

DID IMPERIAL ROME DISARM HER SUBJECTS?

P. A. BRUNT

IN HIS *Roman Social Relations 50 B.C.–A.D. 284* (New Haven and London 1974) Professor Ramsay Macmullen presents a sombre picture of the condition of the lower orders in the Roman empire, which in general appears to me to represent the truth only too well. But among the many suggestions he throws out which provoke reflection, at least one may challenge dissent. In his sketch of Roman taxation he urges that the resistance movements it caused “reveal in rough outline a common pattern of desperation: first, initial conquest by the Romans; next, the rapid confiscation of all hidden weapons;” and then assessments and “recurrent spasms of protest against the weight of tribute harshly calculated and still more harshly exacted.” His belief that even in the early empire taxation was heavier than is commonly assumed seems to me justifiable, but that is not my subject here. Is it right that disarmament, indeed rapid disarmament, was normally the first act of the conquerors as a prelude to taxation? Macmullen founds this claim on (a) a few texts relating to the disarmament of particular peoples and (b) an interpretation of the law or laws *de vi*, which in his judgement show that disarmament was universal.¹ By implication, it was also permanent. There is perhaps some risk that this view will gain credit, unless rebutted. A fuller survey of the evidence suggests to me that disarmament was far from normal and, where attempted, without lasting effect.

(a) Macmullen cites a statement of Strabo that “the Gauls had laid down their arms and were now compelled to practise the arts of cultivation.”² But these words, taken along with other passages in which Strabo cele-

¹35, with n. 26. Macmullen goes on to contrast the prosperity of the “cities” with “the less happy rural world.” But he can hardly mean that only rural dwellers paid taxes (which would be false) and were disarmed; cf. his argument under (b).

²οἱ δ’ ἄνδρες μαχηταὶ μᾶλλον ἢ γεωργοί. νῦν δ’ ἀναγκάζονται γεωργεῖν, καταθέμενοι τὰ ὅπλα, 4.1.2. Cf. 4.1.5 on Massilia’s neighbours: ἐξημερουμένων δ’ αἰετῶν ὑπερκειμένων βαρβάρων, καὶ ἀντὶ τοῦ πολεμεῖν τετραμμένων ἤδη πρὸς πολιτείας καὶ γεωργίας διὰ τὴν τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐπικράτειαν; 4.1.11 on the Cavari and neighbouring peoples, who are no longer “barbarians” but are mostly Romanized in language, modes of life, and sometimes in institutions; 4.1.14 on the Gauls of Narbonensis generally, who nowadays ἀγόντες σχολὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὅπλων ἐργάζονται τὴν χώραν ἐπιμελῶς καὶ τοὺς βίους κατασκευάζονται πολιτικούς. The parallel texts show that Strabo is thinking of a natural process of civilization resulting from peace (for a converse process cf. 3.3.5). Cf. also his account of a similar development in parts of Spain, 3.2.15; 3.3.8. Admittedly this had not gone so far in Gallia Comata, though even there παραπεισθέντες . . . εὐμαρῶς ἐνδιδάσκει πρὸς τὸ χρήσιμον, ὥστε καὶ παιδείας ἄπτεσθαι καὶ λόγων (4.4.2).

