THE ROADS OF ROMAN ITALY

MOBILITY AND CULTURAL CHANGE

RAY LAURENCE

ROUTLEDGE

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PREFACE

History is the writing of the historical imagination in the present. For myself, this book is the way I view an aspect of the past. Although in places based on the work of others, what is in this book is the way I see their past as opposed to how they may have written it. The reader of this history should be aware that their own view of *The Roads of Roman Italy* need not be the same as mine. To have the opportunity and the ability to write history is a privilege that has incurred many debts of gratitude and these need to be acknowledged.

The opportunity was provided by the British Academy Postdoctoral Research Fellowship scheme from 1993–6 initially and continued at the University of Reading subsequently after my appointment to a lectureship. I am grateful to my colleagues (present and past), both classical and archaeological, at Reading for tolerating my subject area that fails to define itself within a traditional definition of what is ancient history or what is archaeology. Further thanks are due to the British Academy and the Hugh Last Fund of the British School at Rome for financially supporting visits to libraries and sites in Italy. The British School at Rome has continued to provide an academic environment for study. I would like thank Valerie Scott for advice and permission to use the School's archive, and Helen Patterson for her enthusiastic discussion of communications in the Tiber Valley. The latter's patience and that of Shawn Graham, and Mary Harlow in the search for the remains of road structures in the Tiber Valley should also be acknowledged.

My debts to those in the past who have shown me how to write history must be acknowledged. Three people should be acknowledged for having put themselves out when they did not need to. Jeremy Paterson, Keith Hopwood and Peter Slade in their very different and highly personable ways showed me how to write history and gave me the confidence to do so. In writing this book though, my mind was drawn back further to the innovative teaching of Kathleen M. West, who showed me a long time ago that there was more than one way to think about the problems of solving a learning difficulty. I still find it startling to express my thoughts on paper

and realise the immense debts that I owe to these people every time I do so. They all have my very warmest thanks—without their individual interventions this book would not exist.

Many have helped in the writing of this book: in terms of ideas Colin Adams, John Creighton, Elio Lo Cascio, Janet DeLaine, Mike Fulford, Martin Millett, Helen Patterson and Andrew Wallace-Hadrill have found time to discuss various points and ideas that are put forward here. The participants at conferences and seminars in Birmingham, Durham, Exeter, Leicester, Naples, Nottingham, Oxford and Rome in the recent past deserve thanks for their comments formally and informally. More importantly, there are those who have asked the most profound questions such as: 'aren't roads simply boring?' or 'why are you studying that?'. More than anyone, Lilah Hargreaves has asked these key questions and preserved me from getting lost in an obsessive fog during the writing process. To be reminded that there is a world that is not academic was a necessity in the completion of the book. In short, Lilah's support was critical in the final stages of writing and I owe her much more than gratitude and thanks.

A note on the text references

The references in the text follow a standard Harvard system for modern works. For classical references, standard abbreviations are used. The reader is referred to S. Hornblower and A. Spawforth (1996) *The Oxford Classical Dictionary,* pp. xxix—liv, for classification or decoding these references.

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1

INTRODUCTION

Why write a book on Roman roads? This question has occurred frequently during the research and writing of this book. Put simply, it is a topic that has been totally misunderstood by recent scholarship on the subject and has caused us to have a skewed view of the past in Roman Italy. Historians have recognised that the Roman state was involved in the development of an extensive transport network of roads from the fourth century BC, but have not managed to understand the impact of road building. Moses Finley (1973:126–7), in the most influential study of the ancient economy for more than a generation of scholars, saw the purpose of these roads to have been political and militaristic and even later as having no significant economic impact. The reason for this explanation is given in terms of the cost of transport by land in comparison with the far cheaper forms of transport by river or sea (Finley 1973:126–7; also De Neeve 1984:8– 17, 1985; compare Braudel 1981:419–21). This view of the economy was followed by a generation of scholars (Duncan-Jones 1974:1; Hopkins 1978:3; Garnsey and Saller 1987:44, 90) and has recently been re-asserted in Morley's (1996) study of Rome's hinterland. In fact, it has become a theme of economic history simply to ignore the subject, since trade by sea is seen to have been cheaper. As a result, in recent works on Roman Italy (e.g. new editions of the authoritative *Cambridge Ancient History*) land transport hardly receives a mention. Thus, an immediate aim at the start of the project was to address this lacuna in Roman history.

Although the book marks a counterpoint in many ways to some of the fundamental assumptions made by Finley and his Cambridge colleagues, it is written within that historical tradition. This mode of study places an emphasis on the structure of not just the economy, but other aspects of society in relation to the cultural impact of Rome. The influence of the historiographical tradition of Keith Hopkins's *Conquerors and Slaves* (1978) can be found in many sections of the book. His work produced a model of change for Italy in the second and first centuries BC and of the impact of imperialism on Roman society that still remains influential and at the forefront of historical thought on ancient Italy. In this book, in contrast, I

am concerned with the impact on Italy of change in the nature of transportation. In a way the book follows on from my work on Pompeii (Laurence 1994a), which was concerned with a single city study of the use of space in its temporal setting (i.e. Pompeii's space-time), in line with an earlier study by Jongman (1988) of the economy of Pompeii in the Finley/Hopkins tradition. There I was asserting the importance of space and time for our understanding of the city in Italy, as much as its economic formation. What I wanted to do in that book was to make an initial step by subjecting Pompeii to the full force of current geographical theory and scholarly thought on space-time (see Soja 1996 for the most recent summary). I viewed the city as a unit in a wider social system in the tradition of other studies and had a preoccupation with the nature of the city stemming from Finley's publications (see papers in Rich and Wallace-Hadrill 1991; Cornell and Lomas 1995; Parkins 1997; also Finley 1973 and 1977). The tradition of the city as an object of analysis stems from the Greek view of the city state. Although in Roman Italy the city state continued to be the basis of local government, in no way did these cities act in the manner of the Greek city states of the fifth century BC, and there is a case to be made for a political cohesion in the Italian peninsula from the first century BC (see Millar 1998:13–48; Mouritsen 1998:49; also Wiseman 1971:28). The way that I view Italy in this book is as a series of cities that constitute a whole through their interconnection by the road system itself, and the action of travel and transportation. In other words the road system is seen as an example of a structure that is between places, which joins them together to create an artificial unity. This view is in tune with modern perspectives from geography that have even intruded into the study of Roman political history (Millar 1998:3). This viewpoint avoids the pitfalls of regional studies based on abstract areas defined by ancient geographers after the events under study. The betweenness of space sums up the fluidity of the regions of the Italian peninsula under Rome and the temporal distances between places that separated them from each other. The latter would vary according to the position of a place within the network of roads at a specific time. Hence the book is about the relationship of transport to the city within the context of the formation of a unified Italy.

The intersection of the city, the traveller and the road form the basis of my understanding of how Roman Italy was constituted to create unity. *The Roads of Roman Italy* is an exploration of the complexed interaction of three elements: roads, cities and Italy. In doing so I set out to alter our perspectives of each element. Hence, some topics that may be seen by other authors as crucial to the study of each element may not appear here. For example, my discussion does not include the challenges of Italian citizenship in its discussion of Italy, nor every single feature of road technology or the imperial post—elements seen as crucial to earlier discussions of the politics of Italy or the description of archaeological evidence. These and others, I

Figure 1.1 Roads follow low ridges of hills; mountain ranges limit the possibilities of transport

find less important than the changes that occurred in Italy's space-economy that made possible the meaning of citizenship to so many and ultimately was the basis for a unified Italy. I make no apologies for doing so, because those who have discussed citizenship etc. have seldom accounted for the change in the mentalité of space-time or the betweenness of place. My object in short is to offer a view of Italy that alters our current perception and will I hope change the minds of the readers in how they see the past itself. For me, that Roman past needs to include an understanding of the spatiality of Italy in relation to the city, regions, the economy and identity in particular.

In writing the book, I do not reject the traditional importance of historical change. This is my major preoccupation in the first chapters of the book. Here, I set out the development of land transportation, first in the context of Roman hegemony and, specifically, the relationship between the development of Roman imperialism and road building: the cultural change from a society that was based on the city state to a state that was not a 'nation', but was associated with a dispersed citizenship (compare Hobsbawm 1990; Gellner 1983; Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983). These changes caused or maybe were caused by an alteration in the mentalité of space-time. This highlights a new system of thought with regard not only to the polity, but primarily to territory and space. The Roman expansion

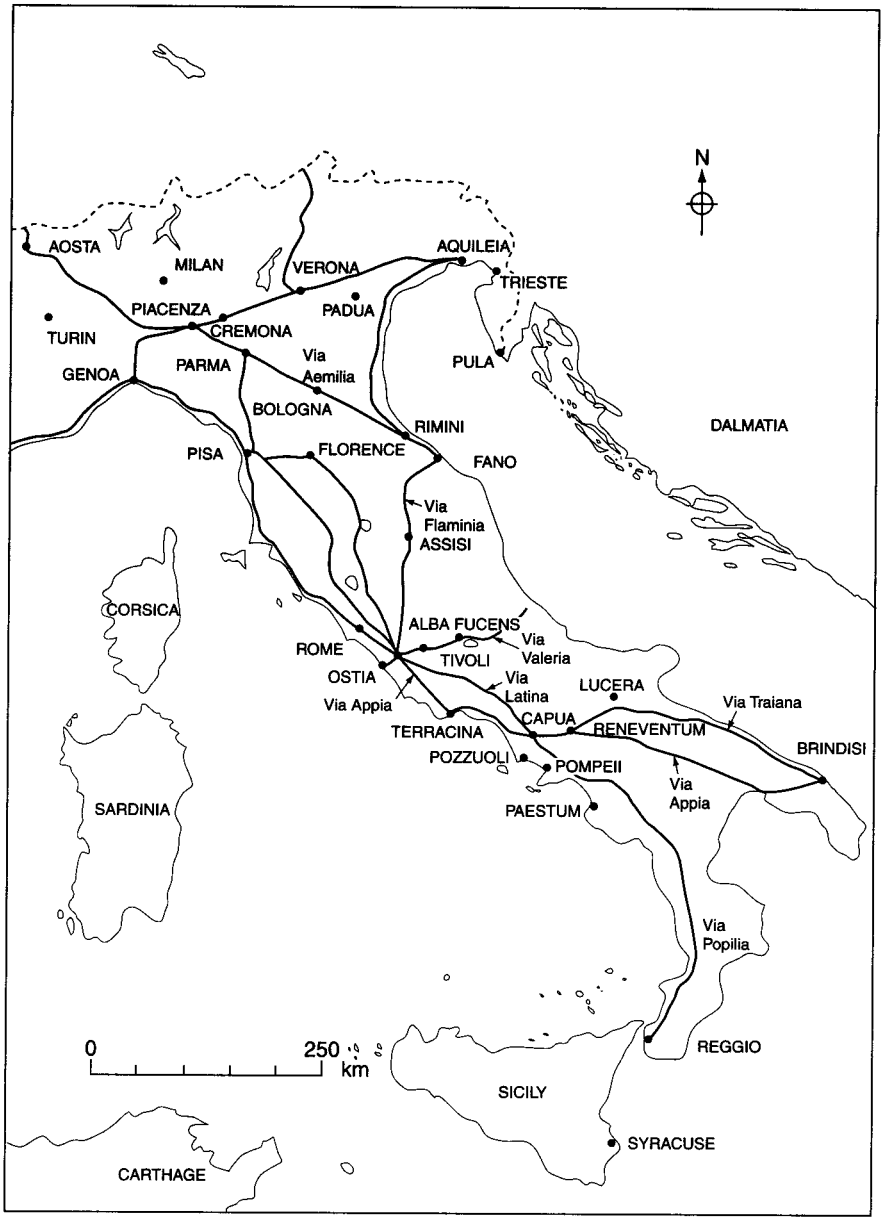


Figure 1.2 The major roads of Italy

in terms of territory and change in mentalité that was associated with it provided an impetus not just for the founding of Roman and Latin colonies but also for the creation of new towns—*fora*. These, I argue, were foundations that were later to change their name and appear simply as *municipia*. The setting up of these towns was an integral part of the change in the nature of Roman space-time and they became centres for the enforcement of the state's will. The economic viability of these places is discussed in relation to their role in the landscape of Italy. These smaller scale settlements shaped the pattern of urban settlement in Italy as much as the existing Italian towns or the Roman and Latin colonies. Underlying the new politico-spatial formation was the road system that in itself altered the geographical organisation of Italy. The development of this new spatial form is followed in Chapters 4 and 5, where I set out to analyse the politics of road development and the associated changes in road technology that reduced the temporal distances between cities. These changes in technology resulted in a shrinkage of space-time distanciation and a new view of the betweenness of space. The new mentalité is set out in Chapter 6, where I document the Roman view of Italy that was dominated by a need to travel from place to place. The analysis here includes a detailed study of the Antonine Itineraries and suggests that the itinerary as a view of space is as useful as a modern map. Hence, what I present is a vision of the growth of a space for imperialism and empire that was dependent on the use of an improved technology of transport, and a new culture of both space and distance.

The major question of the cost of land transport is addressed in Chapter 7. A complete overhaul of the doctrinal view of the expense of land transport is undertaken and presents a case for the study of the Roman economy within the context of practice and profit, rather than theoretical cost. In doing so, I point to the need to see road transport alongside river and maritime trade as a complementary system. The theme of river transport is followed up in Chapter 8 with a detailed study of the use of rivers and canals in Italy based on recent Italian scholarship with its emphasis on topography. Here, I have an interest to demonstrate that rivers and canals were utilised, but their use depended on human technology to control the flow of rivers and canals. The technological sophistication required for structures such as canals actually favoured road transportation. What we need to understand is the nature of transport technology and its use in practice, rather than making abstract statements with regard to the cost of land: river transport. A key problem for understanding the use of the road system is that it is difficult to place a scale on the need for transport. Predictive models of city regions drawn from the geography of modernism have failed to establish any meaning successfully to the network of roads and cities except maybe in Campania (Morley 1997; Frayn 1993:74–100; for critique see Cosgrove 1984:30; Laurence 1997a; Whittaker 1998).

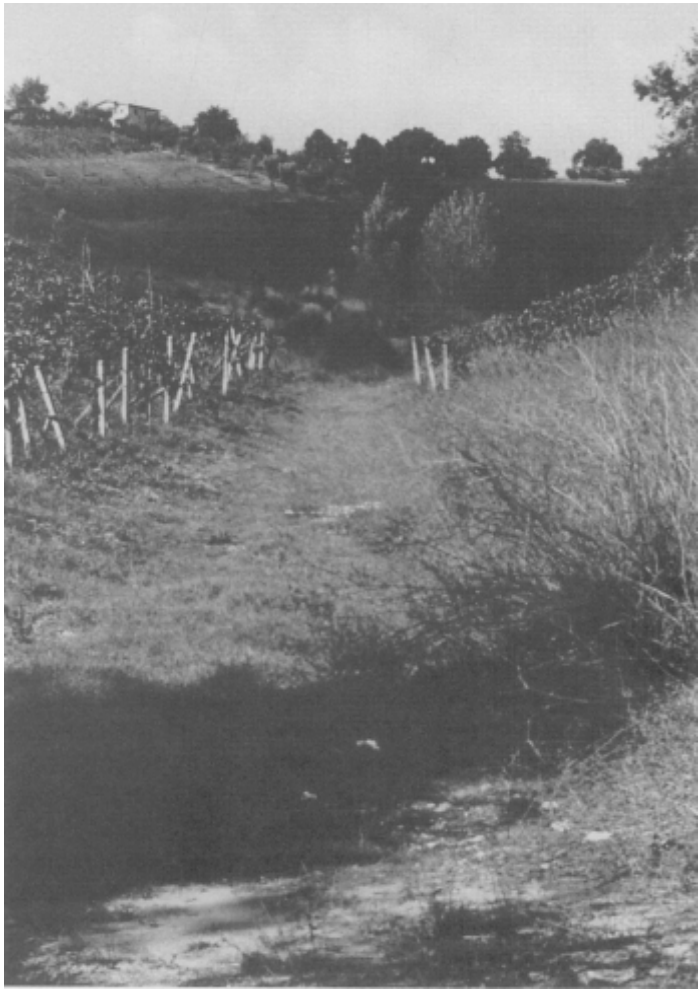


Figure 1.3 Remains of a Roman road in the Ager Sabinus

I approach the subject tangentially in Chapter 9 with discussion of the supply of improved breeds for the haulage of carts and carriages.This analysis demonstrates that the supply of mules (an improved breed) was a constant in the economy and shows a desire for a more efficient transport technology. This factor in itself points to a developing system that was reducing the temporal distances between places through measures that improved the overall efficiency of the system—through the paving of roads and the breeding of stronger animals with greater stamina than either the ass, the horse or the ox. Chapter 10 is a discussion of mobility within Italy with particular attention to the need or requirement to travel on state business.

Included alongside the discussion of travel is an approach to the movement and circulation of money over distance.

The question of mobility raises another: the role and the social standing of the traveller. These questions are answered with reference to the mode of travel and the appearance of the traveller to others within Italy. What I wish to show here is that the mobility of certain sectors of the population caused major changes in the economy and the culture of travel. The interaction of the traveller with the more sedentary population of Italy is the topic of discussion in Chapter 11. Here I demonstrate that the development of public architecture in Italy was designed to be displayed to the travelling elite from Rome and elsewhere as much as to the local inhabitants. This points to the importance of a city being between places from and to which travellers make their way. The view of euergetism adopted here points to the integration of the culture of cities through the traveller's gaze and expectation, rather than an abstract notion of 'Romanisation' that is seen from a perspective that stresses the city and its local population as the unit of historical analysis (on Romanisation see Laurence forthcoming). To a certain extent, travel in a way created a unity for Italy in terms of both geography and culture.

Tota Italia is the theme Chapter 12. What I wish to show is that the divisions of Italy through the use of ethnonyms was in a way a response to the idea of a unified peninsula. The use of ethnicity here is emblemic to cause a difference in our minds as readers of ancient geography, as well as in the minds of the travellers coming across towns and people. The role of roads and cities in the geographical description of *tota Italia* stresses again the intersection of these three units of human action that depended on the agency of travel or geographical description to invest them with meaning. The geographical unity created by a road system was undercut by a series of divisions by city and by ethnicity, which at the same time could be viewed as a single unit—*tota Italia*. Following on from this is a discussion of the utilisation of the Augustan regions to extend the power of the state. Geography and the control of space is a theme of Chapter 13. My intention here is to explain the reasoning behind the division of Italy into eleven regions by Augustus. The argument naturally rests on the road system and travel, in this case the protection of the traveller from banditry. This system of geography created a structure for the extension of state power not just through the individual cities of Italy, but to the roads themselves and the cities that were never far from the major roads. State power is at its most prominent when dealing with outsiders (bandits), but presumably extended to other fields of human activity as well.

My final chapter draws together what has gone before and outlines the implications of the previous chapters for our understanding of the nature of Roman Italy. This chapter is discursive and brings together the earlier arguments; its aim in short is to say what is the historical significance of a

culture based on land transportation and a geography based on a road system. To enable a degree of clarity, this chapter is not heavily referenced and for further discussion the reader should refer back to the earlier chapters for detail. In no way should the statements in this chapter be seen as simple assertions since they based on what has gone before. This methodology is necessary to promote a clarity, to avoid obfuscation and to provide an opportunity to state the significance within the broader subject area of Roman history.

The chapter opens with a discussion of the state. The production of a space of transportation by land is seen as part of Roman power and created a new space of interconnection over a long distance, whereas Etruscan roads had been very localised affairs. This new form of interconnection of necessity altered the nature of the economy and requires us to adjust any economic model, in particular those of Moses Finley and Keith Hopkins. The adjustment causes the model of the consumer city to appear to over-emphasise the economic strength of the ancient city. I argue here that urban development was dependent on the circulation of the elite, as opposed to the consumption of surplus production by an elite in towns. Discussion then moves on to the role of the road in the structuring not only of geography but also of Roman power and cultural identity. In short, I argue here that the road was at the very heart of the Roman spatial system of cities, villas and agriculture.

In writing the book, I have tried as far as possible to avoid in-depth theoretical discussion that might obscure my historical argument. A discourse on space and time is not to every ancient historian's taste, but for those who wish to know more, I refer them to two key texts that lie behind my work and summarise recent discussion in geography: E.W. Soja (1996) *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* and D. Harvey (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity.* Both Soja and Harvey provide key insights into the spatial thought of Henri Lefebvre, whose work I have discussed elsewhere (Laurence 1997b), and they provide a clear beginning or starting point for any understanding of space-time. This does not mean that I have uncritically adopted a perspective that is recent in its origins and imposed it on the Roman past. At every turn, my space-time perspective is tested with reference to evidence from antiquity to assess its validity.

Methodologically, the analysis presented here is confined by what is known from the past. It is notable that a chronology for the building of many roads simply does not exist, partly because the phases of road construction would have been included in the substantially absent sections of Livy's history of the third and second centuries BC. Efforts to reconstruct the chronologies of the lesser known roads (e.g. the Via Clodia or Via Cassia) through a connection via their name to a known person tend to self-destruct (e.g. Pekary 1968; for critique see Wiseman

Figure 1.4 The ancient Via Aurelia beneath the modern road of the same name at Luni

1970:140–44). Equally, the tying of the building of roads to a political chronology tends to be found wanting sooner or later (see e.g. Hinrichs 1967), especially since that chronology is based on later writers. Inevitably, history is a study in plausibility or an art of the possible. I find the most profitable approach is to understand the traces of the past through an analysis of elements of change that have marked a presence over a long period of time. Ancient history is bedevilled by dating at the general level that lacks a certain exactitude—this should not come as a surprise given our knowledge of the past (compare Millar 1986a:295). Not to recognise this at the outset would be an attempt to mislead the reader. Perhaps ancient history and archaeology have something in common: texts which are based on a small amount of evidence can easily be falsified by a reshuffle of that evidence. This should not deter scholars from writing archaeology or ancient history, but reinforces the need to have multiple perspectives of the past. Hence, my intention here is to write a rather different book from those that have gone before: for example, Raymond Chevallier's *Roman Roads* or Lorenzo Quilici's scholarly articles on the course and construction of roads in Italy. My emphasis is rooted in a cultural change in Italy from the fourth century BC through to the second century AD that is most clearly seen in a change in Rome's approach to space and distance, alongside changes in the technology and style of transport, which is accompanied by a change

in the nature of the city as a focus of monumentalism. These features are all fundamental to any understanding of cultural and political change in Rome and Italy. To ignore an understanding of space-time in terms of transportation causes many issues to become abstracted from their geographical or even historical setting.

2

MASTERING SPACE

Road building 312–44 BC

I will argue in this chapter that the building of the major roads of Italy in the fourth, third and second centuries BC was crucial to Roman hegemony and in the creation of what we think of as the Roman empire. In my discussion of this subject, I wish to avoid a narrative that sees the establishment of Roman imperialism as an inevitable consequence, and instead put forward an account of the extension of Roman power across space in line with recent work in historical geography (Meinig 1982:71). The problem for both author and reader is that we know that Rome later became a powerful empire, but we should not view the actions of participants in say the fourth century BC with this privilege of hindsight (see Carter 1987: xxii; Bernstein 1994:16; for a narrative of events see Cornell 1995a).

Territory and hegemony

A problem for all accounts of the Roman expansion into Italy is a tendency to view the territory now associated with modern Italy as a natural political formation (this view has its origins with Mommsen (1894:7–8) and should be read in light of Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; see most recently Mouritsen 1998). Our view of Rome as a conqueror has been conditioned by nineteenth- and twentieth-century views of both the 'state' and 'empires' in general. We have lived in a world that associates nations with specific blocks of territory (c.f. Weber's definition of the state as a compulsory organisation with a territorial basis, 1978:56). There is no reason to assume that in the Roman past a similar view of territory was maintained (Laurence forthcoming). Indeed, I would suggest that in the context of the Roman expansion in Italy such a view is wholly inappropriate. Rome established colonies of its own people and those of Latins at a distance from the capital, for example, at Terracina in 329 BC (see Figure 2.2). In no way did this create a bounded Roman territory associated exclusively with people that were from Rome. The structure of Roman Italy was far more fluid than the strict association of a people with a territory allows for. Roman citizens were located in new

towns away from the home city of Rome, often alongside conquered or allied peoples. In fact, what we find at Rome even in the second century BC is a very loose concept of territory and space. For example, Richardson (1994:564–9, 591–3) has shown that a *provincia* did not refer to a specific geographical region but the exercise of *imperium* in a military command, and that peoples within *provinciae* were classified as: either Roman citizens, allies *(civitates foederatae)* or free cities or peoples *(civitates liberae)*. Rather than a specific territory being associated with any one specific group of people, in Italy we see a mixture of peoples across space (Nicolet 1994:600–2). It should be made clear that individual cities were associated with a specific group of residents (Roman, Latin, allied, etc.), but their neighbours need not have been of the same origin or ethnicity. What we find in Italy in the fourth century BC is a mosaic of peoples, rather than a series of unified territories (see Coakley 1993:1–22 on the fundamental differences), which was unified, later, by the hegemonic leadership of Rome (see analysis of language by Mouritsen 1998).

It is necessary at this stage to explain exactly what I mean by hegemony. Most accounts of the Roman conquest of Italy take a 'realist' view of hegemony, in which states act in their own interest and hope not to antagonise Rome (the hegemonic power). Such a view is in line with international relations of the twentieth century and, in particular, the Cold War politics of nuclear deterrents (Gill and Law 1988:77). Equally, accounts of the 'expansion of Rome' stress military action, rather than other forms of hegemonic discourse that have been seen to be crucial to any understanding of international relations (see Cox 1983 for a methodological summary). Hegemonic leadership is more than just a question of coercion through active warfare, it is also based on consent not just of those within the hegemonic state, but also those beyond it (e.g. Braund's 1984 analysis of 'friendly' kings). In particular, it involves the dominant class across states. In the discussion of Roman hegemony in Italy, the dominant class is seen to have been the urban elites of the allied polities which looked to Rome as a natural leader (e.g. Cornell 1995a:363; but see Whittaker 1995a). This realist explanation only partially addresses the issue of consent within Roman hegemonic leadership, since it was necessary for the Roman plebs and the non-elite of allied polities to be actively involved in warfare and to consent to their involvement. Key to any understanding of Rome's leadership are the reforms of the fourth century BC that had led to the abolition of debt-bondage, the involvement of plebians in office holding, and the regulation of the *ager publicus* (for discussion and details see Cornell 1995a:327–44). This placed the Roman plebs in a new position that drew them into the interests of the state. The importance of plebian interests in the explanation of road building will become apparent later in this chapter, but in terms of hegemony we need to bear in mind that those who fought in Rome's wars of expansion were the non-elite from Rome and to a greater extent the

populus from the allied polities of Italy. The gains for this class from Roman hegemonic leadership were in terms of booty and land. This factor underpinned and maintained the possibility of further territorial expansion. True, the dominant class in all the polities of Italy, including Rome, was the elite, but it was dependent on the participation of the humbler classes (Cox 1983:171). In fact, what we see in the building of roads in Italy is an active attempt by the Roman elite to win the consent of Roman plebians and perhaps also plebians within other polities (for discussion of this concept see Hoffman 1984; for comparison see Whittaker 1995a).

The Via Appia

The building of the Via Appia would seem to be both symptomatic of Rome's hegemonic leadership and at the same time to be actively reinforcing or establishing that leadership (for sources on the Via Appia see Radke 1981:133–88; Castagnoli *et al*. 1972). Never before had an individual polity undertaken construction on such a large scale. The road, as built to Capua 115 miles away, was a demonstration of Roman power, particularly to Rome's new allies in Campania. The scale of the project and its innovative nature may have confirmed Rome's hegemonic leadership to many allied peoples (Rapkin 1990:5 on relations of transport innovations and world leadership). At the same time, the censor, Appius Claudius, was promoting the interests of the Roman plebs rather than the elite (for a 'realist' perspective see MacBain 1980; for the role of censors Suolahti 1963). The emphasis on plebian interests may not have been formulated with just Roman citizens in mind, but may have been calculated to appeal to the non-elite of the Campanian cities.

The road laid out by Appius Claudius was built to Capua—a city that was later to be seen as Rome's great rival in Italy (Vassaly 1993:231–8; Radke 1981:152 notes the centrality of Capua for road construction in this earlier period). Prior to the construction of the road, contact between the two cities had been made via the route that led through the Latin cities allied to Rome, but recently Rome had been at war with first the Latins and then later the Samnites. Indeed, the building of the Via Appia can be seen as a strategic response to the disruption caused by Rome's Latin allies, since the course of the Via Appia led to Campania and took a route through the Pontine Marshes to the sea at Anxur (Terracina) and from there followed down the coast to Campania and then turned inland to Capua—avoiding any contact with the cities of Rome's Latin allies (for strategic considerations, Uggeri 1977, 1990b; on Via Latina Ashby 1907; Giannetti 1974; Gelsomino 1986). We should view the building of the Via Appia as an attempt to create an additional route that secured a link between Rome and her Campanian allies. The alliance of Rome and the Campanian cities seems to have been important to Rome, and the latter's actions were seen in terms of hegemonic

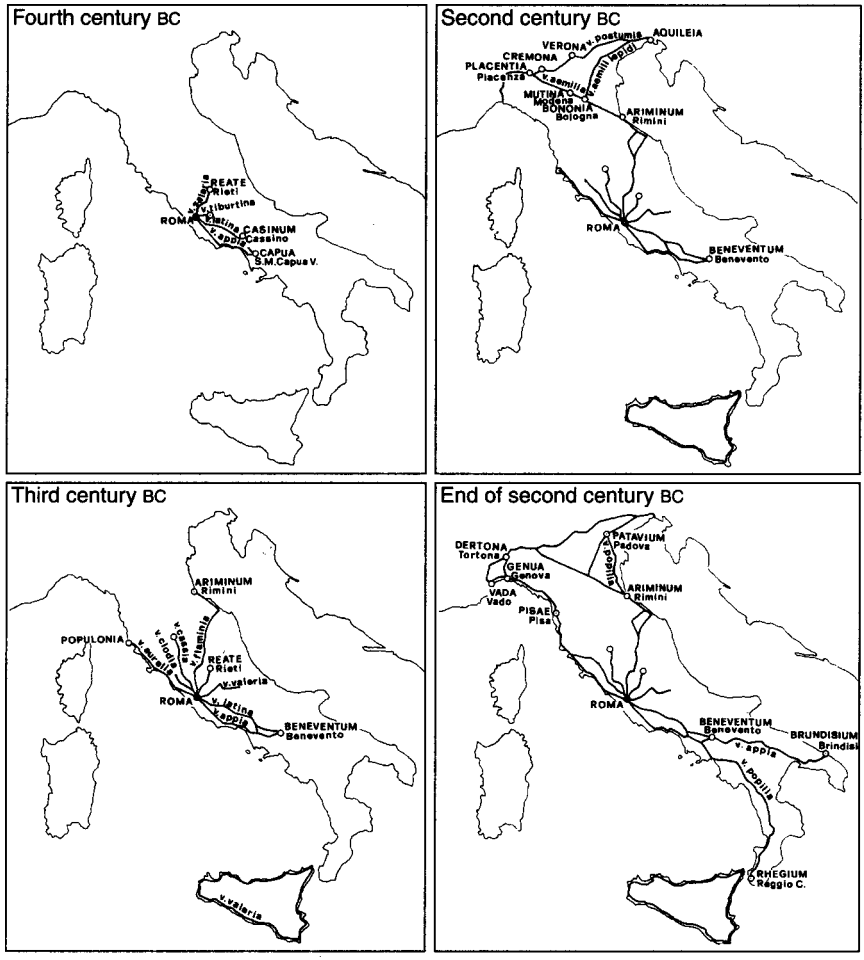
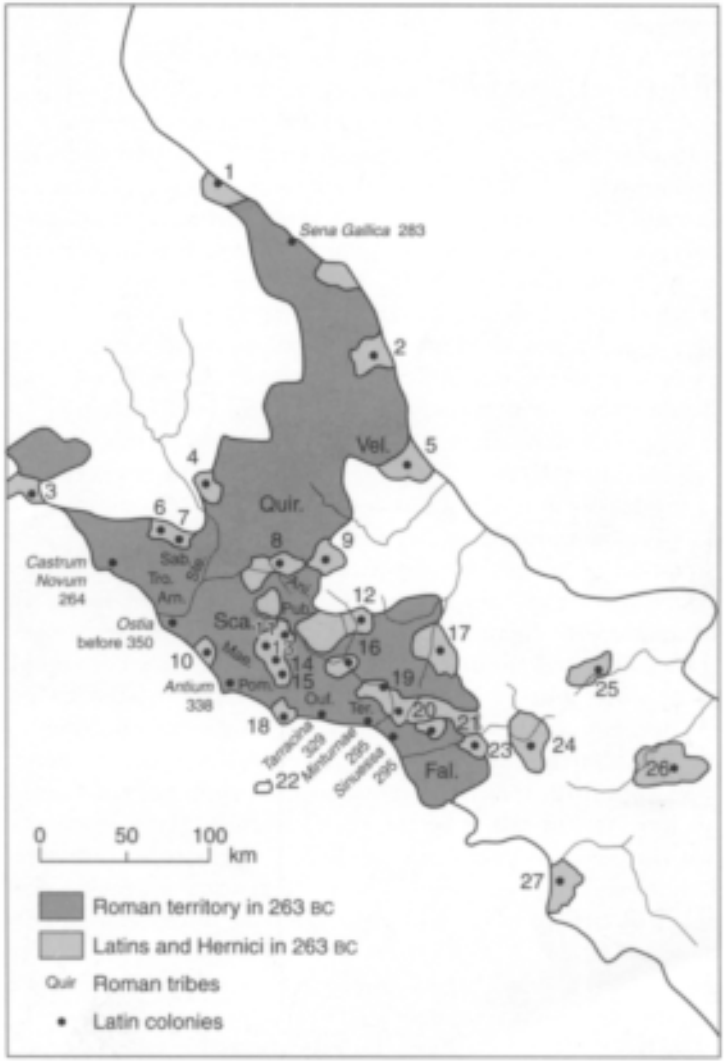


Figure 2.1 The development of the road system
Source: From Quilici, L. (1990) *Le strade Viabilità tra Roma e Lazio,* Edizioni Quasar

leadership by later sources. For example, in 296 BC, the Roman senate considered how they might protect Campania from the Samnites (Liv.10.21.7–10). They saw the solution in the foundation of colonies at Minturnae and Sinuessa (Coarelli 1988a:42; Lopes Penga 1950; Gianfrotta 1989 for relationship of colonies and road). These two colonies were not regarded as simple land assignments for plebians, but as garrisons against the Samnites. Minturnae close to the mouth of the River Liris at the point where the Via Appia crossed that river had a clear strategic importance (see Dominic Riegg 1986). But, at the same time, the two colonies formed a link between the more distant Rome and the Campanian cities (see Figure 2.2).

However, the building of the Via Appia should not be seen simply in relation to warfare that reinforced Rome's hegemony; it also had an importance for the internal politics of Rome itself. Appius Claudius as censor in Rome in 312 BC did something quite remarkable in building the road and aqueduct named after himself (note previous roads not named after a person, e.g. Via Salaria, Mazzarino 1968). It was innovative and set a pattern for the future. The ancient sources are clear that these two projects were seen as 'deathless monuments' to the censor (Diod. Sic. 20.36: Frontin. Aqu. 1.4; *ILS* 54; Liv. 9.29, *Per.* 9; Stat. *Silv.* 2.2.98; Figure 2.1). In effect, as Diodorus points out, the projects were upon a new scale of magnitude that consumed the entire revenue of the Roman state in the interests of the people of Rome. Thus, as censor, Appius Claudius broke with a tradition of relatively small-scale projects and pushed for his scheme to be adopted in the face of opposition from the consuls. Similarly, in his duties as censor, Appius was equally innovative. He enrolled the sons of freed slaves into the senate for the first time. He enrolled citizens in whatever tribe and census class they wished to be in. Overall, he was said to have considered the senate less important than the people (Diod. 20.36). This view of the role of the people presents an image of Rome that is difficult to square with the modern view that Rome's allies remained loyal due to the allegiance and emulation of Rome by their elites. The appeal here is not to the elite, but to those who are traditionally seen to be less politically important, yet active in fighting for Rome and the allied cities.

The actual task of the construction of the road itself can also be seen to have been an appeal to Rome's citizens and the peoples of the Campanian cities, who were not members of the political elite. Many of our sources suggest that the road was paved in stone in 312 BC, but this can seen to be anachronistic since Livy's account of the third century BC makes much of the paving of sections of the Via Appia after its initial construction by Appius Claudius (10.23, 10.47). I think we need to think of the structure of the road in 312 BC as made up of compacted gravel to a width of eight Roman feet, the legal minimum width of a road (for example, in the Twelve Tables—*Dig.* 8.3.8; Humm 1996:700–4). The route taken would have required considerable labour costs, since drainage work in the Pontine Marshes and the creation of cuttings and embankments in the upland regions through which the road ran could only have been achieved by human labour. The contracting out of the work would have made a considerable number of people obliged to Appius Claudius. Indeed, it has been suggested that the need to pay for the work led to the issue of a particular coin type for the purpose (Crawford 1985:29, followed by Humm 1996). Significantly, these coins follow the contemporary weight standards of Campania. Crawford would go as far to suggest that coinage was a new phenomenon in Italy in the fourth century BC and the Roman issue with the head of Mars and a



horse's head with the legend *Romano* on it (Crawford 1974: no.13/1) was used to pay for the construction of the road itself.

The exclusive association of the road with Rome's Campanian allies is made clear by the fact that the section of road through the Pontine Marshes does not intersect with major settlements until it reaches the coast at Terracina (a Roman colony from 329 BC, Rita Mari *et al.* 1988).The building of the road was associated with the establishment of settlements on the road itself, for example, Appius established the town known as Forum Appii. Indeed, it would seem that Appius Claudius gained a vast number

KEY

Latin colonies, with dates (BC)
1 Ariminum, 268
2 Firmum, 264
3 Cosa, 273
4 Narnia, 299
5 Hadria, 290–86
6 Sutrium, 383
7 Nepet, 383
8 Carseoli, 298
9 Alba Fucens, 303
10 Ardea, 442
11 Signia, 495
12 Sora, 303
13 Cora, before 500
14 Norba, 492
15 Setia, 383
16 Fregellae, 328
17 Aesernia, 263
18 Circeii, 393
19 Interamna, 312
20 Suessa Aurunca, 313
21 Cales, 334
22 Pontia, 313
23 Saticula, 313
24 Beneventum, 268
25 Luceria, 314
26 Venusia, 291
27 Paestum, 273

Roman tribes, with dates (BC)
Arn. Arniensi, 387
Sab. Sabatina, 387
Ste. Stellatina, 387
Tro. Tromentina, 387
Pom. Pomptina, 358
Pub. Publilia, 358
Mae. Maecia, 332
Sca. Scaptia, 332
Fal. Falerna, 318
Ouf. Oufentina, 318
Ani. Aniensis, 299
Ter. Teretina, 299
Qui. Quirina, 241
Vel. Velina, 241

Figure 2.2 Roman settlement and colonisation down to 241 BC
Source: Cornell,T. (1995) *The Beginnings of Rome,* Routledge

of clients from those involved in the building of the road itself, those settled in the Pontine region and maybe also the citizens of Campania. This seems to be implicit from events in the third century BC; the people of Forum Appii set up a statue of one of Appius Claudius's descendants with a crown on its head. That person, a Claudius Drussus in our source, was said to have initiated a plot to seize Italy through his dependents (Suet. *Tib*. 2). Although the details are unclear, what is striking is the emphasis on the number of clients in this region with an allegiance to the Claudian family (Humm 1996:735) and what was aimed at was the seizure of Italy rather than Rome. The latter seems all too likely in the context of this region which was between Rome and Capua as the source of the plot. The connections of Appius Claudius's family extended beyond Rome to the cities of Campania.

The building of the Via Appia in gravel was probably undertaken over a period of five years down to 308 BC. The project established road building as a key feature of the activity of the Roman state: the next censors, Marcus Valerius Maximus and Gaius Junius Bubulcus, built roads through the *ager publicus* (public lands) at a cost to the state in 307 BC (Liv.9.43.25). Work on the Via Appia did not end in 308 BC. A series of inititiatives were taken to improve its surface: in 295 BC, a path in square blocks was completed from the Porta Capena to the Temple of Mars (Liv.10.23) along the course of the initial section of the road. Following on from this improvement, the section of the Via Appia from the Temple of Mars to Bovillae (10 miles from Rome) was paved with *silex* (some form of hard stone, a limestone or a basalt, Liv.10.47). The funding for these two projects came from the fines imposed on pastoralists, who had exceeded the restrictions of the Lex Licinia of 367 BC (for details see App.B.C.1.8.33; Varro *R.R.* 1.2.9 and bibliography Cornell 1995a:329). The connection points to the measure as one that would appeal to the non-elite and was promoted in both cases by the aediles. Just over a hundred years later in 189 BC the first section of the Via Appia to the temple of Mars was paved with *silex* by order of the censors (Liv.38.28; Coarelli 1988a:37 suggests further sections were paved in limestone on basis of milestone *ILLRP* 448, but notice that the first 13 km of the road are on an outcrop of *selce* Quilici 1990; Arthur 1991:49 suggest road not paved till 191 BC). What is clear is that from the early fourth century the Via Appia was a key road that was paved from Bovillae to the city of Rome. It was the route along which ambassadors and visitors from the cities of Campania and the other cities of southern Italy used to travel to Rome. The paving of the road itself would seem to mark a point of proximity to Rome that would have been reinforced by the view of the city from Bovillae (for topography see Quilici 1989a, 1989b; Maria de Rossi 1979).

Although we might see the Via Appia as a construction to bring Campania into closer contact with Rome and as a technology of power in the conquest of the Samnites, it should not be seen in purely functional terms of army supply or basic contact between peoples. As a monument, the Via Appia symbolised Rome's permanence in the region and its power to mobilise resources to alter the landscape of the Pontine Marshes (Quilici 1990; Cancellieri 1990; Cornell 1995a:354; note that the landscape need not be characterised as a pestilence ridden marsh, Attema 1993 *contra* Brunt 1971:349). It had a powerful significance that is brought out through the actions of the Curule Aediles, who in 295 BC paved a path *(semita)* from the Porta Capena to the Temple of Mars. The action of paving the road to the Temple of Mars points to a desire to connect Rome's god of war and agriculture, whose temple was located outside the walls of the city itself. At the same time, these Aediles also set up a statue of Jupiter in a four-horse chariot on the roof of the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol; while at the *Ficus Ruminalis,* the place where the twins Romulus and Remus

were said to have been found by the she-wolf, statues of the infants were set up beneath the extant statue of the she-wolf (Liv.10.23.12; see Wiseman 1995:72–6 on this statue group). These actions taken together can be seen to emphasise to the visitor coming to Rome a view of that city, its identity and place in the world. The visitor would have encountered the Temple of Mars outside the city walls and been conscious of a new road surface in stone blocks. It is almost as though the traveller had arrived at the city since now the road was paved, the point of arrival was also marked by the Temple of Mars—Rome's war god. Once within the city, the emphasis on successful warfare was maintained through the statue of Jupiter in a triumphal chariot on the Capitoline temple. The images of Romulus and Remus as twin founders of the city alongside the wolf would add to this general imagery. It is not coincidental that a reported portent included both the statue of Mars and statues of the wolves in the city in 217 BC (Liv.22.1.12). The imagery set up and the connections made by the paving of the Via Appia from the Temple of Mars to the Porta Capena created a connective architecture back to the city gate, which was continued through to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitol itself.

