study examines the phenomenon of voluntary exile to avoid legal penalties or proceedings, in particular its historical development and effects on the political and social life of the upper classes from 220 to 44. The focus on the highest levels of Roman society is due to the nature of the surviving evidence: only banished men of senatorial and equestrian status are mentioned in the extant sources.4 As regards the chronological limits of this work, I have followed the historian Polybius in choosing the year 220 as a starting point, since the sources for earlier eras of Roman history often are “hearsay taken from hearsay.”5 The period beginning around 220 is within the lifetime of the first Roman historians and thus is more accurately attested. Material concerning the Regal Period and Early Republic, on the contrary, is replete with annalistic fictions, embellishments, and anachronisms, making it nearly impossible to glean any meaningful legal or historical details concerning exile for these early periods.6 The late third century is a propitious starting point for an additional reason: following the highly suspect account of the banishment of Camillus in 392, there is no significant mention of exilium in the ancient sources until the advent of the Second Punic War. As regards the terminus of this study, the assassination of Julius Caesar and the emergence of the future emperor Augustus onto the political stage makes 44 a natural place to conclude any examination of the Roman Republic.

3 A few cases of restoration from exile in the Early Roman Republic are reported by ancient authors. See Appendix II for a discussion of the anachronistic nature of these accounts.


6 The danger of incautiously using sources for Early Rome in this type of study is aptly demonstrated by M. Fuhrman, Review of G. Crisò, Richerche sull’ “exilium” nel periodo repubblicano, ZRC 83 (1968), 439–457.
In addition to voluntary exile, two other forms of exclusion from the state will receive attention in this book. The mid-first century saw the emergence of exile as an actual penalty in some criminal statutes, although voluntary exile still existed side by side with this new criminalized form of banishment. While this use of exile as a statutory punishment occurred only in the waning days of the Republic, another form of involuntary expulsion existed throughout the period of this study. Roman magistrates possessed the authority to impose certain coercive measures to ensure that they were unhindered in their ability to carry out official tasks. One such power was *relegatio* (relegation), which allowed them to expel any disruptive persons from a given area. While *relegatio* was used occasionally to remove troublesome foreigners from Rome, it was very rarely used against Roman citizens. Both exile as a legal penalty and relegation are discussed fully in Chapter Two.

The proscriptions of the late 80s as employed by Sulla, however, are not considered, since they are a separate phenomenon. Several important differences mark proscription as distinct from both exile (voluntary and statutory) and *relegatio*. Once an exile had quit Roman territory and taken up a new residence abroad, he was effectively beyond the reach of Roman authorities. However, a proscribed man was considered a public enemy (*hostis*), and though he may flee from Roman territory, he was never afforded a safe resting place. Sanctions were also taken against the children of the proscribed, who were made ineligible to hold political office. The flight of Marius and his followers in 88 is not discussed in detail either, since these men were also declared enemies of state and allowed no refuge.

Despite its importance in the Roman political arena during the Republican era, *exilium* has been a neglected topic in modern scholarship. Most research concerning Roman exile is contained in general surveys of the Roman legal system. The few works that have explored Republican-era exile in depth have not systematically treated the examples of exile in the ancient sources, but have narrowly focused on topical discussions of legal issues and the technical
mechanisms of exilium. This legalistic approach has ignored the experiences of the exiles themselves, and the impact of banishment on the careers and families of the banished. Many details and facets of exilium have thus gone unnoticed in scholarship – particularly the historical development of its actual practice. It is my hope that this book will provide a fuller understanding of the phenomenon of exile and its significance in Republican-era Rome.

The second chapter of this work covers the basic features and the legal background of exilium. This chapter contains topical discussions of technical details such as the relationship between exile and Roman citizenship, the use of aquae et ignis interdictio, and the development of banishment as a statutory punishment in the late Republic. Chapter Three deals with the historical development of the practice of Roman exile from the Second Punic War to the beginning of the Social War, and the fourth chapter continues this inquiry down to the death of Julius Caesar in 44. Two particular features receive special attention in Chapters Three and Four: the sites exiles tended to choose for relocation and the possibility of official restoration from banishment. Chapter Five features a discussion of miscellaneous topics of exilium, including economic and familial aspects, as well as the stories of exiles found in political propaganda. The sixth chapter is a prosopography of Republican-era exiles, arranged chronologically. Although we can assume that nearly all elite Romans who faced a capital sentence avoided the death penalty by self-banishment, I have not included all such Republican condemnati (convicts) in this section. Only those Romans for whom there is evidence (either direct or indirect) in ancient sources as having sought exilium are featured in this chapter. “Assumed” exiles would contribute nothing to this study, since their inclusion would add no relevant information concerning the practice of banishment. Indeed, for such convicts, no further ancient evidence exists of any activities after conviction; they simply disappear from the historical record. While one can assume that such convicts escaped capital punishment by going into exile, there is no information about them to examine.