brates the civilizing effect of the Roman peace, need mean only that the conversion of the Gauls to agricultural pursuits was a necessary consequence of that peace, not that they had been forcibly disarmed; there is abundant proof that they had not (*infra*). Macmullen also adduces two references in Dio to the disarmament of defeated enemies of Rome by Tiberius under Augustus in Pannonia³ and by Claudius in Britain,⁴ and Tacitus' report that Ostorius Scapula took away arms from Britons who were suspected of hostility to Rome.⁵ Such testimony merely shows the procedure Rome might follow with peoples whose submission was not assured: it need not have been part of "a common pattern." At the same time as he disarmed the hostile Pannonians, Tiberius "sold most of the men of military age into slavery outside the province;" clearly this was not the way in which Rome regularly treated the conquered. Moreover, Tiberius had been aided in his victory by the Scordisci, who were equipped in the same way as the enemy, likewise dwelt in Pannonia, and were obviously not rewarded for their services by being disarmed. Finally, Macmullen invokes the order made by the prefect of Egypt, Avillius Flaccus, apparently in A.D. 34-5, for the confiscation of arms in Upper Egypt, an order perhaps prompted by apprehension he had felt on a recent visit to the district.⁶ According to Philo, a large fleet was required to transport the weapons found down the Nile. If "the rapid confiscation of all hidden weapons" had been ordered after the conquest, over sixty years earlier, the effect had not been permanent. Philo tells us that Flaccus' measure was justified by suspicion that they would revolt, "as they had done on many past occasions," presumably with some sort of arms. Here again it is refractory subjects who are disarmed, and a general prohibition on subjects retaining arms cannot legitimately be deduced.

It is curious that Macmullen has not mentioned the search for arms that Flaccus also carried out in the houses of Jews at Alexandria. Philo alleges that none were discovered, but clearly implies that it would have been criminal for the Jews to have been found in possession of either weapons or defensive armour.⁷ Flaccus' suspicions were perhaps not unwarranted. The Alexandrian Jews were able to arm themselves a few

³Dio 54.31.3 (12 B.C.): καὶ σφᾶς ὁ Τιβέριος, πολλὰ μὲν τῆς χώρας πορθήσας πολλὰ δὲ καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους κακώσας, ἐχειρώσατο, τοῖς Σκορδίσκοις (cf. Fluss, *RE* IIA [1921] 831 ff.), ὁμόροις τε αὐτῶν καὶ ὁμοσκεύοις οὖσι, συμμάχοις ὅτι μάλιστα χρησάμενος, καὶ τὰ τε ὅπλα σφῶν ἀφείλετο καὶ τῆς ἡλικίας τὸ πλεῖον ἐπ' ἐξαγωγῇ ἀπέδοτο.

⁴60.21.4 f. (A.D. 43): καὶ τούτου συχνοὺς τοὺς μὲν ὁμολογίᾳ τοὺς δὲ καὶ βίᾳ προσαγαγομένους . . . καὶ τὰ ὅπλα αὐτῶν ἀφελόμενος . . .

⁵12.31.2 (47-51): *detrahere arma suspectis . . . parat*.

⁶Philo in *Flaccum* 92 f., dated by a fragmentary letter of Flaccus, quoted and discussed by H. Box *ad loc.*

⁷*Ibid.* 86-91; 94-96.

years later, and in 66 they again appear to have possessed arms.⁸ Of course this is no proof that they were entitled to do so. But once again it does not follow that a prohibition operative in the turbulent city of Alexandria had universal applicability. Two legions were quartered close to that city, to maintain order, a precaution unique in the empire.

(b) Before reviewing some other evidence relevant to particular provinces, I may now turn to Macmullen's argument that there was a universal rule for disarmament. He finds it in a provision of the Julian law *de vi*. He cites a fragment of Marcianus, writing in the early third century, *Dig.* 48.6.1: *Lege Iulia de vi publica tenetur, qui arma tela domus suae agrove in villa praeter usum venationis vel itineris vel navigationis coegerit*. In section 3 of the same title Marcianus also says: *in eadem causa sunt, qui turbae seditionisve faciendae consilium inierint servosve aut liberos homines in armis habuerint. Eadem lege tenetur, qui pubes cum telo in publico fuerit*. Now in the first fragment Marcianus attests that it was an offence, not to possess arms but only to collect or accumulate them ("*coegerit*"). Moreover, he admits certain exceptions. The list given in the fragment is not exhaustive. For instance, the *saltuarii* whom great landowners employed to protect their estates must surely have been armed, and legitimately.⁹ However this may be, Scaevola (*h.t.* 2) explicitly attests two other exceptions: *Excipiuntur autem arma, quae quis promercii causa habuerit hereditateve ei obvenierint*. Both are of some significance. The first allows a trader in arms to possess a store of them. But there could be no true disarmament of subjects if they were free to sell (and presumably to manufacture) arms.¹⁰ The second absolves any person of criminal liability if the store of arms in his possession came to him by inheritance; evidently, the fact that he had not himself accumulated them was construed to show that he had no criminal intent in possessing them. Likewise there was no such intent if the arms had been amassed for the use of the owner in hunting (cf. Ulpian *h.t.* 10 pr.) or for his protection on journeys by land and sea. Indeed it must be doubted if the law absolutely forbade the carrying of arms in public, since Ulpian (*h.t.* 10 pr.) is reported as saying that it was an offence under the law to