However, for those travelling to Rome along the Via Appia, the imagery of Rome was present almost as soon as the traveller left Campania. The colonies at Minturnae and Terracina sited on the road itself encapsulated a vision of Roman power—it is notable that these colonies were not thought of by their colonists as settlements but as garrisons of Roman citizens/ soldiers (Liv.10.21.7; 27.38.3; 36.3.5–6). Importantly, it was in the colonies of this region as well as in Rome that the booty captured from the Samnites in 293 BC was displayed in the temples and in other public buildings (Liv.10.46). Further, the landscape of the Pontine region could be seen to demonstrate Rome's hegemony over nature and an ability to create an ordered landscape from the wilderness of marshland (on the relationship of physical landscape and hegemony see Cox 1987:13). The geometric forms of the colonies and the centuriated landscapes would have created an image of territorial control, alongside the colonial settlement of Roman citizens, prior to a traveller's arrival within the city of Rome itself. The journey to Rome was one which gradually revealed elements of Roman culture to the visitor or ambassador from southern Italy.

The meaning of the cultural landscape of the Via Appia to those unfamiliar or partially familiar with Roman culture is difficult to gauge due to the ambiguity of the culture itself. The Roman sources have a habit of defining Romans as different from other cultures without saying what their culture actually comprised. However, it is possible to unravel some of the key elements and when viewed together they form a cultural explanation of the nature of Roman hegemony and the extension of Roman influence beyond its city state and its neighbours. The existence of a road 115 miles in length with colonies of citizen soldiers sited along

it points to an escalation of the distance at which Rome directly intervened in the affairs of the Samnites and the Campanian cities. But such action should not be seen in isolation from the formation of a mythology of Rome's foundation based on the Romulus and Remus myth (see Wiseman 1995 for full explanation of myth formation). After all, Romulus was said to have built a *Roma Quadrata* and set up colonies in conquered cities—both similar to the colonies of Minturnae and elsewhere (Humm 1996:720; Castagnoli 1993:179–87 on *Roma Quadrata;* Cassola 1988:5 on tradition of colonisation). Those from southern Italy might have viewed Rome within the Greek tradition of colonisation in Italy during the eighth and seventh centuries BC at places such as Cumae and Naples in Campania (on Greek influence on Roman colonial pattern Castagnoli 1993:222–3). However, it should be noted that the mythology articulated for Rome's foundation should be related to those fleeing Troy with Aeneas and a foundation by Romulus of the city. The Roman foundation myth creates a difference between the city of Rome and the Greek cities of Campania (Wiseman 1995), yet defines that difference within the language of mythical foundation stories that were current in the Greek cities of Italy. This all points to a cultural change that relates Rome more closely with Greek ideals of the city and helps to explain the desire to create roads such as the Via Appia. The road takes its name from a person and is similar to the Macedonian

Figure 2.3 Via Appia: bridge at Beneventum

roads named after monarchs. Indeed, Humm (1996:735) has argued that the construction by Appius Claudius of Forum Appii, an aqueduct and a road are all actions of a Greek monarch or Greek tyrant. Further, Greek influences can be seen in the geometry of the course of the road through the Pontine marshes that depends on Pythagorian principles in the creation of a rational landscape out of the chaos of marshland (Humm 1996: 718; Cancellieri 1990; Quilici 1987; Lugli 1926). The parallel of Hercules bringing agriculture and founding cities after the defeat of the giants in Campania comes to mind here (Laurence 1996a) or building roads through the Alps (Diod.Sic.4.19.3). Rome may have seen herself or have chosen to display her actions in terms that the Greek city states of Campania could relate to, yet at the same time emphasised a difference or even a superiority in the transformation of the landscape and the symbolic representation of her own foundation. In terms of Roman hegemony, this all points to a use of the language of the Greek city state and the empire of Macedon on the part of Rome. The Via Appia, seemingly a deathless monument to Appius Claudius, was tangible evidence of Rome's power and influence to the cities of Campania and beyond. This in itself is a sign of Rome's attempt to speak the language of her new-found Campanian allies and to associate their political and cultural interests with those of Rome. Thus, the building of the Via Appia was far more than a strategic undertaking in a war against the Samnites. It was fundamental to an attempt to establish Rome as the hegemonic leader of the cities in southern Italy.

The Via Flaminia

The building of the Via Flaminia almost one hundred years later occurred under quite different circumstances, but reveals a very similar preoccupation with plebian politics (for topography see Ashby and Fell 1921—the fundamental study; for sources see Radke 1981:188–239). The building of the road created a greater unity between Rome and her colonies in central Italy. The road was built from Rome to the colony at Rimini on the Adriatic coast. It created a new geography that unified a number of colonial settlements at a distance from Rome: Narnia, the Ager Sabinus, Spoleto, the Ager Gallicus and Sena Gallica (see Figure 2.2). The linkage of these separate entities should be seen as an attempt to consolidate the territory of Roman and Latin colonists and to link that territory to Rome. To the north of Rimini were the 'Gallic' tribes, who in no way fitted into the world order of city states established by Rome in Italy in the earlier century (Mansuelli 1971:34 notes distinction in nucleated settlement pattern). In fact, the Gallic tribes were the necessary ideological enemies of Rome in terms of culture, ethnicity and history (Williams 1997 for critical view of this distinction).

Rome's involvement in the region prior to the building of the Via Flaminia needs to be examined to understand the geographical significance of the road built in 220 BC. The Roman conquest of the region had been relatively rapid. A colony had been founded at Narnia in 299 BC (Liv. 10.9–10) and at Spoleto in 241 BC. In the same period colonies had been founded on the Adriatic coast at Sena Gallica (284 BC) and Rimini (268 BC). In addition, in 232 BC, Gaius Flaminius, a tribune of the plebs, proposed and passed a law to distribute the land between the colony of Rimini and Picenum as individual plots to Roman citizens (Dall'Aglio 1991–3). This measure can be seen to be in line with the wishes not of the senate but of the people (Polyb. 2.21; Cato *Orig.* fr. 43P; Cic. *Sen.* 411; *Brut.* 14.57; Val. Max. 5.4.5; Gargola 1995:103–4; Gabba 1979). It was Gaius Flaminius, who built the Via Flaminia during his censorship in 220 BC (Liv. *Per.* 20). His reasons for doing so can be seen as a result of his military campaigns against the Gauls. In 223 BC he had led an army across the River Po during his consulship. The Via Flaminia with its destination at the colony of Rimini, alongside the *viritim* distribution of land in the surrounding area of 232 BC, can be seen simply in terms of Roman imperial expansion generated by a demand for land for the citizens and the allies of Rome — after all in the next century Rome was to expand into the Po plain. But there is more to this than simple strategic expansion.

The Via Flaminia, known as the Via Recta (Liv. 32.29.6—straight road), may have been based on earlier routes between the towns of Umbria and across the Apennines to the low-lying coastal region around Rimini (on coastal region see Luni 1984). What is clear though is that the building of the Via Flaminia created a view of the region and defined it as a single territory. Strabo (5.2.10=227C) is clear on this: 'If you travel from Ariminum (Rimini) toward Rome along the Via Flaminia through Umbria your whole journey as far as Ocriculum and the Tiber, is 1350 stadia. This then is the length of Umbria.' He then goes on to enumerate the towns on the road itself (e.g. Carsulae, Figure 2.4) and then the towns to the left and right of the road. The region was defined in terms of length by the road, a subject we will return to later in Chapter 12. But we should also view the Via Flaminia in terms of the connectivity between the colonies and Rome itself. The building of the road reinforced the control of colonies at a distance from Rome. Access to the city was easier for the colonists and Rome's control over the actions of the colonies was also reinforced once the road was in use from 217 BC (Liv. 22.11.5). The colonies were required to provide troops for the army. Even during the Hannibalic War, the majority of colonies provided the number of recruits requested. Those who did not in effect questioned Rome's control over them (e.g. in 209 BC, Liv. 27.9–10). Twelve colonies, including Narnia, in effect made themselves exempt from Roman hegemonic control by their refusal to provide recruits. In response to this, Rome exacted

Figure 2.4 Via Flaminia at Carsulae

through diplomacy a double levy with an expectation that the most wealthy would have been chosen as preferred recruits (Liv.29.15.5). Here, we see measures taken against the elite of neighbouring colonies. In the case of Narnia, it would seem that the colonial population was made unstable and no longer reproduced itself by 199 BC, when the colony was reinforced by new colonists. Significantly, other colonies were in a similar position, for example, Cosa which was not reinforced at the time (Liv.32.2). This might suggest that the colonies on the Via Flaminia had a greater importance for Rome at this time, and the maintenance of their loyalty and continuity of settlement was seen to have a particular importance. It is significant that later the Via Flaminia rather than the Via Aurelia became the major route of communication to Gaul and the north-west provinces. We may conclude that the road was a device for connecting the colonies to Rome and for the creation of a new geography that was Rome-centred for the northern half of central Italy.

The Via Aemilia

There is a temptation to view the settlement of colonies and the building of the Via Aemilia in the light of later developments in the Roman empire of both frontiers (Dyson 1985; for sources referring to the Via Aemila see Radke 1981:241–60) and provincial landscapes (Purcell 1990). Such views

tend to create an unnecessary level of continuity between interventions in the landscape that were quite different in their historical context. True the building of a road from a colony, Rimini, to another colony, Placentia, does represent a change in Roman mentalité, as Purcell (1990) stresses. But the nature of that change was unique and should be seen in the context of Cisalpine Gaul in the late third and early second centuries BC only (compare Mansuelli 1971:38–51). Moreover, in terms of Roman discourse on the subject of colonies and conquered territory, it marks a fundamental change that was a response to the challenge to Roman hegemony made by the Boii and Insubres during the Hannibalic wars (Harris 1989:110). Rome had founded colonies in this area at Cremona and Placentia shortly after the construction of the Via Flaminia and certainly the town walls of these two colonies had been built by 218 BC (Chevallier 1983:7–8; Liv.21.25; 21.56.8). These towns were an issue of contention for the Boii and Insubres and a cause for them to revolt against Rome in the Hannibalic war. Many of the original colonists simply left, in spite of a decree by the senate for citizens of these colonies to return to them (Liv.38.11). The destruction of Placentia in 200 BC was remembered by them and it was with difficulty that the Praetor Gaius Helvius compelled them to return to the two cities (Liv.32.26). Ten years later, after a peace settlement in which the Boii lost half their land and allowed Roman colonists to settle on this territory (Liv.36.39.4), the shortage in the population of Cremona and Placentia was made up by the addition of 6,000 new colonists to these two places (Liv.37.46.9–11; see Mansuelli 1971:31–7). The control of territory here would appear to be unique. Polybius (2.35.4) and Strabo (5.1.6=213C) viewed Rome's actions in the area as a total expulsion of the Boii and the Insubres. As a result, a vast empty space was available to be colonised by the citizens of Rome and her allies (but there may be some continuity between pre-Roman and Roman settlements that we do not recognise archaeologically—Mansuelli 1971:19–20). During 189 BC, a Latin colony of 3,000 men was settled at Bononia (Liv.37.57.7). Two years later the Via Aemilia was set up through the major colonies by the consul Marcus Aemilius, in order to provide a link back to Rimini on a more formal basis (Liv.39–2.10). An additional road was also built from Arretium to Bononia known as the Via Flaminia minore (Alfieri 1975–6, 1976; and Dall'Aglio and Dall'Aglio 1978–9; Chevallier 1983:30 on the importance of Arretium in conquest of northern Italy; Ripparbelli 1981 on road systems in northern Etruria). Other roads across the Apennines were built, for example, from the colony of Lucca to Placentia (Banti 1932). These roads cut across earlier centuriation grids (Purcell 1990:16), which would suggest that road building was an addition to the colonial landscape, rather than a necessary part of that landscape (but see Campbell 1996 on re-surveying of landscapes). What is clear, though, is that there was an effort to build not just the road known as the Via Aemilia but others to

link the recent colonies in Cisalpine Gaul across the Apennines to the colonies of northern Etruria at Arretium and Lucca.

The building of these roads between colonies was a new phenomenon, but it should be seen in the light of the building of the Via Flaminia, between Rome and its colonies at Narnia, Spoletum and Rimini. The roads linked the colonies together and created a unity between them, even though they were distant from one another. Having fashioned a new form of landscape, certainly in Cisalpine Gaul but also in other parts of central Italy, based on the colony of citizens and allies, it was necessary to establish a spatial connection between these disunited places to create a cohesion within Rome's territory. Typically the roads cross mountains and form a new geography that cannot be accounted for according to physical region or defined by ranges of mountains, river valleys, coastlines. Just as centuriation at times took little heed of physical features, so too did the roads constructed in the late third and early second centuries BC. The establishment of the roads also changed the temporal geography of distance, since the road, a gravel all-weather surface, would have facilitated the movement of peoples and goods. This factor may have been crucial to a colony's success; as places in 'another person's home' (Cic. *Off.* 1.54) the colonists needed to feel culturally part of a Roman world order rather than in an alien environment. The roads were routes for the army to fight against the Ligurians or the Gauls north of the River Po. The colonies on the roads provided safe stopping points for the army and a place for the production of supplies to the army itself. The scale of production for the army should not be underestimated and can be seen as a key factor in the urbanization of northern Italy in the second and first centuries BC.

A geography of empire?

We have seen how the construction of roads within Italy was strongly associated with the creation of direct links between Rome, her allies in the case of Campania, her colonies and peoples beyond her control, for example, the Ligurians of the early second century BC. The addition of further roads, including the extension of the Via Appia to Tarentum and then on to Brindisi (Lugli 1955; Uggeri 1977, 1988) and the building of the road from Capua to Rhegium (Cantarelli 1980–81), created a new spatial geography in Italy. The emphasis on connectivity between colonies should be associated with the ancient's view of space that stresses the route or order in which towns are placed above the territorial area within which they exist (see especially Nicolet 1990:13, 1991; Janni 1984 for developed version). Therefore, in building roads from the fourth to first centuries BC, Rome was creating a geography of Italy that stressed the connectivity between places. The road system in effect created a vision of Italy that was focused on two cities: Rome and Capua. It comes as no surprise that the contest for the hegemonic

leadership of Italy was conceptualised with these two cities in mind (Cic.*Leg.Agr.*2.78–99; Vassaly 1993:231–8). Indeed, in this context, the secession of Capua to Hannibal should not be over-surprising, nor should Rome's reaction to that secession after the Second Punic War. Once the consent of Capua to Rome's hegemonic leadership had been withdrawn, it was necessary to remove the threat of Capua by force (Laurence 1996b on the destruction of Capua). However, until the end of the third century BC, Rome had in effect created a unity of Italy with Capua and herself at its centre both in terms of space and hegemonic leadership (for an alternative viewpoint see Mouritsen 1998:68–9).After the capitulation of Capua, Rome became the single hegemonic leader, but the spatial arrangement of Italy continued to have a twin focus on both Rome and Capua. Equally, once Rome became involved in overseas conquest in the Mediterranean, the spatial pattern of her hegemonic leadership was altered to include Italy itself as part of her cultural and political home territory.This should not be surprising, since Rome's major ports tended to be colonies, for example, Brindisi, Puteoli or Terracina. In coming to Rome, visitors from other parts of Rome's empire would not have travelled direct by sea, but have arrived at Brindisi or Puteoli and then travelled through Italy to Rome itself overland. Those coming from the north, tended to travel by land through Aemilia and then on to Rome along the Via Flaminia. In effect, the visitor arrived at a version of Rome in setting foot in Italy—hence in terms of hegemony over such provinces as Africa from 146 BC, Rome and Italy became synonymous. After all, *tota Italia* by the mid-first century was populated by Roman citizens and in effect was Rome as much as the capital city itself.

3

TOWN FOUNDATION IN ROMAN ITALY 300–30 BC

The urban history of Italy has been dominated by the foundation of colonies by the Roman state. Few accounts consider other forms of urbanisation that probably created a far greater number of towns overall. The need to consider the alternatives to the colonial foundation and in particular *fora* has a particular relevance to the study of roads, since these settlements tend to appear on the major routes of Italy. The chapter provides a counter to the much studied subject of colonial foundations that have a greater prominence in our source material (see Salmon 1969 for overview). What I wish to show is that we need to consider alternative explanations to those of colonisation in our discussion of the creation of a landscape of cities in Italy from the fourth to the first centuries BC.

The history of colonial foundations is aided by Velleius Paterculus' listing and dating of colonies in book one of his *History of Rome*. Equally Pliny (*NH* 3), in enumerating the towns of Italy, picks out the colonies in that list of about 460 towns (note that it was composed from two lists Thomsen 1947:17–46). Other towns in the list are rightly regarded as *municipia* in the context of the first century AD. However, it needs to be stressed that the colonies and *municipia* do not represent the total sum of urban formations in the period of Roman colonisation in Italy. I wish to suggest in this chapter that the town formation known as a *forum* has a fundamental importance in the late third and early second centuries BC that does not appear at first sight in the historical record. The evidence is incomplete to a degree where much will remain unknown (for a brief account of the evidence see Ruoff Väänänen 1978). The study of *fora* has been hindered by a false assumption that these settlements were established at the time of road building by the constructor of the road, because some *fora* had similar names to that of the road (e.g. *Forum Clodi* on the Via Clodia). This link caused Radke (1981: 85–93) to suggest that all *fora* were originally the places that marked a significant mid-point on the new roads and the urban areas of the *fora* were laid out by the builder of each individual road. Radke's theory became entrenched as a dogma followed by many scholars in the interpretation of the settlements known as *fora* and the process of road building itself.

However, Wiseman has shown that such a hypothesis might be true in some cases, but certainly not in all cases of road building (Wiseman 1970). However, by following Radke's seemingly convincing hypothesis, the interpretation of the development of these lower order settlements has been seriously hindered and has caused them simply to be ignored.

The source material that there is points to the historical significance of these settlements in the development of the Italian landscape. It is apparent that some towns in Italy had become established by the end of the first century BC due to their position in the road system. Strabo (5.2.10=227C) suggests that Forum Flaminium, Forum Sempronia and another town known as Nuceria became established because the Via Flaminia existed. It is notable that not all of these towns were defined as similar in type: two are *fora,* but the other has a name that does not indicate its nature. Strabo is clear that these towns were not established for political reasons but because of the presence of the road. We might posit an economic role for them based upon this evidence and Whittaker (1995b:9) would associate *fora,* along with *vici, castella* and *conciliabula,* with rural markets of a similar nature (e.g. a *conciliabulum* Lucus Pisaurensis; Moscatelli and Vettorazzi 1988:17). Yet, as I will show from the evidence, some were certainly urban formations, for example, Forum Novum in the Sabina later became a *municipium* (Figure 3.1)

Figure 3.1 Forum Novum: basilica lies under the canopies to the right close to the actual forum, to the left the large tomb forms the edge of the monumental centre

Pliny's listing of towns in Italy in *Natural History,* book III, follows the Augustan system of listing the colonies founded by Roman state first and then listing the other towns under a general category of *oppida* (towns); included in this group were a number of *fora* (3.52; 3.115–16). This categorisation would suggest that the *fora* listed were urban formations which were similar in their nature to other towns; for example, in Etruria, Forum Clodii is listed alongside Tarquinia and Blera among others (3.52). Therefore, some settlements called *fora* were viewed as towns by the Augustan period. Pliny lists seventeen *fora* in total, with most of these located in the Aemilia and associated with the consular road of the same name.

The nature of *fora*

To understand the relationship of these *fora* in the context of the urban pattern of Italy, we have to account for their development and try to establish how these towns were founded originally. Pliny lets us know the end result, seventeen *fora* that were in the first century AD considered to be towns, but provides no information on their foundation, nor about other *fora* that would not have conformed to his category of towns. To understand the development of the *fora,* we need to move back into the period of their foundation. Livy's account of this earlier period first mentions *fora* in discussing a more vigorous method for the recruitment of the army in 212 BC (Liv. 25.5.6). He mentions a Forum Subertanum in 211 BC, where a portent occurred (26.23.5). He then generally refers to *fora* as places for the diffusion and enforcement of the state's will in 204, 186, 181 and 169 BC in connection with the recruitment of soldiers or the sale of salt by the state (29.37; 39.14.7; 40.19; 43.14.6–10). Thus, it would seem that in the late third century and into the second century the *fora* appear to be a means for the Roman state to recruit soldiers to the army and, generally, were local centres through which the magistrates of the Roman state enforced the law.

Attention needs to be paid to the nature of these settlements. We need to ask questions about their social and economic purpose—especially since Strabo was categorical that the two *fora* on the Via Flaminia were not settled for reasons of political organisation. The literary sources tend not to discuss such matters directly. Festus (74L) is key to our understanding of the Roman use of the term *forum* when referring to a settlement. He suggests that *fora* were places for trade and exchange, their name, for example Forum Flaminiam, indicates the person who presided over the establishment of the settlement. Later, because people came to the settlement, they became places for trying legal cases and for holding political meetings *(contiones)*.

Festus's definition of the word *forum* is clear, but that clarity in many cases has been disrupted by over-interpretation of the information by twentieth-century historians to explain the establishment of particular *fora* in Italy. Festus's explanation, that *fora* took their name from the person

who established them, has led historians to attempt to match a particular *forum* with the known activities of a Roman magistrate in the area (e.g. Dyson 1985: 117). Here many have hoped to establish an exact chronology for the establishment of the *fora,* but the unknown examples are greater than those that have any certainty. In any case, it is not certain that the person who established the *forum* was a magistrate, let alone a consul or praetor. All Festus says is that the *forum* could take its name from the person presiding over its creation. In seeking a chronology for these towns, historians have consistently referred back to their only known chronology—that of Roman magistrates. The validity of such a procedure does not seem to be justified in the light of the extant source material. The foundation of *fora* unlike that of colonies was not of direct concern to the annually elected magistrates in Rome.

Our major piece of evidence, the Elogium of Polla (*ILLRP* 454), recording the establishment of a *forum,* has been considerably debated because historians have overstressed the need to integrate this piece of evidence in the light of a Roman chronology built up from the Roman literary sources (Bracco 1954, 1960, 1962; Ferrua 1955; Verbrugghe 1973; Wiseman 1970). As an elogium, the inscription records the major actions that were relevant to the location (Polla). These actions are listed separately as follows:

1 The building of a road from Capua to Rhegium, built the bridges and set up the milestones. There is then a list of distances to towns on the road.
2 As a Praetor, he returned 917 slaves from Sicily to their masters in Italy.
3 He was the first to cause pastoralists to become arable farmers.
4 He built the forum and temples of the people.

The forum at Polla was built in the same lifetime as the road, perhaps the Via Popilia, and should be given a similar second-century date. It would seem that others were building *fora* in the region—a *Forum Anni* was built certainly by 73 BC (Sall. Hist. 98). Much debate revolves around the nature of the word forum in this context. Does it mean the town or simply a forum or open space for markets in front of the temples? I think we should really say that a forum was composed of both these elements, because the nature of the nucleated town formation known as a forum need not have been more than a temple and an open space. For example, Forum Novum, later a *municipium* with basilica, baths and a campus (see Filippi 1989 for discussion of the epigraphic record, compare with Cenerini 1992a, 1992b on Forum Popilii and Forum Livii; compare Crawford 1995 on Cingulum), may have originally have been an open paved area for markets with a number of temples. This is made clear from the martyrdom text accounting for the death of Bassus under Diocletian—Forum Novum is described as the place where markets are held and where the people of the area sacrifice to Bacchus, Ceres and Liber (*Vitae Sanctorum* 316, 11 May;

Evans 1939:41) and is the place in which justice was done, as well as a burial centre (Figure 3.2). More work at this site will reveal the extent of the urban population (see Patterson and Millett 1998:13–14).The Elogium of Polla points not just to the creation of a *forum,* but positions that place with respect to its neighbouring cities by giving the distances to Consentia, Capua, Nuceria and Rhegium.This locates the new *forum* in the landscape and marks it out as a new place.The emphasis on the career of the individual involved in the inscription and in particular his activities as Praetor in Sicily demonstrates the association between such public figures from Rome in the creation of the new urban landscape.

Figure 3.2 Grave stele from Forum Novum reused in the building of medieval Selci

The process of the foundation of *fora* can be demonstrated to have taken place with reference to Pliny's description of Italy. The lists of *oppida* include references to *fora* that provide indications of the process of their foundation. Significantly, Forum Populi is listed as *Foropopulienses ex Falerno* or Forum Populi from the territory of Falernum (N.H.3.63–4). This form of classification would appear to refer to territory in Latium that had been confiscated or reorganised by Rome. In Etruria we find another example of this process: Forum Clodi is listed via the phrase *Praefectura Claudia Foroclodi* (*N.H.*3.52), which suggests that the *Praefectura Claudia* was an area of territory organised for direct administration by Rome and at its centre was the town called *Forum Clodi*. Such nomenclature of the *fora* associates them directly with confiscated land in recently conquered territory. Much of this land would have been appropriated for the settlement of colonists in a dispersed pattern of settlement in a centuriated landscape.

The Aemilia

Nowhere is this pattern clearer in our sources than those for the Aemilia. Pliny (*N.H.*3.115–6) alludes to the process of change in the region when he notes that Cato (in the second century BC) had enumerated 112 Gallic tribes of the Boii and the Senones which had inhabited this tract of land. However, they were dispossessed by Rome and the area was re-established with a new pattern to its landscape. A key element unifying the landscape was the Via Aemilia founded in 187 BC (Liv.39.2.10; *CIL* 11.6641, 6642, 6645; Pellegrini 1995 on topography), which linked the colonies of Ariminum, Bononia, Mutina, Parma and Placentia together (for colonies see Mansuelli 1971; Chevallier 1983:7–8 for chronology). These colonies continued as the major nucleated settlements of the region and were listed first by Pliny in his account. However, it would appear that they were not the only towns established in the region. Under the heading *oppida* we find the following entry:

> Caesena, Claterna, *Foro* Clodi, Livi, Popili, Truentinorum, Corneli, Licini, Faventini, Fidentini, Otesini, Padinates, Regienses a Lepido, Solonates, Saltusque Galliani qui cognominantur Aquinates, Tannetani, Veleiates cognomine veteri Regiates, Urbinates.
>
> (Pliny *NH.*3.115–6)

The list of towns in Pliny is alphabetical, but in this case there is a problem: the word *foro* halfway through would seem to refer not just to the following word, *Clodi,* but several. The question is how many? Clodi, Livi, Popili, Corneli, Licini and Regienses a Lepido all contain a reference to a Roman *gens* and appear likely to be *fora*. Regienses a Lepido would seem to be referred to by Festus (332L) by the name Forum Lepidii and should be included with

this group of *fora* and logically all the names in the list preceding it. Among the list of *fora* with reference to Roman *gentes,* we find Forum Truentinorum—perhaps a reference to a foundation by the people of Truentum in Picenum. Other names in the list suggest that they were new towns: Faventia (meaning 'being favourable'), Fidentia (meaning 'confidence' or 'boldness'), *Urbinates*. Others take on local names or names from the local topography: Padinates, Solonates, Saltusque Galliani and Tannetum (from the Gallic village, see Liv.21.25–6) and some are difficult to explain: Otesini and Veleiates. However, even if we could identify which of these town names the word *Foro* referred to we might still be missing the point, because it is clear that the name of the town as Forum 'whatever' could be referred to by another name: for example, Forum Lepidii was listed by Pliny as Regienses a Lepido. Elsewhere, Pliny (*N.H.*3.49) records that a Forum Fulvi in Liguria was also called Valentinum. These known changes in name from the designation by the word Forum would indicate that there were originally more *fora* than those designated as such by Pliny and other geographers. What is clear, though, is that the foundation of *fora* did establish a number of new settlements in certain parts of Italy conquered by Rome.

The establishment of the *fora* as new nucleated settlements in reclaimed land or conquered territory complements the much discussed colonial foundations in Italy. The latter would seem to be only part of the general pattern of town foundation. Many more towns were established by individuals or collective groups as *fora* at the focus of a centuriated landscape. These *fora* in some cases may have failed and fallen out of the historical record; in others they became important places in the road network of Italy. Their importance as stopping points in the transport network should not be overlooked or underestimated. This point comes out with reference to the Via Aemilia. Initially, the road linked the colonies of Ariminum, Bononia, Mutina, Parma and Placentia. The distance from Ariminum to Placentia was 164 Roman miles. Not surprisingly, the spacing between the colonies was far from ideal for transport based on a speed of twenty to forty miles per day (see Chapter 6 for discussion of speed of travel): the distance from Ariminum to Bononia was about sixty-nine miles, Bononia to Mutina twenty-five miles, Mutina to Parma thirty-two miles and from Parma to Placentia nearly thirty-nine miles. These distances between settlements were reduced once the other towns *(oppida)* or *fora* had been established: the greatest distance between towns was twenty miles, with the shortest distance at only five miles and an average distance of about twelve miles between towns on the road.

The importance of the Via Aemila for the organisation of the settlement pattern in this region cannot be underestimated. All the colonies in the region, with the exception of Brixellum, and nine out of the eighteen *oppida* listed by Pliny were sited on the road. Other towns were situated away from the transport network, for example, Veleia. However, many of

these settlements outside the road system tend not to be mentioned by the later geographer Ptolemy or in the Antonine Itineraries. These places disappear from the later geographical sources in any case. Even *fora* on the major roads are often simply not mentioned in Ptolemy's lists of *poleis*. For example, on the Via Aemilia, he lists (Ptol.Geog.3.1.42) the colonies, Placentia, Mutina, Bononia and Parma, alongside the other towns: Rhegium Lepidum and Fidentia (as colonies), Tannetum, Claterna, Forum Cornelii, Caesena and Faventia. It would appear that, for Ptolemy, Forum Livi and Forum Popili were not within his category of *poleis*. This list mirrors the shorter listing given by Strabo (5.1.11=216–7C), in which he lists the colonies as *poleis* (Placentia, Cremona, Ariminum, Parma, Mutina and Bononia) and then the *micro-poleis:* Rhegium Lepidum, Forum Corneli, Faventia and Caesena. Thus, many of the *fora* are simply not included in the geographer's lists of towns (e.g. Forum Gallorum App.*BC.*3.70; Cic.*Fam.*10.30.3; Forum Subertani Liv.26.23.5). This would suggest that although these *fora* may have originally been founded as prospective towns, many did not develop features that visitors would have recognised as distinctly urban. For example, Forum Gallorum on the Via Aemilia between Mutina and Bononia is specifically referred to as a *vicus* by Cicero (Fam.10.30.3). Clearly some *fora* developed more rapidly than others. Forum Gallorum may not have developed into an urban formation due to its location—only eleven miles from the colony at Mutina and fourteen miles from Bononia. Similarly, the later source, the Antonine Itineraries, mentions a number of *fora* in its lists of stopping points for specific journeys (100, 127.1 Forum Corneli; 107.4 Forum Appi; 125.5 Forum Flamini; 126.1 Forum Sempronia; 286.2 Forum Cassi; 287.1– 3 Forum Livi and Forum Corneli; 291.4 Forum Aureli), which do not appear in the earlier geographers. Sometimes the Antonine Itineraries provide clarification of the status of specific *fora:* Forum Corneli on the Via Aurelia is labelled as a *'civitas',* whereas Forum Flaminia on the Via Flaminia is labelled as a *'vicus'*. What is clear from the exclusion of some *fora* and inclusion of others in the town lists of Pliny, Strabo and Ptolemy and in the Antonine Itineraries is that many *fora* did not become urbanised and simply do not appear in the geographical record from the first century AD onwards.

However, the absence of named *fora* from the geographical writers should not reduce the historical significance of the *fora* in the development of the geographical structure of Roman Italy. It would appear that some *fora* changed their names through time, so that it is unclear if a town had been founded as a *forum* originally. The importance of *fora* in the late third and early second centuries BC alongside *vici* as the means of government outside Rome cannot be ignored. By the end of the first century BC *fora,* like colonies, *municipia, conciliabula* and *praefecturae,* all had a demarcated territory marked with boundary stones and their own town council or *ordo* (Anziani

1913:196; *CIL* 11.3310 and 3310a; also Laffi 1974). The *fora* were seen to have been distinct from colonies, *municipia* and *conciliabula,* but our sources only highlight their similarities with these types of settlements. However, *fora* were quite distinct from *vici,* since a *forum* administered a territory that was marked and was governed by an *ordo*.

The historical development of *fora*

The *fora* first appear in Livy from 212 through to 169 BC (Liv.25.5.6, 29–37, 39–14.7, 40.19, 43.14.6–10) and are in all cases associated with new forms of mobilising recruits and enforcing the will of the state. In each case, the *fora* acted as the place for recruitment of soldiers, for the sale of salt (a state monopoly) and for the enforcement of the decree concerning the Bacchanalia. In all of these cases, the Roman state would appear to be legislating and enforcing regulations upon Roman citizens, which suggests that the *fora* and *conciliabula* referred to were in land that was part of the *ager Romanus,* because the Roman state could not implement its will directly over allied territory without the co-operation of the individual ally. Thus, the *fora* were centres in the *ager Romanus,* in which Roman citizens were present in large numbers.

The dating would seem to be significant; it not only occurs in the major period of road building but also coincides with the major expansion in area of the *ager Romanus* (or territory under direct control of the Roman state) in the third and second centuries BC. To understand the process of town foundation in the *ager Romanus,* we need briefly to examine the way in which Rome treated conquered territory. The historical tradition is reported by Livy that conquered territory was frequently broken up into individual plots and divided among the citizens (Liv.1.46.1, 4.48.1, 5.24, 40.38.1–7, 41.16.7–8, 42.4.3–4). The process was set out by Appian (*B.C.*1.7) as follows:

> The Romans as they subdued the Italian peoples successively in war, used to seize a part of their lands and build towns *(poleis)* there, or enrol colonists of their own to occupy those (towns) already existing and their idea was to use them as outposts; but of the land acquired by war they assigned the cultivated part forthwith to the colonists or sold or leased it.
>
> (Appian *B.C.*1.7)

The alternatives of settling citizens on the land, selling it or leasing it to others created the characteristic Roman landscape of the *ager Romanus*. The land that was sold in many cases became acquired by the wealthy landowners who are familiar to us from Cato's *De Agricultura,* with villas associated with large-scale investment in agricultural improvement, including

drainage and irrigation. On the other hand, we find alongside these villas the settlement of the *populus* or *plebs* in small farms of less than fifty *iugera*. The landscape would have been dramatically changed through centuriation, which may well have been conducted prior to the occupation of the land by Roman citizens, whether by distribution to plebians or sale to the elite. The apparent uniformity of this centuriated landscape on maps obscures the reality of a complex pattern of agriculture that varied according to wealth with alternative patterns of labour, crops and scale of production. Not surprisingly, the foundation or takeover of existing towns was envisaged—after all the emphasis on agriculture in the newly conquered territory would require a town or central place in the conception or mentalité of a Roman landscape that associated agriculture with urbanism. The new towns in the *ager Romanus* were not always colonial towns, such as Cremona, which we can easily identify in the historical record, nor can we account for them simply by suggesting that the settlers took over existing towns. Many *viritim* distributions of land simply did not focus upon the foundation of a single town as the colonial settlement. The senate set up a board of ten men to administer the settlement and distribution of plots to citizens, Latins and allies. What is clear is that for a *viritim* distribution of land to occur the area needed to be thoroughly pacified. There is a strong contrast between this type of settlement and the establishment of what are termed colonies, for example, Ariminum in 268 BC, where there was a need for the town as a centre of defence against a hostile population. The *viritim* settlement of the territory was only proposed more than a generation later. The gap between the establishment of colonies and *viritim* settlements would seem to have been similar to the gap between initial foundation of a colony and road building to connect that colony with Rome. Thus, the *viritim* division of land in the *ager Romanus,* like road building, should be seen as the final development of conquered territory into a Roman landscape, if only the first major stage in the development of a clearly Roman practice of agricultural exploitation.

However, missing from the landscape of *viritim* division and sale of land were towns. No mention is made in any of the sources of the founding of towns at the same time. Yet, if we look at the areas in which we know of historical instances of *viritim* land distribution, we find numerous towns and significant urban development alongside road building at the same time; a process or, at least a set of circumstances that we are already familiar with from discussion of the Elogium of Polla. However, if we examine the list of *decemviri* involved in the *viritim* distribution of lands in the *agri Ligustini et Gallici* in 173 BC, we may have a clue to the origins of some of *the fora* in this region. The list of *decemviri* includes M. Aemilius Lepidus, the man who built the Via Aemilia in 187 BC and is associated with the foundation of Rhegium Lepidum formally known as Forum Lepidi. Similarly, we can associate Forum Corneli with Publius Cornelius Cethegus, another

decemvir. Also on the list of *decemviri* is a Gaius Solonius, whom we might want to associate with the foundation of the town of Solonates in Pliny's first century AD list of *oppida* in the region. Moreover, the inclusion of allies in the *viritim* distribution of land in 173 BC might explain the town name of Forum Truentinorum demonstrating a link to the allied town of Truentum in Picenum and we may assume that land was distributed to settlers from Truentum close to Forum Truentinorum. This potentially shows a link between the *viritim* settlement of 173 BC with the foundation of a number of *fora* from Pliny's list. But I think we could be in danger of linking the two elements of the *viritim* settlement of 173 BC and town development in the form of *fora* too closely. Some may have been founded in the year/s of the *viritim* distribution, but not all of the *fora* take their names from the *gens* of the individual *decemviri* responsible for the distribution of land. It seems more likely that the *fora* were established at some time later, once the need for a central place developed Town names such as Urbinates suggest that this town may have simply developed in a landscape that was distinctly rural. Those *fora* in the Aemilia naming a specific *gens* could either be seen as a means of honouring the local patron; or we might view the *fora* as established by the *gens*.

The connection between *viritim* settlements and the establishment of *fora* would appear to be a strong one. Certainly, if we see the *fora* as being founded at the same time as the distribution of land, we can resist the temptation of linking them to road building. However, the question arises about why we know of so few *fora* and why those we do know about tend to be located on roads. Taking the question of number first, many towns in the *ager Romanus* included in Pliny's lists of *oppida* reflect geographical locations: on rivers (e.g. Tifernates Tiberini) or agricultural prospects (e.g. Herbana in Etruria). Some names seem to have been favoured over others and reflect a general process for the establishment of towns. The clearest example is that of the town name Urbinates, which we find in Pliny's list of towns in Region 1 (Latium, Campania [Plin.N.H.3.65]) and twice in his list of towns in Umbria: Urbinates Metaurenses and Urbinates Hortenses (Plin.N.H.3.114). Other town names derive from mottoes, for example, Fidentia was a common name for towns in the *ager Romanus*. Many named towns that do not include the designation *forum* could still make reference to a Latin *gens,* for example, Nucerini Favonienses. The process of the survival of the town name was complexed, especially since many had a cognomen (e.g. Foro Julienses cognomine Concupienses). Which name became the favoured one could have determined how it appears in Pliny's list. This might also explain why so few towns continued to be designated specifically by the word *forum* in their nomenclature. Clearly there are a large number of new towns in the *ager Romanus,* but in many cases the town names do not necessarily reflect their original definition as *fora*. Hence, we may speculate that many towns in Pliny's lists of *oppida* in the area of the *ager*

Romanus had their origins in the period of *viritim* land distribution, but we cannot positivistically prove which specifically can and cannot be allocated as *fora*.

The *fora* of Italy in the third and second centuries BC were a feature of the transformation of the Roman space economy. As part of the overall extension of state power throughout the Italian peninsula, the nucleated colonies formed initial outposts of control. In contrast the pattern of colonisation associated with *viritim* settlements in other areas such as the Ager Sabinus was not initially accompanied by town foundation. Towns in these areas were founded at a later date by individuals and groups of people and were termed *fora*. Their primary roles or functions were those of trade and religious ritual and they became centralised places through which the Roman state could enforce its will. The number of *fora* founded in Italy is uncertain since our evidence is from a later date, but we should realise that towns founded as *fora* could change their name or be known by a number of names. Accompanied by the general spread of colonisation and town building within Italy, there was a fundamental change in the temporal distances between places. The combination of the establishment of colonies, *viritim* settlements, land sales and the construction of *fora* alongside extensive road building should be seen together rather than separated and discussed in isolation.

The problem for historians is that the historical record is focused on a later period. Our conception of urbanism is strongly linked with that later period of civic buildings, amphitheatres and theatres. To move back to the third or second century BC is made difficult since our knowledge of the urban form is limited. What I wish to put forward is that in many cases in both colonies and *fora* the urban element was not elaborate, but comprised a nucleated centre that was utilised periodically as a focus of the local population and the state. Urbanism at this date need not have comprised the large concentration of populations in the town itself above, say 1,000 people or even several hundred; nor did urbanism in Italy at this date exhibit a scale of euergetism seen by many to be characteristic of the city in Italy in the later period (a subject that I will return to in Chapters 10 and 11).

4

THE POLITICS OF ROAD BUILDING

Road building was a political act. Roman emperors in undertaking to improve the transport system of Italy looked back to their Republican antecedents for a political precedent for doing so. At the same time, many of our historical accounts of the actions of politicians in the Republic were written under the empire. These writers do not provide a contemporary understanding of the actions of, for example, Tiberius or Gaius Gracchus in the second century BC, but offer a fundamental insight into the work of Trajan and other emperors. Of these emperors, Augustus and Trajan stand out as the key actors. They were both associated with a politics that emphasised a geographical unit—*Italia*. In Augustus's case it was *tota Italia* (all Italy), whereas Trajan looked to an *Italia restituta* (restored Italy, Figure 4.1). The emphasis points us, in the case of Augustus, to a recent unification and later with Trajan to an established geographical element. The cohesion of *Italia* depended on a space economy defined by the road system established in the Republic and focused on the figure of the emperor as benefactor. In their acts of renewal of the road system, the Roman emperors were creating a continuity with the past of the Republic and drawing on the politics of an earlier era to create meaning for their actions in the present and for the future (on this issue, see Bourdieu 1992:54–7). Politically, by spending their own resources on the building of roads, they were legitimating their position not only with reference to the past, but also looking towards their own posterity in the future. The expenditure of economic resources on road building created the image of a princeps who was a patron of those doing the work, the travellers themselves, and of the communities through which the road passed. This pattern of patronage already existed in the Republic, but in the imperial period was taken further to include all of Italy. Within Italy, at a local level, key figures had been extending the road system to integrate their home towns. As we shall see at the end of the chapter, these figures were involved in a similar task to that of the emperors—but at a local level with rather smaller rewards. The combination of the emperor maintaining the long-distance roads and local magistrates and others extending that system created a spatial unity for Italy. It is with this in mind

Figure 4.1 Trajanic coin: *Italia restituta*
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

that we should turn our attention in this chapter to the politics of road building in Italy.

Republican precedents

The second century BC had seen the consolidation of the long-distance road network begun by Appius Claudius and others. The historical tradition of the second century AD reported that Gaius Gracchus built roads throughout Italy with the addition of milestones and, as a result, many contractors and artisans were under obligation to him (Plu.*C.G.*6–7; App.*B.C.*1.23). This later historical tradition with its focus on Gaius Gracchus may reflect the actions of many individuals involved in road-building schemes on a smaller scale in the second century AD. For example, the Elogium of Polla reports the setting up of a road from Rhegium to Capua with bridges and milestones (see discussion in Chapter 3; *CIL* I^2.638). Similarly, the Via Caecilia across the Apennines from the Via Salaria to Teramo was constructed in this period with the laying of *glarea* (gravel) over a distance of at least 120 miles and the construction of a new road surface along part of its course (Persichetti 1898; *NSc* 1896:817–99; for excavated surface in gravel/ *glarea,* see Facchini 1998). This case shows how the work was contracted out to a number of individuals by the urban quaestor, who held the title *'curator viarum'*. The contractors were given lengths of the road, from milestone ninety-eight to milestone one hundred and twenty to repair, or twenty miles to lay out from the seventy-eighth milestone. What the historians of the second century AD created was a unified history of road building with a focus on the action of Gaius Gracchus as the main historical

agent in the process. In contrast, the epigraphic evidence points to a greater complexity, in which individuals built roads or contracted out for the building and repair of roads in their quaestorship. We will return to the importance of Gaius Gracchus as a historical precedent for Trajan later in this chapter.

