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COLLANA DI STUDI ARCHEOLOGICI

# Alleanze e parentele

Le “affinità elettive” nella storiografia  
sulla Sicilia antica



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Stele ornamentale, sarcofago greco (V sec. a. C.) - Museo di Agrigento

# Kinship diplomacy between Sicily and Rome

by Jonathan Prag\*

## 1. Introduction: kinship diplomacy, Sicily, and Roman imperialism

The phenomenon of kinship diplomacy, if not perfectly defined, is nonetheless widely understood and extensively studied<sup>1</sup>. The presence of kinship diplomacy in the political interactions between Rome and other Mediterranean states has in turn received specific treatment<sup>2</sup>. At the same time, the extent of kinship claims in the island of Sicily and the associated claims about *origines* made by many of the communities on the island have also been studied in very considerable detail<sup>3</sup>. In other words, this paper does not intend to cover new ground – indeed, the individual case studies upon which I shall focus have themselves been the objects of considerable attention. However, it is fair to state that the several instances of kinship diplomacy which can be documented between Sicilian communities and Rome have so far not been considered as an *ensemble* (although individually often considered in relation to one or more of the other instances). In itself, that would not necessarily be sufficient reason to justify a fresh study. The further argument that the Sicilian cases deserve to be better known, not least because they present a number of unusual features, could likewise be dismissed as special pleading. A more serious argument however remains, and this is that consideration of the Sicilian cases in their own right, and as a group, strongly suggests a more diverse and earlier use of the phenomenon of kinship diplomacy, in relation to Rome, than is commonly accepted<sup>4</sup>.

Kinship diplomacy with Rome most commonly involved claims about Trojan origins, and above all about the role of Aeneas. Consequently, discussion of the

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1 NB the comments of Simon Hornblower, *OCD* (3<sup>rd</sup> edn revised, 2003), 807-8, s.v. 'kinship'. Bickerman 1952 remains fundamental. For kinship diplomacy in the Greco-Roman world, see principally Musti 1963 and Curtly 1995, together with the discussion of Hornblower 1996, 61-80 and the general study of Jones 1999.

2 Besides Jones 1999, 81-105, note Elwyn 1993, Erskine 2001, and now Battistoni 2010 (cf. *idem* 2009).

3 Purely *exempli gratia*, Anello *et al.* 2006, Sammartano 1998, De Vido 1997, all of which contain extensive bibliography.

4 This paper is in broad agreement with the general position of Gabba 1976 (cf. *idem* 1990, 55-59); Kienast 1984, 114-117 relates this material most directly to the Roman conquest of Sicily (cf. Zambon 2008, 207-211, 222-23, 226, 260 for a similar line, although often confused on details). Other advocates of early contexts for kinship diplomacy involving Rome in Sicily are Momigliano 1984, 453, and Zevi 1999.

significance of the phenomenon in relation to Rome has been closely related to discussion about the appearance of the ‘Trojan myth’ in Rome and Latium<sup>5</sup>. It is now widely accepted that this occurred early (as early even as the seventh or sixth century BC), as part of a much wider phenomenon of the incorporation of non-Greek communities into a common past (to be understood as something actively pursued by both Greeks and non-Greeks), attendant upon Greek expansion across the western Mediterranean<sup>6</sup>. The central role of Sicily (and southern Italy) in this process is undeniable – Thucydides’ observation (6.2.3) that the Elymians of north-west Sicily were refugees from Troy is merely the most familiar text. As Filippo Battistoni has illustrated, in earlier scholarship Sicily was frequently seen as the key link in the transfer of the Trojan myth to Rome, or indeed in the use of the Trojan myth by Rome<sup>7</sup>. However, besides the point that a focus upon Troy to the exclusion of all else risks leaving other important elements out of consideration, there is commonly a disjunction between on the one hand the widespread acceptance of the early diffusion of this sort of ‘myth-making’ and on the other its place within the story of Roman imperialism and hence kinship diplomacy specifically with Rome<sup>8</sup>.

Arguably, this disjunction is the result of a much larger historiographical phenomenon<sup>9</sup>. Arthur Eckstein has recently taken up the banner of Maurice Holleaux’s powerful and hugely influential deconstruction of Roman engagement with the Greek East prior to the very end of the third century BC. This is a view which takes as one of its central tenets the idea of a ‘sudden emergence of deep Roman involvement in the Greek Mediterranean’<sup>10</sup>. Although Holleaux himself did not deny the existence of contact between Rome and the Greek world in general, the powerful polemic levelled against any evidence for early Roman imperial engagement with the Greek East seems to have had this as a (unintended?) consequence. Ernst Badian subsequently made a serious plea for Sicily’s importance in the development of Roman imperial practices, and in particular for Sicily’s importance in the development of the concept of the

5 See now Battistoni 2010, 15-34 for a history of scholarship on the subject from the 17<sup>th</sup> cent. to the 1940s.

6 Convenient overview in Erskine 2001, 131-156 and note esp. Malkin 1998 (within which, esp. 29).

7 See Battistoni 2010, 25-31, 113; cf. Galinsky 1969, 113-122.

8 So Erskine (2001, 131-56) makes a strong case for the early western traditions, but then, under the heading ‘kinship with Rome’ focuses his attention first upon the case of Lampsacos in the 190s BC (168-178), before returning to the case of Segesta in Sicily as a ‘rare’ example outside Asia Minor and repeatedly downplaying the mid-third-century context (178-184); in general Erskine clearly emphasises the wider contexts, as at 162 and 196. Erskine’s chosen focus upon Troy means that the important case of Centuripae (below) warrants only a single footnote (184 n.94); Battistoni (2010) is more even-handed, notwithstanding the focus also on Troy (so 113-115, Mamertines, and 147-165, Centuripae).

9 The following argument is anticipated by Rizzo 1974, 10-14, 15-17 (specifically with reference to Holleaux); however the case-study of Segesta which Rizzo then develops (17-43) relies upon questionable interpretations of unresolvable problems regarding numbers of Sicilian cities and the act of *deditio*.

10 Eckstein 2008, 6 where he makes explicit that he offers ‘a view similar to Holleaux’; Holleaux 1921, esp. 1-24.

*civitas libera*; that specific claim was however rightly rejected<sup>11</sup>. The failure of that particular effort may in fact have served to reinforce the East-West division in analysis of Roman imperialism. Erich Gruen's monumental study in turn took the crossing of the Adriatic as the point at which 'The first steps of Roman infiltration into the Hellenic world' occurred<sup>12</sup>. What is perhaps so striking, in Eckstein's and Gruen's formulations, is the simple equation of the Mediterranean world east of the Adriatic with the 'Greek Mediterranean' or the 'Hellenic world' - the separation, it seems, has grown stronger with time.

Of course, responsibility lies at least as much, and probably rather more so, with Polybius as it does with Holleaux, Gruen, or Eckstein:

'For it was owing to their defeat of the Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War that the Romans, feeling that the chief and most essential step in their scheme of universal aggression had now been taken, were first emboldened to reach out their hands to grasp the rest and to cross with an army to Greece and the continent of Asia'<sup>13</sup>.

Polybius of course was fully aware of the Greeks of the West, but the Achaean historian had his own agenda, not the least part of which was the need to downplay the work of his Sicilian predecessor, Timaeus:

'The fact, in my opinion, is that Timaeus was sure that if Timoleon, who had sought fame in a mere *oxybaphos*, as it were, Sicily, could be shown to be worthy of comparison with the most illustrious heroes, he himself, who treated only of Italy and Sicily, could claim comparison with writers whose works dealt with the whole world and with universal history'<sup>14</sup>.

It is this world-view which sees the diplomatic activities of Titus Quinctius Flamininus at Corinth in 196 BC as so revolutionary. Of course, in many respects they were, but the hand need not be overplayed; they did not spring fully formed from Flamininus' head, like Athena from Zeus.

11 Badian 1958, 33-43; see especially the corrective of Ferrary 1988, 5-23; however, Ferrary arguably goes too far when he additionally suggests (1988, 12) that Rome could not, in mid-third-century Sicily, have been sensible to the potential of this sort of propaganda – cf. Prag 2010, esp. 68.

12 Gruen 1984, 1; to be fair, he subsequently states (8), 'Rome's experience with the western Greeks, in particular the Hellenic communities of Campania, south Italy, and Sicily, is also touched on only briefly. The importance of that experience [...] should not be underestimated. But information on it is too sparse and limited to allow anything beyond speculative inference.' As far as I can tell, not one of the episodes discussed in this paper is mentioned by Gruen.

13 Polyb. 1.3.6 (Loeb transl.); cf. 3.3.1, or the highly selective meta-historical narrative at 1.2, which runs from Athens and Sparta, through Thebes, Macedon, and Alexander the Great, to the *diadochoi* and the Punic Wars, and the rise of Rome at the expense of the Hellenistic kingdoms.