⁸Jos. *ΑΓ* 19.278; *ΒΓ* 2.487 ff.; note 495: τοὺς ἀμεινον ὠπλισμένους.

⁹M. Rostowzew, *Philologus* 18 (n.s.) (1905) 297–307. There is not, I think, any explicit testimony that on private domains they were armed, but common sense demands it.

¹⁰Macmullen himself collected evidence on arms-traders in the Principate (*ΑΓΑ* 64 [1960] 24–40); cf. A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1964) 66, for state arms factories established by Diocletian; however, it was Justinian who made the manufacture a state monopoly, and forbade private citizens to make or sell arms (*ib.* 671; cf. *Novellae* 85.3). *ILS* 7047 = *CIL* 13.2828 (probably third century) shows that Aeduan "*opifices loricatorii*" worked "*sub cura*" of a centurion; he may only have determined standards and specifications.

be armed *dolo malo in contione . . . aut ubi iudicium publice exercebitur*, and it is hard to see why these specific conditions should be named at all, if the mere carriage of arms in public was criminal *per se*. Similarly under the *lex Cornelia de sicariis* it was an offence to go about armed *hominis occidendi furtive faciendi causa* (Dig. 48.8.1 pr.); here again what made the bearing of a weapon criminal was intent.

What then was the criminal intent that the Julian legislation *de vi* was concerned with? (For our purpose it does not matter if there was one law, or two covering *vis publica* and *vis privata* separately, or whether the legislation was the work of Caesar or Augustus.) In the first place, the mere fact that there was a *lex rogata* shows that it was originally designed to apply to citizens in Italy; provincials could have been restrained by the *imperium* of governors, and edicts would have been sufficient. No doubt the inclusion of the rules in the imperial codes indicates that at some stage the law, like other such statutes, became applicable to all Rome's subjects, but it cannot have been its original purpose to repress revolts against Rome. Obviously the Julian legislation superseded, and extended, the *lex Plautia* which had been in force in Rome and Italy during Cicero's lifetime. That law does indeed seem to have been intended to repress seditious violence which threatened public order and the proper working of republican institutions, but even a Catiline or a Clodius was not attacking the rule of Rome. Moreover numerous juristic statements cited under the rubric of the Julian legislation *de vi* show that it had also become the object of the law, to some extent perhaps as a result of later development and interpretation, to restrain the use of violence for private rapine. In general, so far as they are known, the rules relate mainly to disturbances of the peace, never to actual or incipient revolts against Roman power.¹¹ No one has shown more graphically than Macmullen the continuing need for repression of such violence or the inadequacy of the measures taken.¹² But rebellion was a more serious matter, and was naturally dealt with under the provisions of the law *de maiestate*.¹³ Yet

¹¹Cf. generally M. Balzarini, *Ricerche in Tema di Danno Violento e Rapina nel Diritto Romano* (Padua 1969) 181 ff., esp. 192 ff. with bibliography; for relevant conditions in Italy before Augustus see A. W. Lintott, *Violence in Republican Rome* (Oxford 1968); P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower 225 B.C.-A.D. 14* (Oxford 1971) Appendix 8. Cf. Dig. 48.6 and 7 *passim*; C^J 9.12; CTh 9.10; Paulus Sent. 5.26; Inst. 4.18.8. The provisions of the legislation are conveniently arranged under rubrics in S. Riccobono, *Acta Divi Augusti*, 1945, 129 ff.; they include sanctions against breach of *provocatio* and imposition of new *vectigalia* (sc. by Roman officials, not by subjects), as well as breaches of the peace.