The office of *curator viarum* held by a person early in their career connects the maintenance of roads to Republican politics. In the competitive world of the late first century BC we can define a link between political success and supervision of the road network. Cicero wrote to Atticus with reference to Thermus, a potential candidate for election to the consulship in 64 BC. He was seen as a particularly strong candidate because his earlier work as *curator* of the Via Flaminia would be completed in that year (Cic.*Att.* 1.1). Epigraphic evidence shows how others, such as Lucius Fabricius in 62 BC who built the bridge named after him while a *curator viarum,* were also involved in the renewal of the infrastructure of the road system (Dio 37.45; *ILLRP* 379; Galliazzo 1995: no.6; O'Connor 1993:66). The example of Thermus points to a popularity gained from work on the roads, a view that is confirmed in the later historical tradition of the second century AD and includes the figure of Julius Caesar as a benefactor. Before he was aedile, he was seen to have spent vast sums of his own money on the restoration of the Via Appia while its *curator* (Plu.*Caes.* 5) With hindsight, the readers of this historical record could point to a direct connection between Julius Caesar's success and his activities in his early career. No doubt other projects existed which do not survive in the historical record. Later in the 50s BC, roads continued to be a political issue associated with popular politics. A tribune, Curio, proposed a law for road repairs throughout Italy and to place a cost of 100 sesterces on each servant taken while travelling (App.*B.C.* 2.27; Cic.Att.6.1, *Fam.* 8.6). The key to understanding this unsuccessful piece of legislation and its inclusion in the later historical record is that there was major concern over the upkeep of the roads of Italy at the time; perhaps the ruinous state of the surfaces of the roads was seen to have been caused by the unnecessary addition of slaves travelling with their owners. Thus, Curio was seen to promote his law as an attack on the luxury of the nobility that was damaging to the people themselves. With hindsight, Appian saw it all as a political ploy against Pompey, but for Cicero at the time it was seen to have been a real issue.

Our contemporary evidence from the later Republic points to a concern for road improvements and the magistrates involved in the projects became popular after they were completed. The later historical tradition of the second century AD suggests that the reasons for this popularity came from the personal obligations due to these individuals from the contractors. Other issues may have contributed to the popularity of the *ex-curator viarum*. It needs to be remembered that any candidate in the 60s BC would have considered canvassing in the colonies and *municipia* of Italy (Cic.*Att.* 1.1). The inhabitants of places at a distance from Rome would have used the

road to Rome, say the Via Flaminia, and obviously if its former *curator* was standing for election the road itself would have been a physical reminder of that person's abilities.

The principate

Given the association between road building and popular politics, it comes as no surprise that Augustus in his restoration of the *res publica* from 27 BC was actively involved in the repair of roads in Italy. Following the celebration of his triumph in that year, he began the restoration of the Via Flaminia from Rome to Rimini. His reason for doing so was that travel had become more difficult, perhaps because the last repairs to the roads had, in the case of the Via Flaminia, been conducted some forty years previous to this date by Thermus (Dio 53.22; R.G.20.5). At the same time he encouraged other senators who had celebrated triumphs to repair the other roads of Italy at their own expense (Suet.Aug.30). Marcus Valerius Messalla, who also celebrated a triumph in 27 BC, undertook to pave the Via Latina (Tibul.1.7.57–62) and paid for the work from the proceeds of his campaigns. Others were not so keen to undertake such projects. Marcus Agrippa completed the building of the Saepta at Rome instead of involving himself in road repairs in 26 BC (Dio 53.23, 53.22). The scale of resources required for the effective repair of the roads of Italy was beyond the capabilities of most senators even. This can be seen from Augustus's restoration of the Via Flaminia. The work was not only completed on time but included the restoration of all the bridges apart from the Mulvian and Minuccian bridges (*R.G.*20.5; Dio 53–22). Whether we should accept this statement from the *Res Gestae* at face value is a difficult question that has no answer (dates from building materials and their style are inadequate to make such an assessment). If we were to accept Augustus's account, we would assume that all the bridges identified by Ballance (1951, see also a recent study by Luni and Busdraghi 1988) were included and that the project was a major undertaking of much greater significance than the completion of the Saepta by Agrippa. The lack of uptake by the senators caused public funds or those of Augustus to have been used for the restoration of the roads (Dio 53.22) and in 20 BC Augustus was chosen as curator of the highways. In this capacity, he set up the golden milestone at Rome and appointed ex-praetors to oversee the actual construction of the roads (Dio 54.8.4, 54.26; Frontin.Aqu.2.101). The project of restoration would seem to have been completed by 17–16 BC, when a coin issue was made featuring the words *Quod viae mun(iendum) sunt* alongside an image of an arch (Figure 4.2; Mattingly 1923:75 nos. 432–6). The imagery of these coins may be connected to the construction of arches at either end of the Via Flaminia on the Mulvian Bridge and at Rimini in front of the city gate (Dio 53.22; Figure 4.3). The latter has survived with its inscription referring not just to the restoration

Figure 4.2 Augustan coin: *Aug. Munien*
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

of the Via Flaminia by Augustus but also to the other famous roads of Italy (*CIL* 11.365). The language of consent is clear. Augustus re-established the roads of Italy by paying for them personally or reorganising the *res publica* so that they were completed. In return Augustus was honoured with the building of arches at either end of the Via Flaminia by order of the senate and people of Rome.

However the arch at Rimini displays Augustan ideals in other ways. On the remains of the arch today are images of the gods: as you arrive in the city —Jupiter and Apollo, and Neptune and Roma as you leave the city for Rome (De Maria 1988:91–101; Richmond 1933:156; Wallace-Hadrill 1989a and Fears 1981 on language of commemoration). The association of these gods with aspects of the rise to power of Augustus is now a well-researched subject in which we naturally associate Apollo with the Battle of Actium, Neptune with his victory over Sextus Pompey and then link these with the traditional imagery of Jupiter and Roma (see Zanker 1988 on fundamental conception of Augustan imagery). Equally, we can see the pairings in another way, in which Apollo the god of the new *res publica* is associated with Jupiter who is fundamental for the founding of the Roman state; whereas Neptune and Rome point to the linkage between Rimini, a coastal town, and Rome, the centre of the empire. The arch refers back to Augustus's triumph in 27 BC; some of the proceeds from the wars in Egypt, Illyricum and over the pirates paid for repairs to the road. But arches commemorated public actions and in particular the public works of Augustus in Italy (Sterpos 1970:121–37—for example, the building of the walls of Fanum Fortunae De Maria 1988:243–4). Often these arches are located in front of the gates to the town and created a fresh surface for the new statuary of the Augustan

Figure 4.3 Arch of Augustus at Rimini

age (Richmond 1933:172 and for list of Augustan arches). The arch at Rimini marked the entrance to the city and the end of the road, just as the bridge at the other end of the town, built later by Tiberius, marked the city's northern entrance (*CIL* 11.367; Figure 4.4).

The setting up of commemorative arches and other monuments on the roads and, in particular, at the entrance to towns was a characteristic of Augustan Italy (De Maria 1988; Prieur 1982). The imperial family became the subject for commemoration on these arches, for example, the death of Nero Drusus in 9 BC was marked by the senate erecting an arch on the Via Appia adjacent to the Temple of Mars—a point of significance in the landscape of war and the paving of the Via Appia in the third century BC (see pp. 18–19 Suet. *Claud.* 1; Dio 55.2; De Maria 1988:272). In the same year at the northern approach/exit to the city, the *Ara Pacis* was set up (*R.G.* 12). The arch of Drusus on the Via Appia would have been an important addition to those set up after the Battle of Actium at Brindisi and in the Roman Forum to commemorate Augustus's victories (Dio 51.18). Additional arches were set up by communities in Italy to commemorate the actions of the emperor and his family. The imagery of travel was a unified one in which the focus was on Augustus, not just for his defeat of Rome's enemies but also for the restoration of the roads themselves.

The renewal of the road system by Augustus did not remove the need for improvement. Seven years after his death, Corbulo complained to the senate about the poor state of the roads in Italy and suggested that the contractors

Figure 4.4 Bridge of Tiberius at Rimini

(mancipes) were defrauding the state and that the magistrates *(curatores viarum)* were not checking up on them. He prosecuted many of them in Tiberius's principate and pursued them again during his consulship in 39 AD (Tac. Ann.3.33; Dio 59.15). The fines were considerable from both the contractors and the *curatores viarum;* the latter had their money returned upon Claudius's accession to the principate (Dio 60.17).This evidence points to a continuity with the earlier Republican system that placed individual magistrates in a position of responsibility to organise the necessary work via a contractor. In addition, in the case of the major roads, particularly if they passed through areas that had been subject to earlier agrarian laws, the local landowners paid over a fixed sum for repairs (Siculus Flaccus, *De Conditionalis Agrorum,* Lachmann 146; see *CIL* 1.200 for *Lex Agraria*). For example, the cost of the repair of just under sixteen miles of the Via Appia south of Beneventum was shared between the emperor and the local farmers. Hadrian paid 1,147,000 sesterces towards the cost of the work, whereas the *possessores agrorum* (farmers) paid 569,000 sesterces (*CIL* 9.6075, 6072; on communal repair of public roads see *Dig.*43.8.21–2). However, for the most part the upkeep of the roads was leased to individual contractors who would have been responsible for the work on a specific road or roads, for example, the Via Appia (*CIL* 6.8468) or the Viae Laurentinae and Ardeatinae (*CIL* 6.8469). The association between a particular contractor and a road over a period of time is suggested since they were commemorated in funerary inscriptions in this manner. The nature of their labour force is unclear, but old men who had been condemned to fight in the arena or to the mines could have been employed instead to repair the roads (Suet.Cal.27; Plin.Ep.10.32).

The routine repairs of the roads were the task of the *curatores viarum* and their contractors, but major projects required the intervention of the emperor. These might include the building of bridges, cuttings or tunnels (Plin.*N.H.*36.124–25; Aur.Vict.*Caes.*9). But the emperors were also involved in the extension of the road system. Claudius in his censorship (47 AD) built the Via Claudia Augusta from Altinum in northern Italy to the Danube (*ILS* 208), a distance of 350 miles. This action may be reminiscent of the building of the Via Appia by his famous Claudian ancestor, Appius Claudius, in his censorship in 312 BC; a view that would seem characteristic of Claudius's search for precedents for his own political activity (see Polyb.6.13.3 on traditional role of censors). It is significant that in renewing the road surface of the Via Valeria we find in the language of the milestones the use of Claudius's archaic language and script (Gardner 1920:77; *CIL* 9.6005; see also Van Essen 1957). The connection of northern Italy to the Danube by the Via Claudia also provided a link from Altinum down the coast along a newly built canal to the River Po. Perhaps an ideal of land transport that relied on both river and road systems was present here—it should be remembered that Claudius's father had built canals at the mouth

of the Rhine (see Chapter 8 on canals). Whereas Augustus had initiated the renewal of the existing roads, Claudius was building new routes (Via Claudia from Forulis to confluence of the Atternus and the Tirinus, *ILS* 209 is another example). In doing so, he and his successors looked back to the actions of Appius Claudius and a return to the duties of the censors of the Republic. This is made clear in Statius's poem the *Via Domitiana* (*Silvae* 4.3). In the past it has mistakenly been assumed to describe the action of Roman road construction, but the poem should be seen as a eulogy praising Domitian for the creation of a new road. The monument in stone replaced an old, worn away track from the Via Appia at Sinuessa to Cumae and increased the speed of travel by carriage from Rome to Cumae in 95 AD (4.3.19–39; Dio 67.14.4). In the poem, the road is seen to last as long if not longer than the Via Appia itself, another deathless monument to its creator (4.3.162–3, 101–2). Comparison is also made to Nero's failed attempt to build a canal through the region (4.3.7). In contrast to this, Domitian's project involved the flood control and bridging of the river Volturnus (4.3.67–94); it is as though, like Appius Claudius, the emperor has control over nature. To celebrate and commemorate his actions, a victory arch in Ligurian white marble was constructed at the junction with the Via Appia (4.3.95–110). The new road is seen as even better than that 'Queen of Roads'. Like the other building projects of Domitian in Rome, the Via Domitiana was constructed as an act of renewal, a replacement of Nero's plans for a canal in the region (a project discredited after his death, Suet. *Nero* 31; Tac. *Ann.* 15.42) and a popular act that was hoped to consolidate Domitian's position as *princeps*.

It is the *damnatio memoriae* of Domitian after his death that prevents us from seeing the full scale of his road-building projects in Italy. His successors, Nerva and Trajan, leave a fuller record. Nerva's brief reign saw the initiation of many of the schemes brought to fruition by his successor—Trajan. He is presented by Pliny (*Panegyric* 28–9) as the restorer of Italy and the empire, even excelling Pompey in his provision of corn to the plebs and, in particular, the construction of new harbours and new roads (Dio 68.7; Bennett 1997:138–40). The new harbour facilities at Ostia, Terracina, Rimini and Ancona were on a new scale and were integrated with the major lines of communication in Italy (Paribeni 1975:116–19). Most of the roads of Italy were repaired at this time. A multitude of milestones refer to repairs on the part of Nerva and Trajan, which points to a wide-ranging project of renewal on the Via Appia (*CIL* 6813–14, 6818–20, 6822, 6824–9, 6832– 5, 6839, 6846, 6853, 6859, 6861–3, 6871, 6873, 6877), the Via Flaminia (*CIL* 11.6619–22), the Via Salaria (*CIL* 5947–8), the Via Tiburtina et Valeria (*CIL* 9.5963, 5968, 5969), the Via Latina Labricana (*CIL* 10.6887, 6890) and the Via Julia Augusta (*CIL* 5.8102–6) and extended the Via Domitiana from Puteoli to Naples (*CIL* 10.6926, 6931; Johannowsky 1952). These milestones referred explicitly to work conducted under the two emperors and were potent reminders of the work conducted to restore the

roads of Italy (for a regional analysis through time see Donati 1974). It is significant that the commemoration of these actions with milestones is most prominent in the early second century, alongside commemorative inscriptions dedicated to *curatores viarum* (Figure 4.5). The number of milestones on the Via Appia through the Pontine marshes probably led Dio (68.15.3) to give the credit for the building of the road to Trajan. In addition to this work of restoration he built new roads, the Via Traiana from Beneventum to Brindisi (Ashby and Gardner 1916; Alvisi 1971; Volpe 1990:85–99 on topography of the road) and another road in Etruria from Volsinii Novi to Clusium (*CIL* 9.5883; Moretti 1925:1–26). The scale of works conducted throughout Italy by Trajan was unprecedented and is confirmed by a shortage of land surveyors and an unwillingness on Trajan's part to allow architects from Italy to be relocated to the provinces (Plin.Ep.10.18, 10.39–42, 10.61–2). The overall effect was a renewal of Italy that was celebrated on the coinage. Issues included coins that pointed to the celebration of a restored Italia (see Figure 4.1; *RIC* 2.470–3) and a commemoration of the building of the Via Traiana (Figure 4.6; *RIC* 2.636–41).

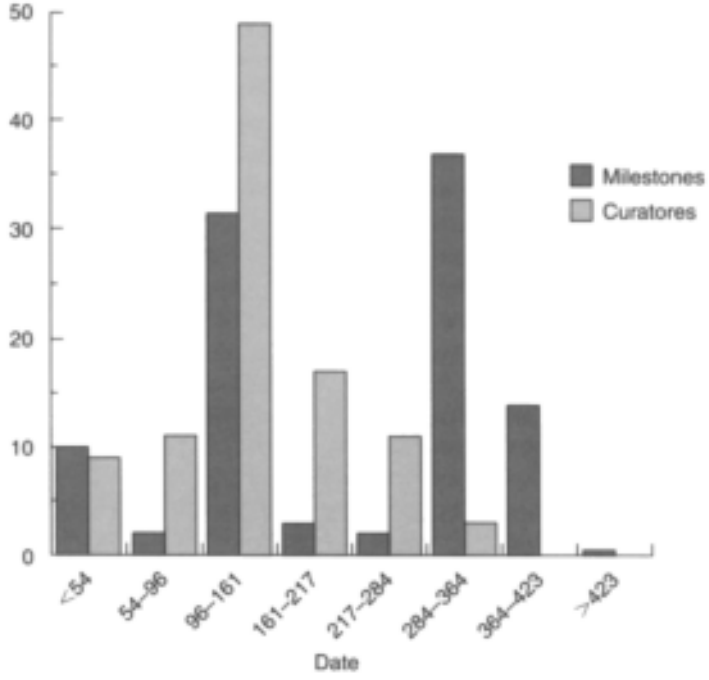


Figure 4.5 Road data through time: a comparison of inscriptions recording curatores viarum and milestones

Figure 4.6 Trajanic coin: Via Traiana
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

The actions of Trajan need to be viewed alongside his scheme to promote the birth rate of the population of Italy known as the *alimenta* (Figures 4.7 and 4.8; for discussion of the evidence Woolf 1990; Patterson 1987; for earlier views Garnsey 1968; Duncan-Jones 1964). Woolf (1990) views the scheme in terms of ideology and patronage and sees it being aimed not at the poorest sections of the community but a privileged group of recipients. At this point we need to return to the contemporary

Figure 4.7 Trajanic coin: *Alimenta*
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

Figure 4.8 Detail from the Arch of Trajan at Beneventum

perception of the reforms of Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus in the late second century BC. The concern with the birth rate and a general policy of renewal of Italy were also the main features of accounts of the reforms of the Gracchi written in the second century AD by Appian and Plutarch (compare the persuasive analysis by Mouritsen 1998:11–19). These two accounts, fundamental for any narrative of the Gracchan reforms, had been seen by scholars to reflect earlier sources, with little originality in the case of Appian (Bernstein 1978:231–4; Stockton 1979:1–5). However, it is now realised that these sources are selective of their material (Pelling 1995:333). It should also be stated that as authors they wrote in the contemporary situation and reflected the preoccupations of the second century AD, rather

than the socio-economic issues of the second century BC. Thus, in stating that the poor could not bring up their children in the discussion of the agrarian situation, Appian (*BC* 1.10) could have been setting up a comparison with Trajan's activities to promote the raising of children via the *alimenta*. Appian (*BC* 1.27) is careful to establish the failure of the Gracchan redistribution of land to increase the population of Italy, which contrasts with the contemporary *alimenta* perceived to increase the number of soldiers (Plin. *Paneg.* 28 for comparison). The historical record reflects a Trajan present and the issues of that present. Indeed, Plutarch's (*C.G.* 7) account of Gaius Gracchus's roads reads like a description of the roads of Italy being built by Trajan in the second century AD:

> The construction of roads was the task into which he threw himself most enthusiastically, and he took great pains to ensure that these should be graceful and beautiful as well as useful. His roads were planned so as to run across the country in a straight line, part of the surface consisting of dressed stone and part of compacted gravel. Depressions were filled up, any watercourses or ravines which crossed the line of the road were bridged, and both sides of the road were levelled or embanked to the same height, so that the whole of the work presented a beautiful and symmetrical appearance. Besides this he had every road measured in miles… and stone pillars erected to mark the distances. Other stones were set up at shorter intervals on both sides of the road so that horsemen should be able to mount from these without help.
>
> (Plutarch *C.G.* 7)

The similarity between this account and the survival in the epigraphic record of milestones and the other sources referring to Trajan's renewal of the road system is most striking and we should perhaps see Trajan using the Gracchi as his historical precedent; a factor which marks out Trajan as having a distinctive view of the past that disassociated him from his Flavian and Julio-Claudian predecessors. They had built roads while holding the office of censor to stress a traditional continuity with the censors of the Republic (e.g. Gaius Flaminius or Appius Claudius). Trajan would seem to be looking to Gaius Gracchus, a tribune of the plebs.

The politics of road building in the empire emphasised the restoration of Italy through public works initiated by the latest emperor. The restoration of the infrastructure of Italy was marked by the commemoration of Trajan at the point of entry to Italy. There were arches constructed by order of the senate and people of Rome to commemorate the actions of Trajan at Ancona (Figure 4.9), at Puteoli, at Beneventum, at the beginning of his road to Brindisi and at Canusium on the road itself (De Maria 1988:232–5, 236; Kleiner

Figure 4.9 Arch of Trajan at Ancona

1992:224–30, 264 for bibliography. Notice that although the inscription on Trajan's column states that the senate and the people of Rome were responsible for its construction, Dio 68.16.3 regards the monument as Trajan's responsibility). The milestones along the roads referred to his work of reconstruction and the coinage carried the image further (see pp. 65–7 on milestones). It should be noted that of the surviving milestones, those of Nerva and Trajan far outnumber those of Augustus, Claudius or Vespasian. This communicated an image of the ideal princeps, who was *optimus* in this aspect as in all others. The contracting out of the work and employment of labour in the schemes was vast. The ideal of a new age was seen throughout Italy in the projects of harbour restoration and road building, as well as appearing in the writing of Tacitus (*Agr.* 3), and was an image that was maintained through to at least the fourth century (Eutrop. *Brev.* 8.4–5). The emperors after Trajan were not involved in a total renewal of the road system, but repaired minor sections that had collapsed.

Local politics

The magistrates of Rome and the princeps were only concerned with the public roads constructed at Rome's expense in the past. They had little or no jurisdiction over the local roads, known as *viae vicinales*. These were the concern of local government and, in particular, that of the towns and

cities of Italy. The town charters of the first century BC make this clear in a very similar form to each other:

> Whatever roads, ditches or drains a IIIIvir, IIvir or aedile on behalf of that *municipium* shall wish publicly to be constructed, to insert, to change, to build or to pave within those boundaries (of the city and territory) which shall belong to the *municipium,* whatever of it may be done without damage (to private individuals) it is lawful for him to do that.
>
> (*Lex Tarentina* 1139–42, cf. *Lex Coloniae Genetivae* 77, translation from Crawford 1996a:308)

These town charters set up annually elected officials who had the responsibility to supervise public works including road building provided it caused no damage to private property. The action of building these roads was not on the same scale as those of the emperor, since the magistrates' actions were limited to within the territory of their city. For example, at Pompeii, the IIviri built the road from the Porta di Stabia to a place called Cisiarii within the territory of Pompeii (*CIL* 10.1064). The intervention of other magistrates in a similar position survives from towns throughout Italy. In most cases, the roads tend to be relatively short, often linking the town to the major roads, such as from the Via Annia to the the walls of Aquileia (*CIL* 5.1008) or to key places in the landscape such as a local *vicus* or village (*CIL* 10.3913). Magistrates were also involved in the building of roads between towns, for instance, from Pompeii to Nuceria (De' Spagnolis Conticello 1994:49), which would have required the co-operation of more than one town. The form of euergetism in these cases is clear: the magistrate had been elected and was willing to spend their money on the improvement of the infrastructure. Successful freedmen, often *Augustales* (priests of Augustus), repaired or paved roads (e.g. *CIL* 5.2116). It must be assumed that they undertook such actions with the permission or co-operation of local magistrates. The building of roads though was not always conducted at the expense of the local officials. The town's treasury also paid for road building from donations made by individuals (*Dig.* 31.1.30). Publius Decimus Eros Merula, a freedman in Assisi, donated 30,000 sesterces for the erection of statues and a further 37,000 sesterces for the building of roads (*CIL* 11.5400). We should associate the activity of road building alongside the erection of other public buildings. Trebia sought the approval of the senate to spend a legacy bequeathed for the construction of a theatre on road building instead (Suet. *Tib.* 31, the will of the testator was upheld). This example points to a demand for road building at a local level in Italy, which was in part fulfilled by legacies and the personal donations of magistrates.

The actual building of a new road depended on the co-operation of the local landowners along its course. The landowners contributed the land for the public good (*Dig.* 43.7). They were also expected to provide the labour force for its repair, and the section of road that ran over what had been their land was clearly marked by inscriptions identifying them with the section they would need to maintain in the future, even though the road was a public way along which free movement was guaranteed (Siculus Flaccus *De Condicionis Agrorum* 146 Lachmann). The actual enforcement of any maintenance was made by the magistrates of the local *pagus*. Repairs to the road were strictly defined as a restoration to its former condition (*Dig.* 43.11). The local landowner had an interest in doing so since, if the road became impassable, the traveller had the right to go through the neighbouring fields (Cic. *Caec.* 54). Politically for the elite, it was well to repair roads in order to create an image of the good citizen within the community for the future (e.g. Cressedi 1949:105).

The building of private roads through estates often involved the agreement of neighbouring landowners (Siculus Flaccus *De Condicionis Agrorum* 146 Lachmann). The co-operation required in the construction of such roads on adjacent properties was sometimes not forthcoming. Marcus Cicero inspected the road leading to his brother's farm in 54 BC and found that although Quintus and one neighbour were building a high quality gravel road, another had not begun to do anything (*Q.F.* 3.1). In other cases, an individual would have been forced to construct the road without the aid of his neighbours. Caius Pomponius Tigranus built a road himself near Atina for carts and set up inscriptions stating he had conducted the work without the help of his neighbours (*AE* 1981:210, 1973:175, 1992:243; Solin 1981; compare Figure 4.10). Rights of access through such roads could be granted to others: much of book eight of Justinian's *Digest of Roman Law* sets out all the potential implications for both the owner of the road and those granted the right of access. Constraints of time, weight of vehicle and the number of beasts allowed along the road are all mentioned as possible restrictions on that right of access. In this context, we can see why Quintus Cicero did not wish the road he was building to his estate to be diverted across another's property but to remain at the boundary of the two estates, even if it meant the gradient was increased (Cic. *Q.F.* 3.1, see pp. 103–4). The private road and its use of it could be restricted and in some cases it was seen necessary to make this clear with an inscribed notice—*Diverticulum privatum* (e.g. *CIL* 14.4231). This does mean that access to the road was denied, but it makes it clear that at a future date the road could be closed or torn up, unlike a public road which remained in use forever (*Dig.* 43.11.2). A considerable extent of the road network of Italy was built by private individuals wanting to have access to the major public roads from their estates (e.g. Figure 4.11). These roads often branched off from the major roads close to a milestone; the expression 'at the *diverticulum* at the such

Figure 4.10 A private road bridge in south Etruria inscribed on the Keystone: *T.Humanus stabilio fecit in private transientibus*
Source: British School at Rome Archive, John Ward Perkins Collection

and such milestone' was a common means of the location of places in the landscape (e.g. Plin.*N.H.*14.49, 31.25; Suet.*Nero* 48): a view of space that was measured, where places in Italy were located according to their position in relation to the major roads calibrated by their milestones with reference to the golden milestone in Rome (see Chapter 6 for discussion).

A unified space?

The early period of road building discussed in Chapter 2 created a network of roads and colonies with a focus on the extension of the city state of Rome throughout the Italian peninsula. This network created an image for the newcomer to Italy of Rome at the major ports and along the roads. The

Figure 4.11 Paved *diverticulum* in south Etruria
Source: British School at Rome Archive, John Ward Perkins Collection

principate saw the extension of the politics of Rome to these places. An Augustan image of the princeps was not only established within the capital but was deliberately placed throughout Italy on the roads themselves. The principle behind the imagery was one of Augustus the restorer of the state, including the repair of the road system. As the person who provided the finance for road building, the princeps received a return which reinforced his position politically (Bourdieu 1992; Veyne 1990:361–2). The image of the emperor was not placed by him or the political authority of Rome directly into the *fora* of the towns of Italy, but was seen on the roads. The ideals of the emperor were seen by those who travelled and were adopted by the elites of the towns of Italy and elsewhere. This was not new; Thermus achieved a reputation through his organisation of the reconstruction of the Via Flaminia and Appius Claudius, as we saw in Chapter 2, certainly gained prestige from his laying out of the Via Appia. What is different about the principate of Augustus was that he was involved in the restoration of roads throughout Italy and consent to his position in the state was adopted by the towns of Italy through the erection of statues and other honorific monuments. The latter included roads named after him that were paved by the *Augustales* (priests of Augustus *CIL* 11.3083). Italy under Augustus becomes a unified political space, bonded by a political imagery of the

princeps as patron and benefactor (see Zanker 1993:92–138). No doubt citizenship should be seen as a factor (Crawford 1996b:414–23), but a unified focus on a single successful benefactor (Augustus) and his family should not be underestimated. His successors may not have seen the need to build up a similar pattern of imagery based on the reconstruction of roads and other monumental projects throughout Italy. Certainly, they did build individual roads but they were not involved in a general renewal of the road system. The exceptions to this were Nerva and Trajan, who emphasised a renewal of Italy and recreated an imagery of the principate that placed the focus on themselves as creators of a new age. The reaction and stigmatisation of the recent past caused the principate of the second century AD to look to alternative models from the past. It would seem that the attempts at reform by the Gracchi had a particular value in this context. This allied the new principate of Nerva and then Trajan with a radical programme of reform and renewal from the distant past that had embraced not just Rome but Italy as well. The actions of Nerva and Trajan recreated that imagery with the princeps as the concerned patron and benefactor of not just those in Rome but all the peoples of Italia.

5

TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

The modern mind tends to think of Roman roads as uniform structures that are straight and are paved. The lack of variety for many people in terms of structure tends to exclude roads from books on architecture or Roman technology in general and when they are included there is only a most general account. Even the Italian literature on the subject seldom strays from the major roads and the topographical identification of where roads occur. This chapter attempts to account for the variety of transport structures in Italy and presents an outline of technological change through time. By technological change I do not mean when the first occurrence of a technology became available, but a perception of the widespread use of that technology. Thus, what I wish to identify is the utilisation of a technology, rather than invention or simple change in isolated instances.

The definition of a road

The Roman view of their world was one that divided the features of the landscape into individual units. The roads of the Roman empire were differentiated according to their nature. A road was a definite object to be distinguished from other forms of tracks and paths. In law a road or *via* had to be wide enough to drive a vehicle along it (*Dig.* 8.1.13). If it was not wide enough for a vehicle, the way was defined as an *actus,* which had to be wide enough for a pack animal. If narrower than this it was simply said to be a path or right of way (*semita* or *iter*). Immediately, it can be seen that a *via* was defined by its ability for wheeled transport to be carried upon it. Moreover, for it to be a *via* the road had to be of a stated width. The fifth-century BC law code, known as the Twelve Tables, set the precedent on this: roads were to be eight feet wide along straight sections and sixteen feet wide where they went round a bend (Twelve Tables 7; Festus 508L; *Dig.* 8.3.8, 8.23; Hyg. *Const.* 134; on the nature of early roads see Quilici 1992:19–27). A width of eight feet would seem to have been a minimum for a *via* because Hyginus (*Const.* 134) points out that most of the public roads of Italy—particularly those established by the agrarian land settlements of the Gracchi

(second century BC), Sulla and Caesar (first century BC) —tended to establish public roads that were twelve feet wide. This extra width would have facilitated easy passing by vehicles with axle widths of about four feet and would also have allowed for passing to take place of two vehicles without hindering the safe passage of pedestrians. Looking at this information, an increase in road width from the time of the Twelve Tables and the agrarian laws of the late second and first centuries BC, we might be seeing in the literary evidence a change in the nature of road widths that was in response to an increase in the incidence of traffic on the public roads. However, the emphasis on a width that allowed for vehicles to pass (minimum eight feet) marks out the road as a distinctive item from *actus* (track) that allowed for the passage of a single vehicle, since an *actus* tended to have a minimum width of four feet (Festus 16L), which would have allowed for the passage of a vehicle (Dig.8.3.7; Varro L.L.5.22). Anything smaller was regarded as a path rather than a road *(via)* or track *(actus)* (Dig.8.1.13). Thus, a road was defined as any right of way over eight feet wide. We should not ignore the narrower *actus* in our discussion of land transport since these were routes wide enough for vehicles (four feet) and had an important role to play in the transport network the Roman empire. However, for the purpose of this chapter, I am primarily concerned with roads.

Public and private

The issue of ownership had important ramifications in determining who was responsible for the repair itself, and this factor would have directly affected the level of repair and the nature of the road surface itself. The principles of ownership in relation to upkeep can be demonstrated with reference to the agricultural surveyor, Siculus Flaccus. He points out (146L) that there were three types of road: the public roads *(viae publicae),* the local roads *(viae vicinales)* and private or estate roads *(viae privatae)* (Figure 5.1). The differences between these three types of road are summarised as follows:

> Public highways *(viae publicae),* constructed at state expense, bear the names of their builders and they are under the charge of *curatores viarum,* who have the work done by contractors; for some of these roads, the landowners are required, too from time to time, to pay a fixed sum.
>
> (Siculus Flaccus 146L)

Therefore, under the heading *viae publicae* we would place all those roads that had been built at the expense of the Roman state, including the Via Appia, Via Flaminia, Via Cassia, Via Clodia, Viae Anniae, Via Aurelia, Via Traiana, etc. These were the major roads of Italy and viewed as distinct from

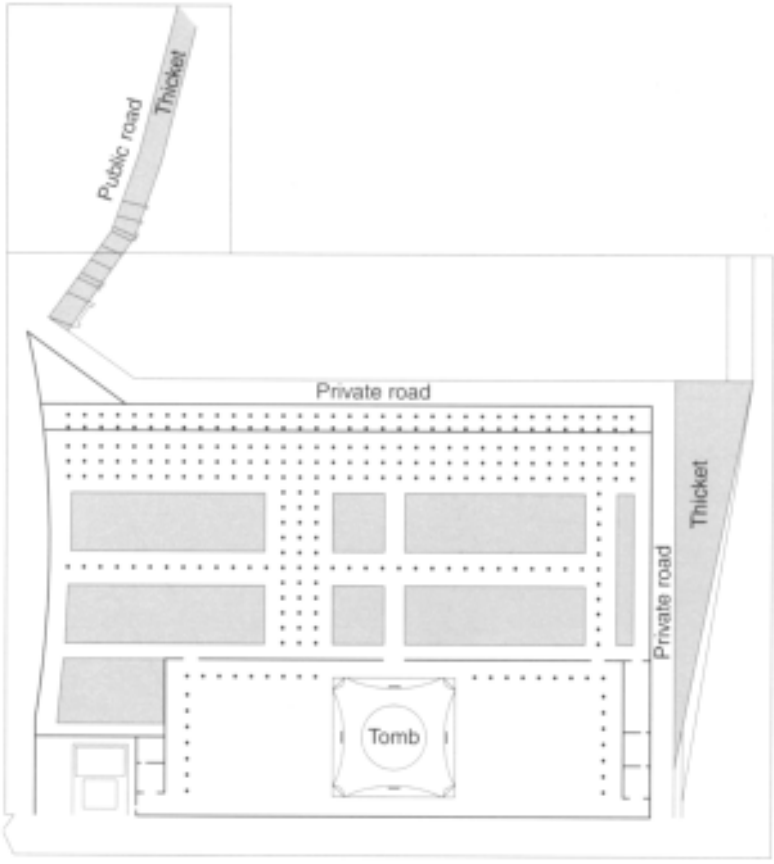


Figure 5.1 Ancient plan showing public and private roads
Source: CIL 6.29847

roads and can be seen to structure the Roman conception of space in the geographical writers such as Strabo (e.g. 5.3.6=236C, see Chapter 12 on this).They were thus marked out as key features of the Roman state in Italy.

Distinct from this group of major roads were the local roads or *viae vicinales.* These roads were public, but under the jurisdiction of the local communities. In consequence, they were often regarded as local roads. Siculus Flaccus accounts for their nature:

> There are in addition local roads *(viae vicinales)* which after branching off from the main highway *(via publica),* go off across the country and often lead to other highways *(viae publicae)*. They are built and maintained by the *pagi* (villages/local communities), who usually see that the landowners provide the

> work force, or rather hand to each landowner the job of looking after the stretch of road going over his land… There is free movement along these public roads'.
>
> (Siculus Flaccus 146L)

Clearly, these roads were public since access was not restricted, but they were maintained at private expense by the local landowners (Dig.43.8.22). This was not the only difference between these local roads and the major highways, since these local roads need not lead to anywhere in particular and might simply provide access to farms or villages. In contrast, the major highways always led to cities, to rivers or to other roads and were never dead-ends (*Dig.*43.7.3).

The last category of roads were those that were private (see Figure 5.1). Access and the use of these roads were naturally restricted since they did not belong in the public realm. Again Siculus Flaccus (146L) makes this clear: 'Finally there are ways leading across private estates that do not afford passage to everyone, but only those who need to reach their fields.'

However, in many cases the right of way to use a private road was granted to others with conditions that only the road could be used and not the fields on either side. Interestingly, in the context of the discussion of rights of access, the Roman lawyers make a connection between the different types of private way and the type of access permitted. An early example marked with an inscription states: 'The lower road is the private property of Titus Umbrenius, son of Gaius. Please request permission to use the road. No animal or vehicle traffic allowed' (*CIL* 1.2.1831). In contrast, in later sources, if the right of way allows for the use of a vehicle or pack animals, it was defined as an *actus*. However, if the access allowed for not only the use of vehicles but also the ability to drag rocks or timber it was considered to be a *via* (*Dig.*8.3.7). The difference between *actus* and *via* in this case would seem to have been one of the quality of the surface of the way. Clearly a *via,* in contrast to an *actus,* could withstand the weight of heavy loads being transported over it, whereas an *actus* would appear to be a narrow track with a poor surface unsuitable for the carriage of heavy loads. Hence, the right of pulling loads of stone and timber was forbidden on an *actus*.

The private roads would have been by far the most numerous, but would also have been the shortest in length and, as far as most of our sources are concerned, relatively insignificant. Similarly, the *viae vicinales* would have had only a local significance for those using them. In contrast, the major public highways fulfilled an important role in establishing a coherent geography of land transport throughout the Roman empire. However, the three types of road can be seen to have complemented one another to create a road system, which left few regions totally isolated from the transport network and, by implication, most places would have been connected to

the major consular roads by either local or private roads. In terms of the building and maintenance of roads, we find a complementary system that utilised state, local and private money for road building. Ulpian (*Dig.*43.8.21) presents a summary of the legal view of public and private roads:

> We call a road public if its land is public. For our definition of a private road is unlike that of a public road. The land of a private road belongs to someone else, but the right of driving along it is open to us. But the land of a public road is public, bequeathed or marked out, with fixed limits of width by whoever had the right of making it public, so that the public might walk and travel along it. Some roads are public, some private, some local. We mean by public roads what the Greeks call royal, and our people, praetorian and consular roads. Private roads are what some call agrarian roads. Local roads are those that are in villages or lead to villages.
>
> (Ulpian *Dig.*43.8.21)

Thus, we find a hierarchy of roads in the Roman empire: those defined for travel, the *viae publicae;* those for access to settlements, the *viae vicinales;* and those that are private or roads established for access to farms and fields, *viae privatae*. Each had a different role in the transport system; some simply gave access, the *viae privatae* and *vicinales*. However, the *viae publicae* or consular roads were fundamentally structured for long-distance travel and, as public features of the landscape, were maintained by the central authority of Rome. These factors in their creation would have been reflected in their use as well. Hence, we should expect the major roads to have been paid greater attention and been maintained by the state (but see Figure 5.2). Clearly, problems of the state acting at a distance may have caused these roads to be poorly maintained. The local roads maintained by the city council and the town's magistrates may not have had such large-scale resources for their building and maintenance, but as a localised issue greater attention may have been paid to their upkeep. The private roads were simply an issue for the person who had built them. However, it is clear from the literature on road building (see Chapter 4) that a pride was taken in the maintenance and upkeep of good roads, even if they were private.

Technological change

The issue of technological change is at its most apparent in the discussion of the paving of the road surface or the creation of a stable surface for wheeled transport. The paving of roads in basalt *(selce)* or limestone blocks, so characteristic of the roads of Italy near Rome, required a particular

Figure 5.2 Eroded road surface of the Via Traiana at Monopoli

Figure 5.3 Via Amerina south of Falerii Novi: the total width of the road was not paved

technology of quarrying and a will to move the stone over potentially long distances to its place of use. The paved surface was intended to ensure a smooth carriage journey and to preserve the actual surface of the road for the future (c.f. Figure 5.3). We should also consider that the importation of goods, including building materials to areas not served by either river or sea transport, would have placed considerable strain on the road surface. Situations such as these could literarily tear a road apart. The wheel ruts in basalt blocks point to the level of traffic and a high degree of erosion that was caused by use through time. Given that the road surfaces varied from beaten earth through compacted gravel to paved stone (*Dig.* 43.2.1.2, 43.11.1, 54.41.2), we might assume that the paving of some roads in Italy was a response to their use and erosion. After all, a road of compacted gravel or beaten earth would not be able to sustain the level of use from the transport of building materials such as granite columns, road stone or other building materials without considerable cost in terms of repair. In fact, the paving of the roads of Italy points to a demand for adequate transport which may be based on the erosion of the road surface due to increase in use. This observation remains at the level of hypothesis since the argumentation is unproven and is at best circular.

The paving of roads has a prominence in the literary evidence from the Augustan period onwards that needs to be taken into account. Livy, writing during the principate of Augustus, finds road paving of historical interest and worthy of note in his history of Rome. The earliest references are to the paving of the Via Appia. In 295 BC, a *semita* or path was paved in stone blocks *(saxo quadrato)* from the Porta Capena to the Temple of Mars (Liv. 10.23). Three years later, in 292 BC, a section from the Temple of Mars to Bovillae was paved with *silex* or *selce* (Liv. 10.47; Quilici 1992:27 links this to a general paving in *silex* of roads near Rome). This stone has an ovoid split and is never found in antiquity to have been worked into square blocks. Livy's very specific language here suggests this was the first time that a road was paved in basalt *(selce)* or maybe limestone. A little over a hundred years later, in 189 BC, we find the censors letting the contract for the paving in *silex* of the road from the Porta Capena to the Temple of Mars (Liv. 38.28). These are exceptional projects using a hard stone to create an all-weather surface. It is clear from the actions of the censors in 174 BC that roads paved with *silex* were unusual in the second century BC: 'The censors first let contracts for the paving with *silex* of streets in the city, and for laying with *glarea* (gravel) the roads outside the city' (Liv. 41.27.5).

The censors were also concerned with the *silex* paving of the streets in colonies such as Pisaurum in the same year (Liv. 41.27.11). The other contemporary usage of this stone to be found in the literature was in connection with agricultural activities—for the support of olive presses and the construction of threshing floors (Cato Agr. 18.3; Varro R.R. 1.51–2). Thus, what we see in the literature is the quarrying of *silex* in the third and

second centuries BC for the specialised purpose of paving roads and the streets of towns.

This pattern of use does not seem to have been extended to include all public roads even in the first century BC. It would appear that even in the 50s BC most public roads did not have a paved surface. In a letter to his brother, Cicero comments on a private road recently constructed in this form that was as good as a public highway in terms of quality (see p. 54). Dated contemporary sources for road building are relatively rare, but these sources do mention *silex* and may point to an understanding of the utilisation of this basalt rock. Inscriptions tend to refer to the paving of roads within towns prior to the first century AD (e.g. of street paving at Ostia *CIL* 14.375 or Casinum *CIL* 10.5204). Even after that date at a local level they are relatively rare: for example, at Forum Sempronia we find *Augustales* overseeing the paving of roads with *silex* for relatively short distances (*CIL* 11.6126–7) of a few hundred to just over a thousand paces. However, these actions are commemorated epigraphically and should be seen as public works that were an undertaking of great significance at a local level. The potential for seeing these acts as a form of emulation of Augustus's repair and relaying of the Via Flaminia in 27 BC needs to be considered (we should not assume with Quilici 1992:31 that all roads were paved at this point). What is apparent, though, is that roads in the early first century AD were being paved in *selce* for short lengths by local magistrates in the towns of central Italy.