14 Greeks of the West at Polyb. 1.6.2; Timaeus, 12.23.7 (Loeb transl.). On Polybius and Timaeus, most recently Baron 2009; for Timaeus see Vattuone 2002 and Momigliano 1977 [1959].

It is, therefore, against this broader historiographic backdrop that I propose to survey the various pieces of evidence for the use of kinship diplomacy between Sicilian communities and Rome. In the light of the previous paragraphs, it will be no surprise that I shall suggest that these can most readily be understood in the context of the conflicts which took place in Sicily during particularly the First, but also the Second Punic Wars, in the third century BC, and I shall therefore devote some space to elucidating the Sicilian context. It must be acknowledged from the outset that the evidence is not always conclusive for such a high dating, and I shall deliberately include some of the more speculative elements from among that evidence. It is, however, my contention that if all this material is considered on its own merits, in the Sicilian context, rather than treated separately and individually, and often minimally, as part of some larger narrative (which is its usual fate), then much of it becomes mutually supporting and reinforcing, and a rather different picture begins to emerge.

## 2. *Kinship diplomacy in Sicily*

Five Sicilian cities are explicitly linked to Rome by kinship claims of one sort or another in the surviving tradition, and it is on these instances that I shall focus the remainder of this paper (although I shall briefly consider other possibilities along the way). These are: Messana, Segesta, Centuripae, Eryx (specifically the sanctuary of Venus Erycina), and Haluntium. Earlier studies have, almost always, focused upon a subset of these examples – not least because the two fundamental pieces of epigraphic evidence relating to the case of Centuripae only came to light in the 1960s and 1970s, and have remained relatively little known thereafter<sup>15</sup>. The treatment which follows is in loose chronological order: Messana in 264 BC is undoubtedly the first episode in the sequence, but, on the high chronology which I here suggest, Centuripae might in principle precede Segesta (since Centuripae's surrender to Rome in 263 BC almost certainly preceded that of Segesta by some months). I treat Segesta first because it is the more widely discussed and more commonly accepted, and the case of Centuripae will be better understood in light of that discussion and an elucidation of the context of the early stages of the First Punic War. The main episodes involving Eryx belong in the later years of the First and the early years of the Second Punic War. Haluntium is much harder to date, and the hypothesis offered here will expand upon the context provided by the case of Eryx in particular.

<sup>15</sup> The most wide-ranging discussions are probably Manganaro 1963 (original publication of the Centuripae inscription with extensive analysis) and Battistoni 2010 (113-127 and 147-165 discuss all but the case of Haluntium). Gruen 1993, 44-50 and Jones 1999, 85-93 are reasonably representative of the wider treatment (albeit the former places excessive emphasis upon kinship claims as the work of cloistered intellectuals rather than part of real international relations).



2.1 *Messana*

Polybius, in his account of the actions which lead into the First Punic War describes the Mamertines of Messana, under pressure from Hieron II of Syracuse, as acting thus:

‘Some of them appealed to the Carthaginians, proposing to put themselves and the citadel into their hands, while others sent an embassy to Rome, offering to surrender the city and begging for assistance as a kindred people’<sup>16</sup>.

The very brevity of the report makes it difficult to assess. One point deserves immediate emphasis however, since it is often obscured: the Mamertines were not seeking support against Carthage, but against Syracuse; the appeal was directed simultaneously towards Carthage and towards Rome (presumably as a result of the connections and interests of different factions within the city’s elite), but only in the case of Rome was the approach further reinforced by an appeal to *homophylia*. Consequently, it is not legitimate to assess this as ‘anti-Punic’ in its rhetoric; the rhetorical context is precisely that which Polybius himself presents in the preceding narrative, namely the Mamertines portrayed by the Greek Sicilians (of Syracuse) as barbarians. Unsurprisingly therefore, the Mamertines appealed to the two ‘barbarian’ powers in the region, and the episode needs to be understood within the wider context of conflict and propaganda between Greek and non-Greek in the region<sup>17</sup>. It is difficult, given the nature of our sources, to form a judgement on how this specific aspect of the Mamertine appeal was received by Rome: Polybius’ silence after his initial mention of it demonstrates only that it was not of great interest to him. Cassius Dio explicitly makes the claim part of the grounds offered by the Roman commander C. Claudius for accepting the appeal; but this element appears to be no more than the repeat by Dio of the offer as reported by Polybius, in a Roman mouth, and one should be wary of granting it too much weight<sup>18</sup>. It is however worth noting that there are further traces of such ‘diplomatic warfare’, of which this is but one part, in Hieron II of Syracuse’s criticism of Roman *fides* for ac-

16 Polyb. 1.10.2: [...] οἱ δὲ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους ἐπρέσβευον, παραδιδόντες τὴν πόλιν καὶ δεόμενοι βοηθήσειν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ὁμοφύλοις ὑπάρχουσι.

17 See esp. Polyb. 1.9.3-8 for Hieron II’s campaign against the ‘barbarians’ occupying Messana (completely obscured in the Loeb translation, which repeatedly replaces *barbaroi* with one of ‘foreigners’, ‘Campanians’, or ‘Mamertines’; unchanged in the revised 2010 edition). For the theme, most recently Prag 2010, cf. Péré-Noguès 2006, esp. 59-63. For ‘barbarian’ Campanians in Sicily see the examples in Tagliamonte 1994, 124-57. See e.g. Giardina 1997, 97 n.114 for an ‘anti-punica’ reading, cf. Battistoni 2010, 60; Musti 1973, 131 is closer. For the opening of the First Punic War being principally directed against Syracuse, see e.g. Eckstein 2006; 164-9; Hoyos 1998; 53-7; Badian 1958; 34-5.

18 Dio’s speaker offers the justification of, διὰ τὸ γένος αὐτῶν τῆς Ἰταλίας ὄν (11.43.6). Curiously, the parallel summary of Zonar. 8.8 is instead in line with Polybius in reporting the claim as part of the original Mamertine appeal, omitting it from Claudius’ response.

cepting the appeal (Rome was especially open to accusations of hypocrisy after the comparable episode at Rhegium in the previous decade)<sup>19</sup>.

Recent discussion of the episode has focused upon Polybius' word *homophylia*, which is not typical of the language of kinship diplomacy. The exact significance of the term in relation to the language of kinship diplomacy is difficult to pin down<sup>20</sup>. Literary usage suggests that the term is in some ways distinct from the more usual term *syngeneia* (broadly equivalent to the Latin *cognatio*). Polybius' usage (presumably the best guide for interpreting this passage) is well illustrated by 11.19.3-4 where those who are not *homophyloi* in Hannibal's army are the Libyans, Iberians, Ligurians, Celts, Phoenicians, Italians, and Hellenes, 'peoples who neither in their laws, customs, or language, nor in any other respect had anything naturally in common.' The passage illustrates the difficulty, in so far as it is therein implicit that peoples who are *homophyloi*, such as the Italians (and so, in the case under discussion, the Mamertines and the Romans) will have such things in common, ἐκ φύσεως, naturally. However, it remains legitimate to observe that there is nothing explicitly supporting the view that common ancestors were asserted on this occasion, in contrast to more 'typical' acts of kinship diplomacy, and it could even be suggested that the term *homophylos* is intended to exclude claims of genealogical affinity<sup>21</sup>.

Ultimately, however, we are limited by the very compressed nature of Polybius' report and lack of further information. It is entirely possible that the claim to be *homophyloi* was backed up, in the event, by a much fuller set of justifications (as indeed would generally be the case). Antonino Pinzone has explored in some detail the possibility of tracing connections between Campanians and Romans through Capys the eponymous founder of Capua (and thence into the Trojan *nostoi* traditions); as Michael Crawford reminds us, it is also entirely possible on other evidence that this Oscan-speaking community developed a charter-myth of its own linking it to the Olympian gods; and, as Filippo Battistoni has recently noted, a late Roman text suggests that some such mythological claim was indeed made, and one that was apparently distinct from claims of Trojan origin.<sup>22</sup>

19 Diod. Sic. 23.1 (on which Eckstein 2010, 414); for the Rhegium episode, Bleckmann 1999; for the theme of Roman *fides* as live in southern Italy at this time, note the contemporary coin of Locri depicting *Roma* and *pistis* (SNG ANS 531, Crawford 1974, 724-5, Caltabiano 1978).

20 Compare Russo 2010, 74-79 (expanded in a forthcoming article) with Battistoni 2009, 75 n.8 and 2010, 60.

21 As argued by Russo (previous note); one should keep in mind however that other literary examples of the term, e.g. Thuc. 1.102.3 (Athenians and Spartans as *allophyloi*) well illustrate the importance of rhetorical context for most of the literary texts and that such distinctions ultimately serve (and can be put to) a political purpose, and are not rigidly technical.