¹²Chs. 1 and 2. Cf. also his *Enemies of the Roman Order* (Cambridge, Mass. 1966) 255 ff. on brigandage.

¹³Paulus Sent. 5.29.1: *lege Iulia maiestatis tenetur is, cuius ope consilio adversus imperatorem vel rem publicam arma mota sunt*. Cf. Dig. 48.4.1.1.

even what is known of that law does not include any express prohibition on the possession of arms.¹⁴

In any event the possession of military equipment by such individuals as could afford to purchase it was less potentially dangerous to Rome than the existence of stores of arms at the disposal of subject communities, whose local governments were best able to organise a formidable revolt. Yet such stores of arms under local control undoubtedly existed.

The persistence of violence must have made it actually desirable for loyal local governments to have armed men at their disposal, especially in the vast areas where no Roman troops, except perhaps for a few scattered *stationarii*,¹⁵ were quartered. It is hard to believe that the existence of armed police forces, like the *diogmitae*¹⁶ in some parts of Asia Minor, was confined to *civitates*, where they happen to be attested, or where there were special magistrates appointed to keep the peace (irenarchs, *praefecti arcendis latrociniiis*, and the like). Although Vienna is not one of those *civitates*, it certainly possessed a stock of arms in 69, which it was forced to surrender to the Vitellians (Tac. *Hist.* 1.66.1). Admittedly, Vienna was no ordinary subject city but a titular Roman colony. The Aedui too, whose *electa iuventus*, with some assistance from the Vitellian troops, put down a popular rising led by Mariccus (*ib.* 2.61), were conceivably privileged as allies and "brothers" of the Roman people (*Ann.* 11.25.1). But the need for some kind of local militia or police subsisted everywhere, and there was no good reason for Rome to impose disarmament on any subject communities whose local governments could be counted on to show fidelity.

It is indeed quite clear that throughout Spain and Gaul communities as such were not disarmed. In A.D. 15 *ad supplenda exercitus damna certavere Galliae Hispaniae Italia, quod cuique promptum, arma equos aurum offerentes. quorum laudato studio Germanicus, armis modo et equis ad bellum sumptis, propria pecunia militem iuvit* (Tac. *Ann.* 1.71). I take "*Galliae Hispaniae*" to be a comprehensive term for the *civitates* in the Gallic and Spanish provinces. For Gaul there is still further evidence.

Tacitus' account of the Gallic uprising under Tiberius is relevant. An initial revolt among the Turoni was easily repressed by Roman troops with some help from "*Galliarum primores*," including Sacrovir, its secret

¹⁴I doubt if it is significant that in the summary of, or excerpts from, juristic accounts of the tasks of provincial governors (esp. *Dig.* 1 16 and 18) there is no mention of a specific duty to seize arms in private hands, though it is stressed that he must maintain order.

¹⁵On state and municipal police forces see O. Hirschfeld, *Kl. Schr.* 576-645 (= *SBBerl* 1891, 845 ff.; 1892, 815 ff.; 1893, 421 ff.).