A word must be said about the sources for this work. No ancient source provides a detailed treatment of the practice or development of exilium. As a result, brief

---

descriptions, summary remarks, and other scraps of information from disparate sources must be collected, interpreted, and fitted together to form a coherent picture of this phenomenon. Meager evidence makes such procedure standard for most areas of classical studies, as the researcher is obliged to make certain inferences to fill in missing pieces. The case of Roman Republican exile is no exception. It has been my aim in this work to fully explain my interpretation of the ancient evidence and subsequent conclusions to give the reader ample information to evaluate my reconstruction of the practice of *exilium*.

Before proceeding, it is useful to explain some terminology. In English, the word *exile* can describe a wide variety of situations and is often inconsistently used by modern authors. The ancient sources are no different: *exilium* and its cognates are employed very broadly to describe almost any act of withdrawal or flight. Thus, *exilium* can be used to indicate traditional voluntary exile, flight from proscription, magisterial *relegatio*, retirement from Rome for personal reasons, extended military service, and even emigration or travel. Fortunately, context generally always makes clear the specific meaning in each case. For the purposes of this study, *exilium* refers to the voluntary act of exile to avoid legal penalty. I use the English words *exile* and *banishment* in a similar fashion. Reference to another form of withdrawal from the state (such as a formal penalty or by magisterial *relegatio*) will be made clear in the text. *Aquae et ignis interdictio* will be translated as either “interdiction” or “outlawry.”

The term voluntary *exile* is similarly ambiguous and needs further clarification, as not all Romans who willingly withdrew from their homeland in response to judicial proceedings were banished men. There are two criteria in this study for determining voluntary exile: that the person’s flight allowed him to avoid potential legal penalties and that the fugitive was recognized as an exile by Roman authorities (and thus was prevented from returning home). To illustrate these criteria, the cases of three men who are often called “exiles” in ancient and modern sources merit examination. M. Livius Salinator (cos. 219 and 207) was accused of malfeasance in his deposition of the spoils from his victory in Illyria. Convicted and fined

---

60 Cf. T.L.L. s.v. “Exilium,” col. 1484: privata aliæ patri... quali si alio discessu voluntarie efficiatur... siue leg et damnatione inferi... (separation from one’s native soil, as is caused by someone’s voluntary departure, as is inflicted by law or condemnation). Examples of the broad meaning of *exilium* and its cognates include Cicero’s use of *exulare* to describe travel in general (*Rep.* 2.7.9), the survivors of Cannae calling their prolonged military service *exilium* (*Livy.* 25.6.16 and 18), and Ovid’s characterization of the withdrawal of Roman flute-players to Tibur to protest an unfair law as *exile* (*Fast.* 6.664–667).
for his actions, Livius left Rome due to the disgrace of his condemnation and remained away for seven years until the consuls of 210 persuaded him to return.11 Similarly, P. Cornelius Sulla departed from Rome after his conviction for electoral bribery (*ambitus*) in 66 and lived in Neapolis.12 While Livius and P. Sulla had left Rome due to their convictions, their departures were not an attempt to escape punishment for their crimes. Rather, they elected to leave Rome to avoid the humiliation and loss of stature they felt as convicted criminals. Their “flight” was truly self-imposed, as they were free to return to Rome whenever they wished. (Both eventually did return.) Scipio Africanus’ relocation to the town of Liternum in 187 or 184 to prevent the completion of his trial was also not banishment, since he was not officially declared an exile by the Roman state. Indeed, Scipio’s excuse that he was unable to attend court proceedings due to illness was accepted by the college of tribunes and his trial was adjourned.13

Ancient authors often employed a sort of shorthand to describe the complex process of exile. Since voluntary exile was the outcome of nearly every capital conviction in the Republic, some sources will state that someone was “driven into exile.” Although the option of banishment was chosen by the fugitive, an incautious reading of the sources makes it seem as if exile was actually imposed by the law as a penalty. In most cases, the sources are more concerned with the practical outcome of legal matters rather than their process.14 Thus Cicero can describe in some detail in one speech how *exilium* is a voluntary act that no Roman law inflicts as a punishment, but in another can briefly mention that exile results from judicial condemnation.15 In the second instance, the orator was merely relating what would inevitably happen if the defendant was convicted: he would avoid capital punishment by seeking exile.16