In terms of the state's road-building activities in the first century AD, the classic text remains Statius's *Silvae* 4.4. This unusual text eulogises the action of road building and makes frequent mention of the use of *silex*. I believe that this passage has been misread as typical of all Roman road building and has been seen to provide the classic description of the construction of roads (for example, Quilici 1990:25 sees this text as a simple description of road building). I do not think this can be sustained. Statius is not referring to an ordinary action, but a marvel to behold (Pavlovskis 1973:2). I believe we might view this as a new level of perfection in terms of road construction. The use of paving in *silex* is not part of that innovation, but its use over a long distance is what makes this road so remarkable for Statius. We see here an innovation in the extent to which the material is being utilised. Although the Via Domitiana is constructed from locally available *selce,* the extensive use of this stone would seem to be remarkable and points to a larger-scale demand than had been present in earlier projects.

The organisation of paving the major roads of Rome was on a larger scale in the second century AD. Indeed, most of the epigraphic evidence for the paving of roads and its organisation comes from the second century AD. The office of *Procurator ad silices* appears alongside a *Procurator silicum viarum sacrae urbis* (*CIL* 6.1598; Muratori 1739: no.1114.5, see also Gruterus 1616: no.411.1; Henzen 1857:94). This points to the state

organisation of the supply of paving for roads. Alongside this evidence we find that milestones from Italy refer to a variety of works relating to roads. The most informative and closely dated series of milestones comes from the Via Appia (*CIL* 10.6812–6873). These milestones point to a restoration of the road surface that was done according to the condition of the road and involved the figure of the emperor either in taking total responsibility or simply overseeing the work (see Di Vita-Evrard 1990 on the inscriptions). The repair of the sections is piecemeal rather than referring to a complete overhaul of the whole road (Table 5.1).

The contrast of these milestones to those of the contemporary Via Traiana is striking: on that new road we find a simple statement, *Trajan fecit*. On the Via Appia we have a series of actions mostly begun by Nerva and completed by Trajan. These suggest that individual sections of road were repaired, restored or renewed throughout the period, but the action to repair the whole road was undertaken in stages. These stages were completed at different speeds according to the nature of the repair undertaken. Where a complete renewal of the road surface was required, the date of completion is considerably later than that for simpler repairs. The renewal of the road paving is only mentioned for one section in 110 AD, coincidentally the same year in which Cassius Dio (68.15.3) reports on the construction of a road across the Pontine marshes: 'At this time he (Trajan) built a road of stone through the Pontine Marshes and provided the roads with most magnificent buildings and bridges.'

In addition to this information, Blake and Bishop (1973:281) date the *selce* paving overlying an earlier one of limestone near Terracina to 110 AD. In combination with the epigraphic evidence, it seems to be conclusive that *selce* had not been utilised here, even though there were locally available deposits in the Alban hills. What I would suggest is that we should see this

Table 5.1 Milestones recording the repair of the Via Appia

Mile	*Date*	*Action*	*CIL 10*
10	97	refecit	6812
17	97	refecit	6813
39–43	97	faciendum curavit	6825/6827
	98	sua pecunia const	6820
	98	viam incohavit	6824
	100	constr. curavit	6820
	100	consummavit	6824
<43	100	refecit	6819
44–48	97	facien curavit	6833–39
48–53	110	silice sua pecunia stravit	6833–39
71	216	silice novo (21 miles)	6854
85–112	97	faciendam curavit	6861–73

as a change in the type of road surface with a new emphasis on the provision of roads that were paved, not just in Rome itself but on the major highways of Roman Italy. Following on from Domitian's paving of his road in Silex, we find in the second century that Ulpian (43.2.1.2, 54.41.27) distinguishes between three types of road:

- *viae terrenae;*
- *viae glarea statae;*
- *viae silicae stratae.*

The latter were identified as paved specifically for the driving of carriages (Front.*Ad M.Caes* 5.40; compare to gravel surface in Facchini 1998). Coins commemorating the construction of the Via Traiana feature a wheel and we should conclude that the feature emphasised here is the possibility of travel by wheeled transport. The construction of roads of this quality was a considerable undertaking in terms of labour and resources. The emphasis on paving would have involved skilled labourers and it comes as no surprise that *silicarii* appear among the gangs of labourers working on the aqueducts of Rome during the second century AD (Frontin.*Aqu.* 117; notice that Tacitus *Agr.*31 addresses difficulty of paving roads). I do not wish to argue that roads were not paved prior to the last decade of the first century AD, but I wish to highlight the wider availability of the use of *silex* and the paving of roads in general. This shows a new level of demand for *selce* and a general specialisation in its production.

Quarrying of stone

Not all roads were paved with *selce* or basalt blocks. When the ancients do refer to paving they tend to use the word *silex,* which can refer to any stone of a particularly durable nature. The word defines hard rocks of various colours from a number of sources, for example, the Sabine variety—a dark stone (Plin.*N.H.* 36.135; Figure 5.4; see also Figures 5.5 and 5.6), in contrast to the Umbrian white variety that could carry heavy loads but we are told would break up if exposed to frost (36.167; Figure 5.5). These we might see as representing basalts and limestones respectively. In terms of awareness of the nature of the material, Pliny (*N.H.*36.168–70) highlights quality and suggests that the black stone is of the highest. Writing in the mid-first century AD, he does not mention sources of basalt that exist south of Rome which are associated with the Alban hills or the volcanic deposits in Campania. To what extent these sources were utilised is hard to estimate. We should be wary of discounting the ancient evidence since recent petrological studies of millstones have shown that the source identified by Pliny (36.135) near Lake Bolsena is supported by that analysis (Peacock 1980, 1986, 1989; Williams-Thorpe 1988). Even where stones were available (e.g. in case of

Figure 5.4 The Clivus Capitolinus in Rome

Figure 5.5 Limestone paving of a road leading from the Via Flaminia to the Tiber
Source: British School at Rome Archive, John Ward Perkins Collection

Pompeii) there was a preference for mills made from the leucitic basalts found near Lake Bolsena, the primary source for millstones in Italy. We should not necessarily assume that a source of stone was in use in antiquity simply because it is geologically present (Figure 5.6). However, what we do see is use in the most part of locally available resources for the paving of roads in Italy. This can be shown with reference to the Tiber valley, where basalt deposits do not exist on the eastern side of the river in the Sabina. Where paving has been located, even on major public roads such as the Via Salaria, it is often in limestone rather than *selce* blocks (Quilici 1994:90–5). In his published survey of the area around Eretum, Ogilvie (1965:84, 94–5, 103–4, 11) records a number of limestone blocks and three *diverticula* in *selce*

Figure 5.6 Quarry face at Monte Maggiore in the Monti Sabatini

paving. It should also be noted that the long-term survival of limestone blocks *in situ* would not be as great as *selce*. Limestone blocks are less durable, easier to cut and in terms of basic density more portable than *selce*. The *diverticula* with *selce* paving stones demonstrate that materials were sometimes moved across the Tiber for road construction, but generally on the eastern side of the Tiber limestone or conglomerate was probably the most important rock for paving roads (Ashby 1927:42; Quilici Gigli 1994:66, 69 on the variation of usage on Via Nomentana; Quilici 1982:110–35, 1991:199 on use of *selce* and limestone on the Via Latina; see also Quilici 1990:27 for summary). In contrast, on the western side of the Tiber we find that in the Ager Capenas survey only seven sites featured find spots of material in *selce*—i.e. for the paving of the roads leading to those sites (Jones 1962, 1963; see also more recent data in Mazzi 1995). In contrast, the survey of the Ager Veientanus located a far greater number of sites associated with *selce* paving and its use in construction (Figure 5.7). The reason highlighted in the publication was the proximity of *selce* deposits on Monte Aguzzo and Monte Maggiore (see Figure 5.6; Kahane *et al.* 1968; for characterisation of the rock type see Bertini *et al.* 1971:45) or near Anguillara and Nepi (see Hemphill 1975:120; for characterisation of the rock type see Bertini *et al.* 1971:41–2). The survey of the Ager Faliscus produced a number

Figure 5.7 *Selce Opus Reticulatum:* south Etruria
Source: British School at Rome Archive, John Ward Perkins Collection

of sites with evidence of the use of *selce* (Potter manuscript; see also Frederiksen and Ward-Perkins 1957). The overall pattern to the survey shows a marked prominence of paved roads close to these quarries. In fact sixty-three of the 534 sites identified in the Ager Veientanus survey displayed evidence of the use of *selce*—in other words a significant number of these local or private roads leading to the major sites were paved in *selce*.

In the context of a general usage of paving on the major roads of Rome and in the city of Rome, we need to consider the supply of that rare resource *selce*. There is a general assumption in the literature on ancient Rome that *selce* was quarried from the deposit close to the tomb of Caecilia Metella on the Via Appia for supply to the city. This was where *selce* was quarried in the nineteenth century for the paving of Rome's streets. It was assumed that the same source was utilised in antiquity (Corsi 1845:74–5; Middleton 1892: 354; Lanciani 1897; Porter 1907:19–20 and remains in the literature today DeLaine 1995b: Fig. 2; 1997:85–101; in contrast Forbes 1963 accepts Procopius at face value). However, such an assumption is running against the ancient source material and in particular Procopius's account (*B.G.* 14.6–11) of the construction of the Via Appia and the source of stone for the road: 'For all the stone, which is millstone (mulitain) and hard by nature, Appius quarried in another place far away and brought there; for it is not found anywhere in that district.'

We could argue that Procopius simply got this wrong (as Quilici 1990: 25). However, given the topographical accuracy of his account of the activities during the Gothic War near Rome, I think that this would be a mistake. It seems possible that the material quarried near the tomb of Caecilia Metella is of a different appearance to some paving blocks found in the city of Rome, since *selces* have quite different characteristics in terms of colour and appearance. We should not contest that this quarry source was utilised in antiquity, but we should reject the notion that it was the source for *selce* used in the capital. The few pieces of geologically analysed *selce* from stratified sequences dating to the second century BC in Rome confirm this viewpoint. In the 1920s the American geologist, Henry Washington, analysed a number pieces of *selce* collected by Tenney Frank (Washington's geological work is still recognised as fundamental, see Funicello 1995:32). These samples from the Scalae Cacae and the Emporium were sourced by Washington to the Monti di Vici near Civita Castellana to the north of Rome (Frank 1924:54–5; Blake 1947:40–1). Similarly, material from the Clivus Capitolinus (see Figure 5.4) was also provenanced to the same region (Van Deman 1924:14). The material referred to locally as 'occhio di pesce' has a distinctive composition and high leucitic content (see Bertini *et al.* 1971:48 for description). The potential for any error over identification of this most distinctive rock seems unlikely. What remains clear is that this material was being used in Rome in stratified contexts prior to the first century BC, if we are to follow the dating given in the literature for where these samples were taken from.

Such evidence suggests a firm connection between the middle Tiber valley and the paving of streets in Rome at an early date.

The 'occhio di pesce' *selce* is found in the middle Tiber valley at a variety of sites on both sides of the river. Most significantly, it was utilised in the paving of the Via Flaminia. Paving stones were identified close to Civita Castellana on the Treia river crossing (see Ashby and Fell 1921 for topography) and to the north at Ocriculum, where the whole section of road recently excavated was composed exclusively of 'occhio di pesce' *selce*. Further examples of the use of this material were found at Falerii Novi and on the Via Amerina to the south. In both these cases, the 'occhio di pesce' paving blocks were found to have been patched with material of a more compacted and darker colour with less leucitic crystals. A probable source for these would be quarried from the east central Monti Sabatini near Nepi and Sutri or from similar sources at Monte Aguzzo, Monte Maggiore, Sacrofano or to the south of Lake Bracciano (see Bertini *et al.* 1971:45 for a description of this rock; Hemphill 1975:120 for quarries). This might suggest a sequence of use, in which the 'occhio di pesce' rocks fell out of use in favour of the harder and more difficult to work *selces* of the Monti Sabatini. Interestingly, 'occhio di pesce' paving blocks were located on paved sections of the roads on the eastern side of the Tiber valley. The roads leading to Forum Novum from the Aia Gallantina and from the Tiber were paved in this material (for topography see Gamurrini *et al.* 1972:342–55; see also Filippi 1989). Conglomerates and limestones suitable for paving would have been locally available, but there was a decision to use *selce* from across the Tiber for these roads rather than local materials. In doing so, the person responsible for paving the roads may have been attempting to emulate the use of such materials on the major highways in Italy. Alternatively, with the widespread use of this type of *selce* from Falerii Novi in the east to Forum Novum in the west and up to Ocriculum in the north, we might suggest that the material was extensively quarried and utilised in the paving of roads throughout the region of the middle Tiber valley.

In terms of dating the usage of this particular rock source, we need to take into account its qualities. Because it contains large leucitic crystals, this stone is much easier to cut than other *selces*. This may have given the stone an advantage in the creation of blocks for paving, but in terms of its erosion its composition has the disadvantage of being subject to some cracking. Also, it should be noted that when made into blocks the stone does not create a completely smooth surface. Instead, a pitted surface is formed that in some circumstances might be advantageous in that it provides greater cohesion between the shoes of men or the feet of beasts. However, the smoothness of a journey in a wheeled vehicle may not have benefited from its use, rather than other *selces* from the Monti Sabatini and Monti Albani. Thus, the rock creates an ideal all-weather surface for journeys on foot or horseback—but not for those by wheeled carriage. The emphasis in

literary sources on the creation of road surfaces for wheeled vehicles in the second century AD suggests that this rock may not have been the preferred type. This view is in part confirmed from a brief examination of the paving of the streets of Ostia. I was unable to locate any 'occhio di pesce' type *selces* in the paving of the streets that had been constructed after raising the street level in the second century AD. A variety of quarry sources could be identified at Ostia. Clearly present were the light grey to dark green *selces* of the Alban hills alongside darker materials from the Monti Sabatini quarries (for discussion of the supply of other building materials to Ostia, see DeLaine 1996:178–9). It might simply be the case that the 'occhio di pesce' type of paving was superseded by the use of harder, smoother paving stones from other sources. We might suggest that with the increased demand for the use of *selce* for paving in Rome and on the roads of central Italy, new sources were located which were better suited to the creation of a flat paved surface. However, many roads continued to be paved with limestone and it was mainly on the roads radiating from Rome and in the volcanic regions that *selce* was utilised.

Road restoration

It is clear that roads were not initially paved but were formed from surfaces in compacted gravel *(glarea)*. What we find is a gradual upgrading of the quality of the road. This can be seen with reference to examples in which we find that the extent of the paving is not as wide as the actual width of the roadway itself. In the case of the Via Amerina, south of Falerii Novi (see Figure 5.3), the paved surface is only wide enough for one vehicle with what appear to be passing places added at a later date (Munzi 1994; Frederiksen and Ward-Perkins 1957). This pattern of only partially paving a road surface is repeated on the road from Ostia to Portus constructed in the first century AD (Figure 5.8). One half of the carriageway is composed of compacted gravel, the other from *selce* blocks at the excavations at Isola Sacra (Baldassare 1987; Calza 1940). Whether the road was originally paved in this fashion is difficult to determine. We might suggest that one side carried heavier, slower moving traffic, while the other carriageway was used by lighter, faster moving traffic. What is clear, though, is that the nature of the road surface and its associated structures were upgraded and altered to reflect changes in the available technology, with a marked improvement in terms of the speed of travel or the weight of goods (including building materials) that might have been transported.

Our discussion so far has concentrated on the nature of the actual road surface. Another key factor to consider in the improvement of technology is bridge construction. The ability to span a valley with a bridge would have reduced the distance travelled to cross a valley and the gradient down to the river. For example, the Ponte di Nona bridge on the Via Praenestina was

Figure 5.8 Road abutment and paving on the road from Ostia to Portus at Isola Sacra

originally a much smaller structure which today survives at the base of the main section of the viaduct across the valley (O'Connor 1993:69–70). The dating of such structures is always problematic and at best we are likely to gain an estimate based on the nature of the building material and building techniques with reference to other dated buildings—the bridge is dated by this means to the first century BC (Lugli 1957:309; Quilici 1992:31). Similar structures can be found on the Via Appia at Ariccia, the Via Flaminia at the crossing of the Treia valley (Blake 1947:109–10 suggests this structure is contemporary with the road's creation), and on the Via Nomentana at the Villa Patrizi, all of which Quilici (1992:31) sees as contemporary to one

another and pointing to a series of interventions to improve the transport system.

In the assessment of improvements in bridge technology over a wide area the problem is one of dating. This is seen at its clearest with reference to the Via Flaminia (see Figure 5.9). Augustus in the *Res Gestae* (20) is categorical that he restored this road in 27 BC along with all the bridges apart from the Mulvian and the Minuccian. When we examine the nature of construction of the bridges along the route of the Flaminia (Ballance 1951 for detailed survey; Luni 1989; Garofano 1994; Bruschetti 1994; Bonomi Ponzi 1994; for recent studies), we find a variety of construction techniques, from which Blake (1947:215) concludes: 'If all the bridges really are Augustan, they prove conclusively that bridge building had not yet become standardised. All are carefully constructed and massive, but beyond these two qualities they have little in common.' This takes us into the subject of what restoration of a bridge might actually comprise. In their study of inscriptions referring to the reconstruction or restoration of public buildings, Thomas and Witschel (1992) have concluded that the actions commemorated are often archaeologically non-existent (see discussion by French 1981:22). The emphasis on bridge building and road reconstruction points to two key factors: first, bridges were a major feature of the road; second, they needed some form of repair or restoration (for a full catalogue see Galliazzo 1995). This would imply that the bridges were not new and the remains we see today may include both earlier and later interventions. What is apparent from the vast number of bridges found from Roman Italy is that they are a major engineering feature of the landscape and greatly aided the speed of travel across valleys. Equally significant for the roads through the Apennines were the cuttings, embankments and viaducts (for examples, see Quilici 1994 on the Via Salaria, see Figure 14.5) which ultimately kept the road on a level route and avoided an undulating course. Clearly such actions improved the speed and reduced the effort placed into travel, but they are almost impossible to date with any certainty. This factor caused the alteration and adaptation of the physical landscape: for example, to create a more direct route on the Via Flaminia, a tunnel was constructed in the Furlo gorge (Luni 1992 for full description), or to link Cumae with Naples via the Crypta Neapolitana described by Seneca (*Ep.* 57; see Coralini 1992). These tunnels date back to at least the first century BC (Strabo 5.4.7=246C). Tunnels such as Vespasian's through the Furlo gorge were monumental actions to be remembered in the future alongside his renewal of the road system (e.g. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 9).

The emphasis has been on the extent to which road building involved a high investment of manpower and resources in creating structures, whether embankments, tunnels or bridges. It needs to be borne in mind that not all bridges were built from stone. Many rural bridges (e.g. in the Ager Lucensis, see Ciampoltrini and Andreotti 1994) were made of wood. Even major roads

such as the Via Appia featured wooden bridges, for example, at Minturnae (Brookes 1974; Calzolari 1994:232–3). It is difficult to account for why some areas did not develop stone bridges when nearby other monumental stone structures had been established. All seemingly logical arguments about the use of a technology, or its development from wood to stone, tend to observe rather than explain change without accounting for the fact that the use of stone and wooden bridges co-existed. In the context of road building, we should place this technological co-existence into the context of a road system that in some places utilised paving blocks and in others gravel or beaten clay. Human decisions were being made in the application of technology that did not follow a straightforward linear development. Instead what we may be seeing is the use of the appropriate technology within the limits of manpower and available resources.

The first roads constructed in the fourth century BC were notable for their length and surface only in the sense of travel on foot or horseback as all-weather routes. The maintenance of these routes was associated with considerable improvements in the technology of transport that included the paving of the road itself for the use of carriages and carts. In terms of choice of materials, the very hardest and least likely to erode were utilised—ideally basalt *selce*. Organisation of the quarrying and supply of this material is only hinted at by the sources, but by the second century AD a procurator was in charge of its supply. This might suggest that there was an imperial

Figure 5.9 The Ponte d'Augusto at Narnia

monopoly of the supply of this material that was quarried at a number of places in Italy and, in particular, in the Tiber valley. The quarrying and movement of the paving stones involved considerable human labour, but it is clear that the stone need not have been local to the region in which it was utilised for road paving. The role and organisation of the supply of this material are clearly more complex than a direct link between quarry site and its place of use, but we are unlikely to discover the nature of this trade from our sources. Similarly, the course of the road often involved cutting embankments and bridging valleys. These interventions increased the efficiency of travel at a cost in human labour and capital. No one can look at the Ponte d'Augusto at Narnia (Figure 5.9) or the Ponte del Diavolo on the Via Salaria (Figure 14.5) without realising the effort put into the improvement of the infrastructure (Quilici 1995). Overall, these actions cannot be simply explained by an economic need to travel or move goods. Instead, we need to regard the roads as key features of Roman monumentalism that displayed the power of Rome by the ease of travel and the scale of the structures which were utilised for the transport of peoples and goods in Italy. The changes in technology literally speeded up journeys and altered the kinetics of space— the subject of the next chapter.

6

TIME AND DISTANCE

In the previous chapters, roads have been seen as a key factor in the integration of the Italian peninsula in a slightly abstract sense that has detached the use of these structures from everyday experience. Key to our understanding of this factor is a clear grasp of the nature of speed of travel in relation to the spatial layout of the journey itself. This is what geographers refer to as space-time—a view that refuses to disconnect space from its temporal setting (Soja 1996 for summary). Only by understanding the nature of Roman space-time and the level knowledge of distance between places on the part of the traveller can we make sense of the cultural change associated with road building and the improvement in terms of road technology discussed in the previous chapters (Figure 6.1). What I am seeking to elucidate here is the ancient epistemology of space and time, in other words the cultural perception of distance on the part of an ancient traveller.

Temporal distance

Distance between places creates a barrier to human interaction and at the same time a defence against outsiders or those living further away (Harvey 1989:219–22). In the context of Roman Italy in the third and second centuries BC, the existing concept of distance had to be understood and to a certain extent undermined because the establishment of Roman and Latin colonies at a distance required the Roman state to interact with these new settlements. One way to achieve this aim was by the establishment of long-distance roads, after the initial period of colonisation. The alternative would have been to leave the new colonies cut off from the Roman state, which could have caused settlers to abandon the new towns. There was resistance to the setting up of a colony at Luceria in 314 BC because the site was so distant from Rome (Liv.9.26.1). The friction of distance in this case may have caused many settlers and others at Rome to feel wary of being associated with such far-off places. The problem for the state was to overcome the friction of distance and to find a means to establish a stronger

Figure 6.1 Road cutting on the Via Appia at Terracina

link with these colonies. One method of breaking the barrier of distance to create a form of political integration between places was to improve the basis of communications with the recently founded colonies. The integration of these distant colonies would seem to have been achieved through the establishment of a long-distance network of roads that altered the temporal distance between Rome and the colonies of Italy. Significantly, in the second century BC after the partial establishment of the road network we find that a number of colonies (we know of Sipontum and Bruxentum) had been abandoned (Liv. 39.23.3–4), perhaps because they were located beyond the road system.

Not surprisingly, the roads of Italy altered the speed of communication and established connections throughout the year, as we have seen in the previous chapter. The significance of this basic change should not be underestimated. It complemented the new concepts of distance involved in the establishment and settlement of new colonies on the periphery of the Roman state from the third century BC. To be involved in the long-distance settlement of citizens, it was equally necessary to create a system that unified those members of the state at a distance from Rome. At the same time, the changes associated with these distant settlers—centuriation, road building and town planning—should be seen as part of the establishment of a new space economy in Italy. It was this space economy that facilitated the appropriation and political domination of distant

Figure 6.2 The Via Traiana at Egnazia

territory by the Roman state. As part of the change in the space economy of Italy, we can also see changes in the use of technologies and the application of new techniques to the exploitation of the Roman landscape: surveying in centuriation, town planning and road building; new methodologies in farming and an increasing emphasis upon trade in agricultural produce, rather than subsistence production. Not surprisingly, such changes produced a number of social, cultural and political responses in the second and first centuries BC, which would have included the 'Bacchanalia conspiracy', the problems asssociated with the Gracchi and the Catilinarian conspiracy. These responses were not localised to the centre of Italy and Rome, but included geographical regions that were temporally distant from Rome such as Apulia.

The scale of change in the landscape and the social system of Italy can be revealed by comparison with change in the Enlightenment in Europe. During that period Europe experienced a fundamental alteration to the space economy that involved 'the creation of a regional, national and supra-national space economy within which resources, people and product could be mobilised through the operation of price fixing markets' (Harvey 1973:258). Fundamental to these changes in the space economy was the need to deal with the problem of communications and transportation. This problem was addressed through the establishment of turnpike roads, canals, systems of communication and administration, cleared lands and

enclosure of the common land to produce a new set of spatial relations, which caused a certain amount of compression of the temporal distances between places (Harvey 1989:255). Such changes have often produced new challenges to the society in which they occur and tend to stimulate a diversity of social, cultural and political responses (Harvey 1989:240). In the case of Roman Italy, we need to understand the well-known cultural responses (the Bacchanalia, the Gracchi, the Catilinarian conspiracy, etc.) with a clear perspective on the changes in Italy's space economy. Importantly, it is necessary to isolate the nature of change in terms of temporal distance with reference to known journey times in the ancient world. From these data for the speed of travel, it will be possible to establish the nature of change in terms of space-time distanciation brought about by the building of the road network.

The speed of travel

The ancient sources have a tendency to record the exceptional, which is true of journey times in particular, and they place an emphasis on the longest journeys at the greatest speed. Julius Caesar maintained a journey time of 100 miles per day over a period of eight days (Suet.*Jul.*57) to cover a total of 800 miles. According to Pliny (*N.H.*7.84), the longest twenty-four-hour journey was achieved by Tiberius Nero when his brother Drusus was ill, and was measured at 182 miles. These figures provide us with an upper limit of what was perceived to have been possible, but clearly such figures were the exception rather than the rule and tended to be conducted by exceptional persons in exceptional circumstances.

To find more realistic data for the speed of communication, we might look at the time taken by messengers to travel across Italy to and from Rome, using relays of vehicles and draught animals (Cic.*Rosc.*7.19). Livy (39–21.5) records that a messenger took four days to reach Luni from Rome in 181 BC covering fifty-eight miles per day. Other sources point to messengers achieving speeds of seventy-two or seventy-three miles per day on journeys from Brindisi to Rome (Plu.*Cat.*14) and Ravenna to Rome (App.*B.C.*2.32; S.H.A.*Max.*25.2; for other less explicit figures see Chevallier 1988:191–5). Significantly, the higher speeds were recorded on the major lines of communication: the Via Appia, Via Aurelia and Via Flaminia. Thus, we might suggest that these routes were associated with more rapid transport, because they might have been better maintained or there was greater provision for changing vehicles and draught animals. What is clear from the sources is that a messenger could cover between fifty and eighty miles per day in Italy (these figures for messengers would not appear exceptional, see Ohler 1989:101). This would mean that most towns in Italy could receive news from Rome within a period of less than five days.

In no way do these journey times of messengers reflect a general speed of travel for all journeys in Italy. Speed would vary according to the mode of transport, but our sources do not specify in most cases what form of transportation was utilised. Pliny (*N.H.* 3.100) points out that the journey from Tarentum to Brindisi of thirty-five miles would take a man walking a day and could take up to a day if in a vehicle. The Elder Pliny's view is confirmed by data given by his nephew (Plin. *Ep.* 2.17, 6.8), who points out that his property at Laurentum was a half-day journey, seventeen miles, from Rome and that the towns of Mediolanum and Comum were a day's journey apart at a distance of about thirty miles (for comparative data see Cotterell and Kamminga 1990:193–6). A speed of thirty to thirty-five miles per day would appear to have been fairly normal for a Roman army on the march (Polyb. 2.25; Liv. 24.13.9–11, 22.11.5; for other figures see Chevallier 1976:194). Caesar in 49 BC could anticipate speeds on the Via Appia of between thirty-five and forty miles per day and, from the context, we may assume that he was accompanied by at least a bodyguard if not a large body of men (Cic. *Att.* 9.15a; compare Veget. *Epit.* 1.9; for discussion see Watson 1969:54–5). These would seem to have been relatively standard speeds for the major roads of Italy and were faster than the speed of travel on other routes.

Travel on other routes can be established with reference to legal sources. Those summoned by the praetor to court were allowed a day for every twenty miles travelled to court (*Dig.* 11.1.11, 38.15.2.3, 50.16.3). This would suggest a minimum speed for all travel of twenty miles per day, whether by road, by *actus* or other form of pathway. The importance for the study of roads here is that this standard legal speed is at least 33 per cent lower than what we have found to be prevalent on the roads of Italy. Hence, the implication is that the construction of roads in Italy caused the compression of temporal distance, which gained roughly 33 per cent in terms of the efficiency of land transportation by the end of the first century BC. With the paving of more roads in the first and second centuries AD, the speed of travel would increase to a higher level and importantly to a larger number of destinations, as local roads were also paved.

A landscape of position

The importance of the reduction in temporal distance or journey times in Italy needs to be viewed in the context of the Roman view of their landscape and the measurement of that landscape. The consular roads in many ways structured the landscape. For the land surveyor they could be used alongside rivers, mountains, crossroads and monuments to fix the boundaries of estates (Hyg. *Cond.* 74). Moreover, as the primary routes of travel through the landscape, the *viae publicae* were the means of access to places and could be used as a tool for structuring the geography of Italy and the empire. The

fact that the consular roads *(viae publicae)* had milestones to mark their course from Rome enabled a person to describe with accuracy the position of a place in the landscape of Italy (Figure 6.3). For example, in defining the position of the intake for the aqueducts of Rome, Frontinus explains at what point on the major road a person should stop and then describes the position of the intake with reference to the road. Therefore, his description is as follows for the intake of the Aqua Appia:

> The intake of the Aqua Appia is on the Lucullan estate, between the seventh and eighth milestones, on the Via Praenestina, at a crossroad seven hundred and eighty paces to the left.
>
> (Aqu.5)

Frontinus uses this form of notation as a means of locating all the sources of the aqueducts around Rome. It would appear that this system was not solely used for technical purposes but also to locate places in general (e.g. *CIL* 6.29784; Festus 296L, 356L). Pliny, in describing the route to his villa at Laurentum, explains that his villa is only seventeen miles from Rome and goes on to say:

Figure 6.3 Milestones *in situ* on the Via Salaria. Note that there is more than one milestone to represent the intervention of at least two emperors and a statue base between them

> There are two different roads to it; if you go by that of the Laurentum you must turn off at the fourteenth milestone, if coming by the Via Ostia, at the eleventh. Both of the roads are in some parts sandy, which makes it something heavy and tedious if you travel in a coach but easy and pleasant if you ride.
>
> (Plin.*Ep.*2.17)

This view of the landscape and an ability to describe it according to where a person would be relative to their position from Rome could only be done once a system of milestones had been set up on the public roads. Moreover, the milestones allowed travellers to establish their position relative to that of Rome and the distance they needed to cover. Fundamentally, the system of milestones created a view of the world based upon the measurement of distance on these roads from Rome (Quint.*Inst.*4.5.22; Laing 1909). In turn, this view of distance from Rome created a distinctive geography in Italy that was structured according to the position of a person or place relative to the public road system.

Roman itineraries

Two aspects—the speed of travel and a methodology of location based on the milestones along Roman roads—were powerful tools for the management of journeys and understanding of geography in Italy. The milestones identified the location of people in particular, for example, Cicero was seen by Plutarch (*Cic.*7, compare *Comm.Pet.*32) to be able to remember where important persons lived and who their friends and neighbours were 'so that whatever road in Italy Cicero travelled, it was easy for him to name and point out the estates and villas of his friends'. Similarly, when waging war, Vegetius suggests that a general should have detailed itineraries or lists of distances between places, both written and pictorial, to allow for informed decisions to be made over the time taken to cover a set distance (Veget. *Epit.*3.6). The planning of journeys and the calculation of the time taken over journeys were key to the successful functioning of campaigns, but also of any journey in the Roman empire. Severus Alexander was said to have made proclamations two months before the campaign began with reference to the journey time to the frontier:

> 'On such and such a day and at such and such an hour, I shall depart from Rome, and if the gods so will, I shall stop at the first *mansio*.' Then were listed in order all the *mansiones,* next the camping places, and next where provisions were to be found, for the whole length of the march as far as the boundaries with the barbarians.
>
> (SHA, *Sev.Alex.*45)

The application here is a calculation of distance covered within a certain time, alongside the issue of army supply. The level of calculation is high here, some might argue because the journey involved the emperor himself going on campaign. However, Cicero's *Letters to Atticus* reveal a preoccupation with travel and an ability to keep in touch with Atticus and receive letters from him which was based on an ability to plan a journey in advance. For example, on his journey from Rome to Brindisi in 51 BC he receives at least three letters from Atticus and informs his correspondent of his where-abouts in the future:

> I am dispatching this letter on 10 May, just before leaving Pompeii for Trebula, where I am to stay the night with Pontius. After that I propose to travel by full normal stages without any delays.
> (*Att.* 5.2)

> On 10 May I arrived at Pontius' place near Trebula. There I got two letters from you the third day after dispatch, I gave Philotimius a letter for you as I left Pompeii for this destination.
> (*Att.* 5.3)

Significantly Cicero had taken his time on the earlier part of this journey to visit his estates, whereas from Trebula he was to follow the established stages of the journey along the Via Appia. We find him at Beneventum on 12 May, at Venusia on 15 May and at Tarentum on 19 May, where he waited for Pompey (*Att.* 5.4–8). What is clear is that Atticus was informed of his intended route and the time it would take. Hence, he would have known where Cicero was on his journey and be able to anticipate his arrival at places in the future. The messengers needed to travel faster than the correspondents or else they received news that was dated or their letters would have crossed. It would seem that the elite when travelling may have preferred a slower pace than the maximum they might have achieved. Key to the functioning of the system was a developed concept of space-time that integrated the elements of physical distance and time taken to complete a journey over that distance.

A key set of texts for our understanding of Roman space-time are the Antonine Itineraries (compare early modern itineraries Braudel 1981:416–9). This document was formed from a series of journeys that list the places on those routes. Scholars have attempted to link these listings with the *cursus publicus,* the journeys of an individual emperor or troop movements (Nicolet 1991:72; Reed 1977; Dilke 1985:122–9; Rivet and Smith 1979: 150–4; Chevallier 1976:34–7 summarise the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments). The general view of the document is that it is chaotic and its coverage quite random. Some authors are incredulous that the sections on one province may spill over and include parts of another (Rivet and Smith

1979:151). However, there seems to be a fundamental misconception in the approach to the document as a whole. Each individual itinerary represents a Roman view of space which is a journey through space rather than a mapping of that space (Janni 1984 for discussion of the concept). These individual itineraries may be cross-referenced with others in the listing to achieve the goal of travel to a place listed. A return journey may be made by simply reversing the order of places in the original itinerary. In effect, it is rather like reading a railway timetable in which you may wish to change trains to achieve your destination and will need to refer to more than one page of that timetable (Bekker-Nielsen 1988:151 sees the Itineraries as similar to a taxi driver's 'Knowledge'). The key difference is that, rather than having a listing based on time, we have a series of itineraries based on distance in Roman miles. The practicalities of this document can be seen with reference to eleven individual itineraries from Italy that are listed consecutively (*Ant.Itin.* 106.5–123.7). These are set out in Figure 6.4. The first listing is the route from Rome to Columna, the crossing point to Sicily. Within the document are listed the places on the route and the distance between those places. The second and third lists refer to journeys from Capua to Beneventum and to Equum Tuticum. This refers back to a place listed earlier on the first list. Hence, in combination that first list from Rome to Columna might be combined with subsequent listings for alternative final destinations. Following on from the listing to Equuum Tuticum there are itineraries to Rhegium and to Hydruntum via Brindisi. Later in the document, itineraries are given from Terracina to Naples and from Naples to Misenum and Nuceria, to Beneventum and ultimately on to Tarentum. The key places for travel (or where you change itineraries) are Capua, Terracina, Beneventum and Equum Tuticum. These should be seen as key points within the landscape of travel and presumably would have benefited both socially and economically from the greater presence of travellers passing through these particular towns. Rather than a chaotic piece of documentation, the Antonine Itineraries concisely account for journeys in southern Italy which may be cross-referenced to create alternative journeys to other major cities on these routes. We might assume that, once in a particular city, it would have been possible for a traveller to gain information of the precise location of a person or place, in the same way that Pliny accounted for the location of his villa at Laurentum.

The numerical listing of distance in the Itineraries should not necessarily represent individual stages of a journey itself, but the distance between towns. Travellers were given a list of potential stopping places and from this could plan their journeys. The spacing of towns in Italy as expressed in the listings of the Antonine Itineraries shows a range across the peninsula from three miles to over forty miles. However, the distances between towns tend to be within the range often to thirty miles (see Figure 6.5). Few journeys featured stages of more than thirty miles. Thus, the spacing of

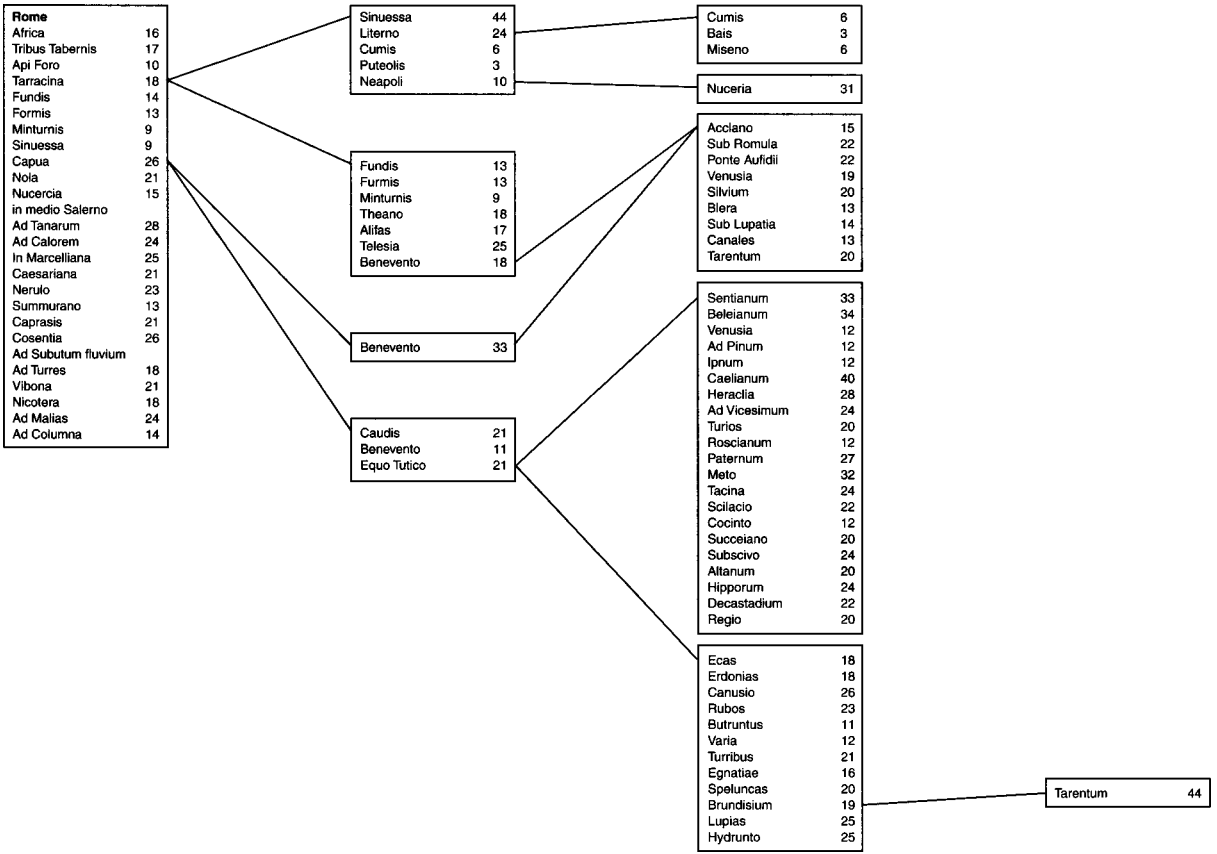


Figure 6.4 Listing of towns in Antonie Iteneraries (southern Italy)

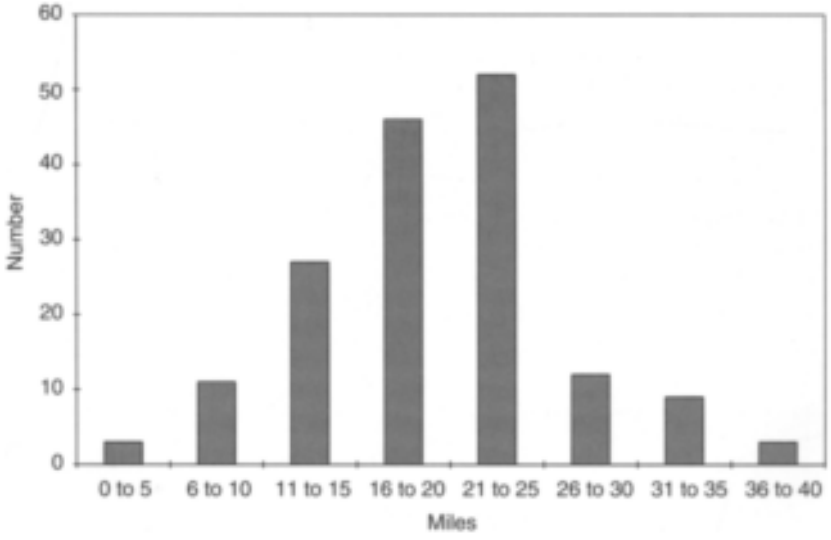


Figure 6.5 Inter-centre distances in the Antonine Itineraries (Italy)

towns within the Antonine Itineraries points to stages easily accomplished within a day, even by those who could not travel at a speed of thirty-five miles per day. Equally, within Italy, travellers utilising these Itineraries would have remained within ten to fifteen miles of a town, which would indicate that the chances of being stranded in the countryside were limited. The short distance to a town would suggest that in terms of security the traveller was not straying into the remoter areas associated with danger within the Roman mind set (see Chapter 13 on banditry).

What is also clear from the Itineraries and their listing of distances between towns on the routes of Italy is that there was a marked variation in the spacing of towns across the peninsula. The major roads (Table 6.1) display an overall lower average distance between towns (10–18 miles)

Table 6.1 Spacing of towns in the Antonine Itineraries: major roads from Rome

Name of road	*Places*	*Range*	*Average spacing*
Via Appia	Rome–Capua	9–26	15
Via Aurelia	Rome–Genoa	5–27	14
Via Domitiana	Sinuesa–Naples	3–24	10
Via Flaminia	Rome–Rimini	8–27	18
Via Labicana	Rome–Beneventum	3–25	13
Via Latina	Rome–Beneventum	3–25	11
Via Praenestina	Rome–Beneventum	3–24	13
Via Salaria	Rome–Hadria	6–20	13
Via Valeria	Rome–Hadria	11–25	18

and the distance between places is not greater than twenty-seven miles. In contrast, the spacing of towns in northern Italy (including the Aemilia) is higher, with the average distance between towns above twenty miles in most cases (Table 6.2). Once we examine the routes through the Alps, we find the spacing of towns markedly increases and the journeys feature some particularly long and difficult stages (Table 6.3). These figures are for journeys beyond the normal range for travellers and might only be considered in specific circumstances. The other figures for the Adriatic coast, Picenum and southern Italy reflect the general pattern of northern Italy (Tables 6.4 and 6.5). What is not shown in the figures is a significant differentiation in the spacing of towns across Italy. This is in marked contrast to Bekker-Nielsen's calculations based on Pliny's listing of towns in Book Three of the *Natural History*. He finds a decrease in the spacing of towns in northern and southern Italy (1989:20–40). I would suggest that this may be caused

Table 6.2 Spacing of towns in the Antonine Itineraries: northern Italy

Places	*Range*	*Average spacing*
Aquileia–Bononia	13–22	23
Verona–Bononia	25–30	26
Cremona–Bononia	12–32	21
Cremona–Faventia	20–25	24
Rimini–Milan	10–25	17
Milan–Aquileia	22–38	29
Milan–Rimini	10–24	20

Table 6.3 Spacing of towns in the Antonine Itineraries: alpine routes

Places	*Range*	*Average spacing*
Vindelicum–Verona	24–36	30
Brigantia–Milan	15–50	23
Brigantia–Como	10–60	39
Aquileia–Veldidena	22–36	26

Table 6.4 Spacing of towns in the Antonine Itineraries: Adriatic coast/Picenum

Places	*Range*	*Average spacing*
Ancona–Brindisi	8–40	18
Rimini–Equum Tuticum	12–28	22
Nuceria–Ancona	8–18	12
Helvillum–Ancona	8–14	10
Septempedem–Castrum Truentum	12–20	18

Table 6.5 Spacing of towns in the Antonine Itineraries: southern Italy

Places	*Range*	*Average spacing*
Equum Tuticum–Columna	13–28	20
Capua–Columna	13–28	20
Equum Tuticum–Rhegium	12–40	23
Equum Tuticum–Hydruntum	11–26	20
Beneventum–Tarentum	13–22	17

by the difficulty of locating all the cities listed by Pliny. Equally the measurement of distance used by Bekker-Nielsen is one that stresses a map distance rather than a closeness based on location with reference to the road system. The latter may cause the distances between towns in the Antonine Itineraries to be physically nearer to one another than those places. There is a difference in the spacing of towns in Italy, but the determinant of that difference is not based on distance from Rome. Instead, I would suggest the variation is a distinction between those towns upon the named roads of Italy and those outside that primary system of transport which links places to Rome.