22 Pinzone 1983, 89-137 (and cf. 2002, 117-119; for Capys, see e.g. Dion. Hal. *AR* 1.73.3); Crawford 2007, 276-7 on Festus 150 Lindsay; Battistoni 2010, 115 on *Panegyrici Latini* 5.2-3 (Mynors).

Choosing between such alternatives is neither possible, nor necessary. Several elements do however deserve highlighting. The first is the clear indication of the engagement in the discourse of ‘Greek’ and ‘barbarian’ implicit in the Mamertine appeal, already well-established in Sicily and southern Italy, and which is itself a major part of the thought-world of kinship diplomacy<sup>23</sup>. Second is the importance of the episode as evidence for contemporary ideas of Italian identity<sup>24</sup>. Third, and connected to the previous two points, is the importance of not assuming that Trojan origins are always those being adopted in dialogue with Rome – although the Mamertine claim can be hypothesised to have a Trojan element within it, it is hardly necessary, and is no more than hypothesis. Neither should it be assumed that Rome’s only engagement with this sort of diplomatic discourse must be mediated through Greek manipulation of the Trojan myth.

Messana, it should be noted, ended up as one of only three *civitates foederatae* in Sicily. It would be wrong to argue that Messana obtained its treaty *because* of its claim of *homophylia*, just as it would be misplaced to argue that the claim was the key in persuading Rome to intervene, or indeed that its absence from the subsequent debate in Rome as reported by Polybius indicates the failure of the claim. Such a claim, or the more typical kinship claim which may have accompanied it, is rarely if ever the sole, or primary reason for such privileged status, or action. But it would also be perverse to deny any value to such a claim in the working out of politics and diplomacy which may result in such status. It is, I would suggest, no accident that the first four examples to be considered in this paper were all in possession of privileged status of one sort or another in Cicero’s time. The obvious context for the acquisition of such status is the period between Rome’s initial invasion of the island in 264 BC and the final consolidation of Roman control across the entire island in 210 BC after the capture of Syracuse. In the case of Messana itself, the treaty is usually assigned to this opening diplomatic exchange in 264 BC<sup>25</sup>.

23 See Dench 2003, 298-304, with deliberate use of scare-quotes; also Asheri 1999.

24 Crawford 1990, 91-6 offers the clearest elucidation of the contemporary institutionalisation of ‘Italy’ in Roman imperialism; Pinzone 1999 [1978], 81-86 (cf. Crawford 1990, 95 n.15) with reference to Val. Max. 2.7.4 develops a thesis of Catalano (1978, 529-30) regarding the specific significance of Messana’s ‘Italianness’ in this period of development. Both Pinzone and Crawford offer the view that Roman imperial practice in Sicily was initially no different from that within the peninsula, only diversifying during the First Punic War (and beyond). Messana’s appeal at the outbreak of the war fits clearly within this interpretative framework. Russo 2010 attempts to take this further, suggesting that there was an attempt at this time to assert that Sicily was actually part of Italy. For a rejection of the significance of Val. Max. 2.7.4 see Harris 2007, 307 n.40 (after Linderski). For the concept of *Italia* generally in this period, see recently Harris 2007 and Bispham 2007, 53-73.

25 Sources for the treaty in Schmitt 1969, 135-7; on Messana, Pinzone 1999 [1981].

## 2.2 Segesta

With Segesta we come to what is probably the best known and most frequently discussed example of kinship diplomacy with Rome in the western Mediterranean. The city, along with Eryx (see below), has long been singled out because the Elymians, of whom it was the principal city in western Sicily, provide probably the earliest secure example of the use of the Trojan tradition in relation to Rome (with the possible exception of Pyrrhus), and certainly of the presence of the Trojan tradition in Sicily<sup>26</sup>. The origin of the Elymians themselves was, unsurprisingly, the subject of diverse traditions in antiquity: already in the fifth century Thucydides has them as Trojan, Hellanicus as migrants from Italy<sup>27</sup>. Indeed, as we shall note in the case of Eryx below, it is most likely that these debates formed part of the contest for control in western Sicily that was in full flow already in the sixth century. The details do not however concern us here, and have been very thoroughly studied by others<sup>28</sup>. Instead, I wish merely to pick out a number of significant points when considering the Segestan appeal to Rome.

The first is the obvious one that this sort of dialogue has a local tradition which long precedes the arrival of Rome. This leads directly on to the second point, which is that Segesta itself had a long tradition of engaging with external powers in the struggle for supremacy in the region: Segesta joined ranks with Athens, Carthage, and Pyrrhus, before ever Rome appeared on the Sicilian scene. Whether kinship claims, or similar forms of diplomacy, were adopted in any of those cases is a moot point, but in the first at least it has often been suggested<sup>29</sup>. It is in this respect that the precise historical context of Roman intervention and initial engagement with Segesta becomes important. Segesta made its *deditio* to Rome early in the First Punic War, late in 263 BC, making a clear choice between Rome and Carthage, in favour of the former<sup>30</sup>. Following closely as this event does upon the apparent acceptance by Rome of Mamertine *homophylia*, it has been suggested that Rome's acceptance of the Trojan myth at this point marked the formation of a common front against both Greeks and Carthaginians<sup>31</sup>. To do so, however, ignores the recent example of Pyrrhus seek-

26 Battistoni 2010, 25 and 113 for the importance of Sicily / Segesta first highlighted in the work of F. Bamberger and esp. L. Klausen in 1839. For the case of Pyrrhus, Erskine 2001, 157-161.

27 Thuc. 6.2.3; Hellanicus *ap.* Dion. Hal. *AR* 1.22.3 = *FGrHist* 4 F79b. The second-century Alexandrian scholar Apollodorus appears to have known a combination version with Trojans arriving in Italy and subsequently crossing to Sicily, Apollodorus *ap.* Strabo 6.1.3 = *FGrHist* 244 F167.

28 See especially Sammartano 2003, De Vido 2000, Sammartano 1998, De Vido 1997, Moggi 1997, all with full references and earlier bibliography, as well as Battistoni 2010, 117-24 and the remarks of Marino 2007.

29 The general point is made by Musti 1988-89, 165-6. On Athens and Segesta, see Zevi 1999, 315-20, with further references.

30 Diod. Sic. 23.5 and Zonar. 8.9.

31 Chirassi Colombo 2006, 223.

ing to unite all Sicilians in driving out Carthage from Sicily, as well as the fact that Hieron II of Syracuse had, by this stage, taken the Roman side, and many other Sicilian cities had also already made *deditio* to Rome, including Centuripae for which a kinship link is also attested (see below)<sup>32</sup>. In seeking to drive Carthage out of Sicily (which, according to Polybius 1.20.1-2, had solidified as a Roman aim by 262 BC), Rome was potentially joining a long line of those championing ‘Greek’ (in the loosest possible sense) Sicily<sup>33</sup>. In taking up an offer of kinship such as that offered by Segesta, the Romans were, on the one hand, simply bringing on board or accepting allies by every means possible, while, on the other, they were adopting a course of diplomatic action which had the potential to reverse the implied negative presentation as barbarian invader which would inevitably have followed from adopting the Mamertine cause against the Syracusans in the previous year. With Syracuse on side also, such an inclusive approach was entirely realistic.

Much of the debate over the Segestan case has revolved around the presence, or otherwise, of Aeneas. Reconstructing the details of the evolution of kinship claims and genealogies is a perilous exercise, given the dreadfully fragmented nature of our sources. Formally, the earliest evidence for the presence of Aeneas in the Segestan claim comes from Cicero’s statement of 70 BC: ‘Segesta is an ancient town in Sicily, members of the jury, which they show to have been founded by Aeneas when, fleeing from Troy, he came to this region’<sup>34</sup>. Approximately contemporary evidence comes from bronze coins of Segesta, which depict the classic scene of Aeneas carrying Anchises; on the latest assessment these coins belong in the period 90-30/20 BC<sup>35</sup>. Notoriously, Zonaras, in his epitome of

32 Plut. *Pyrrhus* 22-23 for Pyrrhus called in by the Sicilians to help drive out the Carthaginians, sacrificing to Herakles at Eryx in the hope of being worthy of his Heraklid ancestors in the sight of the Sikeliotes, and subsequently also campaigning against the explicitly barbarian Mamertines; Diod. Sic. 22.10.2 for Segesta’s support of Pyrrhus (paired with the other Elymian city of Halikyai, as also in 23.5). For the sequence of events in 263 BC, cf. Polyb. 1.16.2 (very compressed), Diod. Sic. 23.4-5, and Zonar. 8.9. Detailed discussion of 263 BC in Eckstein 1987, 102-134 (although I do not follow Eckstein’s account in all respects).

33 See Prag 2010; Sammartano 2006 has valuable comments of direct relevance to this discussion on the pan-Sicilian perspective visible in the first-century author Diodorus, who downplays the specific place of the Elymians as part of a claim that by his day everyone on the island had become Sikeliotai, i.e. ‘Greek’ Sicilians (Diod. Sic. 5.6.5), and so (suggests Sammartano) a part of the wider civilised community represented by the process of myth-making more generally (i.e. ‘Greeks’ vs ‘barbarians’ in the broadest possible sense).