13 Liv. 38.22.4–5; 39.5.2; 9. See *MRR* 1.184 for complete sources. For the problems of reconstructing the events of Scipio’s trial, see H. H. Scullard, *Roman Politics*, 290–305; *Scipio Africanus: Soldier and Politician* (Ithaca, 1970), 222–224.
14 Cf. App. BC 1.47; Cic. Dom. 87; Brut. 128; Asc. 17; Gran. Licin. 14; Fl. Strab. 4.4.14; Sen. Res. 5.172; Liv. 25.2.49.
15 Exile as voluntary: Cic. Caec. 1.17; abbreviated references to the process of exile: Ch. 250; Dom. 72 and 84.
1.2 THE CULTURAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND OF ROMAN EXILE

In his analysis of Roman government and law, the Greek historian Polybius saw the practice of Roman exile as unique. Nearly a century later, Cicero also asserted the distinctiveness of this Roman custom as he contrasted the voluntary nature of Roman exile with the penal character of exile in the laws of other nations.\(^{17}\) While Polybius and Cicero remarked on the unusual nature of Roman exile, neither writer explained the cultural and political underpinnings that shaped it. Given the fragmentary nature of our sources for Roman exile, any modern attempt to discover its cultural background will be highly speculative. A few modern scholars have attempted to reconstruct how the unique aspects of exile reflect the norms of Roman society. R. A. Bauman theorizes that the Roman ideal of *humanitas* was seminal to the development of voluntary exile.\(^{18}\) While Bauman concedes that the Roman concept of *humanitas* was flexible and took on new meanings at different times, he believes that it represents a consistent thread in Roman legal thought. Despite the changing nature of the concept, Bauman considers that the essential element of *humanitas Romana* was a civilized behavior and attitude that avoided acts of brutality toward other members of the human race.\(^{19}\)

Although the term *humanitas* first appears in the latter half of the second century, its fundamental tenets such as *aequitas*, *clementia*, and *iustitia* (fairness, mercy, and justice) were long active in Roman thought and culture.\(^{20}\) Bauman asserts that *humanitas* and its related concepts affected the application of Roman penal law, giving rise to the custom of allowing criminals to avoid punishment by going into voluntary banishment. This convention of permitting exile resulted in the *de facto* abolition of the death penalty in criminal trials. Bauman points out that we have no record of any legal proceedings that result in executions during the last fifty years.\(^{21}\)

\(^{17}\) Plb. 6.4.6–8; Cic. Caec. 100.


\(^{20}\) Bauman, *Crime and Punishment*, 14; *Human Rights*, 2,4–8; W. Schadewaldt, “*Humanitas Romana*,” *ANRW* 14 (1971), 52–56. Schadewaldt (followed with reservations by Bauman) believes that the word *humanitas* first came into use when Scipio Aemilianus and his circle were influenced by the Greek philosopher Panaitius and the historian Polybius.
years of the Roman Republic. Accordingly, he sees the practice of voluntary exile as "one of Rome's greatest contributions to human rights."[^21]

Roman actions often seemed to contradict the tenets of *humanitas*, however. For instance, Scipio Aemilianus may have been among those who first articulated the concept of *humanitas Romana* in the mid-second century, but he nonetheless meted out brutal punishment to Roman enemies at Carthage and Numantia. While Bauman explains how Scipio's actions against foreign enemies could be justified in the Roman view, he does not account for the widespread use of death sentences as both judicial and extrajudicial penalties in Roman society.[^22] For example, although exile allowed convicted Roman citizens in all known cases to escape capital punishment at Carthage and Numantia, slaves and foreigners were not similarly protected from execution. The selective protection of only Roman citizens from judicial death penalties undermines the idea that a universal concept of human rights shaped the custom of Roman exile. Furthermore, even citizens of Rome were not safe from execution. All our evidence for the use of exile to avoid capital punishment concerns offenders of high social rank: senators and equestrians. Exile may not have commonly been available for lower-class criminals, who were thus still subject to the death penalty. Low-ranking magistrates called *triumviri capitales* appear to have held capital jurisdiction over slaves and common criminals.[^23] Even the upper classes were not immune from state-sanctioned execution. Paradoxically, as the application of the death penalty by the law courts against *cives Romani* (Roman citizens) became almost unknown in the last century of the Republic, victorious factions in internal political strife freely used execution in extrajudicial proceedings. Beginning with the massacre of Tiberius Gracchus and his supporters in 133, widespread killings of citizens by the state periodically broke out. The civil strife of the Late Republic made slaughter and proscriptions a feature of the domestic landscape. While the concept of *humanitas* may have been discussed in literary and philosophic contexts, its practical effect on the behavior of the Roman Republican state was limited. Given the frequent violence of the Romans toward slaves, foreigners, and even fellow citizens, the concept of *humanitas* fails to provide an adequate explanation for the development and practice of Roman exile.