Road improvement and travel

The alteration to the existing road system by building the Via Appia, the Via Domitiana and the Via Traiana had an effect on the nature of the system itself. However, seldom have scholars considered the possibility of comparison between existing routes and the new routes constructed. I am not suggesting here that we might recover the decision-making process of Appius Claudius in building the Via Appia from the Antonine Itineraries. Instead, I wish to suggest that documents like the Antonine Itineraries allowed for the comparison between routes built in the past that may have influenced the decision on the part of Domitian and Trajan to establish new routes in Italy. It is not simply a case of establishing a route, but also appropriate stages along that route at a relatively short distance: I think we may say ideally under twenty miles—the minimum daily expectation of travel. A comparison can be made between the journey from Rome to Beneventum along the Via Appia and the Via Latina. The journey on the Via Appia of 164 miles was shorter than that on the Via Latina by twenty-two miles. The lengths of the stages of this journey are expressed graphically as Figure 6.6. There were considerably more places mentioned on the Via Latina, but in terms of distance between stopping points there is little to differentiate the two journeys. A similar perspective comes from an examination of the journey from Rome to Cumae on the Via Appia and then along the Via Domitiana (Figure 6.7). This journey was said by Statius (*Silv.* 4.4) to have been reduced in terms of time. In comparison with the previous route along

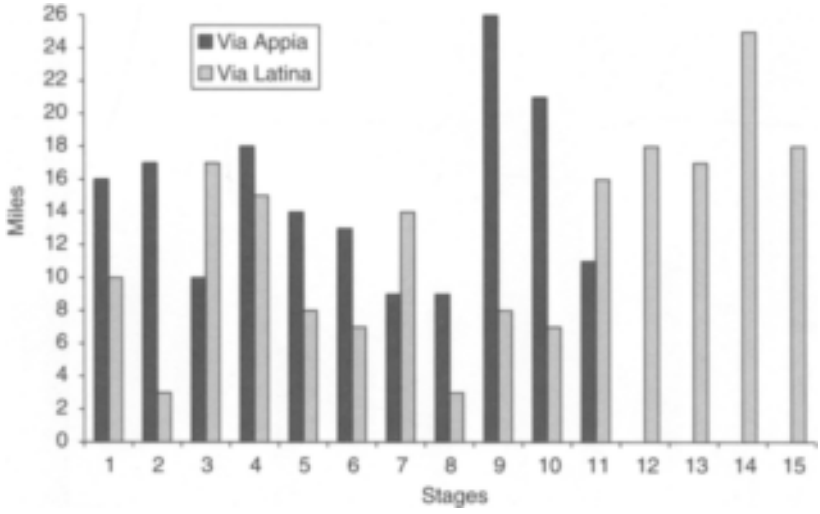


Figure 6.6 Spacing of towns on the Via Appia and Via Latina from Rome to Beneventum

the Via Appia, we again find that the distance is physically shorter by thirty-two miles to a total length of 135 miles. It should be noted that the new paving of this road would have also reduced the temporal distance of the journey as much as the actual physical distance being shortened: a view that may be confirmed with reference to the Via Traiana from Beneventum to Brindisi (Figure 6.8). The actual distance is reduced by a mere fifteen miles with a series of stages of a similar length. Again, I think the issue of the

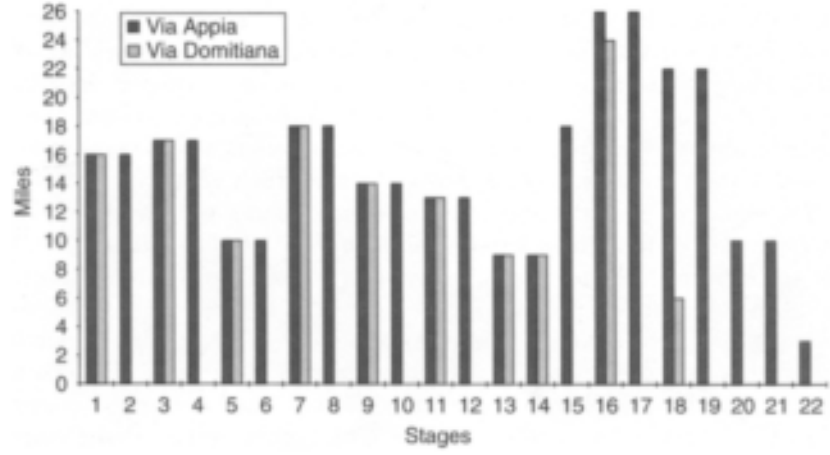


Figure 6.7 Spacing of towns on the Via Appia and Via Domitiana from Rome to Cumae

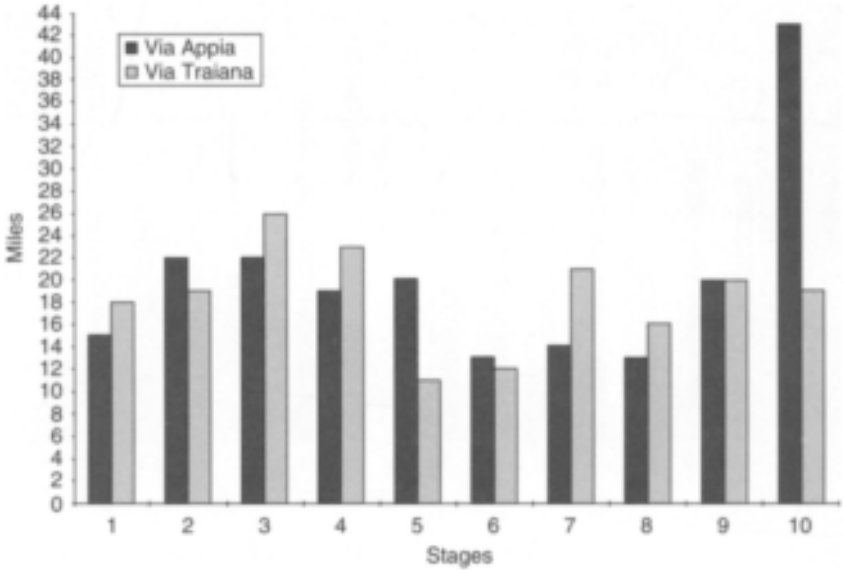


Figure 6.8 Spacing of towns on the Via Appia and Via Traiana from Beneventum to Brindisi

new paving of this route may have reduced the journey time to a greater extent than the change in physical distance suggests. Certainly the new roads built by Domitian and Trajan do reduce the overall distance, but it would appear that the paving of these new roads was key to the improvement in the overall reduction of journey time. Thus, what the Antonine Itineraries do not give us is an accurate account of journey time. It was for the traveller to estimate how long each stage of the journey would take, depending on what was known about the conditions of the road. Once on the journey these estimates of the length of time could be altered or adjusted, for example, the travellers would know how far it was to the next town and be able to estimate their arrival.

The choice of how a person travelled would condition how many places were journeyed through in a day. Horace (*Satires* 1.5; Chevallier 1988:8–11; see Gowers 1993 on nature of the text) travels slowly from Rome to Brindisi. He breaks off from his journey at Aricia, a mere sixteen miles from Rome. Next day he travels to Forum Appii, covering the distance of twenty-seven miles by the evening. He states that the journey from Rome to Forum Appii could be completed in one stage, but he had chosen to take his journey on the Via Appia at a slow pace. This would suggest that a normal pace for the journey would be forty-three miles for the first stage to Forum Appii, where a barge would take the traveller the eighteen miles to Terracina overnight. Thus, over a period of twenty-four hours a distance of fifty one miles was covered. Horace's journey features stages of under twenty miles,

as well as those in region of thirty-nine miles during the later stages towards Brindisi. We might conclude from this that individuals would have used the Itineraries according to their need for fast or slow travel; it would depend whether they wished to stop at towns or hasten onwards. However, the Itineraries as an epistemology of landscape or as a form of geography were designed for the traveller and were by their very nature a practical aid to travel. Indeed, it is only with an itinerary with measurements of distance and the naming of places that it would have been possible to estimate where and when a person would arrive in a town. For correspondence between people, the knowledge of such a system was essential for that correspondence to be effective. After all, Severus Alexander was said to have published at what hour he left Rome and would have been able to estimate at what hour he might have arrived at the first stopping place and subsequently the rest of the places on his route.

Roman space-time

The sophisticated epistemology of travel found in the Antonine Itineraries and based around the measurement of physical distance was also available from milestones along the actual road. Travel was not solely the experience of the elite. The setting up of colonies of citizens and the extension of citizenship to freeborn Italians suggests that many of these citizens may have voted in the second and first centuries BC in Rome (see Millar 1984, 1986a,b, 1998; North 1990; Laurence 1994b for discussion). Trade within Italy for the supply of the city of Rome (Morley 1996) or in the seemingly elusive figures of the *negotiatores* and their myriad ways of economic transaction (Paterson 1998 for discussion) required a system of spatial location and temporal calculation of the time taken to transport goods. A brief look at the *Letters* of the Younger Pliny reveals integration of the economic system through the travel of the elite (on agricultural practice see Rosafio 1993). Pliny held productive estates at a number of locations to avoid the disadvantage of being affected by crop failure within a single climatic region (Ep.3.19; 4.6). Of necessity, this pattern of property ownership involved Pliny in travel to his estates to deal with major financial transactions: for example, the grape harvest (*Ep.*8.2, 9.16); the leasing of farms (*Ep.*9.37); the receipt of petitions from peasants and attendance to the estates accounts (Ep.9.15); the rebuilding of shrines on the estate itself (Ep.9.39); the building and dedication of a temple in the local town (*Ep.*4.1). Journeys to his home town of Como and to his estate in Tuscany were a key feature of his life and could have been identified as an advantage of having properties in more than one place (*Ep.*4.13, 3.19). His personal presence at his estate in Tuscany tended to occur in the summer months (*Ep.*5.6). We might assume that other members of the Roman elite were involved in similar cycles but at certain times, for example, in January when a number

of magistrates were taken up by elected candidates (*Ep.* 2.11), the elite were present in vast numbers in Rome itself.

For this system of property holding and political involvement in Rome to be sustainable, travel by road was a necessity and a part of the elite's annual experience. Rather than seeing an isolation of regions or individual cities, we find their integration (see Morley 1997:48–51) through a dispersed elite and citizen body. It is significant that the colonies founded by Octavian after the battle of Actium in 31 BC were dispersed throughout the Italian peninsula. They were also well placed on the road network (Keppie 1983: 73–82). Later settlements were also conducted on the same basis (Keppie 1983:82–6). It can be argued that these settlements were a means to garrison Italy with former soldiers on the part of Octavian. However, seen from the perspective of the colonist, a land grant at a distance from Rome did not disconnect them from the city. The veterans as key supporters of Octavian may have been needed by him at Rome as much as in the towns of Italy. For this purpose, the potential movement of voters and supporters to Rome was assumed rather than needing to be stated. Voters, like senators, would go to Rome to support their candidate or to see him take up office in January. Only with the firm establishment of the principate was such participation reduced and isolated to members of the elite and the supporters of a successful candidate. The road system created an interconnection between places that allowed for a mobile elite and citizen body and also the mobility of surplus products and profits.

7

TRANSPORT ECONOMICS

The discussion so far has centred on the setting up of the infrastructure of the road system itself and the mentalité of space-time associated with travel. This chapter opens the major question of the cost of transportation and then goes on to examine the evidence where transportation is seen to be key to the economic practice of agriculture in Roman Italy. In terms of methodology, I am setting down the conventional argument over cost of transport and then analysing practice. This is quite different from the normal process of deduction from the cost of transport on the part of other scholars (most recently Morley 1996), where transport cost is seen as determinant of actual economic practice. Here, I wish to contest the very notion that land transport was slow or expensive compared with other pre-nineteenth-century economies—if anything, it was rather more efficient (Ohler 1989: xii). The assertion that land transport was prohibitively expensive can be traced back from recent scholarship through Finley's *Ancient Economy* and Jones's *Later Roman Empire* to an article by Yeo published some fifty years ago entitled 'Land and Sea Transportation in Imperial Italy'. This article set up the nature of the discussion of land transport for the next fifty years—the discussion sought to compare the relative costs of land and sea transport.

Transport costs: figures and calculations

Yeo (1946) presented an account of the relative costs of land and sea transport drawing on the ancient sources, primarily Cato's *De Agricultura* (22.3) and Diocletian's Price Edict. From these sources he attempted to establish the actual costs of transport for imperial Italy. His analysis was detailed and made frequent reference to other costs in Italy by way of comparison. However, at times he misses the significance of some of the evidence and certainly decontextualises it to create a standard cost for the transportation of items in relation to cost at the point of purchase. There would also seem to be a number of errors in his calculations that cause the transport costs to escalate. Therefore, at this point, it is worth reviewing the figures again.

To deal with Cato's evidence first, he discusses the cost of buying and transporting an olive oil mill overland from Suessa, a mere twenty-five miles away and, by comparison, a similar mill from Pompeii some seventy-five miles distant. He tells us that the mill and fifty pounds of oil purchased at Suessa would cost 425 sesterces, that there was an additional cost of the bar for the press of 72 sesterces and there would also be a cost of 60 sesterces for assembly. The transport cost for this short journey of twenty-five miles was estimated by Cato as six days' wages for six men using oxen and carts from his estate, which would amount to a cost of 72 sesterces. Therefore, the total cost of the mill and its assembly would have been 557 sesterces and the cost of transport would have been 72 sesterces. Cato also gives another figure for the cost of a similar mill brought at Pompeii, for which he would have paid 384 sesterces for the mill and 280 sesterces for its transport to his farm and a further charge of 60 sesterces for its assembly.

Cato's information on the cost of transport of an oil mill provides us with two working examples of the proportion of transportation costs from two places over different distances. The transport cost over the twenty-five miles from Suessa was equivalent to 11 per cent of the total cost of the mill (Yeo 1946:221–2 gives transport cost as 17 per cent of total cost), whereas the transport cost of the mill from Pompeii, over seventy-five miles, was more than 39 per cent of the total cost (Yeo 1946:221–2 gives this proportion as 75 per cent). Yeo (1946:224) converts these costs for the oil mill into cost equivalents for wheat and other staple goods to create a standard cost for all transport over land. In doing so, he decontextualises the original prices to refer to a different product and universalises the specific data into a general rule of thumb. This misses the point of what Cato was attempting to illustrate by giving the two examples. He wanted to compare the different costs of buying a mill for his estate. Interestingly, he considers buying a mill from one local location twenty-five miles away and another location at some distance, seventy-five miles away. In terms of total cost, the mill from Suessa was 629 sesterces, whereas that from Pompeii cost 724 sesterces. To buy the mill from Suessa would have made a saving of 95 sesterces. This would mean that the cost of the mill and its transport from Pompeii was only 15 per cent more expensive than the cost of a mill and its transport from a much closer location. This relatively small margin of cost demonstrates a number of economic factors that would have been present in the Roman empire which have been ignored or passed over by historians writing since Yeo (1946). First, prices for goods varied across Italy and goods from further afield could compete with those produced at a closer location. Moreover, the journey from Pompeii to Cato's farm was three times that of the journey from Suessa to the farm. However, it must be stressed that the overall cost of the mill from Pompeii was only 15 per cent more than that of the mill from Suessa even though its transport costs were nearly four times greater. Clearly, the costs of mills would vary according to the local geology and

whether the mill had been transported prior to its sale. Pompeii was ideally located for such a trade since it had direct access to suitable stone for mill production (on the petrology of mills in Italy see Peacock 1980, 1986, 1989; Williams-Thorpe 1988).

Yeo (1946) also makes a number of deductions about the speed of transport from Cato's evidence. Cato calculates the transport cost from Suessa based on transport by oxen accompanied by six men. He says that it would have taken them six days to transport the mill a mere twenty-five miles. It should be pointed out initially that the mill was an unusual load, which would have required exceptional efforts. Yeo stresses that the time taken (six days) was calculated for a round trip because the men used Cato's own carts for the transport of the mill. Therefore, it should be assumed that the total distance was fifty miles and that it took six days to make this journey. Yeo rightly suggests that the average speed was about eight miles per day. This is true of this example, but Yeo extends this speed to all land transport. In doing so, he backs up his argument with reference to a journey from Brundisium to Rome recorded by Ovid (*Pont.* 4.5.8) as taking a total of ten days, which he suggests must have been done at a speed of six miles per day. Here, Yeo has made a mistake in his calculations. The journey by his reckoning would have been a total distance of sixty miles, but the distance from Brundisium to Rome was 360 miles. Therefore, this error causes him to underestimate the speed of transport by six times—Ovid would have covered about thirty-six miles per day to travel from Brundisium to Rome on the Via Appia over a distance of 360 miles. The speed of thirty-six miles per day would not appear to be exceptional (see Chapter 6). The adjustment to Yeo's calculations places a control upon the figures from Cato for the transport of a mill. The transport of the mill was exceptional; it took a particularly long time because oxen were used for the transport of particularly heavy loads (Yeo suggests it weighed 3,000 pounds) and a large input of human labour (six men). The use of oxen is significant because they travel at two miles per hour—about half the speed of a mule (see Chapter 9). Further, we do not know whether the transport of the mill was over a road surface. This would have made a significant difference to the speed at which the item could be moved. Therefore, Cato's figures need to be regarded for what they are—exceptional in every way and not to be used to estimate a cost for land transport generally.

To turn to the figures for the cost of land transport taken from Diocletian's Price Edict (sections 17 and 35; Lauffer 1971; Giacchero 1974; Crawford and Reynolds 1979), Duncan-Jones (1974:366–9) summarises the calculations for the cost of land transport from this source. Although these figures have been subject to revision with the discovery of further fragments of the Price Edict (Crawford and Reynolds 1979; Giacchero 1974:45), the overall interpretation of the relative cost of sea, river and land transport has not significantly altered (DeLaine 1992:126). The Edict informs us that the

cost of transporting 1,200 pounds in a wagon was charged at a cost of 20 denarii per Roman mile. To place a scale upon calculations over distance, such figures have to be comparable. To do this, the figures used tend to be a *modius* of wheat (22 pounds), therefore the wagon would carry fifty-four-and-a-half *modii*. This means that for every mile a *modius* of wheat was carried, the cost would have been 0.4 denarii per *modius*. If the wheat cost 100 denarii per *modius,* the transport cost of the wheat in proportion to its actual cost would increase by about 40 per cent of the value over a distance of 100 miles (Duncan-Jones 1974:368 calculates this cost at 36.7–73.4 per cent using the same figures; variation may be accounted for due to *kastrensis modius* being viewed as equivalent to either one or two Italian *modii*—I have viewed it as equivalent to one Italian *modius*). The cost of sea transport for wheat can also be calculated. The journey from Alexandria to Rome of 1,250 miles, would have cost 16 denarii per *modius*. The cost per mile would be equivalent to 0.013 denarii. Therefore, the transport costs of a *modius* of wheat (cost 100 denarii) per 100 miles would have been 1.3 denarii, representing an increase in cost of 1.3 per cent as compared with about 40 per cent for transport over the same distance by land. These comparative figures can be seen to show the different relative costs of sea and land transport.

However, we need to understand these figures in context, before we can be sure of readily accepting their value as economic indicators. First, it should be recognised that the figures do not compare like with like. The figure for sea transport was for bulk cargo over a long distance, whereas the figure for land transport in the Price Edict refers to the calculation of a journey with a smaller load. The modern literature frequently alludes to the fact that the cost of transporting wheat over a sea journey from Alexandria to Rome was the same as transporting the same wheat over a distance of 100 miles overland. However, this comparison seldom takes into account the transport costs for the wheat from Alexandria which would have already been incurred in transporting the goods to that city. Yet, agricultural goods incurred land transport costs prior to their shipment from the river ports of the Nile down to Alexandria. This example illustrates how, in the Roman empire, the transport of wheat involved a complementary system of land, river and sea voyages, rather than suggesting that the lower cost of sea transport precluded the possibility of land transport.

What the figures in Diocletian's Price Edict do show, though, is a variation in cost according to the form of transport taken. This produces a cost ratio of sea to land transport of 1:31. For comparison, in the first half of the eighteenth century a ratio of 1:23 is recorded (quoted in Duncan-Jones 1974:368). It may well be that we should view Diocletian's Price Edict as the maximum cost and that often costs could be less than those recorded there. Equally, the figures may be referring to a very particular form of transportation and that the sums charged covered wages and expenses for

the carters, as well as the hire of the vehicle and traction animals. No doubt costs of land transport would have been lower if the carts, traction animals and labour power were owned by the person with goods to be transported. In Egypt, a cost for the transport of wheat by river over 13.6 miles is given for the year AD 42, which Duncan-Jones (1974: 368) sees as the equivalent of a cost of 6.38 per cent per 100 miles, which he converts into a ratio of transport costs sea: river as 1:4.7 (compare DeLaine 1992:125–6, 1:3.9 for downstream journey and 1:7.7 for upstream journey). The ratio of river transport to land transport based on these figures would have been 1:5. Significantly, these figures are not markedly different from the early modern period in Europe or the period of the early industrial revolution in Britain during the eighteenth century. Therefore, the figures for the cost of land transport in the Roman empire do not appear to be exceptional when compared to other societies. Indeed, the figures in fact demonstrate costs for transport of a very similar order of magnitude.

These tentative calculations of the cost of land transport have been frequently used to explain features of Roman economic action to which they do not refer. For example, high transport costs have been used to explain why famines in inland areas were not relieved: 'Despite the existence of a comprehensive network of trunk roads, land transport remained so costly and inefficient that it was often impossible to relieve inland famines from stocks of grain elsewhere' (Duncan-Jones 1974:1).

Such analysis ignores outside factors, for example, lack of transport animals and carts for the purpose, or simply a lack of political will (see Garnsey 1988:22–3; compare famines in Ireland in the nineteenth century). Moreover, the 'high' transport costs of goods by land have been used to determine and explain the ideology of self-sufficiency in Italian agriculture (Duncan-Jones 1974:38) as a functional means of maximising resources. Spurr (1986:144–6; see also De Neeve 1984, 1985, 1990) is critical of the use of these figures from the Price Edict as deterministic of behaviour in agriculture, since they refer to hired transport. Moreover, Spurr argues that the economics of self-sufficiency in agriculture extended to the field of transport, which allowed costs to be reduced by the use of farm animals and farm slaves, both of which would have undertaken much of the transport of goods to market. However, even if we do accept these figures as typical, it does not imply that land transport was an alternative seldom undertaken. To suggest that land transport was too expensive reduces human activity in the Roman empire to the rationality of modern cost-benefit analysis (a rationality or ideology alien to the ancient world). True, the transport costs by road were more than those by sea, but this does not imply that land transportation was seldom undertaken (Isager and Skydsgaard 1992:106; see also Garnsey 1988:23 for examples of long-distance transport of staples in Thessaly and North Africa). Our current knowledge of transport costs in the Roman empire is limited to the creation of an order of magnitude for prices, which would

appear to be closely comparable to those in Britain and Europe from 1700 to 1800. I now turn to a comparative example from this period.

A comparative example: eighteenth-century England

Britain between 1700 and 1800 saw a period of rapid change in the efficiency of road travel with the introduction of maintained toll roads, which provides us with an important parallel to the establishment of a road network in Italy from the late third through to the early first century BC. Both periods would appear to have been accompanied by an increase in the circulation of goods and both should be viewed as times of rapid economic change. The dynamics of transport in the eighteenth century demonstrate the significance of improved communications for the economy. Increasingly, we are becoming aware that in the eighteenth century the improvement in transport made by the toll roads and canals of Britain stimulated economic growth and can be linked with the technological innovation and reorganisation of labour that are associated with the industrial revolution (Pawson 1977:4–7). Generally, in this period the improvement in transport conditions overcame many of the constraints placed upon local economies by the factor of distance. Adam Smith in *The Wealth of Nations* (1776:148) summarises a contemporary view: 'Good roads, canals and rivers, by diminishing the cost of carriage, put the remote parts of the country more nearly upon a level with those in the neighbourhood of the town.'

This has important implications for the interpretation of land transport in the Roman economy. The action of road building, canal building and the improvement of river navigation all reduced the cost of transport. The presence of a sophisticated road system in the Roman empire would have reduced the costs of transport. Similarly, the construction of canals and the control of rivers would also extend the local economies of Italy (see Chapter 8). Moreover, the road systems of Italy caused distant towns to become less remote (to use Smith's terminology). In effect, just as in eighteenth-century Britain, the road system of Italy in the second and first centuries BC created a new space economy that linked places together (see Chapter 2).

Significantly, in Britain during the eighteenth century the cost of transport by sea, water and land did vary, with a clear advantage to water and sea transport purely in terms of cost. But the documentation from eighteenth-century Britain shows that the apparently superiority in cost of sea transport did not cause it to be the dominant form of transportation (Pawson 1977: 22–3). This would seem to contradict the logic of prices established for the Roman empire, where it has been argued that land transport was an inferior, expensive alternative to maritime transport. Indeed, Pawson (1977:27–9) points to the key advantages of land transport. It could be cheaper to transport goods solely by land, instead of a journey to port by land and then a coastal journey, because the alternative incurred additional costs of

handling the goods. Moreover, land transport on the toll roads was reliable in bad weather and the fear of losing valuable cargoes at sea caused many high-cost items to be transported by road. However, most significant for our understanding of transport economics is Pawson's observation on the integration of the transport network:

> Nevertheless, despite the apparently overwhelming economic advantage of trade by water, a well used transport system existed. This land transport system can be classified in two parts: a *complementary* system, which was interdependent with water transport, and performed a feeder and distribution role for it, and a *competitive, independent* system which did not rely on water transport linkages.
>
> (Pawson 1977:23)

The establishment of these two systems of transport in the eighteenth century radically altered the nature of the economy of Britain, in terms of both the movement of goods and the circulation of ideas. With this in mind, we need now to establish the nature of the transport system in Roman Italy to see if the role of land transport by road had a similar complementary role and significance.

Agriculture and land transportation

The connection of roads with the agricultural systems of Italy in the second and first centuries BC through to the first century AD can be demonstrated with reference to literary sources of the time. The agricultural writers, Columella and Varro, refer to remarks of Cato the Elder on the subject of the buying of agricultural property in the second century BC. Cato was writing in the period when the major roads of Italy had been established and their effect on the transportation of agricultural produce was beginning to be understood. Therefore, Cato's remarks come from a period of change in the human geography of Italy, which can be seen as having an important implication for the Italian economy. Interestingly, Cato's comments were accepted and reproduced by Varro and Columella and regarded as still having significance for the selection of viable agricultural properties in the first centuries BC and AD. They should be seen as a general view of the role of road transport for agriculture throughout the period 200 BC to AD 200.

The texts require some discussion to place in context the importance of the newly established roads in the selection of agricultural property. Columella (1.3) reports that Cato considered of prime importance the quality of the soil and the nature of the climate. After these two primary considerations, the factors of a similar importance were the road, water and the neighbourhood *(viam, aquam, vicinum)*. According to Cato, a

road added to the value of land in a number of ways: first, by allowing the owner to travel in relative comfort to the property, rather than dreading an arduous journey and, in consequence, seldom visiting. Second, a road aided the bringing in of goods and resources to a property as well as the transport away of produce: 'a factor which increases the value of stored crops and lessens the expense of bringing things in, because they are transported at a lower cost to a place which may be reached without a great effort' (see also Varro, *RR.* 1.16.3). Already, in the second century BC, we see a view of the road system as an asset for agriculture. Cato also points to the engagement of agriculture with a wider economy that is often underplayed by modern scholarship on the subject. Much of the modern literature refers to the agriculture of Italy as built upon self-sufficiency, but in Cato we find that certain needs of the villa were performed by outsiders. Certainly an ideology of self-sufficiency was present in Roman agriculture, yet this did not override a practical necessity to interact with the wider economy.

The integration of the villa economy with that of the town is demonstrated with reference to Varro (*RR.* 1.16.2–6). He is categorical that the ability to transport products from the villa by carts on roads or by river could make a farm more profitable *(fructuosus)*. This would suggest that transport was a major factor in the successful economic integration of the villa into the wider economy. The reasons for a villa needing its transport link are also given by Varro:

> Farms which have near by suitable means of transporting their products to market and convenient means of transporting from there those things needed on the farm, are for that reason profitable. For many have holdings some into which grain or wine or the like which they lack must be brought, and on the other hand not a few have holdings from which a surplus must be sent away.
>
> (Varro, *RR.* 1.16.2–3)

Further, Varro suggests that the villa should be integrated into the local town or *vicus* (village) economy and, if lacking these, an economic relationship with a large rich villa would have been a practical alternative. These centres were potential markets for the produce of the villa and were also centres of labour and services required by the villa owner (by this I do not intend to imply that these centres were 'service' cities in line with Engels' model, see Engels 1990). In terms of labour provision, these centres were the focus for provision of specialists such as physicians, fullers and other artisans; to own your own artisan was one thing but if that person was to die 'the profit of the farm would have been wiped out' until a replacement was found. Only if the farm was isolated from towns, *vici* and large villas would it have been necessary to own specialist craftsmen. Similarly, if a villa

was close to a road and had good communications with towns elsewhere, it would have been relatively easy to hire the labour for the transport of goods (Columella *RR.* 1.3.4, quoting Cato). Transport, like the harvest of crops, involved additional labour that was cheaper to hire for a short period of time, averting the need to own extra slaves for the purpose who might have been under-employed for much of the year. It would appear that agriculture was thoroughly integrated into a wider economy and that a villa's economic viability was increased by a good supply of hired labour, a prospering town and an adequate transport route for the export of goods either by road or river (Plin.N.H.17.28, referring to Cato). It should come as no surprise that Varro (L.L.5.35, discussed by Purcell 1995:170) made an etymological link between the words *villa* and *via*. The villa would simply have been an expensive but largely non-productive investment without the ability to export goods by road or river.

Villa location and road building

In terms of the development of Roman agriculture, the location of a villa close to a major artery of the transport system was important. Lacking that location, there was always the possibility of building a road to link the villa to the major transport routes of Italy. This would seem to have been a relatively common practice. For example, in the field survey of the Ager Veientanus in Etruria, *selce* paving stones were found at sixty-three of the 534 sites (data from Kahane *et al.* 1968). Roads were needed to connect the villa with the wider economies of Roman Italy.

The process of villa development after purchase is well documented in the letters of Cicero to his brother with reference to his brother's properties (*Q.F.*3.1). Cicero had recently visited his brother's properties and was providing a report on the progress of various building works at these sites. At the first property visited, at Arcanum, a stream had been diverted and was providing water in spite of the drought. At the second property, the architect/builder had failed to align the columns in a straight line but the paving of an area was progressing well. At the recently purchased Fufidian farm *(fundus),* Cicero foresees the irrigation of fifty *iugera,* the construction of fishponds, a *palaestra* and the planting of a wood. Most interesting for our purposes are Cicero's remarks about the building of roads to the property at Laterium. Quintus Cicero and his neighbours would seem to be improving the local roads around their estates. One of his neighbours, Varro, had built a good road in front of his property, whereas another, Locusta, had not built the section of road that would have adjoined their property. Clearly, some agreement had been made between the neighbours over the construction of this road. In addition, Quintus had built a section of road through his own property avoiding the use of his neighbour's land. This is described to his brother:

> I examined the road, which I thought good enough to be a public road, except for 150 paces (I measured it myself) from the little bridge at Furina's temple leading to Satricum. In that stretch, it had a surface of dry clay instead of gravel *[glarea]* (that will have to be altered), and that section had a steep incline, but I understand that it could not be taken in any other direction, especially as you did not want to take it through either Locusta or Varro's land.
>
> (Cicero *Q.F.*3.1)

This new road appears to have led from the estate to Satricum (a local town). It was one of Quintus's major developments to his properties outside Rome and would have greatly facilitated access to the property. Significantly, the road connection was being constructed to the highest standard with a gravel surface, which was the technology used on the public roads of the time (see pp. 54–5). Yet, the road was a private one and would only have been utilised by the estate. It would have involved considerable investment, but was deemed necessary in order to improve the viability of this property.

In the cases discussed so far in which roads were built from villas to the major roads of Italy, we are seeing a pattern that emphasises the ideal position of a villa as close to a road rather than on a road (see also Columella *R.R.*1.5.6–7). Similarly, there is an emphasis of location of villas that stresses the need to be close to towns but not just outside the walls. The emphasis in the discussion by ancient writers of the location of villas is always to be close to rather than adjacent to other features of the human landscape. A villa needed to be close to a road to allow for good access and communications. Equally, a villa needed to be near a town so that it had access to markets and labour. Ideally, it would also be near a port or river for the export of produce. This places the villa in a unique position in the Roman landscape. It appears to be separate from the major areas of settlement and might seem to subscribe to an ideology that emphasises subsistence. However, the villa's proximity to towns and roads caused it to be integrated into a wider economy. Moreover, in terms of the Roman space economy, the villas extended the influence of the town over a wider area that was integrated with the economy of the local towns and, through ease of transportation, away from the local towns into a wider economic system.

These features all play an important role at the classic villa site—Settefinestre. The location of this villa could be seen to be ideal and conforming to the prerequisites of the agricultural writers. The villa was positioned upon a hill and dominates the valley of the Oro (Carandini and Settis 1979:43–9). It was close to a *diverticulum* (side road) leading to the Via Aurelia a mere 1.7 km away (Carandini 1988:121–2). Moreover, the villa was close to the Latin colony at Cosa and its harbour—4–4.5 km away (Carandini 1988:126–7). Other urban centres were also nearby, within a

day's journey by road, including: Orbetello (12 km), Porto Ercole (14 km), Heba (18 km), Talamone (22 km), Saturnia (35 km) and Vulci (38 km). All of these towns would have provided markets for goods, which could have been transported using the vehicles, animals and slaves from the villa (Cato *R.R.* 52). The economic cost of this form of transport was negligible since the labour power was available within the villa itself. It was only if the agricultural produce of the villa was transported further afield that any additional outside transport costs were incurred. The villa was integrated into the wider economic system through its proximity to the port at Cosa, which would have allowed for the shipment of produce by sea at a lower cost (we should include the importation of goods as well as export of produce here).

The presence of the road (Via Aurelia) should not be ignored in the context of production and export, because the availability of sea transport would have been affected by the weather and was considered to be impractical in winter (from October to April). During the winter goods produced at Settefinestre would have been transported by land, rather than by sea. Therefore, land transport complemented transportation by sea when the seas did not permit sailing. Further, for short journeys of less than a day, we would not foresee the use of shipping due to an extra need for labour in the transhipment of goods from carts or pack animals onto boats. This brings out the complementary nature of land, sea and river transport. Few journeys, if any, would have been entirely water based because, ultimately at some point, transported goods had to travel overland to reach their final destination. Thus, to discuss water and land transport as competing systems according to price is to misunderstand the economics of transport in the Roman world. It was true that water transport was cheaper, but that did not mean that land transport for the marketing of produce was not possible. Instead, the implication of water transport being cheaper suggests that on a number of routes this form of transport had an advantage. However, it must be stressed that a large proportion of all goods moved in Roman Italy were moved by road. The reason for this can be seen in the availability of water transport, since in no way did navigable rivers and coastal ports service all destinations within Italy. However, these rivers and ports were linked to other places and destinations for goods by a sophisticated network of roads, which facilitated overland transport. For example, Terracina, a colony sixty miles south of Rome on the Via Appia, had its port developed at the expense of the Roman state in 179 BC (Liv. 40.51.2). This action caused Terracina to become the closest port to Rome. In terms of the importation of goods to Rome, these might have been taken to Terracina and then a further sixty miles to Rome along the Via Appia. This example illustrates how land and sea transport complemented one another in the long-distance transport of goods.

The space economy of Roman Italy

The implications of the evidence from the second century BC that there was a system of land transport which complemented transportation by river and sea and, as we have seen, that these forms of transport were not exceptionally costly when compared to other economic systems prior to the nineteenth century, carry some important significance for our understanding of the Roman economy. Over the last twenty to thirty years, we have been taught to think of the Roman economy as underdeveloped and based upon a peasantry living at a level of subsistence, with the cities as places for the consumption of any surplus wealth. A characteristic of this conception of the Roman economy is the lack of integration between its various parts and, certainly, of the maintenance of a minimal level of trade because there are assumed to have been prohibitive transport costs for most products. However, transport costs were a universal in the ancient world and, as Jongman (1988:140–2) has argued, the more important question is profit rather than cost. Clearly, produce from farms such as Cato's were transported for sale, and it was seen to have been advantageous for the sale of agricultural produce if the farm was close to a town, a river or a road. Therefore, perhaps what we need is a model of the Roman economy that emphasises the interrelationship of the units of production and consumption. To a certain extent we already have a familiar one to hand in Hopkins's (1978: Fig. 1.1) model for the growth of slavery in Roman Italy, but this addresses only part of the problem. In what follows, I wish to view Roman Italy in terms of centres of production and consumption to illustrate the interrelated nature of the economic units as both producers and consumers.

By the early to mid-second century BC, the road system of Italy had been established from the River Po down to Italy's southern coast. It is in this period that we tend to see the development of villa-based agricultural systems similar to those of Cato producing surpluses for sale elsewhere. At the same time, we might wish to identify Rome as the key market for the sale of produce, because the population growth in the city demanded this. Again in the early second century, we find the colonies founded earlier in the third century developing distinctive urban features such as walls, temples, *fora* and paved streets (e.g. Liv.41.27.10–11). It appears that these developments in towns and in agriculture follow on from the expansion of a road system in Italy. Indeed, we might view the development of large estates at a distance from Rome and owned by the Roman elite as a reaction to the reduction in the temporal distance travelled to estates further away from Rome. The physical distance from Rome of these estates remained the same, yet the introduction of a substantial road system reduced the time it took to travel to estates physically further afield. It would also have made the journey less problematic in terms of personal comfort and would have

allowed the owner to visit more frequently. Similarly, towns in Italy began to develop architecturally at the same time as the idea of what a town should be was circulated to even the furthest flung colony. Spatially, those places further away (whether towns or villas) were integrated with the cultural and political centre (Rome) because a new road system had developed to link them together.

The spatial integration of Italy by the second century BC has a number of important implications for our understanding of the nature of trade and the economy of Italy. Most of the information refers to actions of the most wealthy (i.e. the elite) of a similar status to Cato. The villa, as we have seen, was a centre for agricultural production with a view to the export of a surplus for sale, either locally or further away. The extent of the trade in agricultural surplus is subject to debate, but for our purposes here it is necessary simply to recognise its existence. The villa was not simply concerned with production, it was also a centre for consumption. A glance at Settefinestre demonstrates the amount of consumption that took place at the villa in terms of building materials and the degree of architectural embellishment that enhanced the life style of the owner and his family. However, in addition, goods that were unavailable in the locality may have been brought to the villa for consumption. Even though there existed an ideology of agricultural self-sufficiency, many villa owners may have needed certain products (e.g. imported wines, etc.) from towns or further afield to maintain a life style that we tend to associate with Roman culture in the cities of Italy (see, for example, Stefani 1994; for a brief discussion of the data see Laurence 1996a). However, it is clear that the material conditions of the life style of the elite in their villas were not significantly different from those found in the towns of Italy. In fact, the villa in Italy should be seen as a place for the display of wealth through storage, whether produced from the villa or imported from elsewhere (see Purcell 1995 on storage and production in villas). Inevitably, the villa could not produce all its own needs and, as we saw above, interacted with towns or *vici* in order to acquire other resources, whether in terms of labour power or material goods. Equally, the villa depended on the town as a place of sale for the surplus produced. Thus, there was a close economic tie between the villa and the town and, importantly, the villa reflected the consumption patterns of the town; or perhaps we should say that the consumption patterns of towns and villas, because of their economic and cultural interaction, were similar.

Finally, to return to transport costs and the economy, the investment of labour and resources in road construction, both with public and private monies, cannot be entirely related to the conquest of Italy. As I hope to have shown above, by utilising the evidence of economic practice, rather than simple relative costs of land and sea transport, we can begin to understand the significance and success of road building in the Italian economy. Road building allowed for goods to be moved at a greater speed, whatever the

season. It is true that land transport was more expensive in terms of cost than by sea, but that did not prevent goods being transported overland. In fact, in Roman Italy transport costs did not prevent the movement of goods. Significantly, the construction of roads allowed for the movement of goods and the development of a more productive agriculture alongside urbanism (see conclusions in Chapter 14).

8

INLAND WATERWAYS

The role of river transport and the construction of canals in the Roman empire is something that remains largely ignored by scholars involved in the study of the ancient economy. River transport was dismissed as unimportant for the most part by Brunt (1971:180) since the flow of most Italian rivers was seasonal and erratic to an extent that significantly hindered transportation. In contrast, Italian scholars have pointed to the importance of the Tiber and the Po for the transportation of goods (see e.g. Quilici 1986 on the Tiber or Uggeri 1990a on the Po). These two opposing viewpoints need to be assessed in the light of the argument in the previous chapter that transport by land complemented the movement of goods by river and sea. Also, we need to examine the economics of river transportation in the light of Cato's advice (*R.R.* 1.3) that estates should be bought near a town, the sea, a navigable river or a well-travelled road.

The Tiber

Cicero (*Rep.* 2.10) and Livy (5.54) saw Rome as ideally situated on the Tiber, a river navigable throughout the year which allowed for the importation of goods to Rome from the Mediterranean, the Tiber valley and some of its tributaries. Indeed, when reviewing the history of Rome, Livy pointed to the supply of corn to Rome in the fifth century from Etruria by way of the Tiber during periods of famine (2.34; 4.12–13; 4.52). Similarly, in the construction of the fleet in 205 BC, Livy suggests that timber and wheat were supplied by the Etruscan cities of Perusia, Clusium and Rusellae (28.45.16–18). These views from the late first century BC give the impression of a natural transport route down the Tiber that had been used prior to the building of roads such as the Via Flaminia or the Via Cassia. However, the flow of the Tiber was seasonal and in summer its upper reaches were reduced to a trickle or even no flow at all (Figure 8.1; see Le Gall 1953:9– 18, 27–35 on nature of Tiber's regime). This contrast of views on the river needs be interpreted in the light of Cosgrove's suggestion (1990:3) that rivers are never simply natural phenomena, but are subject to human management

Figure 8.1 Dried up river: the Aia in the Sabina (September 1998)

(see Judson and Kahane 1963 and Quilici Gigli 1983 on hydrological management).