¹⁶*Amm.* 27.9.6 (368) calls them *semiermes*, cf. perhaps *HAMarc.* 21.7 (*armavit et diogmitas*), but for "their usual arms" cf. *Mart. Polycarpi* 7.

instigator; these men were certainly armed (*Ann.* 3.41). Next, Florus raised a rebellion among the Treveri; *aliud vulgus obaeratorum aut clientium arma cepit* (*ib.* 42). To judge from what follows, Florus' adherents may not have possessed proper weapons and armour, for we hear that among the Aedui Sacrovir had had "legionary" arms manufactured secretly, and even so had not enough to equip more than a fifth of his 40,000 followers; the rest had to make do with hunting spears and knives; they also included a few gladiators (*ib.* 43). It cannot, however, be inferred that the production or possession of arms was forbidden to the *civitas Aeduorum*, then any more than in 69 (*supra*). It was not the *civitas* through its local government that planned the revolt; Sacrovir seized on the capital, Augustodunum, precisely with the object of securing the persons of the children of the ruling class, who were at school there, and forcing their fathers to join his cause; but since the Aedui still preserved their privileges under Claudius (*supra*), the Roman government must have absolved them of complicity. Of course, even in the absence of a Roman prohibition on the manufacture or possession of arms, it would have been taken as proof of treason if a private person had openly ordered equipment for 8,000 soldiers.

Again, it would be extremely hard to believe that the forces with which Vindex besieged Vesontio and faced the Rhine legions were wholly armed with hunting or agricultural implements, the kind of "*vilis arma*" possessed by the peasantry of Albintimilium (*Tac. Hist.* 2.13.1), who were Roman citizens and virtually defenceless, not because they had been disarmed, but because they were poor (*inopes*) and could not have expected any occasion to arise on which they would need weapons of war. Vindex had mustered his army rapidly, obviously with the co-operation of the *civitates*. He was indeed easily defeated, but that was natural in any event, since his men were untrained. In the same way the Helvetii could offer no effective resistance to the Vitellians, but they were certainly not disarmed; they manned a fort with their own militia (*Hist.* 1.67), and if they lacked military training and fighting spirit, we can contrast their neighbours, *ipsorum Raetorum iuventus, sueta armis et more militiae exercita* (*ib.* 68). In the Maritime Alps (2.12.3) and in Noricum (3.5.2) the *iuventus* could similarly be called up for local defence; in the former case again want of practice and discipline, not of arms, made them useless against regular troops.¹⁷

Tacitus' account of the story of the *imperium Galliarum* in 70 also fails

¹⁷The peasants who took part in the African rising under Maximin were armed with clubs and axes, *Hdn.* 7.4.3. Men of the better classes concealed daggers under their clothes, to assassinate the procurator, but they also possessed swords (7.4.5 and 7.5.3).

to hint that the Gallic *civitates* were disarmed. He does not make Vocula discount the danger of the rebellion on the ground that the Gauls simply had not the equipment to fight (*Hist.* 4.58), nor was this argument, which might have been decisive by itself, if it had been founded in fact, deployed by the Remi in preferring *pax* to *libertas* (69 cf. 67.2). A "tumultuary band" of the Baetasii, Tungri, and Nervii, which at first resisted the insurgents, was armed with swords (66). The Lingones invaded Sequanian territory and were defeated in battle (67). The *plebs* of the Treveri cast away their arms only after they had been routed by Roman cohorts (70.4), but a large band remained in the field and were able to assail the legions with missiles, though in hand to hand encounter they were soon overcome (71.4 f.). Once again, it is evident that raw provincial levies were no match for regular troops but also that the Gauls were not at the mercy of the Romans, simply because they had not the arms to fight with.