Rather than looking to philosophic concepts, another modern scholar sees the origins of exile in the peculiarities of Roman social structure. G. Crifo concluded

[^23]: The access of lower-class citizens to the legal procedures afforded to senators and *equites* is a controversial issue for modern scholars. See Chapter 2, n.11 for sources and discussion.
that exile was a manifestation of Roman citizen rights that had its beginnings in the
gentilic structure of Early Rome. When faced with a criminal charge, the accused
from a particular \textit{gens} was allowed to remove himself and resettle with another clan.
In the Early Republic, this gentilic right was later expanded to include all Roman
citizens.\footnote{Crifò, \textit{Ricerche}, 77–107 and 125–191.} While Crifò’s theories rely heavily on the anachronistic sources for Early
Roman history, I believe he has raised an important factor in the composition of \textit{exilium}: namely that the practice of voluntary banishment is inextricably bound
with the privileges of Roman citizenship.\footnote{Cf. Fuhrman, \textit{Review of Crifò}, 451–457.} However, Crifò did not explore one
important political dimension of Roman exile.

The key to understanding the cultural background of Roman banishment, I
believe, lies in the ethos of the governing classes in the Republic. Voluntary exile
as it developed at Rome reflected the political ideal of \textit{concordia}. \textit{Concordia} stressed
political harmony among individuals and social classes to ensure the smooth
governance of the state and was generally expressed in terms of cooperation
between patricians and plebeians or senators and equestrians. Writing in the first
century BC, the antiquarian Dionysius of Halicarnassus succinctly captured the
main elements of \textit{concordia} (albeit in a highly idealized fashion) as he described the
legendary accomplishments of Romulus:

\begin{quote}
\textit{οὔτω δὲ ἔδρα βάρθως ἢ ἡ Ἡρώλοιον ὁμόνοια τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκ τῶν ὑπὸ Ἡρωῦλου κοσμικωςθύνων λαβούσα ἔθνον, ὅστε αὐθέντος δὲ σώματος καὶ φάνου τοῦ κατ᾽ ἄλληλαν ἔχωρων ἔντος ἐξοκεισθεὶς καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτων, πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων ἀμφιβηθημάτων γενομένων τῷ δήμῳ πρὸς τούτῳ ἐν τέλει περὶ τῶν κοινῶν, ὡς ἐν ἄστασις φιλοί γίγνεσθαι μικραῖς τε καὶ μεγάλαις πόλεσιν ἀλλὰ πείθομεν καὶ διδάσκομεν ἄλληλοις καὶ τὰ μὲν ἐκάνοντες, τὰ δὲ παρ᾽ ἐκάντων λαμβάνομεν, πολιτικὰς ἐπισκόπου τά τις ἐγκλημάτων διαλύσεις.}
\end{quote}

Therefore, the harmony of the Romans, which originated with the practices
of Romulus, was so firm that in six hundred and thirty years they never
came to communal bloodshed and slaughter, although many great disputes
arose between the people and the magistrates concerning public affairs, as is
bound to occur in all cities, both large and small. Yet the Romans settled their
quarrels in a civil manner, persuading and instructing one another, conceding
some things and gaining others in turn.\footnote{D. H. 2.11.2–5; cf. 2.62.}
Cicero’s conception of *concordia ordinum* (harmony between the senate and equestrians) was the fullest and most articulate expression of this paradigm of political unity. Writing in the waning days of the Republic, Cicero refined the traditional concept of *concordia*, which was deeply ingrained in Roman political thought. A brief survey of the importance of *concordia* in Republican Roman ideology will help us to understand how this ideal served to shape the practice of Roman exile.

Ancient authors writing about Roman history recognized the fundamental nature of *concordia* in Roman political ideology and highlighted examples of this concept in their descriptions (however fanciful) of the early history of Rome. As we have seen, Dionysius of Halicarnassus considered political harmony at Rome a key ingredient to the success of the Roman state. Additionally, the historian Livy often stressed the importance of policies promoting political concord in his descriptions of the development of Rome, particularly in the relationship between the patrician and plebeian orders. For example, in his narrative of the First Secession of the Plebs in 494, Livy depicts the institution of the plebeian tribunate as helping to restore *concordia* in Roman politics. Similarly, his version of the settlement of 367 between patricians and plebs highlights the ideal of civic concord. In Livy’s account, reforms favorable to the plebeians that had been proposed by the tribunes C. Licinius Stolo and L. Sextius Lateranus were delayed for ten years by the patricians. Finally, in 367 this internal dissension came to a head when the dictator M. Furius Camillus returned to Rome after conducting a successful war against the Gauls.

videndum perfunctum eum bello atrocior domi sedetio except, et per ingentia certamina dictator senatusque victus, ut rogationes tribuniciae acciperentur; et comitia consulum adversa nobilitate habita, quibus L. Sextius de plebe primus consul factus. et ne is quidem finis certaminum fuit, quia patricii se auctores futuros negabant, prope secessionem plebis res terribilesque alias