Pliny the Younger (*Ep.*5.6) reports that goods could be shipped down the Tiber to Rome from his estate near Tifernum Tiberinum in the autumn and winter months, but not in summer since the rivers became dry. Any crops grown for sale in Rome would have to be stored for transport later in the year by river or be taken by road to the city. The former seems more likely in the case of crops such as wheat, especially since the value of agricultural produce could increase through the year after the initial harvest. Obviously, goods such as wine or olive oil that needed processing would not be transported prior to winter once the water level had increased on the Tiber. This was the case in the upper reaches of the Tiber above the confluence with the Clanis tributary. Below that point, Pliny the Elder (*N.H.*3.53) identified some forty-two tributaries, the major ones being the Anio and the Nar (Tac.*Ann.*3.9 on travel from Nar to Rome). He saw this vast amount of water accounting for the navigability in the lower reaches of the river, even for seagoing vessels coming up to Rome (compare Dion.Hal.3.44). However, it should be noted that the Tiber required careful regulation even in its lower reaches to maintain the channel itself (Le Gall 1953:135–83). *Cippi* (boundary stones) marked the division between the public utility of the Tiber and the private structures along its banks in Rome and down to Ostia (*CIL* 10.4704, 5320, 6.31340–557).

What we also find on the Tiber are schemes for water management to adjust the flow of the river and to allow for navigation even on some of its minor tributaries. The earliest scheme to promote navigation was conducted after the conquest of the *Ager Sabinus* by Marcus Curius Dentatus in the early third century BC (Liv. *Epit.* 11; Vell. Pat. 1.14). He cut a channel between the Veline Lake (near Reate) and the River Nar (Cic. *Att.* 4.15), which increased the flow of water into that tributary of the Tiber. In consequence, the Rosea river dried up and the inhabitants of Reate lost the use of this famous watercourse. An attempt in 54 BC was made to resolve a dispute between Reate and Interamna in front of the consuls in Rome and a commission often men (Cic. *Att.* 4.15). It is not known what the outcome was. The dispute itself is unclear, but may have been over the use of water and the alteration of the existing hydrology to create navigable rivers. This seems likely, given that the censors of that year were involved in reorganisation of the banks of the Tiber and the river port of Rome (Quilici 1986:200 for excavated evidence). Elsewhere in the Tiber valley by the first century AD navigation schemes had been developed, for example, on the rivers Clanis and Tinia, as well as on the upper reaches of the Tiber. Water was collected for nine days behind dams and then discharged to fill the watercourse (Plin. *N.H.* 3.53) and to create a period of navigation. Dams of a similar nature for the control of flow to aqueducts have been found in the Tiber valley (Figure 8.2; Jones 1962, 1963:197–201). Significantly, both the Clanis and the Tinia were associated with the transportation of building materials and timber to Rome (Strabo 5.3.7=235C). The key difficulty here was to compensate for a lack of water in the upper reaches of the river, but by doing so the problem of flooding was exacerbated downstream at Rome. The flood of AD 15 caused the *princeps* Tiberius to give two senators, Ateius Capito and Lucius Arruntius, the task of controlling the flow of the Tiber (Tac. *Ann.* 1.76) in both summer and winter (Dio 57.15 states there were five senators involved). The scheme that these two senators wished to adopt was drastic and would have reduced the risks of flooding in Rome. They wanted to divert the Clanis into the Arno, to dam the Nar and to dam the Veline lake. The Florentines saw the diverting of the Clanis into the Arno as a major cause for flooding and petitioned the senate. The people of Interamna objected to the damming of the Nar since they would have lost valuable agricultural land that may have been irrigated for pasturage and large-scale hay production (Plin. *N.H.* 18.263). Even though the people of Reate had seen the draining of the Veline Lake as a cause of ruin in 54 BC, now they objected strongly to its re-creation. As a result of these objections, the senate concluded that nothing should be done (Tac. *Ann.* 1.79).

If we read these actions in the light of the control of flow in the Clanis and Tinia, we can see a logic to the scheme that would allow for regulation of the amount of water flowing into the Tiber (Le Gall 1953:120–24 takes a rather literal view of passage; see also Fernandez Casado 1983:569). What

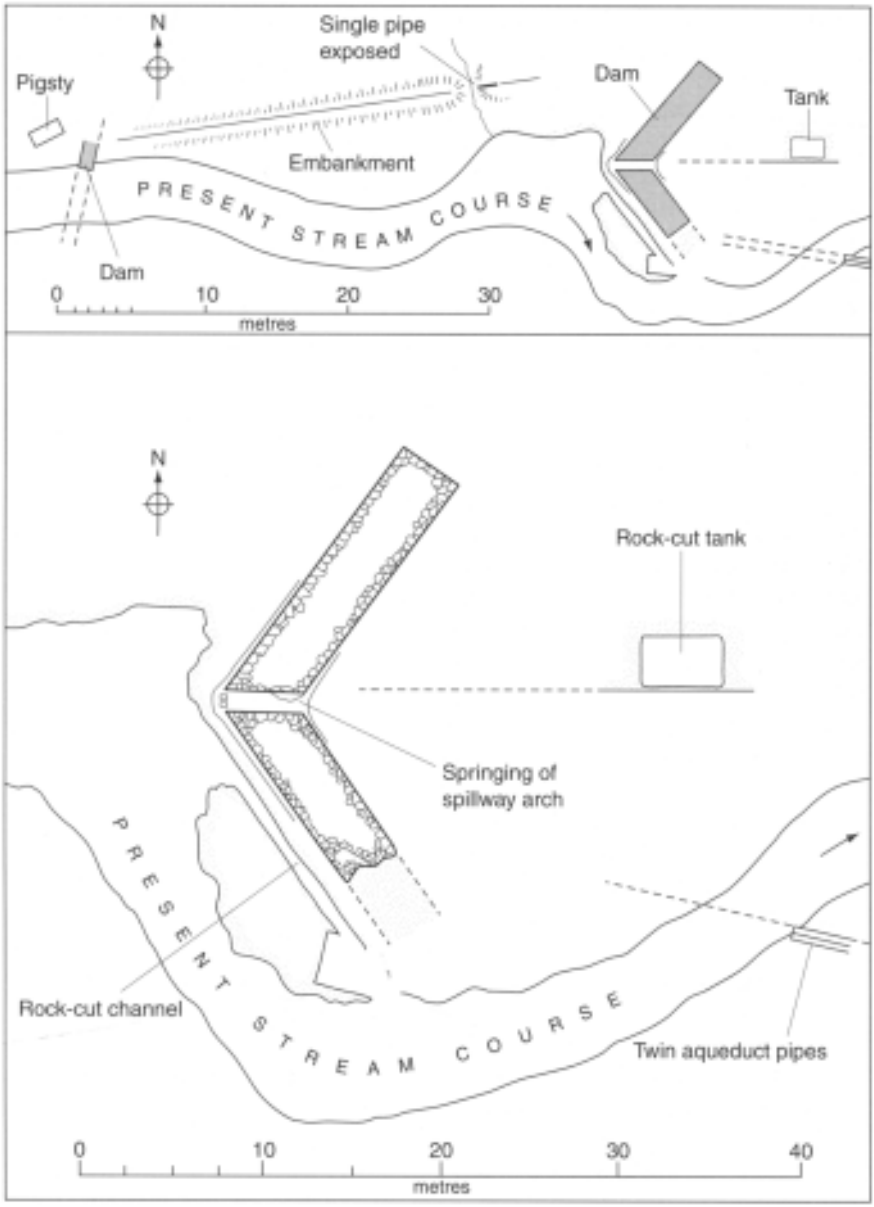


Figure 8.2 Dam across river for an aqueduct intake at Lucus Feroniae
Source: Jones (1962)

this points to, though, is a clear understanding of hydrology and attempts to control it at its source (contra Le Gall 1953:123). Later solutions tried to reduce flooding by controlling the flow of water below Rome. Claudius had a canal cut to prevent flooding in Rome (*CIL* 14.85; Meiggs 1973:54–5). Similar attempts were made by later emperors (e.g. by Trajan *CIL* 14.88; Plin.8.17 see Pisani Sartorio *et al.* 1986:195–6), but in years of heavy rain the Anio and Tiber would flood regions adjacent to them (Plin.Ep.8.17) and the raising of the level of building at Ostia and at Rome in the Campus Martius points to a persistent problem in the second century AD through to late antiquity (DeLaine 1995a:95–6; Meiggs 1973:64; Wilson 1935:53– 4; see Le Gall 1953 for list of floods).

The key to all these schemes was to prevent flooding in Rome in winter, while at the same time to create a reliable watercourse through the summer months in the main channel of the Tiber and its major tributaries (the Nar and the Anio principally) for trade with Rome. The nature of that trade is well documented. Building materials from the Tiber valley were used extensively at Rome (Strabo 5.3.7=237C; see DeLaine 1995b; Quilici 1986:209–13 for assessment of geological resources and their use). Equally, agricultural produce was shipped down the Tiber to the capital (e.g. Juv.*Sat.*7.117–19), and it was seen to be advantageous to own estates near the Tiber (Cic.*Rosc.Am.*19–20). We can also see some cases which suggest that metal production occurred in the upper reaches of the Tiber valley and these finished products were also transported down the Tiber to Ocriculum and Rome (Liv.28.45.16–18; Cic.*Mil.*64). Our knowledge of port facilities on the Tiber would reveal the nature of trade and the relationship between the river and the settlement pattern of the area. Unfortunately, at present any assessment of the nature and extent of the supply and role of river ports is limited by our current knowledge of their archaeology (Quilici 1986 for survey of the evidence; Patterson and Millett 1998 for future work on the Tiber valley). However, it is clear that the port facilities at Rome associated with the Mulvian Bridge some three miles from the city were not designed for use by vessels coming up the Tiber from Ostia (Quilici 1986:198–202; on evidence see Meneghini 1985; Mocchegiani Carpano 1982) and were utilised for the reception of significant quantities of goods from up the river.

The nature of transportation down the Tiber valley to Rome is fairly clear. What is more uncertain is the nature of transport upstream from Rome. Certainly boats were hauled from Ostia to Rome by oxen (Procop.5.26.9–13). The same technique could have been utilised to take barges upstream above Rome. Speeds recorded in the nineteenth century for upstream travel are extremely slow and were directly affected by the rate of flow of water in the Tiber itself. This seasonal factor would have reduced the efficiency of upstream travel to a degree where any journey for an individual could more easily have been achieved by road (Holland 1949:283–7). However, haulage

of goods in barges by oxen or buffalo in the nineteenth century was a viable alternative even to the upper reaches of the river north of Orte (Smith 1877:34–5). Also, boats which had made the downstream journey would have needed to have been brought back upriver for future journeys. It might be more likely that rafts were used on the downstream journey and disposed of in Rome.

Our information from antiquity of schemes to create or regulate navigation on the Tiber points to a level of technological sophistication and a will to apply that technology to create a navigable channel for as much of the year as possible. This would suggest that river transport became increasingly regular on the upper reaches of the Tiber (e.g. the Clanis) by the first century AD. In terms of trade, the use of the Tiber reduced the cost of transporting bulk cargoes, but the transportation of such goods still tended to be seasonal and not guaranteed even then.

Canals

Canals have already been mentioned in connection with the prevention of flooding at Rome. We now need to examine the extent to which canals were utilised in Roman Italy and assess their impact on transportation. The image of the use of the canal in Roman Italy is strongly influenced by the *dammnatio memoriae* of Nero. His scheme to build a canal from Lake Avernus on the Bay of Naples to Rome was condemned by his Flavian successors (Stat.*Sliv.*4.3.7–8), and by the second century historians viewed it as a sign of Nero's 'passion for the incredible' (Suet.*Nero* 31; Tac.*Ann.*15.42). This factor has caused the scheme to be seen as a sign either of Nero's misrule or of Rome's failure in technology. The scheme itself was designed by the best architects and engineers of the time, who were also responsible for the construction of Nero's new palace in Rome. The purpose of the scheme was to allow ships to sail safely to Rome from Puteoli. This was crucial for the government of the city of Rome, since grain had to be imported to feed the population. Claudius had constructed an artificial harbour at the mouth of the Tiber, but its safety was in question since 200 ships of the grain fleet had been destroyed there during a storm in AD 62 (Meiggs 1973:57–8). The nearest secure anchorage to Rome was at Puteoli, some 160 miles south. If a canal could be constructed from Puteoli to the Tiber, ships carrying grain from Egypt and Africa could sail directly to Rome in safety.

The project was begun. Prisoners from all over the empire were transported to Italy for the digging of the canal. There was clearly a major worry as to whether there would be enough water in the region to supply the canal. However, for much of its length the canal would have travelled through marshes (Figure 8.3) and would also have been supplied with water from the large rivers, the Liris and the Volturnus.

Figure 8.3 The coastal plain north of Cumae

The canal would in effect drain the marshes (Plu.*Mar.*37; Liv.26.7.9–10), reducing their potential for diseases such as malaria, and might also have reduced the volume of water in the River Volturnus to enhance navigation and prevent flooding. There were some major engineering feats to be undertaken elsewhere which would have included the tunnelling of mountains. This factor may have caused the scheme to be abandoned after Nero's fall from power.

Some might view the scheme as a typical example of Nero's mismanagement of the Roman state. But perhaps we should be cautious in our criticism here and consider this work in relation to other Roman canal projects that were realised under the empire. The region of Cisalpine and Transpadine Gaul was dominated by the River Po, a river that was some 400 miles in length and, according to the Elder Pliny (*N.H.*3.117–19; Figure 8.4, Polyb.2.16; see Bosio 1990 for discussion), contained a huge amount of water. This in itself could present a problem for river navigation, but a solution was found in the second century BC. Water was diverted away from the main channel by the construction of canals upstream (Strabo 5.1.11) and at the same time the marshes around the Po were reclaimed (Uggeri 1987:337–47, 1990a:179). Similar schemes were adopted on other rivers flowing into the Adriatic (e.g. at Ateste, see *Notizie degli Scavi* 1915:137–44; see Traina 1983:15–16 on Tartarus) The effect of this was to create a series of navigable waterways by

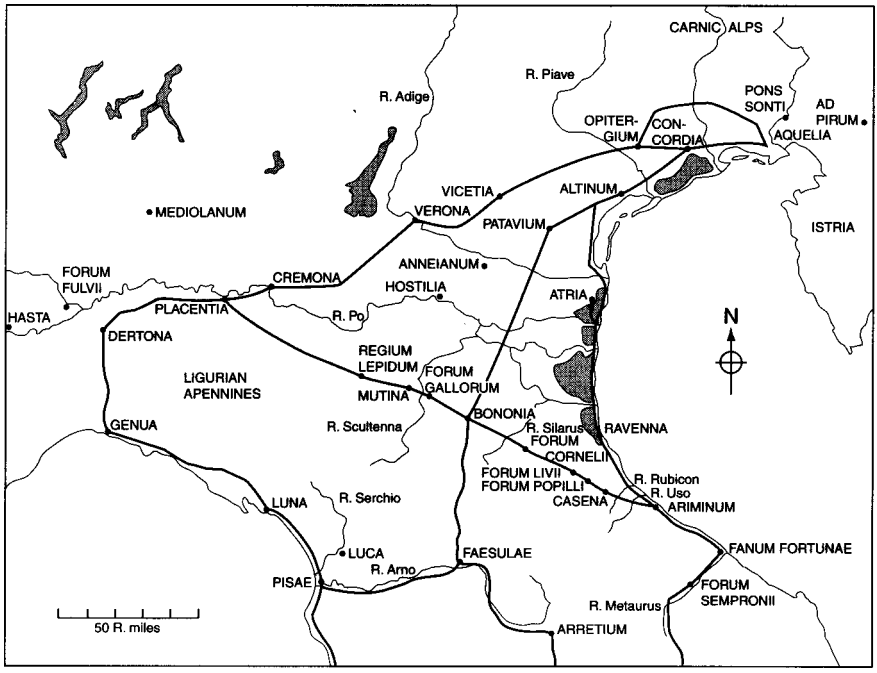


Figure 8.4 The Po plain in the first century BC
Source: Wiseman (1970)

regulating the hydrology of the Po valley and can be seen to be similar to the attempt to regulate the Tiber.

These rivers flowing east to west were in addition linked together by a system of coastal canals. The channel of the Po was then connected to Ravenna by a series of coastal canals which were navigable even for seagoing vessels (Plin. *N.H.* 3.119–22; Figure 8.5). Pliny states that the canals between Ravenna and Altinum to the north are over 120 miles in length. He goes on to describe them: the River Po (Padus) was carried to Ravenna by the Canal of Augustus (Fossa Augusta, for excavated evidence see Grazia Maioli 1990:377–81); to the north of the River Po was another canal known as the Fossa Flavia, linking the River Po to the River Tartarus (the Tartarus was also known as the Fossa Philistina, suggesting its artificial nature); from here another canal, the Fossa Clodia, linked the system to the north and the lagoons around modern Venice. The names of the canals Fossa Augusta, Fossa Flavia and Fossa Claudia are also found on the *Peutinger Table* and provide us with clues to which emperor built each section (in the discussion here, I depend on Uggeri's incisive observations 1978, 1987, 1990a,c). Clearly, the Fossa Augusta was built by Augustus. We find evidence for development in the area including a town called Augusta on the canal and presumably

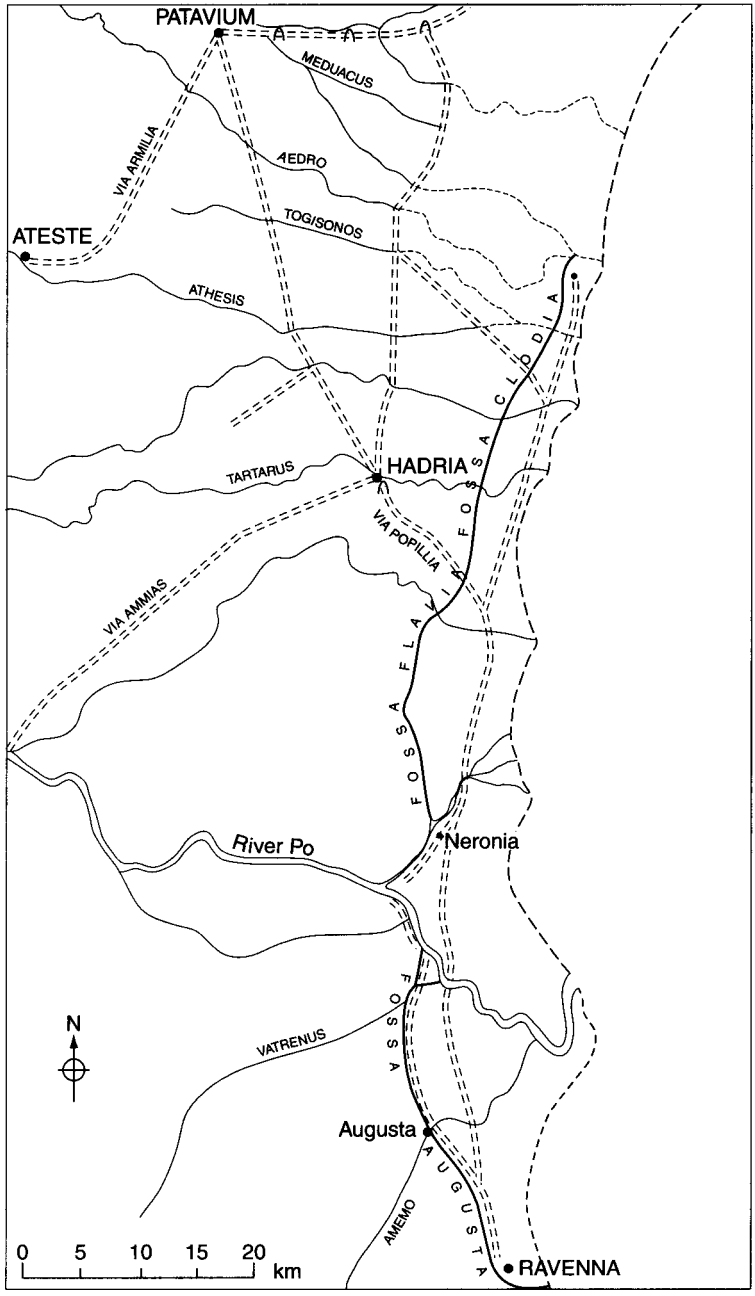


Figure 8.5 Canals north of Ravenna

founded by the emperor (Uggeri 1994). Similarly, the Fossa Clodia was built by the emperor Claudius. Pliny tells us that to celebrate his invasion of Britain he had sailed from the canal at Ravenna 'in what was a vast palace rather than a ship'. The Fossa Flavia presents us with a more interesting problem of whose work it was. At first sight, we would associate it with an emperor belonging to the Flavian dynasty that ruled from AD 69 to 96: Vespasian, Titus or Domitian. But if we take a closer look we find a town near this stretch of canal called Neronia. This points to the involvement of Nero in the area and the foundation of a town named after him, just as there is a town called Augusta named after the first emperor further south on the Fossa Augusta. The association of the town named Neronia with the Fossa Flavia would suggest that Nero had begun a canal project here that was to be finished by a Flavian emperor.

Therefore, it would appear that Nero was building not only his infamous incomplete canal south of Rome to connect Puteoli to the capital, but was also involved in the extension of the existing canal system in northern Italy. This project resulted in a canal for large vessels parallel to the coast for about 120 miles. The similarities with the scheme to connect Puteoli with Rome are evident: both would have run parallel to the coast and both are of similar length. The scheme to connect Puteoli to Rome, by a canal 160 miles long, appears more realistic when we can see that a well-documented example was built over an initial distance of 120 miles and later extended to the north as far as Aquileia, to give a length of some 200 miles.

The canal connection of Ravenna to the River Po established this city as the entrepôt for the towns upstream. This provided a connection by water for travellers coming to Ravenna. In the fifth century AD, Sidonius Apollinaris (*Ep.* 1.5) described his journey:

> At Ticinum, I went aboard a boat and travelled quickly down stream… Proceeding on my way I came to Cremona… Next we entered the town of Brixillum only to leave it, just allowing time for our oarsmen to give up their places to boatmen of Aemilia, and a little later we reached Ravenna… There, the situation is most favourable to trade, and in particular we saw large food supplies coming in. But there was one drawback: on one side was the sea, and elsewhere the sewer-like filth of the channels was churned up by the boatmen's poles…the result was that we went thirsty.
>
> (Sidonius Apollinaris *Ep.* 1.5)

The rivers and canals speeded up journeys to fifty or sixty kilometres per day (Calzolari 1992:86), but they were complemented by road connections; Sidonius continued his journey to Rome by road. There are numerous inscriptions in the towns of the Po valley recording the presence of *collegia*

of bargemen and sailors (Boffo 1977; Calzolari 1992:93, see De Salvo 1992 on nature of these *collegia*), alongside excavated river port facilities (Cera 1995), that point to an extensive pattern of navigation focusing on the Adriatic towns linked by the canals with trade ultimately connected with Rome for certain goods (Panciera 1972).

Canals are found elsewhere in Italy, for example, on the River Otranto (Strabo 6.3.5) and in the Pontine marshes (Cancellieri 1986; Fernandez Casado 1983:594–7).The latter were not on the scale of the Po valley scheme and seem to have been limited to the connection of coastal lagoons and the building of the Decennovius Canal adjacent to the Via Appia (Procop.5.9). If Nero's scheme to build a canal from Lake Avernus through this region to Rome had been carried out, a similar pattern of canal construction would have been seen here as well (notice how Vitruvius 1.11–12 makes the distinction between the two regions).

The role of water transport

We should not assume that the construction of canals and improvement of navigation on the rivers of Italy had as dramatic effect as canal building had on the economy and culture of eighteenth century Britain. Rather than a system of rivers and canals in Roman Italy, we see a partial system of water transport that only affects regions such as the Tiber and Po valleys. There was navigation on some other rivers in Italy such as the Liris and the Sarno, but there is no documentation of any attempt to improve it (on Liris see Hor.*Od.*1.31; Plu.*Mar.*37–9; *Dig.*19.2.13.1). The canal project from Lake Avernus to the Tiber would have provided for relatively speedy and cheap carriage of grain imported to Puteoli from Egypt and North Africa that would have circumvented the alternatives of either land or sea transport.The former was more costly and the latter was less reliable.

Canal or river transportation was cheaper than that by road, as can be seen from a letter written by Pliny to the emperor Trajan in consideration of the building of a canal in Bithynia (northern Turkey):

> There is a sizeable lake not far from Nicomedia, across which marble, farm produce, wood and timber are easily and cheaply brought by boat as far as the main road; after which everything has to be taken on to the sea by cart, with great difficulty and expense.
>
> (Plin.*Ep.*10.41)

According to Pliny, a canal would have remedied the problem. However, Trajan worried about whether the lake would have simply drained into the sea, if he allowed Pliny to pursue his scheme.The economic advantages of such projects were in the long term; they required high expenditure and an

immense amount of labour to achieve the end result. This may have been the reason for the abandonment of this particular scheme and Nero's project to link Lake Avernus to Rome.

The canals in the Po valley and along the Adriatic coast north of Ravenna point to the importance of water transport in the region alongside an extensive network of roads (see Vitr. 2.9.16). In terms of the original colonial settlement of the region, most of the towns founded by Rome were not close to the lower reaches of the Po. We might argue that only with the draining of the marshes and the regulation of the river's regime did it become possible to develop towns on the river in this region. It is significant that Ostiglia (ancient Hostilia; Tac. *Hist.* 3.9), a *vicus,* became a significant crossing point. It marked the beginning of the Via Claudia Augusta which linked the Po to the Danube, a road built by the *princeps* Claudius' father in 15 BC (Bosio 1991:133; Calzolari 1992). Thus, it was a key point in the extension of Roman power to the north. In effect, it was the place where anyone coming from the north would take the River Po down to Ravenna via the canals. It is significant that Ravenna was from the time of Augustus the centre of the fleet (Bosio 1991:138; Suet. *Aug.* 49). Ostiglia's development is a result of the meeting of two systems of transportation alongside a local city. It was not a town in its own right but the river port for Verona. Only later did a settlement or *vicus* develop alongside the port itself (Calzolari 1989:11–12). Ostiglia's importance in terms of transportation to the north is shown by Claudius's triumphal return from Britain when he sailed down the Padus and out into the Adriatic. Presumably he used his father's road to travel from the north, after attending to the soldiers stationed on the Rhine and the Danube.

The Po, the Danube and the Rhine were linked by roads to complement the advantages of river transport. The design of such a system would appear to have been Augustan, since it was Claudius's father, Drusus, who constructed canals on the Rhine to promote navigation (Tac. *Ann.* 2.8) and the key road which linked the Po to the Danube. Alongside these projects were the building of the canal from the Po to Ravenna and Agrippa's canal from Lake Avernus to the Bay of Naples (Suet. *Aug.* 16). The stationing of the fleet at Ravenna and Misenum should be seen as connected to the action of canal building in each case (Suet. *Aug.* 49). The strategic rearrangements were accompanied by major projects to establish a system of transport over a much larger territory and a general restructuring of space to take account of the supply of armies on the Rhine and Danube. As part of this scheme, the Po valley's communications were improved. A marked change to the extant system was made by the establishment of a canal from the Po to Ravenna, which became the starting point for future canal building in the Po delta and the establishment of new settlements once the drainage work was complete.

There is an obvious cost advantage in transporting goods by water rather than by road. But what we do not see in Roman Italy is the development of an extensive system of canals. We need to understand these two seemingly contradictory statements.The canal schemes involved land drainage as well as the creation of a transport system. In doing so, the local hydrology and land use of the area was altered. These schemes could only be undertaken if there existed the political will to do so. In the case of land drainage and canal building in the Po valley the will was clearly there—since the increase in agricultural land would seem to have been the crucial factor in the area's development (see Calzolari 1995; Dall'Aglio 1995). In contrast, the scheme to connect Lake Avernus to Rome was achievable with the political will of Nero to undertake it, but once he was removed from power the plan was abandoned. Instead, Domitian constructed a new road to connect Cumae to the Via Appia. Opposition by the towns in the upper reaches of the Tiber valley prevented the scheme proposed in AD 15 to control the flow of the Tiber. In this case the loss of valuable agricultural land was the key argument that overturned the proposal in the senate. What we see in these projects is that any proposal to promote communications and the cost of transporting goods by river or canal could have been easily reversed by arguments related to the production of agricultural produce. Schemes that did succeed were designed to prevent flooding or to reclaim marshland. The economic argument over the cost of transportation is only found in the scheme proposed by Pliny, but that was rejected by Trajan on engineering grounds and a general uncertainty over the alteration of hydrology. Even in Nero's attempt to connect Rome to the Bay of Naples, the argument is not economic but highlights the dangers of transporting goods by sea. Yet, there is no doubt that the cost of transportation would have been reduced. The use of the canals from Ravenna to Aquileia, as opposed to a sea voyage, caused an addition to the price of goods in the region of 15 per cent (Uggeri 1987:344 based on *AE* 1947:149). This was cheaper than transporting the goods by land and thus the seller of the goods could gain a greater profit. Bulk cargoes of agricultural produce and building materials could have been more easily shipped by river than carried by road. However, what we have found in the texts discussed in this chapter was a desire to avoid sea transport if at all possible. Hence, Rome at the mouth of the Tiber or Ravenna at the entrance to the canals and the Po valley were ideally situated to receive goods from upstream. It would seem that to carry goods upriver was an exceptional action in this period and may have incurred considerable costs in terms of time and resources—especially when taking goods into the higher reaches of a river's course. Canal and river transportation in Italy was limited by its location and lack of integration.There was no attempt to widen the nature of river transport through extensive canal construction except in cases that controlled the

flow of rivers and, in particular, flooding and navigation on the river itself. The fact that Domitian replaced Nero's proposed canal by the simple addition of a new paved road explains the Roman attitude to transport improvement—a road was simpler and more efficient in terms of capital outlay to achieve the same result of better communications.

9

MULES AND MULETEERS

The scale of the transport economy

The dominance of land transport over river transport in terms of its availability was discussed in the previous two chapters. We now need to turn our attention to the scale of land transport in Italy and to assess the contribution of transportation to the overall economic structure of Rome and Italy. Nowhere do we find information on the level of transport needs or how frequently goods were transported from place to place. The way I have chosen to approach the subject is to focus on a specific transport animal— the mule—rather than use economic theories derived from other situations, many culturally created in the twentieth century (see, for example, Morley 1997). The mule is an animal that is well documented in the ancient sources (Adams 1993, 1995 on linguistic usage), which causes the following discussion of scale and the economy to be firmly rooted in antiquity. The nature of the mule causes it to be an object that lends itself to analysis. The mule is a hybrid produced by crossing an ass with a horse and its appearance reveals this crossing. Its extremities, ears, legs, feet and tail, appear ass-like, whereas its body resembles that of a horse (Figures 9.1 and 9.2). In terms of size, it varies according to the nature of its parents. In nineteenth-century France mules tended to reach 15–16 hands and weighed 1,000 to 1,200 pounds. To produce a mule hybrid for sale in Britain, the crossing of male asses with either shire-horses or Clydesdales was considered. The result of such breeding was to produce an animal larger than its parents. Moreover, the animal would tend to be stronger than its parents through size and strength from the physical characteristics introduced from the ass, particularly its sturdy legs and large feet. Mules were bred for pulling loads or dragging ploughs (Tegetmeier and Sutherland 1895:84–94). Further, the working life of a nineteenth-century mule was twenty-five years; considerably longer than the horse's ten to twelve years (Tegetmeier and Sutherland 1895:76). In the nineteenth century smaller mules were bred as pack animals; their size facilitated the loading of pack saddles (Tegetmeier and Sutherland 1895:138–51 for details). Therefore, as an improved breed or economic product, the mule has an additional analytical value that points to the

Figure 9.1 Mules in the Sabina

importance and ubiquity of such animals in the transportation of goods and people.

Ancient production

The Roman agricultural writers are consistent in their belief that the best mules in Italy were bred near Reate in the Ager Sabinus. These animals competed effectively with the famous mules bred in Arcadia in Greece. Large herds were kept in Reate for breeding and sale (Colum.6.36). Animals for breeding had to be of a certain age: Varro advises that the male ass should be over three years old and, according to Columella (6.36), the mare should be between four and ten years old. The selection of the parents to produce mules is discussed in the same language and with the same endorsements as nineteenth-century treatises on the subject. We are told that the mare should be physically large and handsome, whereas the ass should be chosen not for its beauty, but for its record of producing strong mules (Colum.6.36 notes ugly and beautiful asses produce weak/strong mules). The breeder should look for an animal with ample stature, a strong neck, robust and broad flanks, a vast and muscular chest, brawny thighs, solid legs and a black or spotted coat. The ass had to be familiarised with horses to nurture it towards intercourse with a mare (Varro *R.R.* 2.8.2–4 reared on mare's milk). Such animals were bred for the purpose and could

have been sold for considerable sums. Varro (*R.R.* 2.8.3) records two examples of Reate breeding asses selling for 300,000 and even 400,000 sesterces. This would suggest that, like nineteenth-century breeders, the Reatines were reluctant to supply others with breeding asses and the capability to compete with their own production (cf Tegetmeier and Sutherland 1895: 94–106).

This provides another side to Reate's position in the mule trade; it would appear that the breeders were producing especially large male asses specifically for the breeding of mules. We might compare this region to Poitou in the nineteenth century where a Poitou ass which stood at 13–15 hands was crossed with a Poitou mare to produce a Poitou mule at 15–16 hands. These nineteenth-century breeders maintained that only the Poitou mare could produce such mules and thus discouraged others in Europe from attempting to breed them. The third element to mule breeding was the production of suitably large mares.

We do not know the size of the breeding herds of antiquity, but we need to place a scale upon the breeding of mules in order to understand the nature of production. A pamphlet produced for use by the British Government of India during the nineteenth century gives us a general guide to setting up a mule-breeding station: 4–10 male asses, a stallion if mares are required and 600 mares per annum for the asses to breed with (Tegetmeier and Sutherland 1895:153–8). Further, female asses would be needed for the breeding of male breeding asses—the real speciality of ancient Reate.

However, production did not end at birth. For a mule to be useful for land transportation its hooves had to be hardened. This was done when the animal was a year old and had been taken from its mother. The young mules were pastured on rough stony ground in mountainous areas (Colum. 6.37.11; Varro *R.R.* 2.1.17; Sen. *Ep.* 51.10). They would later return to the Rosea plain and be fattened prior to sale (Varro *R.R.* 2.1.17; cf Plin. *Ep.* 2.17; Gabba and Pasquinucci 1979:163–4). The price fetched for mules was higher than for ordinary horses and said by Columella (6.27.1) to be similar to that fetched by another improved breed, horses for chariot-racing at the circus games in Rome. After all, the mule was recognised to be the strongest of the equid family. It could be used for travel at a much higher speed than with oxen and could endure a longer journey than a horse (Colum. 6.37.11). Comparative evidence from the American Mid-West suggests that a mule pulling a 400kg wagon (equivalent to the Roman weight ratio) could have travelled a distance of fifty miles each day (Clutton-Brock 1992:51).

Mules were also utilised for the movement of much heavier goods, including building materials in the city of Rome (Mart. *Ep.* 5.22), and complemented the human labour of porters in cities (Hor. *Epist.* 2.2.72; Suet. *Cal.* 39). The ubiquity of the animal in the city can be revealed with reference to archaeological evidence from Pompeii and may be confirmed in the future by the recovery of similar data from other Pompeian contexts. In a preliminary study of four equids the bone analysis would suggest that

these were mostly female mules/horses rather than donkeys (pers.comm. Jane Richardson, see also Fulford & Wallace-Hadrill, 1998). Thus, in the city as well as the countryside the mule/ass was essential for the movement of people and goods (people: Hor.*Sat.*1.5 mule on canals; Suet.Jul.31 mules from bakery could be used to pull carriages). However, not every region of Italy presented the ideal conditions for equid breeding—lush pasture combined with mountainous terrain for hoof toughening—and it was the areas of Reate, the Ager Sabinus and Umbria which constituted the major areas of mule production (Plin.*N.H.*18.263).

Trade

As has already been observed, the mule as a product was probably worth more than a horse. This fact can be put down to its strength and specialised nature in the hauling of carriages (Figure 9.2). The price of mules varied according to their appearance; in the status-conscious world of Roman Italy, the better looking animals were worth more. What increased that basic price was a pair or two pairs of matching animals (*Dig.*9.22, 21.1.34; Gaius Inst.3.212.12). Varro (*R.R.*2.1.14) records prices of up to 60,000 sesterces for a matching pair of Reate mules and even 400,000 sesterces for a team of four matching mules. Such matching could most easily be achieved by the mule breeders themselves. However, between the breeder and the consumer stood the mule trader or *negotiator* who, if dealing on a large scale, could find and match mules. The scale of such business and the wealth derived by the *negotiator* are hard to evaluate. The mule trader was seen as having low status and was an insult bandied at the emperor Vespasian. He was said to have mortgaged his estate to his brother and taken to mule dealing after his governorship of Africa (Suet.*Vesp.*4). But, as has frequently been observed, the status attributed to an occupation by the elite should in no way diminish its importance as an economic activity. As ever in the Roman empire, the place of sale was in a town with an auctioneer overseeing the process (Apul.*Met.*8.23; Rank 1989 for economic significance of auctions). Thus the process can be seen as involving at least four separate groups: the breeders, the *negotiators,* the auctioneer and the consumers. We will turn next to the nature of the consumers.

To understand production in Italy and the general economics of mule breeding, we need to recognise that the economy was not simply a structure that exists outside the social structure of Italy, or outside a given historical situation. Often theories of the ancient economy have been seen to be universal, yet have been found to have been constructed with only a certain number of historical situations in mind. In the case of Roman Italy, too often as historians we have demilitarised the economy and failed to recognise the importance of supplying the army with goods during the third to first centuries BC. It would appear that in this period there was what we might

Figure 9.2 Mules pulling a magistrate's *raeda* (now in Avignon Museum)
Source: from Pisani Sartorio, G. (1988) *Mezzi di trasporto e traffico,* Edizioni Quasar

call a 'war economy' in Italy, which was embedded in a social structure associated with constant warfare (Cornell 1995b:128–32). Hence, we should not discuss the economy of Italy without considering the role of supply to the army (10 to 20 per cent of the population in the second and first centuries BC). To do so would be to ignore a large number of cases of production, whether agricultural or non-agricultural.

The pack/haulage animal was required by the state for the prosecution of warfare. We constantly hear of the requisitioning of transport and transport animals during campaigns (Liv.4.41.8; 9.14.15; 25.13.6; 27.43.10; Polyb.3.55.5; Caes.*Afr.*9.1; Caes.*BC.*2.1.4). Moreover, I would argue that the emphasis on road building and settlement of colonists in Italy during the third and second centuries BC was designed with the supply of the campaign army in mind. Towns contained the supplies for warfare: arms, packs, *iumenta* (haulage animals) and non-combatants (Liv.9.14.15). Equally, a large number of non-combatants were involved in the supply of the army with food carried by mules. This is revealed in the Roman military stratagem of creating the appearance of more cavalry by mounting non-combatants on mules. Livy (7.14.7; Front.*Strat.*2.4.5) gives the number of 1,000 in his account of a campaign against some Gauls in 359/8 BC (Liv.10.40.8 repeats the procedure for 293 BC, used later by Julius Caesar Caes.*B.G.*7.45). Other

examples of the tactic point to a large number of non-combatants with the army. Inevitably, the non-combatants and baggage animals slowed the army's speed of march and at times they were left behind prior to battles (e.g. Liv.7.37.46; 25.13.11–12). But they were essential to the army's survival—after all the supply of an army on the march was equivalent or larger than the requirements of a city in Italy. In addition, on lucrative campaigns there would have been a large number of non-combatants with their baggage animals who would have been involved in the buying up of booty and captives and the transportation of these goods away from the war zone (Caes.*Afr.*75: *mercatores* with carts for goods were with the army). This is made clear by Livy (39.1.6–7) in his discussion of the Ligurian campaign of 187 BC, in which few civilians were with the army because there was not a high expectation of booty.

In terms of the production of mules, the army and its associated merchants were a major market for the breeders, but how big was this market? Anecdotal evidence from the second century BC would suggest that most soldiers had a pack animal of some sort. We find soldiers leading *iumenta* in Plautus' *Epidicus* (209) and, at the siege of Numantia in 134 BC, Scipio Aemilianus is said to have inspected the baggage animals and commended Marius for his horse and mule (Plu.*Mar.*13). Indeed, it would appear that these animals carried the soldiers' equipment in the third and second centuries BC; it is only in the late second century that we find soldiers carrying their own equipment. This is developed as a theme from the siege of Numantia, during which Scipio Aemilianus is said to have enforced military discipline by throwing out of the camp 2,000 prostitutes, making the soldiers work each day and compelling them to carry thirty days' grain and seven stakes apiece. Further, to prevent them from using the baggage animals for this purpose, he sold them (Liv.*Per.*57). Previously, the army had a need for pack animals in large numbers, but from this date onward soldiers tended to carry their own supplies (Sall.*Jug.*44–5, 75: Metellus in Africa does the same and Plu.*Mar.*13: Marius in campaign against the Cimbri and Teutones). We might assume that the numbers of *iumenta* supplied to the army, at most, may well have been equal to the number of troops under arms prior to 134 BC. Clearly, after the late second century BC, these numbers were reduced. We might follow Hyland's estimate of 1,000 mules per legion (1990:88; Peddie 1994:50 suggests 1,250 per legion) as a figure to work with. Moreover, between 10 and 25 per cent of this number would die in most years and need replenishing by newly bred and trained mules (Hyland 1990:88). This would suggest that in the Augustan period, with twenty-eight legions to supply, there would have been a basic requirement of 28,000 mules with a renewal rate of 2,800 to 7,000 newly bred and trained mules each year. These animals may have been bred outside Italy nearer their military markets. However, in the earlier period of the third century we

find a similar market in Italy itself. At the height of the Hannibalic war, following Hopkins's estimates (1978: 33), the Roman citizen army contained 75,000 men. For their needs, I would suggest that a minimum of 15,000 mules were required, with an additional number of similar magnitude to supply the allied contingent of the army. However, in some situations, clearly each soldier had his own mule. This would increase the figure to 75,000, plus a similar number for the allied contingent. These figures do not account for the needs of merchants and others who were also with the army. The supply of mules to the army was significant for the production of transport animals and in particular mules and asses. There would have been a need to supply a steady stream of animals each year to allow the army to be mobile and effective.