34 Cic. *Ver.* 4.72: *Segesta est oppidum pervetus in Sicilia, iudices, quod ab Aenea fugiente a Troia atque in haec loca veniente conditum esse demonstrant*. Battistoni 2010, 122 rightly highlights the significance here of *demonstrant* (also *Ver.* 5.125) for the Segestan efforts to promote the claim; see also *Ver.* 5.83. *Cognatio* is asserted in all three passages.

35 *BMC Sicily* 137 nos. 59-61. I am indebted to Dr Suzanne Frey-Kupper for this information, which comes from §4.5.3.8 in her forthcoming volume on the coinage of M. Iato (and western Sicily) in the *Studia Ietina* series. The local bronze issues of late Hellenistic Sicily are notoriously difficult to date, and the traditional date for this issue in earlier works of ‘after 241 BC’ (i.e. belonging to the period of Roman rule) is regularly misrepresented as *c.*241 or ‘just after 241’.

Dio, makes explicit the Aeneas claim in the report of the *deditio* in 263 BC, and much comes down to how much faith one wishes to place in Zonaras / Dio<sup>36</sup>. It is indeed possible to argue for Aeneas' presence in the Segestan / Elymian tradition at an earlier date than this; but it is also true that the balance of evidence encourages the view that Aeneas' role in the Segestan tradition developed as a result of Roman involvement in the region (and so 'la parentela con Roma abbia potuto influire sulle tradizioni locali segestane, e non tanto il viceversa'<sup>37</sup>).

The important further point, however, is that the *deditio* itself, in 263 BC, is undisputed. In debating to what extent Aeneas was present in the original claim of kinship, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that the most plausible historical moment for Segestan attempts to gain privileged status with Rome – and the most plausible period therefore for the use of kinship diplomacy – is the period following the *deditio* and culminating in the settlement of western Sicily in 241 BC undertaken in the presence of a senatorial decemvirate (Polyb. 1.63.1-3). Segesta, alongside Halikyai, Halaesa, Centuripae, and Panormus, was in possession of *immunitas* from taxation in the first century BC (Cic. *Ver.* 3.13). All five of those cities belong to the part of Sicily which fell under direct Roman control during the First Punic War, and at least two of them (Segesta and Centuripae) made claims of kinship (*cognatio*) with Rome at some point prior to 70 BC (the evidence of Cicero provides the undeniable *terminus ante quem*). A third, Halikyai, is the other main Elymian city in the tradition and surrendered alongside Segesta in 263; although there is no direct evidence for a kinship claim, it was clearly possible, and indeed a failure to deploy it by Halikyai might be thought surprising in the context. A fourth, Halaesa, offers no evidence for a kinship claim with Rome, but does clearly illustrate the close association between kinship claims and the pursuit of civic status and privilege – Diodorus is explicit that 'When in later times [i.e. after its foundation c.403 BC] the city grew greatly both because of the trade by sea and because the Romans exempted it from tribute, the Halaesans denied their kinship with the Herbitaeans, holding it a disgrace to be deemed colonists of an inferior city.' Of direct relevance to a putative First Punic War context, Diodorus also records the existence of a rival foundation tradition attributing the

36 Zonar. 8.9: καὶ τῶν μὲν ἄλλων ἀπεκρούσθησαν, Ἐγέστην δ' ἔκουσίαν ἔλαβον. διὰ γὰρ τὴν πρὸς Ῥωμαίους οἰκειώσιν οἱ ἐν αὐτῇ, ἀπὸ τοῦ Αἰνείου λέγοντες γεγονέναι, προσεχώρησαν αὐτοῖς, τοὺς Καρχηδονίους φονεύσαντες ('Now from all the others they [sc. the Romans] were repulsed, but Segesta they took without resistance; for its inhabitants, because of their relationship with the Romans – they declare they are descended from Aeneas – slew the Carthaginians and joined the Roman alliance' (Loeb)).

37 For early presence of Aeneas, esp. Mele 1993-94. Note especially the cautiously proposed reconstruction of Battistoni 2010, 117-124 (quotation from 117); Erskine 2001, 179-184 adopts a broadly similar position, 'It would be in keeping with the practices of contemporary kinship diplomacy that the Segestans should elaborate their Trojan traditions [sc. by introducing Aeneas] in order to bring themselves into a closer relationship with the Romans' (182-3).

city to Carthage<sup>38</sup>. Although the details are uncertain, some form of taxation was exacted from western Sicily in the period between the First and Second Punic Wars<sup>39</sup>. At the same time, besides the earlier evidence for this sort of activity amongst the Elymians, and the already discussed example of Messana the year before, one should also bear in mind that other Sicilian cities were actively engaged in the Mediterranean-wide activity of kinship diplomacy in precisely this period<sup>40</sup>.

It is therefore not unreasonable to suggest on the basis of existing evidence that the appeals and the privileged status of Segesta – and Centuripae (below) – belong in this early context. There are of course perfectly sound practical reasons as to why these cities received privileged status, and one does not have to believe that kinship claims were *the* reason. I only argue here that they were an important part of the political process<sup>41</sup>. Segesta and Halikyai were very quick to go over to Rome in late 263 and occupied crucial positions in the Carthaginian-controlled far west of the island; Halaesa, a key city on the north coast, was the first to make *deditio* to Rome earlier in 263, transferring allegiance from Hieron II; Centuripae a major city controlling the principal route from the east coast into the island's interior, likewise joined this initial wave of support for Rome; Panormus the principal north-west harbour, was a major Punic base which partially surrendered to Rome and subsequently assisted in resisting attempts by Carthage to retake it.

### 2.3 Centuripae

It is against this backdrop that we come to the particular case of Centuripae. The city was besieged by the consuls of 263 BC, after the sack of Hadranum, in the first major campaign of the war. With the Romans camped outside the gates

38 Diod. Sic. 14.16.3-4 (Loeb transl.), on which Facella 2006, 254 as well as 181-186 on the surrender to Rome and 116-131 on the mixed foundation tradition.

39 The evidence is App. *Sik.* 2.6, Liv. 23.48.7; see Crawford 1985, 104; Ferrary 1988, 19; cf. Naco del Hoyo 2003, 89-90. Livy 24.44.4 refers to western Sicily as the *vetus provincia* in a narrative of the early part of the Second Punic War. On the five cities see especially Ferrary 1988, 5-23, who makes the fundamental point that the privilege in question concerns taxation, and references to *libertas* in Cicero should not be confused with formal category of a *civitas libera*, which, *contra* Badian (1958), cannot be identified in Sicily (cf. Pinzone 1999). For the particular point about the identity of the five, Calderone 1964-5, 98.

40 I am indebted to Roberto Sammartano for reminding me of this point. The key texts are the decrees of Camarina and Gela recognising the *asylia* of Asclepios on Cos (with reference to *syngeneia*), in 242 BC or very shortly after (*IGDS* 117 and 160) as well as Syracuse recognising the *asylia* of Artemis Leucophryene at Magnesia-on-the-Maeander (with reference to *syngeneia*) in 207/6 BC (*IGDS* 97); on the latter, see now Sammartano 2008-09.

41 The arch-sceptic Holleaux (1921, 10 n.3) made this point ('si les Romains ont accordé de grands privilèges aux Ségestains (Cic. *Verr.* 3.6.13), l'explication s'en trouve dans cette prompte *deditio* beaucoup plutôt que dans la *consanguinitas* des deux peuples'); but the point is not that the one excludes the other, but rather that the one provides the context for the other. Gabba 1976, 100 makes a clear case for the 263 BC context.

of Centuripae, the city of Halaesa (one of the other subsequently privileged cities, and at this point under Syracusan control) sent envoys to the Roman commanders with an offer of surrender. Diodorus comments that ‘then, as fear fell upon the other cities as well, they too sent ambassadors to treat for peace and to deliver their cities to the Romans.’ The obvious inference is that at this point Centuripae also went over to the Romans, although nothing further is said explicitly about the city<sup>42</sup>. There is no mention in our sources of a claim of kinship at this point. Once again, the formal *terminus ante quem* is Cicero’s speeches against Verres, with the statement that Centuripae was, like Segesta, tied to Rome by *cognatio*<sup>43</sup>. Like Segesta, Centuripae was also, in Cicero’s time, the beneficiary of tax exemption (*immunitas*).

In the absence of other evidence, it is perhaps unsurprising that many scholars have either speculated or assumed that Centuripae’s connection must be through the Trojan tradition<sup>44</sup>. However, epigraphic evidence now makes clear the important point, visible already in the case of the Mamertines, that kinship could indeed be claimed with Rome through other traditions. In itself this should not be a surprise, but it makes additional sense if one imagines a moment such as 263 BC in Sicily, when it is clear that a great many communities were seeking to side with Rome and were doubtless competing with one another, both immediately and subsequently at the conclusion of the war, for status and favour from the hegemonic power.