No doubt it is highly relevant that the emperor Claudius was convinced of the loyalty of the Gauls, proven, he alleged with some exaggeration, by the experience even in crises of a whole century (*ILS* 212, 2.33 ff.). Equally no apprehensions could be felt about the submissiveness of African cities. Hence in the anarchy of 69–70 Oea and Lepcis could fight a private war; admittedly the Lepcitani were no match for the wild and unsubdued Garamantes, whose assistance Oea invoked (*Tac. Hist.* 4.50.4). The government could hardly have been as sanguine about the docility of some other provincials. In A.D. 36, a tribe in Cappadocia, annexed nineteen years before, revolted and its men took to the hills; it is unlikely that they were unarmed (*Ann.* 6.41). The very same tribe gave more trouble in 52 (12.55). So too in Britain, whether or not Claudius' measures in 43 and those later taken by Ostorius Scapula (nn. 4 and 5) betoken that the government's policy was one of systematic disarmament, not only the Iceni, who (it could be argued) had not been affected by such measures, as they had been ruled by their own "king," but the Trinovantes and other peoples "not yet broken to slavery" were able to take arms under Nero (14.31.2) and to rout a Roman legion (14.32). There was still danger of revolt from *homines dispersi ac rudes eoque in bello faciles* in the 70s, and Agricola's plan was not to deprive the Britons of weapons for war but to seduce them with the pleasures of peace (*Agr.* 21). Sporadically attempted, disarmament had proved ineffective as a means of pacification. Indeed the very frequency with which at all times brigandage is attested in certain areas shows how impossible it was for the government to deny to its most refractory subjects the use of arms.

Judaea is a case in point, well documented thanks to the survival of Josephus' works. The Roman administration was continuously plagued by the *sicarii*; they carried daggers under their clothes, whence it might reasonably be inferred that it was an offence in that province to bear arms

openly.¹⁸ Josephus does make king Agrippa argue against revolt, as no one seems to have argued in Gaul, by alluding to the Jews' lack of arms (*Bḡ* 2.361); the point is not stressed (one phrase in a long speech), and would have been valid, even if the Jews were not totally unarmed, since the relative superiority of the Romans was enormous. The rebels in 66 were able to equip themselves in part at least by breaking into Herod's armoury at Masada (2. 434, cf. 7.299), which had been held by a Roman garrison (2.408), and with the arms of Roman troops massacred at Jerusalem (cf. 2.450) or captured in Cestius' defeat (554 f.); only then did they proceed to manufacture missiles and suits of armour (649); previously they had had to rely primarily on missiles (542 ff.), of which, however, there seems to have been no shortage.

Indeed, at all stages in the fighting, we hear most of their use of missiles (cf. for instance 4.424). However, it may be noted that they had been able to charge Cestius' army and actually to break its ranks (2.517); this indicates that they were already not totally unequipped with swords or spears. Probably, these weapons were more readily available in rural areas than at Jerusalem itself; according to Josephus' *Vita* (28) the magnates at Jerusalem were afraid that their unarmed supporters would be no match for the "brigands and revolutionaries" of Galilee, who had an abundance of weapons, if they were to come up to the city, and in the later struggle of Ananus' followers against the Zealots and Idumaeans, the former, though more numerous, were at a disadvantage because of their inferiority in arms and training (*Bḡ* 4.197 ff., cf. 243), Josephus estimates the number of the Zealots and Idumaeans at 23,400 (5.248 ff.). We hear now of shields (4.290; 5.120; 6.174) and of a 'phalanx' (5.312). Some still bore clubs as well as swords (5.102). The catapults and *ballistae* the Jews possessed during the siege were certainly, in large part at least, spoils from Cestius' army (4.583; 5.13 ff.; 267; 359; 6.121), and it was only gradually that they acquired skill in their use. We must not of course exaggerate the extent to which the Jews were, at any time, well armed. In Galilee (2.512; 3.15; 3.477), and presumably elsewhere, they evidently lacked defensive armour and were the more vulnerable to Roman attacks. We may doubt whether Josephus' claims to have had "hoplites" under his command can be taken literally. In his narrative of operations in Galilee in the *Bellum*, he has undoubtedly exaggerated both the number of his troops, as can be seen from the *Vita*, and the training he was able to give them (2.577 ff.). But it is notable that he seems to stress Roman superiority in training and discipline (cf. 3.475 ff.) rather than in equipment (though he describes Roman arms in detail in 3.93 ff.),