The state also needed to contract for the mules supplied to magistrates going on official business (Cic. *Verr.* 2.83; *Leg. Agr.* 2.32; Liv. 42.1; Suet. *Aug.* 36; SHA *Had.* 17, *Sev. Alex.* 42). This was not an additional market for the mule breeders; no doubt animals for the use of proconsuls needed to be of a higher quality. A provincial governor in the third century AD was provided with a pair of horses, six she mules, a pair of mules, a muleteer and a cook—all of which he was expected to return to the state. The emphasis on matching pairs would suggest that they were used for pulling a carriage and that the extra expense of providing a matching pair was seen as a necessity rather than a luxury (SHA. *Alex. Sev.* 42). The provision of transport by the state would seem to date back to the second century BC or earlier and was designed to reduce the tension caused by magistrates demanding transport and *iumenta* from allied cities (Liv. 42.1). What is clear, though, is that the state contracted out to purchase these animals. The scale of contracting was perceived to have been large and appears in the mini-biographies of Ventidius Bassus, the first Roman to triumph over the Parthians. As a boy, he had been captured by Pompeius Strabo in the Social War and, as an adult, he contracted to buy mules and vehicles for the use of magistrates in the provinces (Gell. *NA.* 15.4; alternative traditions of Ventidius Bassus suggest he was a mere muleteer in an army camp Cic. *Fam.* 10.18: Plin. *N.H.* 7.135; see Syme 1958 for discussion). This contract for the buying of mules should not be seen to be a minor matter. Ventidius Bassus was trading at the top end of the mule market with an emphasis on pairs of mules and the carriage to match (Figure 9.3). Similar contracts with the state for equids are known, for example, to supply horses for the circus games from at least as early as 214 BC (Liv. 24.18.10; Rawson 1981:5–8). It would appear from Rawson's analysis that Antonius, Cicero's opponent in the 64 BC consular election, had a close involvement with the supply of circus horses (Rawson 1981: 9–11 analyses the evidence; represented in Figure 9.4; compare with Figure 9.3). Ventidius Bassus was engaged in the equally profitable business of

Figure 9.3 Commemorative coin of Agrippina pulled by mules
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

Figure 9.4 Commemorative coin of Germanicus pulled by circus horses
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

supplying matching pairs of mules. It would appear that both he and Antonius let the contract from the state in the manner described by Polybius (6.17):

> All over Italy an immense number of contracts, far too numerous to specify, are awarded by the censors…in a word every transaction which comes under the control of the Roman government is farmed out to contractors. All these activities are

> carried out by the people, and there is scarcely a soul, one might say, who does not have some interest in these contracts and the profits derived from them. Some people actually purchase the contracts from the censors for themselves, others act as their partners, others provide security for the contractors, while others pledge their property to the treasury for this purpose. All these transactions come under the authority of the senate. It can grant an extension of time, it can lighten the contractor's liability in the event of unforeseen accident, or release him altogether if it proves impossible for him to fulfil the contract. There are in fact many ways in which the senate can either inflict great hardship or ease the burden for those who manage public property, for in every case the appeal is referred to it.
>
> (Polybius 6.17)

The supply of mules to magistrates cannot be seen as a minor activity. The contractor, Ventidius Bassus, can be identified as a classic *negotiator* linking the producers/breeders of mules to the consumer—in this case the state (Suet. *Aug.* 36).

An obvious market for mules was in agriculture, after all they were the strongest and most durable equid and could substitute for oxen in all tasks including ploughing. To understand the role and extent of animal power in agriculture, I think we need to assess a common assumption about Roman Italy. This is concerned with what is known as the slave-mode of production, which necessarily emphasises the human involvement in agriculture (e.g. Carandini 1988). We are informed that agriculture was dominated by slave production in conjunction with the hired labour of peasants at harvest and other times when extra hands were needed. The question I wish to raise (posed by White 1970:296–7 with little response) is: what proportion of labour power in Roman agriculture was conducted by animals? To answer this question, we can refer to Cato's figures (*Agr.* 10) for the materials to run a 240 *iugera* olive yard to provide us with a scale by which to measure the involvement of slaves and animals in the production process. Cato suggests there should be one *vilicus,* a *vilica,* five labourers, three ploughmen, one muleteer, a swineherd and a shepherd: a total of thirteen slaves, two of which, the *vilicus* and *vilica,* were involved in management, four in the running of draught animals, together with two herdsmen and five labourers. The emphasis on the use of animal power is clear; about a quarter of the staff are involved with the maintenance and use of draught animals. This feature is confirmed by the presence of three pairs of oxen, three asses for the carrying of manure, and an ass for the mill—eight animals: thirteen slaves (to take another example, Cato's vineyard of 100 *iugera:* the proportion of labourers increases to ten, with a single ploughmen and a muleteer running two oxen and two asses, Cato *Agr.* 11). This provides us

with an idea of the involvement of animals in specific agricultural production, but little in the way of information about the transportation of goods. However, we should note that these animals were not exclusively used for agricultural production, since Cato advised all owners to have as many carts *(plostra)* as oxen, mules or asses (*Agr.*62). What is clear is that slave-run agricultural production involved the use of animal power. The utilisation of slave and animal power together should be seen as a means to improve efficiency in agriculture, or perhaps as in other slave or frontier societies, reflecting a shortfall in human population that could be utilised for production. In addition, mules and asses would have been cheaper to buy than human slaves.

A means to attaining greater productivity was achieved by investing in slave and animal power. Both slaves and draught animals were an investment to be maintained and when exceptional demands for transportation were made during the year then additional animals and carts were hired (Colum.1.3.4). It would appear that the attitudes towards draught mules and asses and their use/abuse were similar to those recorded so thoroughly for slaves (mistreatment: Apul.*Met.*3.27, 4.5; Sen.*Ep.*47.5 treating slaves as badly as *iumenta*). The draught animal was essential to agricultural production. No doubt in the absence of labour, perhaps due to Rome's overcommitment to warfare, there was a clear need to maintain agricultural production through the use of slave and animal power. Not surprisingly, the breeders of mules and other draught animals in Reate and Umbria would have been keyed into this market and the breeding of quality animals for productive activities as discussed by the agricultural writers.

Muleteers and trade

Like any group involved in physical work, the muleteers were belittled by the literate elite; yet these people were dependent on their labour to maintain their life style (Joshel 1992 for details). There is evidence of the negative image of the muleteer and to be accused of being involved in the mule business was a term of political abuse (Gell.*N.A.*15.4; Cic.*Sest.*82.8; Juv.*Sat.*8.148; Mart.*Ep.*10.76, 13.11). Some evidence even points to muleteers being as peripheral as the *infames,* for example, actors or gladiators (Petr.*Sat.*126; SHA *Alex.Sev.*37), and the humblest slave was thought by Seneca to be either the muleteer or herdsman (Sen.*Ep.*47.15, cf. 87.4). This might be explained with reference to their marginal position within the household and their contact with others outside the house and even beyond the region. Such statements can be seen as typical of the elite's view of those involved in labour, whether free or unfree (Joshel 1992:3–15), but the role of the muleteer in the elite's social world was at the same time essential. It is clear that all carriages were pulled by mules, but to be socially acceptable it was important to possess your own (Mart.*Ep.*8.61). The

ideology of elite self-sufficiency extended to transport animals as well as other forms of property. It differentiated the elite from those who needed to hire transport if they were to travel (Juv.3.315–7; *Dig.*42.5.8.2). Thus, mules and muleteers were an essential part of the household.

The position of muleteers in the elite household is revealed by epigraphic and legal sources and confirms the view that the elite depended upon them for the maintenance of their social position. It also points to the muleteer as a feature of both urban and rural households. Legal sources had to deal with the problems of bequests that differentiated town from rural slaves bequeathed to separate heirs. Not surprisingly, the muleteer could be an issue of contention since he could be elsewhere at the time when the will was read. The distinction between town and rural slaves provides a key into the composition of urban households which seem to contain a muleteer as a necessity for the functioning of the household in town (*Digest* 32.1.99; equally the muleteer was also necessary to the functioning of a villa, *Digest* 33.7.12.9) and one of a number of slaves used by the *paterfamilias* (head of the household). From inscriptions, it would appear that within the elite households there was a group of workers, including the muleteer, whose social world and status was broadly equivalent. We tend to find this group associated together in funerary inscriptions from Rome (Joshel 1992:88–91; 100–6). The group can be seen to be composed of those involved in the transport of the *paterfamilias* and his family—the litter bearers and muleteers (*CIL* 6.7987). Equally, as skilled labourers, the muleteers were associated with other trained slaves (for skill of muleteers see *Dig.*9.2.8; 9.2.27.8; 19.2.60.7) and those in a position of trust and close contact with the *paterfamilias* and his family, for example, doctors, cooks and *cubicularii* (*CIL* 6.9510; Apul.Met.9.2.9 creates a *domus* of a landowner with a muleteer, cook, *cubicularius* and *medicus;* see Martial *Ep.*11.38 on discretion of muleteers).

We are more likely to find an indication of the scale of transportation of goods outside the realms of the elite household. Veterinary texts point to the prominence of care for mules over any other animal to an extent that Adams (1995:1) sees the horse doctor as the equivalent of the modern motor mechanic. A similar prominence is found for the muleteer in Italy. *Muliones* and *iumentarii* appear in inscriptions from Milan, Tivoli, Todi, Spoleto, Fossombrone, Pompeii, Forum Germonorum, Potenza, Reggio Emilia, Brindisi, Sarsina and Ostia (*CIL* 5.4211, 5872, 6.9485, 11.4749, 4846, 6136, 4.97, 113, 134, 5.7837, 10.143, 11.962; *AEp* 1966.90, 1983.62–3, 1984.377, 1985.173). These refer to any indication of their presence from a mention of a professional in the household through to the actions of collective groups acting in *collegia* (Tramonti 1990). The evidence points to their position and role in the urban and rural economies, but it is in cities that we find their greatest significance. There is a definite association between muleteers and certain gates of a city, for example, in Milan there was a *collegium* of

iumentarii of the *Portae Vercellinae et Ioviae* (*CIL* 5.5872). The election graffiti from Pompeii in which the *muliones* recommend various candidates are all located in Via delle Consolare in close proximity to the Herculaneum gate (*CIL* 4.97, 113, 134). This connection with particular gates is found elsewhere, for example, at Forum Sempronii there is a *collegium* of the Gallic gate (*CIL* 11.6136). In the capital, we find a *collegium* of *iumentarii* wholly associated with the Via Tiburtina (*CIL* 6.9485). This would seem to link the local *collegium* of muleteers with a particular route leading from the city gate along a stretch of road.

This pattern of association between *collegia* and specific roads would seem to be reflecting an organisational structure that was functioning within the Roman state by which Italy was divided up and organised with reference to the road system (discussed further in Chapters 12 and 13). This can be seen in the contracting for the supply of mules (*ILS* 452; *CIL* 6.31369), which was organised along the lines of the major roads, for example, the Appia Traianae, the Annia and all its branches, or simply the roads of Histria, Venetia and Transpadine Gaul. Significantly, the patrons of such organisations were the prefects of the *vehicula*. Here we have a structure of association that is most familiar in the study of river transport from Ostia up the Tiber to Rome (Prefect of the *Annonae* and *collegia* of bargemen and others, see Royden 1988:33–56). The similarity suggests that the organisation of transport, whether by land or sea, featured a system of guilds, with the patron being the most influential magistrate associated with that trade; in the case of the muleteers this would have been the prefect of the *vehicula*. What this points to is a general scale of land transport in Italy that is comparable in terms of organisation to the trade on the lower reaches of the Tiber. Significantly, the *collegia* of *muliones* and *iumentarii* would appear to be located not just in the major towns of Italy and on the major transport routes. Tramonti (1990) has shown that many associations were found in the towns of the Apennines (*CIL* 5.4211, 4294, 5872, 6.9485–6, 11.962, 4749, 4846, 6136), for example, at Sarsina (Tramonti 1990:72–85). Thus the *collegia* and role of the muleteer can be seen to be ubiquitous throughout Italy, permeating into the mountains as well as regions more closely connected to Rome.

Transport in the Roman economy

The appearance of well-organised *collegia* of muleteers, alongside a specific job title of muleteer, stresses the importance of transport within the Roman social system. At the same time the production of an improved breed, the mule, to carry or drag larger loads, points to innovation in transport technology (a Pisidian inscription suggests this doubles the load carried; Mitchell 1976 for text; compare Clutton-Brock 1992:51). In addition to these two factors, the development of paved road surfaces for use by wagons

rather than pack animals suggests that larger loads (400 kg Jones 1973:830; Burford 1960:7) were being carried. As the technology of paved roads spread, so the increase in capacity of loads carried became more widely available (compare Hey 1980:125–7). The improvement of the road surface may mark a change from pack animals to carting; some of the earliest inscriptions recording road construction mention that they were for carts (Solin 1981). The key here is to think of the appropriateness of land transport for the movement of goods over a short distance, a factor reflected in the attention paid to the subject in Roman law (Martin 1990:302). No city was isolated from the economic system of Roman Italy, nor were the villas totally dependent on their own production. Goods needed to be transported and traded. The problem for Italy is that we do not have a clear indication of the nature of that trade. Certainly, estate managers in Egypt could allocate tasks to a team of muleteers through the year (see Rathbone 1991:278 for Egyptian situation; compare Marichal 1971, 1974 and Middleton 1980 on transport of pottery in Gaul). The movement of goods to villas by land can be easily seen with reference to the *Ager Veientanus* field survey that found evidence of imported marble at one-fifth of all the sites discovered (Kahane *et al.* 1968 for data). The paved roads and the breeding mules mark a fundamental change in the technology of transport that increased the weight of goods which could be shifted and the distance travelled in a day. This in itself reduced the overall cost of land transportation and facilitated the economic development of Italy. The importance of frequent transportation of goods is pointed to by the presence of muleteers and their own association by trade.

10

A MOBILE CULTURE?

The developments in technology to the road system and the increased efficiency of the actual transport animals, alongside a mentalité of space-time that emphasised the transport of persons and goods over a distance, are features of a culture that has an emphasis on mobility. This chapter sets out to examine the ancient experience of travel and to assess just how mobile the population of Italy was. This is a key question to our understanding of the linkages between cities and regions. We need to do more than notice their existence and look to see if this system of transport was a crucial part of the structure of Roman society. In other words, was transportation embedded in the social structure in the same way as the economy? The analysis put forward here is partial, since so much information is missing from the historical record. What we do have, though, is an indication of what travel meant to those who participated in the activity and also how it was viewed by those who did not necessarily stray from their place of birth or resettlement (on migration see Hopkins 1978:64–74).

Status definition in transport

A key to understanding the social meaning of travel is to assess the material culture of that activity and to see how social distinctions were made within it. The major differentiation in terms of status occurred within the field of the vehicle being used. The elite would not journey in a simple cart *(plaustrum)* unless there was a crisis in the state, unlike the rural farmer going to a local festival (Liv. 5.40.9–10; Tibul. 1.10.51–2). The vehicle most commonly used by both the elite and others such as Juvenal's Umbricius was a *raeda*—a carriage that could also carry personal possessions or bring goods from Rome to a suburban villa (*Juv.* 3.10, 236; Mart. *Ep.* 3.47; Figure 10.1). When lightly loaded these vehicles could travel as much as 100 miles in a single day (Suet. *Jul.* 57). Clearly, they had great versatility. The definition of gender was reinforced by the type of vehicle used. Women appear to have travelled in a *carpentum* and at a slower speed than their male

Figure 10.1 Raeda in mosaic in the baths of Cisiari at Ostia
Source: From Pisani Sartorio, G. (1988) *Mezzi di trasporto e traffica,* Edizioni i Quasar

Figure 10.2 Commemorative coin showing a *carpentum* issued under Domitian
Source: Hunterian Museum, Glasgow

equivalents in a *raeda* (Liv.1.48.5–7,5.25;Suet.*Claud.*17,*Tib.*2;Figure 10.2). Women had been limited by the Oppian Law in the second century BC over the nature of the vehicle they could use and were taxed at ten times the usual rate on vehicles worth more than 15,000 asses (Liv.34.1.3,39.44). The images of Agrippina or Livia on the imperial coinage depict them in a *carpentum* (Suet.*Cal.*15,*Claud.*11,Figure 9.3).The use of a carriage of any type, although fairly efficient, was still slower than travel on horseback

(Cic.Mil.20–2) and was associated with leisure *(otium)*. Carriages allowed the occupants to relax and attend to their *otium*. Pliny the Younger (*Ep.*4.14, 9.10) composed on journeys, which suggests that the actual travel was relatively smooth with a rocking movement which was seen by medical writers to have been beneficial (e.g. Cels.1.3.12, 2.15, 4.26.4; Plin.*Ep.*3.1). At the end of a journey, it was recommended by these writers that the traveller should stroll in the place they had stopped, rather than rushing, and to take a leisurely bath as a means of relaxing after being seated for a long time (Cels.1.3.12; Gell.*N.A.*12.5).

Rather than using a wheeled carriage, many preferred to travel in a litter (Figure 10.3). This mode of travel was particularly associated with the sick (Liv.24.42, 43.7.5; Suet.*Aug.*32–3, 43.5, 91, *Tib.*31, *Cal.*27, *Tit.*10) and those who disliked travel. Augustus was renowned for slow journeys in a litter. It took him two days even to reach Tivoli or Praeneste from Rome, with frequent stops on the way, and unusually he preferred to go by boat if possible to avoid the rocking motion of either litter or carriage (Suet. *Aug.*32; Cels.2.15 on degrees of rocking in transportation). The use of a litter was seen as inappropriate for magistrates or generals unless they were sick (Cic.*Verr.*2.5.27; Suet.*Dom.*19) and was mostly for travel in a private capacity without the obligations of *officium* or *negotium* (Suet.*Tib.*27). The litter allowed for reading, writing or sleep (Juv.3.239–45). Journeys undertaken by litter could be lengthy, for example, Lentulus travelled from Rome to his estate near Puteoli down the Via Appia in 49 BC (Cic.*Att.*9.11). They could also be utilised in haste: Marcus and Quintus Cicero fled in litters from Rome and the proscriptions in 44 BC, first to

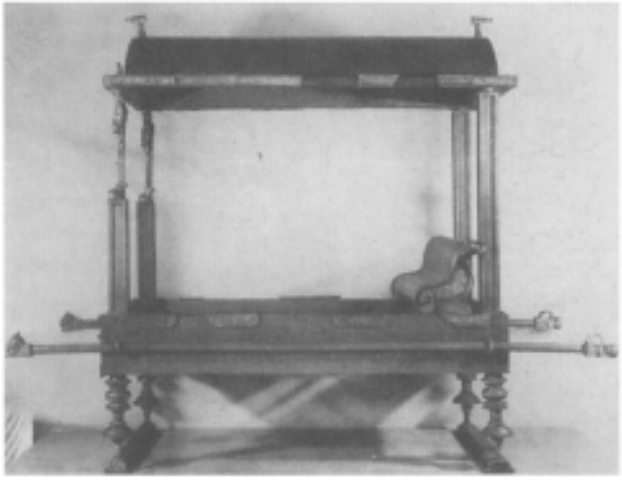


Figure 10.3 Litter from the Capitoline Museum
Source: From Pisani Sartorio, G. (1988) *Mezzi di trasporto e traffica,* Edizioni i Quasar

Tusculum, then on to Astura to take a boat down the coast (Plu.Cic.47; Sen.*Sua.*6.17). In fact travel by litter was encouraged by Claudius's edict that travellers should not pass through Italian towns except on foot, in a litter or sedan chair (Suet.*Claud.*25; SHA.*M.A.*23; *Dig.*8.3.7). The speed of travel by litter may well have suited the needs of the elite to communicate by letter and to visit towns on their way (see Chapter 6 on speed of travel). The status of the person in the litter was displayed according to the number of bearers. In any case, to be carried placed the person at a higher level than others going on foot or leading an ass (Suet.*Jul.*43, *Claud.*28; Mart.*Ep.*4.51; Juv.3.236–49). Those with eight litter bearers were marked out as of higher status than those with six or four bearers (Mart.*Ep.*2.81, 6.77). There was room in a litter for two people, but it would seem that a *paterfamilias* and *materfamilias* had separate litters and need not have travelled together (*Dig.*32.1.49; Cic.*Fam.*7.1.5; Suet.*Dom.*8). The separation of male and female non-kin seems to be crucial here, but kin did ride in the same litter (Cic. *Fam.*10.10.4–5; Suet.*Nero* 9, 28). Thus, the litter as much as the carriage (*raeda* or *carpentum*) was a prominent feature on the roads of Italy and associated with those of high status.

Senators and emperors

The high status associated with travellers using litters caused the people who encountered them to be curious and pay their respects. In moving his exiled wife Julia and her daughter, Tiberius gave strict instructions that soldiers were to keep the people away from the litters on both the road itself and stopping places on the journey (Suet.*Tib.*64). A busy senator could ignore the crowd by closing the litter (Cic.*Phil.*2.106). This could create the appearance of a corpse being carried to its place of burial. In cases where individuals tried to attain such privacy, they could be subjected to jests and ridicule for not following the socially accepted norms of display (Gell.*N.A.*10.3.5). This is particularly true of legates or magistrates holding *imperium* who were expected to travel with a retinue (Hor.*Sat.*1.6.107–9). On arrival in towns, a magistrate could have expected to have services put at his disposal. There is evidence for a very deliberate planning of their journeys so that the local magistrates would have known when they would receive a Roman magistrate and for how long (Cic.*Fam.*3.8.4). The Roman official would have expected to be supplied with goods at each town or *vicus* on the journey. The requisitions allowable by provincial governors were regulated only in 59 BC by a Lex Julia (Cic.*Att.*5.16.3, 5.21.5; Millar 1977: 29; Braund 1998).

The situation earlier in the second century BC was at times far harsher. The arrival of a consul and his wife at Teanum Sidicinum provided an example of what could happen if a magistrate with *imperium* felt slighted.

The consul's wife requested to bathe in the men's baths of the town. A quaestor duly sent the male bathers away. However, the consul's wife thought that there had been too long a delay and in any case the baths were dirty. On hearing this, the Roman magistrate had a stake set up in the town's forum and the person of highest status in the town was flogged. A similar incident was repeated at Ferentinum by a Roman praetor and in response to the potential threat of humiliation the town council of Cales passed a law that no one should use the baths when a Roman magistrate was visiting the town (Gell. *N.A.* 10.3). Whether such incidents were common or rare we simply cannot tell. What they do indicate, though, is that the magistrates of Rome expected hospitality of a high standard while travelling.

The movement of magistrates to and from the provinces at set times of the year and along standardised routes to a province from Italy were formalised. The regular appearance of magistrates departing and returning from the provinces would have been a feature of a town's annual cycle, if located on one of the routes from Italy. The governor of Spain travelled by land all the way; to travel to Africa or Sicily the magistrates left via Puteoli; to reach Greece and the eastern provinces they departed from Brundisium (Cic. *Vat.* 12, Planc. 65, *Phil.* 2.61–2; see Uggeri 1988 on Brundisium). A journey overland was necessary in all cases and would have taken the governor through towns and cities in which he would be entertained. The return of a governor to Italy was an event in itself, but if he returned after a victory the captives from his campaigns would have been displayed on route in the towns of Italy (Cic. *Verr.* 2.66). Cicero compared his return to Italy from exile to that of a triumphant general. He carefully planned his arrival in Brundisium to coincide with the anniversary of the colony's foundation and the birthday of his daughter Tullia (Cic. *Att.* 4.1, *Sest.* 131). This acute sense of timing affected the date of his return from governorship of Cilicia, so that he arrived in Rome on 3 January 49 BC—his own birthday (Cic. *Att.* 7.5). The journey in both cases from Brundisium to Rome was marked by crowds wishing to meet Cicero from the towns on the route itself as well as representatives from other towns. Travel was not simply about getting from place to place, but about being seen by as many people as possible.

To be seen travelling with a retinue was essential for the reinforcement of status. The poor man rode his mule, while the wealthy were carried with wagons, horses and attendants (Hor. *Sat.* 1.100–10). There was a need to get the number in a retinue just right: a praetor attended by five slaves would have been censored for miserliness (Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.107–11). Thirty slave attendants was considered to have been normal in the late first century BC for a man travelling outside Rome (Asc. 31). Not surprisingly, the 'bad' emperors were associated with the greatest excesses. Nero was said to have taken at least a thousand vehicles with him and had the mules shod in silver. The drivers of the vehicles were clad in tunics of the very best wool

from Canusium and there were in addition barbarian horsemen from Mauretania for an escort (Suet.*Nero* 30). The latter may not have been so unusual since Seneca, a contemporary witness, pointed out that few among the elite travelled without Numidians and slave runners to clear the road. The vehicles and mules were adorned with decorative features (Sen.*Ep.* 123.7, also 87.7–11; Plin.*N.H.* 34.162–3). The trend for carriage ornament was said to have been started by Calvus in the first century BC, but was taken to a new level by Poppaea, the wife of Nero, with the use of gold horseshoes for her mules (Plin.*N.H.* 33.140). Nero went one step further with a pair of hermaphrodite horses that he deemed a spectacle in themselves with the emperor in such a miraculous vehicle (Plin.*N.H.* 11.262). There may be some truth behind these views on Nero since many of the sources are contemporary. We should add that the princeps Trajan insisted on a humbler mode of travel (Plin.*Paneg.* 20, 14) in order to distance himself from the excesses of the Julio-Claudian and Flavian dynasties.

The emperor was met by crowds when he travelled (Mart.*Ep.* 10.6) and was expected to receive petitioners. Notoriously, Hadrian replied to a female petitioner that he was too busy; she in turn told him in that case don't be princeps anymore then and he was forced to attend to her demands (Dio 69.6.3). While on the move the emperor would have been subject to petitioners at any time that the journey was interrupted. Suetonius's *Life of Vespasian* (23) includes an incident in which the muleteer gets down to reshoe the mules as a ploy to allow a petitioner to meet the princeps. The possibility of privacy in travel was almost inconceivable and could only be obtained by edicts from the princeps himself, which even then required the physical presence of soldiers to prevent access (Tac.*Ann.* 4.56). Later these incidents became a reason for criticism. Such very public journeys needed not only to be well thought out, but also organised in advance. When Tiberius contemplated a tour of the provinces, the vehicles were assembled in Rome and supplies were brought into the towns on the route (Suet.-*Tib.* 38). The emphasis was on a planned journey in which those travelling with the emperor knew where they would be at a particular time and those receiving the entourage knew at what time it would arrive. This planning allowed for the reception of the princeps in a style that was becoming to his position. Cassius Dio (78.9) comments on the sheer expense involved in the use of accommodation and, even in winter, the construction of amphitheatres and circuses at places visited by the emperor. The senators themselves had to build houses where Caracalla could stay even if he did not actually break his journey at that place (Millar 1977:33). The emperor's progress through Italy or the empire was rather like that of a triumphant general (Suet.*Gal.* 18, *Vit.* 10). The population required their presence and an opportunity to see the man who was almost a god. The princeps was on display. On as many journeys as possible Augustus deliberately had his grandsons precede his carriage or ride on either side of it (Suet.*Aug.* 64.3).

He sought to give Italy the same opportunity of seeing his dynasty as the people of Rome who attended the games.

The significance of the mobility of the elite in Italy should not be understated. In a principate based on the consent of *tota Italia* (*R.G.*25.2, see Chapters 12 and 13), the visibility of Augustus and his successors outside Rome was an essential part of the politics of empire. To be seen in the towns of Italy was as important as the settlement of veterans throughout Italy for the stability of the new regime (see Keppie 1983). The system of government was concentrated in Rome but needed to involve at least Italy. To do so it was necessary to create an imagery of Augustus not simply at Rome but in the towns of Italy as well. This was achieved in part by personal travel to the towns on the part of the princeps and by the travel to Rome of the local elites (Zanker 1988:302–7). The appearance of the buildings of a fledgling imperial cult, as well as the construction of honorific arches on the major roads of Italy, asserted the presence of the image of the principate without the need for the emperor in person. But when the emperor did travel he was the focus of his subjects' gaze. They critically assessed the nature of his entourage, his carriage or litter, the people he was with, whether he was approachable and, above all, if there were signs of arrogance or tyranny rather than *auctoritas*. The emperor's image mattered as much in travel as within the capital itself.

The need for transport

To move the discussion beyond the elite is a difficult task since the source material tends to present only their viewpoint. Critics, particularly archaeologists, of ancient historical arguments have tended to seize upon the representative or unrepresentative nature of the source material (see Barratt 1997 for discussion). To ignore this material is to jettison our best yet less than perfect evidence. The state itself and individuals utilised large wagons (*plaustra,* Figure 10.4) for the movement of precious metals such as bronze to the treasury, as well as captured booty brought back from the army's campaigns (Liv.4.60; 38.40.6–10). During transactions undertaken by the elite for property to the value of hundreds of thousands or even a million sestertii, actual payment remained a physical act. The scale of transport required would have varied according to the nature of the coinage, but a million sestertii was carried in a single wagon by Galba (Suet.Galba 8; Howgego 1992:11). If in gold coinage, a million sestertii (10,000 aureii) would have weighed a mere seventy-seven kilograms (pers. comm. John Creighton for all weight calculations used here and below). In fact this amount of gold coinage could be carried on a single mule and Galba's wagon would have had room for other goods or guards. This demonstrates the mobility of Roman gold coinage utilised by the elite for large purchases. The gift of money to veterans, for example, 24,000 sestertii per legionary

Figure 10.4 A *plaustrum* on a tombstone from Beneventum
Source: From Pisani Sartorio, G. (1988) *Mezzi di trasporto e traffica,* Edizioni Quasar

by Julius Caesar at the end of the Civil wars (Suet.*Jul.*38), implies a huge mobility of currency: if in gold coinage, a mere 240 coins per man; if in asses a staggering 96,000 coins weighing 6,960kg or 48,000 dupondii weighing 3,499kg (these calculations use minimal coin weights; it is notable that if in sestertii this does not significantly reduce the weight). To move these amounts of coinage would involve sixteen or eight wagons respectively.

The payment by Octavian of 600 million sestertii for lands in Italy (*R.G.*16) represents a quantity of money being used at various points in Italy and if not in gold coinage then we would expect to have seen cartloads of money being moved. For a mobile senator such as Pliny, with his frequent use of money on his estates at Comum, Tifernum and Laurentum, whether to pay for acts of euergetism or for property, involved the physical transfer of quantities of currency. But we do need to recognise that many transactions could have been made through credit notes or similar banking devices (Howgego 1992:28). For the elite, a visit to their rural estates tended to return them to Rome the richer (Plin.*Ep.*8.2); presumably the sale of harvests etc. did produce actual cash returns that were then transferred to Rome.

The sale of the grape harvest by Pliny (*Ep.*8.2) involved a number of buyers paying sums over 10,000 sestertii— an amount that seems to have been paid at the estate and would have required actual movement of the coinage. The easiest and most mobile form of payment was in aureii (denarii weighed ten times more and the equivalent value in sestertii was in the region of 250 times heavier). However, the denominations involved would suggest that payment tended to be in larger amounts and would have favoured trade on a large scale. Certainly for the elite, who had the most money and the greatest need to utilise large sums, the gold coinage was in a convenient and transportable form. It complemented a system of IOUs that ultimately had to involve the exchange of actual coinage at some point. Pliny (*Ep.*3.19) in considering the purchase of an estate in the region of three million sestertii needed to have the actual money in his possession, and the seller would seem to have been in need of hard cash rather than any form of credit note. The discrepancies in value of the coinage would point to the aureus as a coin type for large-scale transactions by both the state and the elite. Perhaps we should read Cicero's observations on trade in the *De Officiis* (1.150–1) in this light and suggest that the discrepancy between large and small trade may have been a difference in scale of around 200 to 400 times. Money as a transferable good was only practicable if using gold (on money transfer see Hopkins 1980). The movement of large quantities of either asses and dupondii would have involved considerable labour simply to transport them across Italy. There is an obvious need for localised moneychangers, for example, in towns such as Forum Novum (*CIL* 9.4793), to convert the mobile/low weight gold coinage into smaller denominationss. The gifts by Pliny in the region of even 15,000 sesterces (e.g. *Ep.*6.25) would of necessity and practicality in terms of weight have been partly in gold. Thus, the purchase of goods, whether landed estates or their annual produce, and the giving of gifts relied on a system of mobility that depended ultimately on a gold coinage of low weight and high value.

The actual movement of produce from the estates whether agricultural, quarried materials or timber, involved the use of large wagons known as *plaustra* (Varr.*R.R.*1.16.6; 1.17.2; 1.20.3; Cato *R.R.*62–3; Virg.*Georg.*1.163; 2.203). These wagons were far larger than those used for transport of the elite in either a *raeda* or a *carpentum*. The use of these large vehicles may have provided an impetus for the improvement of the surface of roads (Varr.*R.R.*1.16.6). The earliest inscriptions referring to *viae plostralis* come from the second century BC (*AE* 1973:175, 1981:210, 1992:243; *CIL* 5.7812; Solin 1981 for discussion). These vehicles were used for the transport of stone, statues and even whole pine trees (Dig.9.2.52.2; Front. *Strateg.*3.3.5; Hor.*Epist.*2.2.74; Cic.*Verr.*2.1.53; Ov.*Fast.*4.345). The weight involved would appear to be higher than the 430kg generally accepted as a maximum based on the later Theodosian law code (Chevallier 1976:180). This should not come as a surprise since the Theodosian code referred to a later situation in

which the road surfaces were not maintained to the same standards and provision for the transportation of building materials may have been a rarity. Critically, what is important here is the considerable loads moved over some distance. The general use of wagons in Italy is pointed to by Livy's (25.13.10) assertion that Hannibal requisitioned 2000 *plaustra* for the supply of his army in Italy. The weight of loads for the building industry would have required the improvement of road surfaces or else ruts would have developed and the surface would have disintegrated over a relatively short period of time. Again we might associate the incentive for the use of these vehicles generally with a need to supply a large army in the field that may have involved as many as 20 per cent of the population (Colum.6.2.9; Hopkins 1978:33). The need to mobilise the resources to supply armies that were larger than the population of many of Italy's cities was probably the impetus behind the development of a mobile economy. This general mobility associated with the supply to the army of equipment and food supplies created the possibility and infrastructure for the supply of an ever-growing metropolis at Rome.

Alternative forms of travel

Travel on the public roads of Italy appears to have been a fairly formal activity for the elite and an act of necessity for those involved in trade. Another side of travel and the need for transportation can be established through an examination of the use of track ways *(calles)* that were associated with the large-scale movement of animals from one region of Italy to another. Varro's lengthy discussion of the subject in Book Two of his treatise on agriculture provides the starting point for any study (see Sabatini 1977; Skydsgaard 1979; Pasquinucci 1979; Carlsen 1992; Frayn 1984; Grenier 1905 for discussion). Varro (*R.R.* 2.2.9–10) reports on a situation in which shepherds took flocks over considerable distances, for example, from Apulia to summer pastures near Reate (also Varro *R.R.* 2.9.6–7). Rather than travelling by road, these flocks were driven along set routes known as *calles publicae* which were subject to regulation by the state (Varro *R.R.* 2.1.16; see also Liv. 10.23.13; 10.47.7). This system of agriculture certainly continued into the second century AD and perhaps beyond that date, as can be seen from the famous inscription from Saepinum regulating the conflict between the shepherds and the population of Saepinum and its territory (*CIL* 9.2438; Corbier 1983 for discussion of the text; also Corbier 1991). The network of *calles* would seem to have been extensive and in times of crisis, especially during civil war, these routes were used by people to move from place to place without being observed by their enemies (Suet. Jul. 31; Aug. 16.3; Tac. *Hist.* 3.40; Sall. *Cat.* 57). The routes were not known to all and tended to avoid the key towns—the places of government and socio-political control (associated with robbers

Apul.*Met.*4.6). However, as route ways, the *calles* were not open all the year round and were seasonal in their use (Cic.*Sest.*12), unlike the roads which were set up for transport in all seasons and weathers.The presence of these routes in Italy was virtually universal and points to a real need for the transportation of flocks to water and pasturage throughout the Italian peninsula.The movement of flocks of sheep in the modern period is cited by Skydsgaard (1979:28) as an indication of how a system of transhumance would have affected all areas from north to south.The fact that the Roman state took measures to ensure the periodic policing of these routes suggests that the problem and control of violence was often beyond the state's capabilities (Suet.*Jul.*19; *Aug*.3, see Chapter 13 on the policing of roads). These route ways were seldom utilised for other forms of transport since the roads provided easier access to towns, but for the transhumants the towns themselves with their structures of localised power were a threat to the life style and ability to move flocks across Italy (Corbier 1983). In fact, it is as though the shepeherds and their flocks on the *calles* were the cultural antithesis of the cities of Italy connected by roads.

Economic migration

The role of migration in the culture of Roman Italy is particularly hard to assess. Much has been written on the displacement of the Italian peasantry in favour of slave-run estates (Hopkins 1978; Carandini 1988 are the major proponents), yet a free rural population was present in most parts of Italy (Garnsey 1980; Skydsgaard 1980). Many were attracted by the prospect (real or imagined) of free food distributions at Rome (App.*B.C.*2.120; Rickman 1980; Garnsey 1988 for discussion). However, by the time of empire grain distribution at Rome was to a privileged group of people and admission to the *plebs frumentaria* was controlled and restricted (Woolf 1990). For those working on the estates of Pliny and other landowning members of the Roman elite, the ability actually to survive was limited. Pliny (*Ep.*3.19, 9.37, 10.8) points to the weakness of tenancy in producing a cash return, because the arrears in rent were directly affected by poor harvests. The tenants were not in a position to pay off these arrears and consumed all the produce from their farms themselves. Pliny was to experiment with share cropping where others had seized the tenants' equipment, including their tools and other goods necessary for farming. He does not consider the option of utilising slave labour, which was unknown in the region (Plin.*Ep.*3.19). The supply of tenants would seem to have been limited. The alternative of finding new tenants must have been limited by factors that were associated with the extent of the free population within the area. This points to an immobility of labour in these cases, but it is certain that individuals did contract for the supply of labour in one region and supply that labour from another.

Suetonius in the *Life of Vespasian* (1) reports the widespread story that one of the emperor's ancestors had been involved in the supply of labour gangs to work in the Ager Sabinus in the first century BC. These people were recruited in Umbria and migrated each year. The contractor who connected the surplus population from Umbria with the under-populated region around Reate became considerably wealthy. Whether this was simply for a harvest we do not know, but given that it was an annual migration this would seem likely. Certainly in other periods less dependent on forced labour, seasonal migration provided the subsistence of a significant proportion of the population of Italy and elsewhere in Europe (Woolf 1986:50–6; Beier 1985:14– 17; Hufton 1974:73). For example, in the nineteenth century 32,000 people travelled from the Abruzzo, Le Marche, Tuscany and Umbria to the Roman Campagna for the wheat harvest (Woolf 1986:57). An obvious destination in Roman Italy was the city of Rome with its need for vast numbers to labour on monumental projects that included aqueducts, temples and bath buildings (Dig.45.1.137.3 on hiring of labourers from all quarters). Equally, road building and repair would have required considerable labour resources as would the labour involved in the building of monuments in local towns. Such work was unpredictable and was transitory with labourers hired for short periods of time. But migration was a last resort, even if the harvests were not paying off debts to a landlord such as Pliny.

A mobile society?

What I have argued in this chapter in the discussion of the issue of mobility is not for a situation in which there was considerable movement throughout society. Instead, I have identified a system of elite land holding that depended on mobility of the landowner for its economic survival and an elite culture that laid claim to active involvement in the management of their estates. In addition, a system of agricultural trade over long distances can be seen to be embedded in the literature and was a key reason for the improvement of road surfaces. Interconnecting the regions of agricultural production were a series of middlemen *(mancipes?)* who negotiated not simply goods but the provision of labour across regions. Further interconnection between the regions of Italy was maintained by transhumance which was seen by elite writers as the opposite of their culture of cities, roads and agriculture. Additional mobility can be seen in Roman Italy at times of crisis such as during periods of warfare (particularly the Hannibalic and Civil wars) and their aftermath when whole populations were uprooted. Certainly, the history of Italy featured the movement of peoples across the peninsula rather than holding on to an enduring myth of constant settlement (see Chapter 12 for further discussion). Thus, the culture of travel permeated society in different ways according to status and economic activity.

11

VIEWING TOWNS— GENERATING SPACE

The traveller's gaze

Part of the experience of travel is to gaze upon or view landscapes (Urry 1990:1). Pliny in his description of his villa at Laurentum (*Ep.* 2.17) does not simply refer to the physical structure, but importantly includes a description of the journey to the villa and the view of the landscape on that journey. This shows an acute emphasis on the gaze of the traveller to his home and we should consider the viewing of landscape as a crucial element in the ancient experience of travel. The traveller's gaze depended on a series of signs that indicated the location in the landscape of physical and human presences, but also on a system of signs that pointed to the nature of the socio-economic activity associated with that landscape (Urry 1990:2; also Cosgrove's 1984:13 view of landscape generally). For Pliny, the relationship was clear:

> The view on either side is full of variety, for sometimes the road narrows as it passes through woods, and then it broadens and opens out through meadows where there are many flocks of sheep and herds of horses and cattle driven down from the mountains in winter to grow sleek on the pastures in the springlike climate.
>
> (Pliny *Ep.* 2.17)

The view is an important one that takes in the economic production alongside the picturesque variation of the landscape itself. This analytical mode extended to other features of the human landscape including that of towns. Pausanias' (10.4) scorn for the claim of Panopeus to be a city revolved around a lack of amenities and public buildings. This often quoted passage in the debate over the nature of ancient urbanism (Lomas 1997:23; 1998:67 to give two examples) tells us far more about the traveller's gaze than what is or is not a city in the Roman empire. As the viewer, Pausanias needs to recognise a form of urbanism that conforms to his expectations (see Elsner

1992 on his gaze). Panopeus did not meet these expectations, but nevertheless held a city charter and was a place of government. It would be a mistake then to associate the presence of public buildings as a defining factor of urbanism, but clearly the traveller had certain expectations of a city that included monumental architecture. The presence of these structures in a city does not reflect the spread of Roman imperialism or 'Romanisation' (*contra* Lomas 1997, 1998), but is indicative of the creation of an identity for a place as a city through the building of civic amenities. The flasks from Puteoli featuring the public buildings of that city confirm this viewpoint (Laurence 1996b; Ostrow 1979). Vitruvius' (1.Pref.2) discussion of the interest of Augustus in public building projects makes their significance clear. In short, public buildings had an *auctoritas* that reflected the *imperium* of the *res publica*. The link of *auctoritas* to *imperium* stresses the role of buildings in the landscape of Rome and ultimately the state itself. For the people of Italy, their identity was bound up with their place of birth and current residence. Hence, Pliny the Younger's identity revolved around his birthplace in Comum, his villas in Tuscany and Laurentum and his public role in Rome. Not surprisingly, he is keen to build public amenities in his place of birth, a neighbouring town in Tuscany and at a local shrine on his own estate (*Ep.* 1.8, 3.4, 3.6, 4.1, 4.13, 5.7, 9.39; *CIL* 5.5262). The motivation for building projects was not related to any ideal of what his home city or place of residence should be like, instead the reasoning was more localised. It is a natural reaction on his part to place an inherited bronze statue in the Temple of Jupiter at Comum, his home city (*Ep.* 3.6). This action highlights the importance of birthplace to members of the elite (Tuan 1976:24). The gift to the town was a benefaction, but also increased the status of Pliny in the eyes of those who visited it. They would gaze on this particular statue with its plinth, which he insists should be inscribed with his name and official titles. The benefaction creates an image of Comum that is linked to Pliny's official role as a magistrate in Rome. The status of the city is enhanced by Pliny; at the same time his own identity is paraded and his *auctoritas* reinforced by the embellishment of Comum. Thus, the collective identities of Comum and Pliny are merged into a single image that associates the place with the success in Rome of one of its citizens. For travellers, the imagery of a place would have reflected the significance of its benefactors in the present and past.

This perspective of the urban environment in antiquity depends on the actuality of travellers actively viewing the city. Before we can go any further we need to see if this is a justifiable assumption. A key text here is the *Satyrica* of Petronius, which is predominantly about the activities of travellers in various cities in Roman Italy. Although fictional, the novel represents the experience of travel and the interaction of strangers with the local inhabitants of a number of cities. Their actions are those of strangers attempting to read the urban environment from a position of ignorance.