The principal text is a partially damaged inscription from Centuripae, recording an embassy sent from Centuripae to Rome and to Lanuvium in Latium. The actions and purpose of the embassy at Rome are unknown; the majority of the surviving text records a decree of the people of Lanuvium confirming a bond of kinship (συγγένεια, line 4, ξενία καὶ οἰκειοσύνα, line 12) between Lanuvium and Centuripae<sup>45</sup>. The most likely dating for the text (on the uncertain grounds of palaeography and orthography, since there are no secure internal elements

42 Diod. Sic. 23.4. There is no basis for the statement of Zambon 2008, 208-10 that Centuripae was ‘conquered by force’ or was ‘a rebellious city’. Polyb. 1.16.2 states that on the consuls’ arrival, ‘most of the cities revolted from the Carthaginians and Syracusans and joined the Romans.’ Zonar. 8.9 notes that the consuls in their ‘progress through the island together and separately won over many towns by voluntary submission.’ In these accounts, Hieron’s own alliance with the Romans then follows, and the campaign in the west, with the surrender of Segesta, is subsequent to that. Diod. Sic. 23.4 lists the cities subsequently remaining in Hieron’s kingdom.

43 Cic. Ver. 5.83: *Ubi Segestani, ubi Centuripina civitas? quae cum officiis, fide, vetustate, tum etiam cognatione populi Romani nomen attingunt* (‘What of the Segestans, or the city of Centuripae, who, not only through their service, loyalty, and antiquity, but also their kinship, almost deserve the name of Romans?’).

44 Zambon 2008, 210 is not alone in assuming descent from Aeneas.

45 The most recent edition with commentary and photograph, followed here, is Battistoni 2010, 147-65; *editio princeps* Manganaro 1963; see also *IGDS* 189, Cèbeillac Gervasoni 1989, Manganaro 2006. Whether lines 4 and 12 should be used to restore all three terms to both lines is debated.



for a date) is the late second or early first century BC, but precision is impossible<sup>46</sup>. The only clue as to the basis for the claim of kinship lies in the penultimate line of the surviving text, which reads [---]ν ἀποικίαν τῶν Κε[---], the latter word fairly obviously to be restored as Κε[ντοριπίνων ---]. It is, in general, more normal to read the combination *apoikia* + genitive not as a reference to Centuripae itself, but in fact to a foundation by Centuripae. In the language of hellenistic civic decrees, one would imagine that this part of the decree of the Lanuvians, here translated into Greek and published by the people of Centuripae, said something along the lines of ‘and we (the people of Lanuvium) have done all this as befits us as a colony of the Centuripaeans’. As Louis Robert observed, the most likely explanation is a reference to a mythical shared ancestry<sup>47</sup>. At this point, the antiquarian tradition offers some help, because there are many accounts reported to us, beginning with Hellanicus and especially Antiochus of Syracuse, in which the Sikels were originally settled in Latium – or elsewhere in Italy – before they moved to Sicily. It is important to note that in many of these versions the migration of the Sikels from Italy to Sicily is said to have taken place before the Trojan War<sup>48</sup>. However, a difficulty remains – how was Lanuvium founded by Centuripae, if the Sikels went from Latium to Sicily, rather than vice versa? A possible answer is provided by a second epigraphic discovery, a plaster *dipinto* from a private house (not a gymnasium, as is frequently suggested) in late Hellenistic Tauromenium, which summarises the opening of the history of Fabius Pictor (one of several such book-summaries surviving from what was presumably a library)<sup>49</sup>. This very fragmentary text refers to the arrival of Herakles in Italy and goes on to mention in sequence Lanoios, Aeneas, Romulus, Remus and the foundation of Rome. However, the role of Lanoios (otherwise unknown, but clearly the eponymous founder of Lanuvium) and any connection between Lanoios and Aeneas is a matter for speculation: whether Lanoios was active independently of Aeneas prior to his arrival, or was, for instance, a Sicilian who joined Aeneas in Sicily and then settled at Lanuvium, etc., we can only guess. The *dipinto* itself is commonly dated to the earlier second century BC. The reference to Fabius Pictor indicates that this particular tradition was in circulation by the end of the third century BC.

46 See Battistoni 2010, 150 n.162; dates between *c.* 200 and the late first century BC have been proposed, generally on historical grounds.

47 Robert in *BE* 1965, 499. See the lucid synthesis of the various alternatives that have been posited in the past by Battistoni 2010, 153 and 160-61.

48 See esp. Dion. Hal. *AR* 1.22 reporting the variants of Hellanicus, Antiochus of Syracuse, Thucydides (6.2) and Philistus of Syracuse; full discussion in Sammartano 1998, and Zevi 1999, 322-43 (who, 323, emphasises the point that ‘una circostanza appaia sicura, e cioè che nella storiografia antiochea l’arrivo dei Siculi in Sicilia non aveva nessuna relazione con i *nostoi* [...]’).

49 Most recent (revised) edition Battistoni 2006 with excellent colour photographs; *ed. pr.* Mangano 1976 (written before *idem* 1974 which offers a revised text, but published afterwards). Battistoni 2010, 161-4 reproduces the text with discussion.

The context for the activities of the Centuripaeen embassy to Rome and Lanuvium perhaps *c.*100 BC is unrecoverable<sup>50</sup>. As the earlier example of Heggiesias' embassy from Lampsacus to Rome, via Massalia (where materials for dialogue with a Galatian tribe were also acquired), makes clear, the web of connections and the variety of interactions possible in ancient diplomacy was complex<sup>51</sup>. Asserting a connection to Rome indirectly through Lanuvium is in its own way nicely diplomatic (it would hardly do to claim priority over Rome itself). As has been emphasised recently, the verb ἀνανειόω (lines 3 and 12 of the Centuripae text) does not necessarily mean 'renew' but only 'record' or 'confirm' (on the basis that the connections asserted pre-existed and are ongoing); consequently the possibility of the Centuripae inscription representing a formal 'renewal' of links does not help with the potential chronology, beyond broadly confirming the Ciceronian *terminus ante quem*<sup>52</sup>. In any case, the Centuripae inscription itself tells us nothing directly about the kinship link with Rome, only with Lanuvium, and there is no reason to assume that this embassy was the one responsible for the original establishment of *cognatio* with Rome. Fundamental for this discussion therefore is the point that the figure of Lanoios appears to have been granted a significant role in the account of Fabius Pictor (always allowing for overemphasis through the partiality of the Tauromenitan – and so Sikel – epitomator). As Elizabeth Rawson observed, Fabius' history was itself part of this wider discourse, seeking on Rome's part 'to redress the balance against the pro-Carthaginian historians from Sicily and Magna Graecia, in an unprecedented attempt to influence Greek opinion.' With reference to the Tauromenium text she further noted in an aside that: 'He [Fabius] also had accounts of legendary connections between Sicily and Latium, which fell out of the tradition when Sicily lost all political importance'<sup>53</sup>. The implicit point, of course, is that the active development of the tradition requires a moment when Sicily *did* have political importance for Rome. Other scholars have already argued for the development of the genealogical connection between Sicily and Lanuvium variously in the fifth or later fourth century BC, and links between Sicily, Latium and Campania more generally go well back into the fifth century at least<sup>54</sup>. The evidence of Fabius shows that it was taken up with relevance for Rome at the time of the Hannibalic War at the latest. But Fabius' adoption of

50 Canali de Rossi 2007, 238-9 (cf. *ISE* 163) argues for identification of one of the ambassadors in the inscription (Philiarchos) with a Centuripaeen (Phylarchus) mentioned in the *Verrines* (4.29, 4.50) and links the embassy to the various embassies sent at the time of the trial; as conceded by Canali de Rossi identification however requires a misspelling of the name in the Ciceronian text (see also Battistoni 2010, 150 n.163); the association can be no more than one possible context (cf. Battistoni 2010, 156 n.189).

51 *I. Lampsakos* 4, on which e.g. Battistoni 2009, 83-87, Erskine 2001, 169-72, Ferrary 1988, 133-141.

52 Battistoni 2010, 56 n.37 and 161 n.209, after L. Robert.

53 Rawson 1989, 425.

54 Zevi 1999, 338-9 (pushing back to the wider web of fifth-century connections); Briquel 2001, 303 (arguing that the Latin settlement of 338 provides the *terminus post quem* for the development of the figure of Lanoios at Lanuvium itself). Both note the clear relevance of the Segestan claim for the specific development of this link by Centuripae. Gallo 1992 offers a thorough discussion of early Roman interest in Sicily.

the tradition surely implies that a version was already current; and as has already been argued above, the most obvious political moment for Centuripae to be attempting to seek advantage in its relationship with Rome is in the aftermath of its probable *deditio* of 263 BC, when other communities in Sicily were engaging in like behaviour. The common presumption that Centuripae's original kinship appeal should be dated to the Second Punic War appears to be based upon little more than the fact that this was when Fabius Pictor was writing and a general reluctance to accept earlier dates for this sort of activity in relation to Rome<sup>55</sup>.