¹⁸ *AY* 20.186 (cf. 164: *Bḡ* 2.255) calls their weapons *ξίφidia*; they were curved, resembling Persian *akivakai* and, more closely, Roman *sicae*. But other weapons are also mentioned, cf. *Bḡ* 2.471 (*ξίφος*); Mark 14.47 (*μάχαιρα*).

and it is clear that a substantial number of the Jewish rebels had at least swords or spears and shields. (Similarly, Cestius was able to obtain armed auxiliaries from Syrian cities, 2.502.) We may also remark that one of the rebel leaders in Galilee actually had a fortified villa (*βᾱρις*) "just like an acropolis" (*Vita* 246), so little care had the Roman government taken to deprive turbulent subjects of means of self-defence.

Even the experience of the revolt of 66–70 did not prompt the Roman government to impose effective and durable disarmament on the Jews within or outside Palestine. This is shown by the seriousness of their later rebellions (cf. e.g., A. Fuks, *JRS* 51 [1961] 98–104). The strength of the rebels in Egypt in 115–117 was such that the prefect was unable to repress them with the forces usually garrisoning the country, no doubt weakened by the detachment of some troops to take part in Trajan's Parthian war, and that eventually Marcus Turbo had to be sent for the purpose with a fleet and army; it is now known (*contra* Fuks) that he was not himself prefect (cf. H. G. Pflaum, *Les Carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain* [Paris 1960] 199 ff.). In the interim native Egyptians had been employed to fight the Jews (Wilcken, *Chr.* 16 f.). O. W. Reinmuth, (*The Prefect of Egypt* 126) says that "the native population was armed under the command of the strategi." But this statement is not warranted by the evidence. There is no more reason to suppose that the fellahin needed to be armed than the Jews themselves. Weapons were lacking to neither. Under Hadrian the Jews in Palestine had actually kept for themselves and were able to use in their revolt arms they had been required to furnish to the Roman army (Dio 69.12.2).

The practical difficulties of permanent disarmament are obvious enough. Everywhere, even in remote villages, there will have been skilled smiths with materials at their disposal which were needed for the production of the tools used in fields, houses, and workshops; both craftsmen and materials could rapidly be turned over to making weapons and armour. In 149 B.C. Carthage was obliged to surrender all its military equipment; not a catapult or javelin or sword was left; yet the apparently defenceless citizens, after rejecting Rome's last demands, set to work to replace what they had given up at the daily rate of 100 shields, 300 swords, 1000 missiles for catapults, and 500 javelins and spears (App. *Pun.* 80; 82; 93), and they held out for three years. We may compare the prolonged resistance of Jerusalem. Moreover, if, as is probable, there were as yet no state armaments factories (n. 10), the Roman army itself had to be supplied by private manufacturers. With the high costs of transport, it was most economic to order supplies from the nearest sources. No doubt prudence suggested that stores of arms produced for Rome's own purposes should be kept in supposedly safe places, like Masada. Thus in 69 on Vespasian's instructions *destinantur validae civitates exercendis*

armorum officinis (Tac. *Hist.* 2.82.1 cf. 84.1). The cities appointed were doubtless fortified, but few, if any, will have been garrisoned. Vespasian will have relied on the loyalty of the city authorities. That must have been the normal policy of the imperial government.

Indeed, as already pointed out, the city governments needed the means to maintain local order and could hardly have been left without arms. In large areas no troops were stationed, and the central government had no police force and in the Republic and early Principate no attested spy system. It was bound to look to the local authorities to keep the peace internally and to ensure that the manufacture of arms, which could not be prevented and on the whole suited Rome's own interests, was not directed to the support of treason and revolt.