#### 2.4 Eryx

The final major example to consider is that of Eryx (mod. Erice). The case of Eryx is important for any discussion of kinship claims since, in contrast to the examples previously considered, the Romans took an active role in the exploitation of the sanctuary and its associated origin myths. It is common, in discussion of Rome and kinship diplomacy, to view Rome as the passive partner<sup>56</sup>. This presumption primarily belongs in a model of Roman kinship diplomacy which assumes that all such diplomacy belongs to the period when Roman domination was assured, and weaker parties are simply competing for favour. Roman domination was of course not assured in the third century (although this does not matter for those who would deny most third-century examples of kinship diplomacy in the first place), and I have already tried to indicate above something of the complex political position in which Rome found itself in 264/3 BC in Sicily; above all, Fabius Pictor's own work, clearly of interest in second-century Sicily, sits uneasily alongside such presumptions.

The significance of Eryx lies firstly in the formidable, isolated mountain on which it stands at the north-western end of the island, which makes it a key strategic consideration; and secondly in its famous sanctuary of Astarte/Aphrodite/Venus, which gives it both strategic and political/religious value<sup>57</sup>. Eryx was an Elymian foundation, like Segesta, and so an extensive tradition including that of Trojan origins developed early here, as noted above. But it was a tradition which also contained a strong indigenous element, and both the Trojan myth and in particular the place of Aeneas look like accretions to existing traditions, or at least to be in direct competition with them – something most visible in Dio-

55 e.g. Battistoni 2010, 165 '[...] un buon momento per il riconoscimento della parentela sarebbe alla fine della seconda guerra punica.' I infer that the idea that Sicily was essentially reconstituted as a province after 210 BC is a central consideration – but for areas of the island outside Hieron II's kingdom, it is hard to see why 241 (or perhaps 227 BC) should not have been the moment when the key judgements were made.

56 Examples in Erskine 2001, 162 n.1; and the general theme even in Erskine's highly nuanced account is one of 'claiming kinship with Rome'.

57 On the location Wilson 1990, 4-5, 283-5; on the sanctuary, Schilling 1982, 233-266, Bonnet 1996, 115-120.

dorus' account which has the sanctuary founded 'at the beginning of time' by Eryx, son of a local king Boutas and Aphrodite, and subsequently embellished by Aeneas in honour of his mother Aphrodite<sup>58</sup>. In the world of encounters and competition for resources in the (proto)colonial world of the western Mediterranean, multiple myths were, in Irad Malkin's words, 'used to mediate encounters and conceptualize ethnicity and group identity'<sup>59</sup>. In the case of western Sicily and Eryx in particular, the figure of Herakles makes an early appearance, used most obviously by the Spartan Dorieus in the sixth century in his attempt to carve out a territory in the region, but also in the early third century by Pyrrhus, as noted above, in consolidating his position in the western end of the island. It is perhaps not irrelevant to recall the tradition that Pyrrhus had previously used his descent from Achilles to unite Italiote Greeks against Trojan Rome; for Pyrrhus, therefore, the Herakleid tradition was more appropriate than a Trojan one when he came to the land of the Elymians and wished to assert his Hellenic credentials in uniting Sicilians against Carthage<sup>60</sup>. It is therefore no surprise that Eryx occupied a central place in the later stages of the First Punic War, and if we are to seek a context for competition over the sanctuary and its place in that part of the island, it is with the struggle for control of Eryx in the 240s BC that we should surely begin<sup>61</sup>.

The element upon which most accounts tend to focus, however, and consequently the chronological moment which they emphasise, is the decision by the Romans to import the cult of Venus Erycina to the Capitol of Rome in 217 BC, and the temple's dedication in 215 BC<sup>62</sup>. Diodorus' account, which makes no mention of that event, instead places considerable emphasis upon Roman piety directed towards Venus Erycina in her Sicilian sanctuary:

58 Diod. Sic. 4.83. Note esp. in the context of this paper however that Fabius Pictor wrote of the Sicilian-born king Elymus, brother of Eryx (*FGrHist* 809 F28 = Serv. Dan. *ad Aen.* 5, 73); Dion. Hal. *AR* 1.53.1 has a somewhat confused Aeneas-centric version, while Tac. *Ann.* 4.43.4 illustrates the appropriation of the temple by the Segestans in later times, and the consequent further combination of the tradition. This is not the place for a detailed analysis: in addition to the bibliography noted above on the Elymian tradition, and the overview in Battistoni 2010, 117-24, see Leigh 2007 on the complexities of the Vergilian version (in *Aen.* 5) and its implications for 'competing' accounts of Eryx; on Diodorus' account, see esp. Yarrow 2006, 178 and Sammartano 2006.

59 Malkin 1998, 5.

60 Dorieus in Hdt. 5.40; on this use of the Herakles myth, Malkin 1994; Pyrrhus making a vow to Herakles before storming Carthaginian-held Eryx, Plut. *Pyrr.* 22, and leading Greeks against Trojan Rome, Paus. 1.12.1. On this aspect of Pyrrhus' behaviour in Sicily, see e.g. Nenci 1953, 132-5 and Santagati Ruggeri 1997, 24-27. Recent treatments of Pyrrhus in Sicily in Zambon 2008, 99-175 and Bruno Sunseri 2003. On Pyrrhus in the West, see also the papers in *Pallas* 79 (2009), 147-266.

61 Principally Polyb. 1.55-59, Diod. Sic. 24.1.10-11, 24.8-9. On this final phase of the war, and the struggle for control of Eryx specifically, convenient account in Lazenby 1996, 140-41 and 148-59. Note the comments of De Vido 2000, 398 on Eryx's political separation from the other Elymian communities, now and earlier, and Bonnet 2006, 216 for the sanctuary's history and significance explaining both Rome's military efforts in the First Punic War and the efforts to appropriate the cult.

62 Livy 22.9.7-11, 22.10.10, 23.30.13-14, 23.31.9; also Ovid *Fasti* 4.872-6, 893-4. See most recently Battistoni 2010, 124-127 and Erskine 2001, 198-205.

‘And last of all the Romans, having become masters of all Sicily, surpassed all those before them in their honours to the goddess. And they were quite right to do so, rewarding the cause of their increase with suitable expressions of gratitude and honours, since they trace their line back to this goddess and are successful in all their actions because of it’<sup>63</sup>.

The contrast with Livy’s account of the introduction of the cult to Rome, which makes no reference to kinship associations, is marked. That is not to suggest that no such associations were alluded to on that occasion (indeed, as frequently noted, the cult’s importance, and by implication close association with the Roman people, is highlighted by its privileged location on the Capitol itself), but, while fully acknowledging Diodorus’ own Siculo-centric perspective, it is noteworthy that Diodorus chooses to detail other actions on the part of the Roman Senate:

‘Indeed, the Roman senate was so ambitious in its honours for the goddess that it decreed that the 17 most loyal cities in Sicily should wear gold in Aphrodite’s honour and that 200 soldiers should watch over the sanctuary’<sup>64</sup>.

The existence of the garrison (Sicilian, not Roman) is independently confirmed by three inscriptions of the Republican period, while the existence of the group of 17 loyal cities is confirmed by Cicero, who describes Tyndaris as one of the 17 most loyal states<sup>65</sup>. The *Senatus Consultum* is not dated by Diodorus (Cicero’s *Verrines* again provide the formal *terminus ante quem*), but several scholars have noted in the past that the arrangement looks like part of an early attempt by Rome to establish a system of control in Sicily, perhaps prior to the creation of the praetorian province in 227 BC<sup>66</sup>. If one is seeking out plausible historical

63 Diod. Sic. 4.83.4-5: τὸ δὲ τελευταῖον Ῥωμαῖοι, πάσης Σικελίας κρατήσαντες, ὑπερεβάλλοντο πάντας τοὺς πρὸ αὐτῶν ταῖς εἰς ταύτην τιμαῖς, καὶ τοῦτο εἰκότως ἐποίουν· τὸ γὰρ γένος εἰς ταύτην ἀναπέμποντες, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν ἐπιτυχεῖς ὄντες, τὴν αἰτίαν τῆς αὐξήσεως ἡμείβοντο ταῖς προσηκούσαις χάρισι καὶ τιμαῖς. (Erskine 2001, 199 omits the phrase καὶ τοῦτο εἰκότως ἐποίουν from his translation, which is by contrast the aspect most emphasised by Yarrow 2006, 178).

64 4.83.7: ἢ τε σύγκλητος τῶν Ῥωμαίων εἰς τὰς τῆς θεοῦ τιμὰς φιλοτιμηθεῖσα τὰς μὲν πιστοτάτας τῶν κατὰ τὴν Σικελίαν πόλεων οὐσας ἑπτακαίδεκα χρυσοφορεῖν ἔδογματίσει τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ καὶ στρατιώτας διακοσίους τηρεῖν τὸ ἱερόν. See Kienast 1965 on this passage, and esp. 485 on χρυσοφορεῖν (after Wilhelm).

65 CIL X.7258, IG XIV.282, 355; Cic. Ver. 5.124: *En quod Tyndaritanis libenter praedicent: ‘Nos in septemdecim populis Siciliae numeramur, nos semper omnibus Punicis Siciliensibusque bellis amicitiam fidemque populi Romani secuti sumus, a nobis omnia populo Romano semper et belli adiumenta et pacis ornamenta ministrata sunt.’* On the inscriptions (the second of which may belong to the mid-first century BC, although precise dates for all three are impossible) and the garrison see Prag 2007, esp. 82-3. Pais 1888, 173-194 remains the most detailed discussion of the 17, including attempts to suggest other possible candidates for inclusion; cf. De Vido 2000, 434-5 n.103.

66 e.g. Lintott 1993, 206 n.6, Jones 1999, 86 (who notes the possible parallels with Athena Ilias in Asia Minor). If any weight is to be placed upon the phrase πάσης Σικελίας κρατήσαντες in Diodorus 4.83.4, then it must be to the effect of making 241 BC a *terminus post quem*; the First Punic War is described as the Sicilian war in most sources, and at its conclusion Carthage had to yield Sicily in its entirety

contexts, there are really only two serious possibilities: *c.* 241 BC at the end of the first Punic War, or 217-215 BC in conjunction with the introduction of the cult in Rome. The latter view sees the *SC* as part of the negotiations involved in the importation of the cult (although there is no obvious reason for such negotiation, nor any reason for thinking that the Sicilian sanctuary itself suffered any direct diminution in status as a result), as well as a move to consolidate Roman control in the western part of the island in the face of the Hannibalic invasion, mindful of the site's importance in the First Punic War<sup>67</sup>.

The earlier date has been argued for in some detail by Dietmar Kienast, who sees the Senate's decree as part of the deliberate Roman construction of an anti-Punic position, asserting control of what was at that date an essentially Punic sanctuary, and presumably consolidating this position with the support of a Trojan kinship claim<sup>68</sup>. It is worth repeating the point made above that insisting too narrowly upon a negative 'anti-Punic' presentation risks obscuring the positive construction by Rome of a position of unity alongside the Sicilians, intended to counter negative presentation of Rome the external barbarian invader. The positive image is clearly visible in Diodorus, who emphasises Roman piety – something which is entirely familiar from Roman self-presentation in the Greek East in the early second century<sup>69</sup>. In elucidating the context a couple of other elements deserve to be highlighted. The first is that Rome had already set a guard over the temple in the later years of the war, consisting of a group of Gallic mercenaries who had previously defected from Carthage. This backfired rather spectacularly when they plundered the temple, but it immediately provides the most ready context for careful Roman attention to the sanctuary, not least since it is clear that the Romans took care to impose exemplary punishment on the Gauls, disarming them and banishing them from Italy at the end of the First Punic War<sup>70</sup>. Establishing a garrison and quasi-league of loyal cities around

to Rome (with Hieron II an ally of Rome). Theoretically one might argue for 210 BC as being what is meant, but, while the date is important to modern historians, there is little evidence that any ancient writer viewed the sack of Syracuse as the beginning of Rome's control of Sicily; it also post-dates the introduction of the cult in Rome, which, to my mind at least, represents a later, rather than earlier, stage in the process of engagement with the sanctuary.

67 Erskine 2001, 198-205 prefers such a reading; Battistoni 2010, 124-7 agrees on dating, but shifts the emphasis in the role of kinship claims.

68 Kienast 1965, esp. 483-9.

69 Yarrow 2006, 178 (Diodorus); piety in the East see esp. Sherck 1969, no. 34, ll. 12-17 (Valerius Messalla to Teos, 193 BC) and no. 38, ll. 23-25 (letter of a consul to the Delphians, 189/8 BC).

70 Polyb. 2.7.9-10: 'The Romans entrusted them with the guard of the temple of Venus Erycina, which again they pillaged. Therefore, no sooner was the war with Carthage over, than the Romans, having clear evidence of their infamous character, took the very first opportunity of disarming them, putting them on board ship and banishing them from the whole of Italy.' (Loeb transl.; incidentally a further text in support of the view that Italy was at this point developing into a clearly defined entity in Roman eyes.) Kienast 1965, 483 makes this point, 'Die Schändung des Heiligtums aber forderte ihre Entstehung und die entsprechenden Schutzmaßnahmen.' Schilling 1982, 241 notes the significance but then passes directly to 217 BC.

the sanctuary in the aftermath of the war as a means of making good this error of judgement, and rewarding Sicilian loyalty, is certainly plausible. A second element which might encourage this interpretation is the clear association of one of the Sicilian quaestors with the sanctuary at Eryx. Sicily was unique as a province in having two quaestors in the Republican period and, although the history of the development of the quaestorship in the third and second centuries is remarkably obscure, the most obvious explanation for this particular anomaly lies in the assignment of a quaestor to western Sicily in the aftermath of the First Punic War (whether based initially at Lilybaeum, Panhormus, or even Eryx itself we cannot know, although later on certainly at Lilybaeum)<sup>71</sup>. The sack of Syracuse and consolidation of the island into a single *provincia* in c.210 BC presumably marks the moment when the double quaestorship on the island became a permanent institution, with a second quaestor accompanying the praetor (the latter present since 227 BC but only now based at Syracuse). But, if we are to explain the creation of the double quaestorship, we might perhaps try to look for explanations which go beyond merely the size of the island (hardly the largest province) or the importance of Lilybaeum on the route to Africa. The existence of a Sicilian ‘league’ (the seventeen), focused upon the sanctuary of Eryx in this period might be one such motivation.

### 2.5 Kinship contexts: Haluntium and beyond

Lastly, we could speculate (but at this point it must be emphasised that I am doing no more than speculating) that membership of the 17, especially if formed c.241 BC, would be itself a very obvious reason for – or result of – the advertising of links with Rome, whether directly through the Trojan myth in the context of defending a sanctuary of Venus, progenitor of the Romans, or through any other connection. The epigraphic evidence indicates that at least two of the five cities granted tax immunity were amongst those participating in the garrison (Halaesa and Segesta), and at least one of those (Segesta) made kinship claims to Rome as we have already seen<sup>72</sup>. In addition, therefore, to providing a further context for development of kinship claims on the part of any of those cities already discussed, which may have formed part of the seventeen, this seems to me to be the context in which to consider other possible attempts to assert kinship with Rome.

71 On the quaestorship in the third century see esp. Harris 1976, Loreto 1993. For the question of which Roman official, if any, was in charge of western Sicily after 241 BC (see App. *Sik.* 2.6) compare Dahlheim 1977, 44-53, esp. 48 n.94, Kienast 1984, 119-21, Richardson 1986, 7-8, Crawford 1990, 93 and Brennan 2000, I, 91. For the double quaestorship, Cic. *Ver.* 2.11-12 and Ps.-Ascon. 187 and 259 St.; Cic. *Ver.* 2.22 specifically describes one of the two as *is qui Erycum montem obtinebat* (which Pais 1888, 178 notes in this context).

72 *IG XIV*, 282 from Eryx records a Segestan in command (under supervision of a Roman quaestor); *IG XIV*, 355 from Halaesa honours a Halaesian commanding the Eryx garrison. *IG XIV*, 401 from Mesana (now lost) might be another example (see Prag 2007, 82-3).

The first of these is explicitly attested: Dionysius of Halicarnassus recounts that: ‘Patron [the Acarnanian], with some of his friends, being prevailed on by Aeneas to join the colony, stayed with the expedition. These, according to some, settled at Alontion in Sicily<sup>73</sup>. In other words, Patron, one of Aeneas’ Acarnanian guides for crossing the Adriatic, crossed to Sicily with Aeneas, and there founded Haluntium (mod. S. Marco d’Alunzio). A hint of the tradition seems to persist also in Vergil’s mention of an Acarnanian called Patron who competed in the funeral games for Anchises in Sicily<sup>74</sup>. The tradition is given scant attention in modern accounts, and almost universally only as part of a (post-Holleaux) deconstruction of the much maligned tradition of an Acarnanian appeal to the Trojan tradition in the 230s BC, rather than with any positive reference to Sicily or Haluntium itself – where this specific claim must have originated, and is difficult to explain in an early second-century context<sup>75</sup>. Further support for the existence of a local tradition has been seen in the local bronze issue of the Republican period depicting a male head wearing a Phrygian cap on one side, commonly identified as Patron, and a river-god in the form of a man-headed bull on the other, sometimes identified with the Acarnanian river Achelous<sup>76</sup>. When or why the people of Haluntium made such a claim remains unknowable, but it would fit well with inclusion amongst the 17 loyal cities centred on Eryx<sup>77</sup>.