But the local authorities themselves, however well disposed, also had not the means to exercise a thorough control. Stores of arms might be kept under public guard, but there was no way of preventing the production of weapons for nefarious ends in scattered village smithies. Robbers and brigands could not be denied the tools of their trade, and a Gallic notable could even organize the secret manufacture of equipment for 8,000 men. Clearly this was exceptional; in general the notables were loyal, and it was a misfortune for Rome that this conspirator was not restrained by the timely delation that might have been expected.

Scholars were for long so prone to idealize Roman imperial rule that it is a welcome reaction when they draw attention to the persistence of exploitation and to the misery of the masses. But there was no novelty in these conditions. Most of Rome's subjects must have lived wretchedly before they were conquered, and probably more wretchedly; the Roman peace must have brought some benefits to all. Nor is it likely that in general they were consciously hostile to their conquerors (the Jews are of course exceptional); rather, they acquiesced in their fate. Macmullen himself recognizes this when he writes (119) that "the rural lower classes... accepted their lot without thinking much about it So much we may infer from their passivity, silence and deference." Perhaps nothing can be properly inferred from their silence: the illiterate cannot speak to us. But there is a more decisive reason for affirming that they gave a measure of consent to Roman rule. As early as the first century A.D., and to an increased extent thereafter, the frontiers were defended by subjects, mostly recruited from the rural lower class in the provinces nearest to the army camps. And yet it was in these provinces that the people were relatively warlike. Here, if anywhere, revolts could be dangerous, and permanent and universal disarmament would be easiest to comprehend. Still, it would be an odd view that Rome sought to disarm the peoples from which her soldiers were enlisted. A few units of specialized fighting men always drew recruits from the territory where they had been first

raised. And that was surely because there young men were still trained in the use of their traditional arms and fighting skills.¹⁹

When Roman conquest deprived a people of "liberty," the loss affected not so much the masses as the old ruling class; we must, however, remember that most of Rome's subjects had been previously under the control of some other king or *hegemon*, and that relatively few of the provincial *civitates* had any real sovereignty to lose. Whatever political loss they did sustain was compensated from the first by the blessings of peace and by Rome's readiness to uphold their local dominance, and in course of time by an increasing share in the imperial government. The notables were in the best position to discern the difficulty or impossibility of successful revolt, and to enjoy the benefits of order, civilization, and actual participation in Roman power. Without the leadership they alone could give, resistance to Rome could not be effectively organized and had even less chance of success. The rise of provincials in the imperial service and the endless panegyrics they pronounced on Rome's beneficence alike attest the growth of active consent to Roman rule among the subjects who mattered most, if that rule was to endure. It was by winning over the magnates and not by disarming the masses that the Roman government secured submission and internal peace. Disarmament was neither practicable nor necessary as a systematic rule of policy; it was a mere expedient of no more than temporary utility, to be employed against some peoples at the moment of surrender or when there was some particular reason for apprehending disturbances. The "common pattern" is quite different; the local ruling class is left to control the masses and share in their exploitation, and Rome adapts the warlike proclivities of her subjects by giving them arms to protect and maintain her own empire.

BRASENOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

¹⁹Perhaps the *collegia iuvenum*, attested from the second century at least in some western provinces as well as in Italy (*Diz. Ep. s.v. Iuvenes*) should be mentioned, as the *iuvenes* are generally held to have been drawn from the upper class and to have received some military or pre-military training, cf. M. Rostovtseff, *Soc. and Econ. Hist. of Roman Empire*² 47, 103, 107, 128, 326, 429 f. with his notes. But I suspect that he, and others, exaggerate the military, as against the social and religious, significance of these *collegia* and their value to the Roman military system. Thus, C. Jullian (*Daremborg-Saglio s.v. Iuvenes* 784) took Tacitus' allusions to the *iuventus* of the Aedui, Raeti etc. to refer to the young men trained in these *collegia*; in the light of Tacitus' usage of the word elsewhere (Gerber-Greef, *s.v.*), e.g., *Agr.* 27.2; 29.4, this is unwarranted.