73 D.H. 1.51.2: ἐκ δὲ Βουθρωτοῦ παρὰ γῆν κομισθέντες ἄχρι λιμένος Ἀγίσχου μὲν τότε ὀνομασθέντος, νῦν δ’ ἀσαφεστέραν ἔχοντος ὀνομασίαν, ἱερὸν καὶ αὐτόθι τῆς Ἀφροδίτης ἰδρυσάμενοι διαίρουσι τὸν Ἴόνιον ἡγεμόνας ἔχοντες τῆς ναυτιλίας, οἱ συνέπλευσαν αὐτοῖς ἐθελούσιοι συνεπιστόμενοι, τοὺς σὺν Πάτρωνι τῷ Θουρίῳ καὶ αὐτῶν οἱ μὲν πλείους, ἐπειδὴ σῶος ὁ στρατὸς εἰς Ἰταλίαν ἀφίκετο, ἐπ’ οἴκου αὐθις ἀνεκομισθησαν, Πάτρων δὲ πεισθεὶς ὑπ’ Αἰνείου κοινωνεῖν τῆς ἀποικίας καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τινες τῶν φίλων ὑπέμειναν ἐν τῷ στόλῳ οὓς ἔνοιό φασιν ἐν Ἀλοντίῳ κατοικῆσαι τῆς Σικελίας (with Loeb transl.).

74 Verg. *Aen.* 5.298-9: *Salius simul et Patron, quorum alter Acarnan, | alter ab Arcadio Tegeaeae sanguine gentis.* Pais 1888, 179 temptingly suggests that Cicero might be playing with the tradition when he imagines an observer of Verres’ plundering of Haluntium as comparable to one watching the sack of Troy: *qui videret equum Troianum introductum, urbem captam diceret* (Cic. *Ver.* 4.52).

75 So, e.g. Polverini 1987, 1028, ‘Il ricordo di ciò [i.e. Patron’s aid to Aeneas] avrebbe influenzato la politica romana a favore della lega acarnana, all’inizio del II sec.’ Erskine 2001, 191-2, observes that ‘according to some accounts, writes Dionysios, Patron eventually settled at Alontion, a remark which might imply that there were other versions in which Patron continued with Aineias.’ Erskine sees significance in the tale only for its role in linking Acarnanians positively with Aeneas as part of the wider argument over whether the Trojan element in Acarnanian relations with Rome belongs to the third or second century – although he notes (at 193) that historical arguments, including links to Sicily, do encourage a third-century reading of the actual political relationships. Perret (1942, 63-72), by contrast, while very much following Holleaux’s rejection of an early date for the Acarnanian appeal, observes of the allusion to Haluntium that it does not find an explanation in the early second century, and (71) ‘peut-être faut-il y voir l’adaptation à la légende nouvellement formée d’une tradition beaucoup plus ancienne et peut-être historique sur des rapports de colonisation entre l’Acarnanie et Halontion.’ Cf. Holleaux 1921, 13-14 n.4, simply assigning the content of this passage of Dionysius to a date after the 190s BC. The only dedicated discussion, flawed by a desire to trace it all back to real underlying Mycenaean connections, is Bruno 1963. The Acarnanian claim, Justin 28.1.5, Strabo 10.2.25.

76 The numismatic catalogues commonly adopt the identification, e.g. Holm 1898, 717-8, no. 652; Hill 1903, 222, pl. XV, 2-3; Gabrici 1927, 136, no.9. Cf. Calciati 1983-1987, I, 67-69 for the full sequence of issues post-400 BC.

77 Suggested by Pais 1888, 179, and Kienast 1965, 484 with n.8.



The remaining example is presented simply to illustrate the possibilities. Tyndaris, as noted, is the only city for which we have explicit testimony to its membership of the 17. That loyalty is illustrated elsewhere in the participation of Tyndaritan sailors in the Third Punic War, and in Tyndaris' contribution of a ship to the local provincial navy at the time of Verres<sup>78</sup>. While we have no explicit evidence of a kinship claim, the city is one of those with a clear tradition of siding with the rising power on the island (Timoleon, c.344 BC, Hieron II c.269 BC, and then Rome, at the second attempt, in 254 BC), and it is notable that the city seems to have made much of its association with the Dioscuri<sup>79</sup>. The city's name itself is linked to the Dioscuri, part of a Messenian attempt to lay claim to the Dioscuri ahead of the Lacedaemonians and going back to the city's foundation, and the twins are a prominent presence on the city's coinage, not least in the third century and later, frequently in a pose that looks remarkably similar to that familiar from Roman coinage<sup>80</sup>. The episode of most obvious relevance is Strabo's report that Demetrios Poliorketes appealed to Rome to halt its piracy on the grounds of kinship with the Greeks, explained specifically on the grounds of shared cultic practice in the form of worship of the Dioscuri<sup>81</sup>. It is tempting to suggest that Tyndaris might have employed a similar line, perhaps in the period between joining Rome in 254 BC and becoming one of the 17.

### 3. Concluding remarks: Kinship diplomacy in the First Punic War

My conclusions are brief and simple. Firstly, the cumulative evidence for the Sicilian use of kinship appeals to Rome is impressively strong. Secondly, such appeals should not be surprising and are certainly not out of place in the existing currents of Sicilian tradition, well-attested from at least the fifth century BC onwards. Furthermore, the Magnesia and Cos *asylia* inscriptions demonstrate that the Sicilians were very actively participating in kinship diplomacy with the wider Hellenistic world at precisely this date, and the activities of Pyrrhus in Sicily a mere 14 years before Rome's entry into Messina illustrates precisely the

78 Cic. *Ver.* 4.84, 5.86, 5.124.

79 Timoleon, Diod. Sic. 16.69.3; Hieron II, Diod. Sic. 22.13.2; the Romans, a failed attempt to surrender in 263/2 BC, Diod. Sic. 23.5, successful in 254 BC, Diod. Sic. 23.18.5.

80 For the city's foundation by Dionysius I with Messenian mercenaries from the Peloponnese, Diod. Sic. 14.78.5-6; cf. Paus. 3.27, 4.31. Mastelloni 2005, 26-27 notes that some of the other issues of the third century seem to allude to myths that would tie in to the kinship traditions connecting Sicily to Latium and Campania, as noted for both Messina and Centuripae above. For Tyndaritan issues with the Dioscuri, esp. Calciati 1983-1987, I, 80-81, nos. 11, 12, 18 (suggested to be of the period 254-214 BC), cf. Gabrici 1927, 192-3, nos. 11-12 (suggested early C3 BC), 23-27 ('periodo romano'). For Dioscuri in Roman coinage, first on didrachms of the period 225-214 BC, Crawford 1974, no.34 and p. 715 with n.3, and then on the denarius, *ibid.*, no. 44, 5-7 and p.720.

81 Strabo 5.3.5. On the Demetrios episode, see Battistoni 2010, 81-82 (accepting it, with earlier bibliography), with the concluding comment that 'Avere un culto comune è una conseguenza, e quindi una prova, fondamentale della parentela tra popoli.' Cf. Jones 1999, 84, 'the king cited the kinship of the Greeks and Romans, naturally appealing not to Aeneas but rather to the ancient cult of the Dioscuri'.

sort of approaches that might be adopted in this situation. Thirdly, what these diverse traditions, and in turn multiple appeals, clearly demonstrate, is that kinship appeals to Rome may well have focused around the Trojan *nostoi*, but they are by no means limited to these, and in turn almost none of them require the presence of Aeneas himself, even if they come to incorporate him in the later tradition. That this should be the case in appeals made in the third century BC should not I think be particularly surprising or problematic. Fourthly, it is often remarked that many of those states which make kinship appeals to Rome are themselves those on the margins of the Greek world, Hellenised rather than Hellenic states. That would seem to be no less true in Sicily, but at least in the context of the First Punic War, and Polybius' account of this, this makes eminent sense in the war of words over who was, or was not, a barbarian. As Elias Bickerman showed long ago, that is one of the major contexts in which the discourse of *origines gentium* evolves. Fifthly, and finally, the significance of the Sicilian instances is that if they are accepted, and if they are accepted as belonging, above all, to the First Punic War and its immediate aftermath, they demonstrate extensive exposure to and engagement with such methods of diplomacy on the part of the Romans, before ever they crossed the Adriatic. Furthermore, the case of the sanctuary of Venus Erycina offers the clear possibility that Rome took the 'offensive' on at least one occasion in such discourse.

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