They get lost in Puteoli (*Sat.*6–8) and cannot find their temporary lodgings at an inn; consequently Ascyltus is taken to a brothel by a vegetable seller. Here, he is the victim of the alien town and the trick of one of its inhabitants. A key factor in the novel is the successful encounter with men of influence. These are located with few problems. As visitors they manage to be invited to dinner with the influential freedman, Trimalchio. How this is achieved we do not know, but they observe him in the baths on the evening of the dinner (*Sat.*26–7). Significantly, they are not bathing but waiting for Trimalchio to leave the baths. It would appear that dinner for Trimalchio began with bathing and exercise, and the baths were the place where guests met him or at least followed him to his house for dinner (*Sat.*27–8). The famous dinner follows and afterwards the visitors find their way back to their inn (*Sat.*79). Therefore, we locate the visitors initially at the inn, then misled to the brothel, at the baths and having dinner with a key man of influence. For Petronius's visitors the brothel was located beyond the area of the town which they desired to view; in contrast the baths and the visit to Trimalchio's house were on their agenda. Obviously, the inn was a necessity unless there were a relative or friend to stay with in the town (compare Apul.*Met.*1.21). However, accommodation was flexible and could be changed with relative ease (*Sat.*81, 124). Also, it could vary from the small inn to the rented *domus* (*Sat.*124). The *domus* was used to impress local inhabitants with the visitors' wealth in order to gain dinner invitations. Just as the visitors attempted to impress the locals, the latter also presented an image of themselves and their city to the visitors. We find Petronius's visitors expressing admiration for a city's buildings and, in particular, a *pinacotheca* (picture gallery) (*Sat.*83–88) and statues in temples (*Sat.*104). Therefore, the inhabitants of a city presented an image of themselves to visitors not just through their actions but also through prestigious architecture and art. The other side of the city, associated with immorality and corruption, was something to be deplored in the visitor's view of the moral landscape of urbanism (Laurence 1994a:70–88; Wallace-Hadrill 1995). The importance that the *Satyrica* placed on public buildings and their embellishments coincides with Pliny's view of his own munificence.

For those towns on the major roads from Rome, the opportunity to present an image of their city to a greater number of individuals passing through would seem to have had an importance that appears in their spatial arrangement. Equally, for the traveller to Rome, the towns and in particular the colonial settlements could represent an image of Rome's *imperium* as expressed through the medium of public buildings, statues and colonnaded streets. The major roads often led right through the centre of towns, including in some cases the forum itself. For us, so used to the separation of activities within the city, at first sight such an arrangement would appear to contradict the purpose of the forum as an open area of public business and recreation. However, as we shall see from the examples discussed below, the Roman

view of space was a permeable one with boundaries that subtly created divisions between areas of open space.

Presenting the city

The display of the city to travellers was at its most explicit in those towns bisected by major arterial roads used for long-distance travel. A classic example is Minturnae on the Via Appia (Figure 11.1).The site was excavated in the 1930s by Italian and North American teams and has only been partially published (Johnson 1935; see also Frier 1969; Butler 1901; Brookes 1974; Brandt 1985; Coarelli 1989; Bellini 1994).To look at the archaeology, to the north of the Via Appia is an enclosed area in which two temples have been found: one identified as the capitolium, the other as Temple A (Figure 11.2). Behind them, is an enclosed area that forms the northern end of the forum. To the south of the Via Appia things are less certain.There would appear to be an enclosed rectangular area, which when taken with the part to the north of the Via Appia forms an enclosed entity, cut through by the Via Appia. Moreover, the northern end of the forum is divided off by the construction of the capitolium and the addition of Temple A (Figure 11.3). These were built along the alignment of the road, rather than being set back to dominate the entire closed space from its northern end.

Figure 11.1 Via Appia through the town of Minturnae

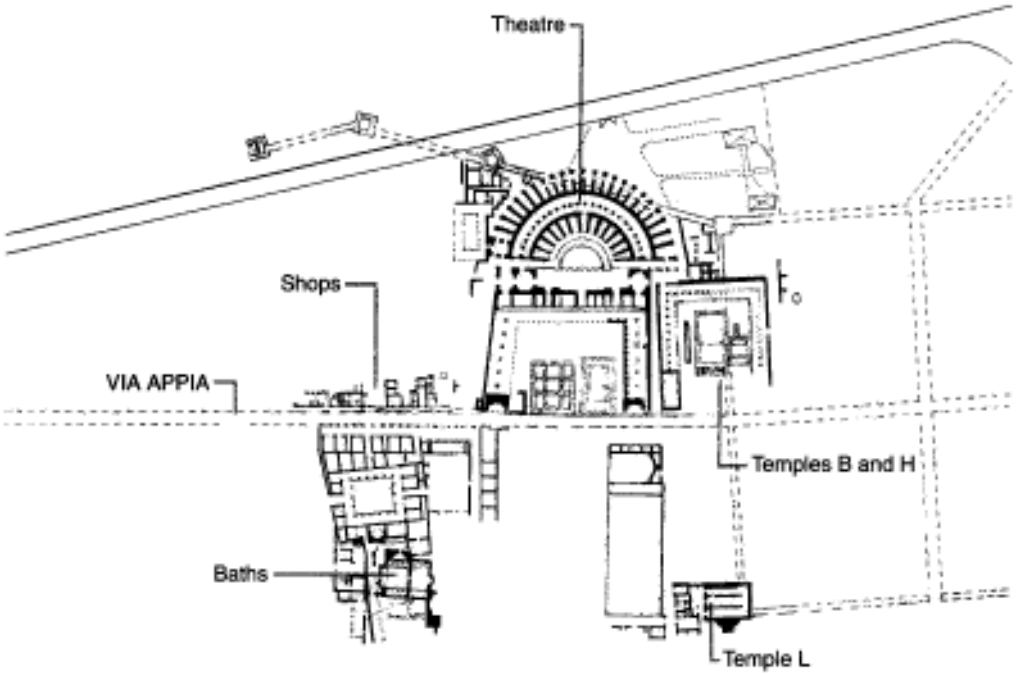


Figure 11.2 Plan of Minturnae: excavated area

Figure 11.3 Via Appia in front of the capitolium and theatre at Minturnae

Temple A can be dated with reference to a series of *cippi* (monumental stones) incorporated into its construction. These *cippi* form lists of magistrates of *collegia* and the last is dated to the 60s BC, conveniently close to the Senatus Consultum of 64 BC dissolving various *collegia* (Asc.7C). Hence, we can safely say that Temple A is later than 64 BC. To what deity the temple was dedicated remains in doubt. The fragment from its inscription IAE cannot reconstruct a name of a deity with any certainty (often reconstructed uncritically as Concordiae Augustae, Lomas 1998:72). This does not directly affect my argument. In terms of space, it is important to realise what is happening: the forum is being shortened and enclosed by the construction of buildings and later two *ninfea* (monumental fountains) along the line of the Via Appia. What happens to the space behind the temples? This becomes incorporated into a monumental area dominated by the theatre. This was built onto/into the city wall at the beginning of the first century AD and its stage area was later extended into the northern end of the forum. This results in a rather unsymmetrical plan to allow for extant access to the theatre via the eastern street.

I think at this point, we need to recognise that in the redevelopment of urban space there will always be compromises. The road to the east had been defined by the eastern edge of the forum and the western side by an enclosed space with two temples (B and H). This enclosed area opened onto the Via Appia to the south, which appears to have determined its

alignment. To the west of the forum there was further monumental development: a *macellum* (market building) opened onto the Via Appia. Thus, for the traveller moving along the road, the town concentrated much of its monumental architecture there. Further, statues tended to be set up along the Via Appia. It forms a classic armature of the type formulated by MacDonald (1986:5– 29) using North African evidence. Not all the buildings were placed along the Via Appia; the amphitheatre was located some way off, as was Temple L. However, the general pattern at Minturnae is clear. We find a spatial situation which emphasises the need to display the glory of the town to travellers: presumably to ensure that it looked like a town to them and did not appear like Panopeus did to Pausanias (10.4). This desire to impress the traveller or visitor may have had primacy over the needs of the inhabitants and the creation of an environment for social interaction. Clearly, there is a conflict here between the presentation of the city to the traveller, the desire of travellers to pass through the city quickly and the local inhabitants' use of the forum.

The conflict between the needs of the travellers and the desires of the inhabitants in the use of space presents an interesting spatial problem. The road was a structure for conveying people, as quickly as possible, in a linear direction. In contrast, a forum during the imperial period was a static space for circulation at leisure and associated with a slower speed. We need only recall the example of the Emperor Nero's father whipping up his horses to run over a small boy in a *vicus* on the Via Appia (Suet. Nero 5) to see the danger of this situation. Later legislation passed in the reign of Claudius attempted to resolve this conflict between the traveller in a hurry and the inhabitants of the towns of Italy (Suet. *Claud.* 25). The law stipulated that travellers were not permitted to ride through the towns. Instead, they were to either walk or travel in a litter. This slowed their speed so that they did not run down the local inhabitants. It also allowed the inhabitants of

the town to draw attention to their monuments and statues as the travellers passed through more slowly.

There were other ways to control the traveller and to resolve the spatial conflict in a city's forum: between the needs of a traveller to move through the city rapidly and the desire on the part of the local inhabitants to have a defined forum area for social interaction. The potential for resolving this conflict is seen most clearly at Terracina, where the Via Appia ran through the forum (Figure 11.4; on course of the Via Appia see Mari *et al.* 1988; Malizia and Innico 1986; Coppola 1984; Thomsen 1948:69). Coppola (1984) provides detailed analysis of the development of the forum area, which allows us to see the spatial separation of the piazza from the through traffic associated with the road. The paved area of the forum was built upon a series of supporting arches to provide a level surface. This surface was paved and is associated

Figure 11.4 Via Appia and forum at Terracina

with the inscription *Aulus Aemilius stravit* (Aulus Aemilis paved this *CIL* 10.6306). At the north end of the forum, the cathedral is built upon the site of a temple and further temples were found to have been built to the north-west and south-east of the forum on the route of the Via Appia. In the forum itself on the other side of the road there would have been a portico in front of the town's theatre. The deployment of public buildings around the forum appears similar to the pattern found at Minturnae. Travellers were presented with a series of buildings as they passed through the town. The forum itself was marked by monumental arches at the point where the road entered the public area of the piazza. Importantly, the paved area of the forum's piazza was divided off from

the road by a permeable boundary. This boundary was defined by texture. The road's surface was constructed from a different material to that of the *piazza*. area. In addition, the placement of kerbstones and statues along the boundary between the *piazza,* and the road defined the division. This combination of a difference in texture and the presence of kerbstones and statues split the forum into two sections: one for the traveller passing through the city and the other for circulation and social interaction.

Importantly, for the image of the builder of the forum itself, Aulus Aemilius, his name was clearly visible to anyone who wished to stop in the forum from the pavement inscription, behind which were a series of statues. His name was also prominent on the new temple built by him and dedicated to Rome and Augustus (*CIL* 10.6305). The inscriptions on the statue bases, like those set up by Pliny in Comum, would have referred to the person who had provided the statue. This creates an image for the individual benefactors of the town, but collectively it presents the town to the traveller and defines the status of Terracina. The desire to do so may reflect the position of the forum itself on the Via Appia. It is not built on level ground, but on a sloping site. The necessity of building a level area on large barrel vaults prior to the construction of the piazza area suggests that the site was chosen not for functional reasons related to construction, but in order to create a central place within the city actually on the Via Appia itself. This site seems to have been deliberately chosen over one closer to either the Sanctuary of Jupiter Anxur (Figure 11.5; see Coarelli 1987:113–40 on sanctuary) or a situation closer to the harbour (Cancellieri 1986:150–51). The redevelopment of the harbour area in the second century AD was accompanied by a new route through the town for the Via Appia and a new forum associated with this new route (Malizia 1988). The advantages of a central space on the course of the road outweighed the disadvantages. The key advantage was for the city to be seen by travellers passing through the town itself.

The presentation of the town to travellers began before their actual arrival. Some cities paved the roads from the boundary of the city's territory to the gates of its walls (e.g. Puteoli, *CIL* 10.1698; Ling 1990:208; compare De' Spagnolis Conticello 1994). The traveller would see a view of the city's skyline from a distance. For example, in approaching Terracina the Sanctuary of Jupiter Anxur would dominate the view prior to arrival (see Figure 11.5). Other towns, such as Minturnae, were constructed on the plain and would not have been so prominent, but travellers would become aware of an approaching town once they saw the cemeteries along the roadside (Figure 11.6). The tombs themselves were on private lots, but the wishes of the deceased were overseen by the local city (e.g. Thylander 1952: A19, *CIL* 14.850, Toynbee 1971:74–6). The commemoration of the dead was a cumulative process, which was ever-evolving to create an image of the city

Figure 11.5 Sanctuary of Jupiter Anxur at Terracina

in both the past and present (for overview see Von Hesberg 1994: 29–67). Hence, rather than seeing a contemporary view of the inhabitants of the city, the traveller viewed a history of commemoration and a perception of the city's history as presented (compare Woolf 1997:32). This was reinforced by the inscriptions on the tombs mentioning offices held by the dead. The size and munificence of those tombs would have attributed an importance to the dead, but we should not be tempted to see a reflection of the social structure through time in their commemoration. The reasons for resisting this line of argument are that the regional variation and the changing patterns through time actually resist analysis (Hope 1997; Mouritsen 1997). However, travellers in antiquity, whose perceptions of date, style and knowledge were far greater than our own, they would have been able to read a cemetery or tomb group and establish a meaning about who lived, had lived, and was socially significant in the town. Indeed, the commemoration of people from the historical past was cultivated by individuals in their neighbourhoods (Bodel 1997:20–26). The gaze of the travellers on the cemeteries lining the roads provided them with a sense of history of the place at which they were arriving. This viewing of history would have been informed by the knowledge and ideology of the traveller. Particular characteristics of the cemetery, for example, the commemoration of freedmen, the presence of the Greek language, etc. could evoke different feelings of the place being approached and would confirm or alter the traveller's view.

Figure 11.6 Tombs on the Via Flaminia at Ocriculum

As the traveller came closer to the city, the significance of the tombs would seem to increase. Particularly substantial tower tombs and circular commemorative monuments have been found immediately outside the gates of a number of cities in Italy (Figure 11.6, Von Hesberg 1994:42; Hope 1997). Also on the outskirts of a number of towns, the amphitheatre was located within sight of the major road. Coming from Rome, it was easily visible to those travelling north through Ocriculum on the Via Flaminia or through Luni on the Via Aurelia (Figure 11.7). The placement of this monument close to the road outside the city indicated that it was of a status to have an amphitheatre. This perspective is confirmed by Tacitus (*Hist.* 2.21) in his discussion of the destruction of the amphitheatre at Cremona. Lomas (1998:75, based on Renfrew and Cherry 1986) understands this action as a matter of competition between cities in the manner of peer polity interaction, and the local competition between cities as crucial for the development of a Roman culture in Italy. I would identify the viewers of these monuments as passing travellers as well as visitors from other local cities to the games (e.g. AD 59 riot at Pompeii, Tac. *Ann.* 4.17). Clearly, the amphitheatre in the provincial towns did not overly impress travellers from Rome after the construction of the Flavian amphitheatre, but it did point to the regular display of games and the punishment of criminals. Rather than any form of acculturation, the image of the city as set out through the construction

Figure 11.7 The Amphitheatre at Luni

of an amphitheatre was a presentation of order and the repression of illegality. Within the city itself, the temples and later monuments commemorating the imperial family pointed to a view of the sacred that was essential in distinguishing the civilised city dweller from the barbarian (Laurence 1996b). The presence of a major road through a city affirmed its status and monuments were presented to uphold this image to both travellers and inhabitants.

The traveller's view provides us with a guide to how we should view the city in Italy. Although the landscape of Italy was fragmented by the existence of a series of cities (Jackson 1984:32–4), the road as an area of social behaviour created a new landscape out of a series of fragmentary ones (Jackson 1984:26–7). The presence of travellers alters the spatial and behavioural structures in the cities through which the road passed. The similarity of the public buildings in cities of Italy should be seen not so much as an attempt to create unity, but resulting in the appearance of unity (Jackson 1984:164). Nevertheless, the cities themselves asserted a difference via their various histories (see Chapter 12 for full discussion). The cities of Italy may have appeared to an uninformed traveller as a unified culture, but for those wishing to delve deeper there was a pronounced disunity. However, this should not reduce the importance of a kinetics of landscape, in which the cities of Italy displayed their material present and past to the traveller (Tilley 1994:31–3). It is in the

context of travellers within Italy that we can see why the local elites were involved in the process known as euergetism: it was not simply for display to their own city, but also to those who visited it (see Veyne 1990 on the nature of euergetism).

This alteration of perspective on the Roman city in Italy rejects the isolation of the city or even the city and its rural hinterland as a unit for analysis. These dominant modes of scholarly discourse are appropriate for the cities of classical Greece, but not for Italy after the third century BC. Fundamental to our understanding of the cities in Italy is a larger view than just that of the isolated city or even region of cities. The public buildings of the cities of Italy created a series of signs that contained certain specific meanings to the traveller (Figure 11.8). The absence of those symbols of urbanism was a cause for comment (e.g. Pausanias 10.4), which would suggest that the landscape of the city was associated with specific modes of social activity in the minds of travellers (Cosgrove 1984:13). This view of the city links it firmly into a cultural or iconographic form of thought, rather than anything to do with the economy or forms of consumption directly. Yet, the expenditure by the elite on the fabric of a city depended on economic factors if not economic thought. Nor are the public buildings of a city an indicator of its economic wealth. Yet, for the traveller in antiquity, the public buildings provided information about the status and cultural wealth of the inhabitants of a city.

Figure 11.8 The forum of Herdonia and the Via Traiana leading to it

The social status of cities

The convergence between the visitor's experience to a Roman city and to a Roman house is apparent. Both were arenas for the display of cultural identity and the power of a group, whether a *familia* or a *civitas* (Wallace-Hadrill 1994). Just as in the *atrium* of a house the images of ancestors were displayed in an arena of architectural grandeur, similarly in the forum the statues of the living and the dead who were locally renowned were exhibited with the public buildings forming a backdrop (Flower 1996:4, 70–5). In towns with an emphasis upon through travel, the area for display was extended from the forum along the major through route such as the Via Appia; at other towns without this emphasis the arena for display was isolated. The entrance into a city by a gateway or arch was the point of transition for which travellers had been prepared as they passed through the cemeteries prior to arrival at the city itself. The spatial organisation of buildings to be viewed within the city revealed an image. Like the *atrium* of a house, the display of a city is concentrated at the point where the visitor first crosses a boundary (the city gate or the threshold of a house). Brothels and service quarters are hidden from view. The wider streets provided a vista to a vanishing point that alludes to the size of the city. Such similarities might be taken further to abolish the notion that public and private space are structured differently in the Roman world. Clearly, what is essential is the assertion of power and cultural values through display, whether by a *familia* or by a *civitas,* in order to impress the visitor and stranger. Therefore, rather than relating the building of public monuments to the euergetism of the individual in the context of a local community, we need actively to consider euergetism as a collective benefit: not only as entertainment and employment, but also as the expression by a community of its cultural identity in relation to other cities and, in particular, to visitors to the city. Visitors were to be controlled, just as visitors to the house. This could be achieved through social pressure or via the inclusion or exclusion of visitors from specific areas of the city by the configuration of space. The convergence of the socio-spatial definition of the city and the Roman house should not come as a surprise. Both were produced by the same ideology and a need to assert status in both public and private spheres.

12

TOTA ITALIA

Naming Italy

The role of roads in the definition of both space and place has already been referred to. What I am concerned with now is to see how the Roman conception of human geography based on land and sea travel permeated into the writing of ancient geography. The roads of Italy located towns, villas and other elements of Roman culture, but did the reliance on land transportation overcome divisions created by physical geography such as mountains or rivers? The establishment or division of Italy into eleven regions by Augustus will be examined to see whether they have any form of coherence in terms of the history of the people that inhabited them or whether they are a new form of division that defies the physical and historical geography of Italy. The relationship of roads in the landscape to the imagination of space and place in geographical writing should clarify the impact of the road system in the creation of a new form of geographical thought. Implicit in the phrase *tota Italia* was an assumption of unity of geographical space that has been created from a disunited past or a fragmented space. This change in terms of the spatial structure was probably as important as that of granting citizenship to the population of the Italian peninsula.

The ancient geographical imagination

The ancient geographers described physical features, named the places and cities of the human landscape and accounted for the variation of peoples, who were represented as a static entity in a set territory or place. They did take account of discrepancies between the present situation of their time and the historical tradition (see below for discussion). Indeed, we should be clear about what the geographers were setting out to achieve through their activity of description before we go any further with the discussion of ethnicity. The Greek geographer Ptolemy (1.1) provides a summary of the role of a geographer as compared to that of a chorographer:

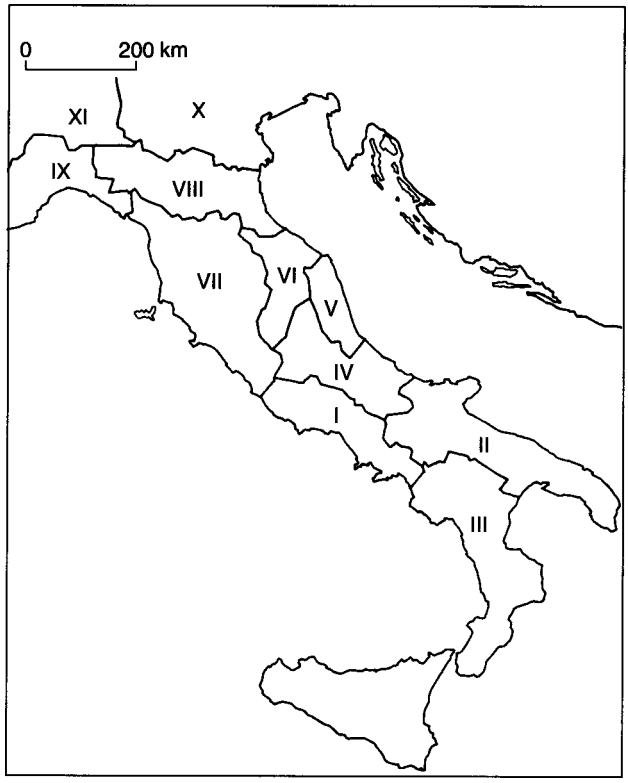
> Geography is the imitative and representative description of the whole known part of the world, with everything which generally

> belongs to it. It differs from chorography in that the latter, considering the areas separate from one another, shows each of them with an indication of their harbours, their villages, and the smallest habitations, the derivations and detours of all the rivers, of the peoples and similar details. The actual aim of geography is solely to show the world in all its expanse, how it functions as much by its nature as by its position. It is concerned with general descriptions, like those of gulfs, large towns, peoples, great rivers, and everything which deserves to be shown as such. Chorography is concerned with the description of a part of the whole, as one would show an ear or an eye. But geography embraces the totality of things as the image of a head depicts it (the human) in its entirety.
>
> (Ptolemy 1.1, trans. Nicolet 1991:119, note 23)

Geography for the ancients represented the major features of the world without the minutiae and, from these descriptions, it should have been possible to draw a map of the world. The emphasis on map making dictated a methodology that caused Strabo and others to describe the outline of coasts as a preliminary step to any description of areas inland (Strabo 2.5.17; Janni 1984; on geographical methodology see papers in Sordi 1988). This emphasis upon map making, as Nicolet (1991:95–122) has shown, can be taken as part of an imperial project to acquire knowledge to govern the empire (but see Leach 1988:90–91 on alleged differences between Roman and Greek geography). At stake for the geographer was the creation of a body of knowledge that would have information for the creation of maps, and also for prospective travellers to understand the people they were likely to encounter.

For the geography of Italy, the ancient authors were presented with a structure based on the division of Italy by Augustus into eleven regions (Figure 12.1). This division of space was not built around the geographical logic with its emphasis on coastal description and map making. Instead, as Nicolet (1990, 1991:203) has observed, the arrangement of the regions was centred upon Rome, with the numbering running to the south through Latium and Campania (Region 1), then across country to take in Apulia (Region 2), then back to take in Region 3. Following on from this, there is a jump to account for the peoples of the Central Apennines and Picenum (Regions 4 and 5); then we have Umbria (Region 6) and Etruria (Region 7). At this point, the system moves to the north of the Apennines to include Aemilia (Region 8) and Liguria (Region 9). What is left over, the area north of the Po and south of the Alps, is split into two: the region of the Venetii (Region 10) and Transpadana (Region 11).

Once the system of eleven regions was established, some geographers combined the approach of describing the coastline with a view to map



Region I	Latium and Campania
Region II	Calabria and Apulia
Region III	Lucania and Bruttium
Region IV	Samnium
Region V	Picenum
Region VI	Umbria
Region VII	Etruria
Region VIII	Aemilia
Region IX	Liguria
Region X	Venetia and the northern Adriatic coast
Region XI	Transpadine Gaul

Figure 12.1 The eleven Augustan regions

making with reference to the Augustan regional division of Italy. Pliny, writing a little over half a century after the establishment of the eleven regions, describes first the coastline of Italy from its north-west to its north-east limit, setting the boundaries of the Augustan regions as he went, and then adding for the interior a list of cities given alphabetically by Augustus. His need to describe the coastline causes him to reorder the regions: 9, 7, 1, 3, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 11, 10 (Pliny *N.H.* 3.49–126).

However, the system of the regions was disregarded by other geographers, who continued simply to describe the coast, Mela (2.58–73) follows the coast naming cities (places) and the five major inland cities: Rome, Capua, Mutina, Bononia and Patavium. Similarly, Strabo followed the coastline but accounted for the ethnonyms as well as the cities and places of Italy in his account. The final extant version of Italy, by Ptolemy, set out a precise location of places via his concept of longitude and latitude, but he continued to group towns according to their territorial location and ethnic name. Clearly, the Augustan division of Italy into regions did not eradicate alternative representations of Italy by geographers. It would seem that there was not one representation of space, but a number of versions representing the same territory and peoples.

As a geographer, Strabo was involved in the description of territory and had to face the task of creating a unified concept of Italy as a geographical unit out of a number of disunited parts (see Coarelli 1988b; Tozzi 1988; Prontera 1988 for detailed discussion; also notice the role of geography in creating a fiction of a whole or parts, see Duncan and Duncan 1992 on Barthes 1972:81–4 on the Blue Guide). At the same time, Strabo succeeded in emphasising the disunity of Italy through the detailed description of its parts, for instance, Umbria.

Strabo's concern with meeting the requirement that a map might be drawn from his description of Italy causes him to emphasise its shape and coastline. But in a number of ways he does more than this by describing the inland areas. He presents detailed information of the territory of various peoples in former times and in their present positions and makes a link between territorial division and the ethnicity of the people living in that territory. Frequently he notes the loss of ethnic unity and cohesion in a region. This methodology provides detailed information on how he attributed an ethnic identity to other peoples and the geographical use of ethnonyms in the description of territory that disregards any unity of space created by road building or the establishment of the eleven regions.

The mention of ethnicity and ethnonyms requires some further discussion of their relationship to territorial space. Traditionally, following Herodotus (8.144), an ethnos could have been tightly defined: in the case of Greeks, a people sharing a common descent, a language, gods, sacred places, festivals, customs and ways of life, in spite of having no geographical unity of territory in space. Not surprisingly, Strabo accounts for the Greek involvement in

Italy through colonisation, but resists any attempt to see contemporary Italy as a Greek world—unlike other writers who attempted to draw comparisons to create a Greek past for Rome (e.g. Dion.Hal.*Ant.*7.72–3). Strabo is adamant that very few of these Greek cities had retained their Greek way of life apart from Naples and Tarentum (Poccetti 1988; Lomas 1993:34, 145, 162 on Tarentum and Naples) and, to a lesser extent, Cumae (5.4.4). But even at Naples there was a major loss of what Strabo recognised as a Greek ethnicity. The population had been mixed with the Campani. It may have retained Greek institutions (the gymnasium, the *ephebia,* the *phratriae*) and Greek names for things, yet Strabo was adamant that they were Romans (5.4.7). This loss of ethnicity and its replacement with a Roman identity has frequently been commented upon. To what extent this cultural change had occurred due to peer polity interaction, in conjunction with the unification of places through the improvement of communications, is unknown. But given the general trend in Italy towards a more unified urban culture, the evidence does point to the creation of a unity not only politically but culturally as well.

What is less well understood is the relationship of the changes in Greek culture highlighted by Strabo and a general cultural change that affected all the peoples of Italy. His geography of Italy frequently involves a discussion of the past in which he relates the changes in population (Poccetti 1988: 223–5). This often refers to the replacement of one people by another, for example, in Campania (5.4.8) we can identify the Osci being driven out by the Tyrrheni, who were themselves removed by the Pelasgi, who in their turn were conquered by the Samnites. Strabo accounts for such changes processually in terms of the ethnic replacement of one people by another in the past. Here, he follows a fairly simple model of invasion and removal or subjection with the result of a lost ethnicity.

Strabo has a complex ideal of what constituted an ethnic identity in Italy and, like Herodotus, was concerned with common origins and descent when discussing either Greeks or Italian groups in Italy. This comes out in his discussion of the Sabini. He regards them as a very ancient people indigenous to Italy, unlike so many other groups (5.3.1). He conceptualises their role as the original people of Italy from which many other peoples were descended in the manner of the descendants in the Greek colonies. Therefore, he relates that the Picentini (5.4.2) and Samnites were colonists sent away to other areas by the Sabini. The Samnites had their own descendants, the Leucani (6.1.2), from whom were descended the Brettii (6.1.4). Thus, many of the peoples of Italy were represented as having a common origin similar to that of the Greeks.

For Strabo, a crucial element for the determination of ethnicity was language. Most of the languages of Italy do not receive a mention, but we can see that he links language to ethnic groups when he discusses

Campania and in particular the Osci (5.3.6 and 9). He finds it strange that the Osci had disappeared and had no presence in Italy, since the language still existed but was not associated with any particular ethnicity. Moreover, place names, so important for the telling of geography, referred back to an Oscan presence. For example, in naming Teanum Sidicinum he is forced to discuss the absence of the Sidicini (a people) and account for why the town is part of Campania. Similar problems occur with names such as the Ausonian Sea, but the Ausones never lived near the sea according to Strabo's investigation (5.3.6). Elsewhere, language and place names could be seen to coincide with the ethnonym described in cases in which Strabo does not remark upon their lack of correspondence. It also demonstrates the importance of language in defining ethnicity for Strabo and the ancient traveller, which we have already seen in his discussion of Naples. Through the use of Greek institutions and language this city came close to being ethnically Greek but, upon closer examination, Strabo found that it was ethnically Roman, but promoting its Greekness and its association with a Greek past.

As a geographer, Strabo was describing different ethnic groups and accounting for their presence in relation to a defined territory. Ideally, for geographical tidiness, there should be a precise relationship between territory and people, especially if it was to be possible to draw a map from this description. Not surprisingly, problems occur. In his discussion of Umbria there was little concordance between where the Ombrici lived and the territory known as Umbria (5.2.10). The territory began at the Apennines and stretched to the Adriatic coast with its ancient boundary with Cisalpine Gaul at either the River Aesis or the Rubicon in the past. However, now that Cisalpine Gaul was thought of as part of Italy, Umbria, according to Strabo and others, was seen to stretch as far as Ravenna, since the people living there were Ombrici. As we shall see later, this in no way corresponded to the administrative region known as Umbria.

Strabo takes another criterion for accounting for ethnicity and, in particular, its absence: dress and customs. He is categorical that the Leucani, Brettii and Samnites had lost their ethnic differences in language, armour, dress and other distinctive features (6.1.2). To make matters worse for Strabo, their settlements had either disappeared or were simply unremarkable. Such a situation creates unremarkable geography and little to account for or write about, although in discussing the Sabine settlements earlier Strabo lists them in spite of their lack of urbanity, due to a need to account for the 'glory and power of Italy' (5.4.11) presumably in the past.

Equally, we can see a general erosion of neat boundaries in Italy and the formation of larger units of territory alongside the loss of individual cohesion of ethnic groups. This is particularly apparent in Apulia, where the Peucetii

were also known as Poedicli and the Apuli (native name) could be called by the name Daunii given to them by Greeks (6.3.1). These names and the division of Apulia according to different ethnic territories had collapsed:

> Since the terms Peucetii and Daunii are not at all used by the native inhabitants except in early times and since the country as a whole is now called Apulia, necessarily the boundaries of these ethnics cannot be told to a nicety either and for this reason neither should I myself make positive assertions about them.
>
> (Strabo 6.3.8)

Evidently, some ethnic boundaries had ceased to have any meaning for those living there and this could be recognised. However, it would appear that ethnic boundaries could have a rigidity once applied, as Nicolet (1991) recognises in the division of Italy into eleven parts by Augustus. Many of these boundaries corresponded to the traditional ethnonyms with some break-up with the Samnites being divided between Regions 1, 2 and 4, (Nicolet 1991:175–6). Interestingly, in Strabo's account the Samnites had lost their ethnic distinctiveness and were not recognised as a distinctive region by Augustus, unlike the Umbrians, Etruscans or Ligurians. Not surprisingly, the division could not account for all possibilities and the heterogeneous nature of Italy. Those ethnic groups on the boundaries were likely to disappear from geography, just as the Osci on the boundary of Latium and Campania had disappeared from Strabo's geographical vision at some earlier date (5.3.6; 5.4.3).

Ptolemy's geographical account of Italy (3.1), written in the second century AD, confirms the persistence of the ethnonyms attributed to the peoples of Italy by Strabo. Even with his use of longitude and latitude, Ptolemy first follows the coastline of Italy, listing its towns and then in the north lists the peoples of the Alps returning to his starting point in the north-west. Then he fills in the interior using a system of ethnonyms to group towns together. These are subdivided to a greater extent than the divisions used by Strabo for the same purpose. For example, Ptolemy's Umbria does not constitute such a large area, since its northern sector divided off under a separate ethnonym—the Senones. There is a tendency to break the eleven large regions of the Augustan redivision of Italy into smaller units, except in the cases of Liguria and Etruria, which might be seen to have a greater homogeneity compared to other regions. Ptolemy makes every division possible, including that of Apulia into Peucetii and Daunii, which Strabo had viewed as arbitrary since the inhabitants did not recognise such terms. Clearly, geography had created a map which fixed the boundaries of territories to be associated with a stated ethnonym and, as can be seen from Strabo's more extensive account, unified a history to be associated with that ethnonym and territory. Ideally, the geographer should have been

capable of finding the appropriate customs and beliefs to associate with the people inhabiting a particular part of the earth. But in Italy, due to personal knowledge, Strabo could find such attempts frustrated for the present and needed to explain these inconsistencies with reference to the past (on Strabo's knowledge of contemporary Italy see Coarelli 1988b).

In no way should we view the statements of the geographers as a description of ethnic groups, nor should we draw maps with ethnic boundaries based upon these sources (Dench 1995:1–3). The authors of the extant descriptions of Italy were using information to create divisions of the world into regions. The problematic nature of such divisions is clear, as any regional geographer will confirm. It is relatively easy when mountains or rivers create a physical division in space. What is more difficult is to find the boundaries when the physical geography provides few clues (e.g. in Apulia), or too many features for the creation of simple division (e.g. in the Central Apennines, see Dench 1995:1–3). Therefore, the subdivision of space by ancient geographers does not directly represent the reality of ethnic territories, but it does inform us of a view of the world that relied upon ethnicity to define territorial divisions in space. As the geographers fixed these divisions, they were in effect creating a static notion of ethnicity for those regions. In many cases they were aware of such arbitrariness, but not capable of reconceptualising an organising paradigm based on the concordance of territory and ethnicity.

Understanding Romanness

So far we have largely dealt with the outsider's view of ethnicity in Italy. We now need to examine the insider's point of view and switch to a Roman source representing his ethnic group, Romans. Velleius Paterculus (1.14–15), in the first book of his *History of Rome,* groups together various features of Roman history that he saw to cease to have meaning if inserted into his historical narrative. He creates lists of achievements, including the foundation of colonies and the extension of citizenship to others from 390 BC (the sack of Rome by the Gauls) down to 100 BC (the date of army reform and alteration of the nature of colonial foundations):

> It will perhaps not seem out of place, if, in this connection, we weave into our history the various extensions of citizenship and the growth of the Roman name through granting to others a share in its privileges.
>
> (Velleius Paterculus 1.14.1)

This view of the importance of citizenship would suggest that, for Velleius Paterculus, membership of a citizen body could constitute what it was to be Roman. It can be seen to be similar to the notion of French nationality

that in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was constituted above all through membership of the citizen body rather than based upon language or ethnicity (Hobsbawm 1990:88).The peoples to which Roman citizenship was extended included: the Aricians, the Campanians and a portion of the Samnites without suffrage, Fundi and Formiae,Acerra, the Sabines without suffrage and finally suffrage was granted to the Sabines.The list stops at 100 BC and avoids the complication of the Social War after which most of Italy gained Roman citizenship.The concept of citizenship overrides and distances Romanness from ethnicity, since citizenship is reported to be granted to peoples identified by their ethnonyms to distinguish them. Some of these ethnonyms accounted for peoples over a wide area and resident in a number of centres, for example, the Sabines or the Campanians. Others were of a more specific nature, for example, the Fundani or Formiani referring to the peoples associated with the cities of Fundi or Formiae.This would seem to represent a universal approach by Rome towards others, whether a dispersed group of people, or a very specific group centred around a city.

Clearly, there was a desire on the part of Rome to set up centres or cities among dispersed peoples. For example, in resettling the Picentes on the Gulf of Paestum, they set up what Strabo calls a metropolis at Picentia as the centre of the newly established people in the area who lived largely in villages (5.4.13). Strabo notes other metropolises associated with dispersed peoples in Italy: Mediolanum of the Insubres, Suessa of the Volsci (in the past), Corfinium of the Peligni,Teate of the Marrucini, Petelia of the Chones and Consentia of the Brettii (5.1.6, 5.3.4, 5.3.11, 5.4.2, 5.4.10, 6.1.3, 6.1.5; cf. Capua 5.4.10, and the rivalry for this title between Cnossus and Gortyna 10.4.7). However, in most cases, the word metropolis tends to refer to what is termed a *civitas capital* in discussing the urban pattern in Roman Britain: it was a central place for a large territory associated with a particular ethnonym.

To return to Velleius, he also lists the founding of colonies throughout Italy down to about 100 BC.This listing can be seen as a complete naming of all Roman colonies.Those founded after this date could easily be identified as colonies since their name included a reference to the general who had settled veterans there, for example, Colonia Cornelia Veneria Pompeianorum (the town Pompeii) founded by Lucius Cornelius Sulla.Thus, in effect Velleius is highlighting the places that were not known or simply forgotten as colonies of the Roman people.The list effectively details all those who could be seen as ethnically Roman or Latin.The differentiation of these ethnonyms is less than easy in Velleius or other contemporary texts (this is not to argue that there was not a legal distinction between these colonies originally). However, what Velleius does provide us with is an account of a dispersed settlement pattern (of colonies) which we might associate with the ethnonym Roman in Italy and elsewhere in the Mediterranean. Parallel to Velleius' account of the colonies founded prior to 100 BC, there already

existed a list of colonies drawn up by Augustus and enumerated alphabetically for each of the eleven regions of Italy (also notice how Livy pays particular attention to the founding of colonies in his *Summaries* and see also Plin.*N.H.*3).These lists of colonies marked those towns associated with a Roman origin as distinct from the other towns of Italy. Significantly, colonies placed a particular emphasis upon the anniversary of their foundation and their continuity as settlements of citizens (Roman or Latin) established by Rome in the past and then marked these days with festivals. Unlike the surrounding towns and territories, the colonies could point to a Romanness that others simply did not have (e.g. Cicero *Pro Sestio* 131 on Brundisium and his arrival on the colony's anniversary 5 August; see also Puteoli *CIL* 10.1781; Interamna Nahars *CIL* 11.4170, see Harris 1977:285 for discussion of these).

How other towns constructed their identity needs to be discussed. An example will suffice to illustrate the problem. Patavium, in the region of the Venetii, is seen by the geographers as exceptional. Mela selects it as one of the five inland towns he mentions (others were Rome, Mutina, Bononia, Capua) and Strabo (5.1.7) views it as the best of cities with 500 equites according to the AD 14 census.The town was the birthplace of Livy and so we have extra information about the construction of the town's identity (Liv.10.2). Moreover, as Harris (1977) stresses, the town had not been conquered by Rome but, instead, was firmly allied with Rome in wars against the Boii and the Symbri (Strabo 5.1.9). The town could celebrate the fact that it had never been conquered and recalled the defeat of the Spartan general, Cleonymus, at the head of a Greek fleet in 302 BC. Livy points to the ancient beaks of ships fastened to the Temple of Juno and contests involving ships on the anniversary of the battle (Liv.10.2).

In terms of ethnicity, according to Strabo (5.1.4), there were two theories over the origins of Patavium: one stated that the people were part of the Celti of northern Italy, but the other suggested that the city had been founded by Antenor and the Eneti of Paphlagonia.The connection with Antenor was key for the identity of the town to have a wider value, since it associated the Patavians with Rome through a common ancestral link back to Troy. Moreover, the link to Antenor was actively marked by games, said to have been set up by him, every thirty years. Here we see a basically barbarian town appropriating the Trojan legend to be used symbolically to alter the city's ethnicity so that it might become closer to Rome, the major power in the region (compare Dench 1995:61 following on similar actions by Greeks and peoples of southern Italy). Equally, we should view this appropriation of Trojan mythology in the context of the increase in Roman influence in the region. This contact with Rome occurred in the early second century BC and was associated with the setting up of a local calendar beginning with year one (*CIL* 5.2864, 2885, 2787, 2794, 2797, 3031, 2873, 3019, 2943; *ILS* 5650, 9420; *NSc* 1926:352; see Harris 1977 for discussion).According to

Harris (1977:287), the calendar can be calibrated by cross-referencing the dates to locate year one as 173 BC. The significance of this year, in the context of Roman involvement in the region, may have been the alliance between Rome and the Henetii referred to by Strabo (5.1.4). No doubt, given the date, the setting up of a new calendar marked some involvement with Rome (Harris 1977:287–8).

However, the town could culturally distance itself from Rome, for example, to create a moral contrast between the chastity of women in Patavium compared with those in Rome (Plin.Ep.1.14.6; Mart.*Ep.*11.16). As Dench (1995:91) has shown in her study of the Sabines, this feature of morality simply contrasts anywhere in Italy with Rome, a city seen to have decayed or 'fallen' in the Roman imagination. Harris (1977) sees this feature as a symptom of others, alongside the previously discussed phenomenon, that represent attempts by the people of Patavium 'to preserve some independence from the dominant Roman culture'. This might be true, but he constructs the argument through a dichotomy of acceptance and resistance of Romanness, which ignores the complexity and evolution of identity that could on one reading ally Patavium to Rome, but on another view the city and people as descended from the Celti.

Clearly, in Patavium, identity could be refashioned in relation to Rome. The changing political situation associated with Rome's conflict with the Boii had altered and disrupted the traditional affinities between the Henetii of Patavium and the Boii. In consequence, we might say that the Patavians had redefined their identity to emphasise their link to Antenor of Troy and an origin myth that linked them to Rome. Equally, in the period following Rome's domination of the region, we might use an alternative explanation and state with Harris (1977) that the changing social context had disrupted the conventional ways of understanding. Both explanations can be used at different moments in time to stress the advantages of the negotiation or change in identity. More than anything, this illustrates how the nature of both identity and ethnicity were subject to negotiation through time (see Bentley 1989; Chapman *et al.* 1989:11 on academic debate and definition of ethnicity), rather than any truth about the use of fragmentary elements from antiquity that can be identified as being important for the construction of either identity or ethnicity in practice (see Bentley 1989 on practice). What is clear is that outsiders such as Strabo could detect or attribute differences between the peoples of Italy, and that these differences were a valuable resource in terms of symbolic capital.

The Augustan regions: the state's geography

The emphasis on regional distinctiveness in the ancient geographers brings us back to the need for the division of Italy into larger units and, in particular, the division of Italy into the eleven Augustan regions (see Figure

12.1). This system appears to have been quite different from the organisational methods of the ancient geographers founded on the attribution of ethnicity and the description of difference. Nicolet has argued that the Augustan system of eleven administrative regions eroded local character in some cases, yet in others it can be seen to be based upon existing regional entities (Nicolet 1991:203 examples cited: Umbria Cic.*Mur.*42; Picenum Sall.*Jug.*30; Lucania Plin.*N.H.*2.147). He tends to relate the regions to physical geography, which works in most cases; for example, Etruria was defined by its coastline, the Apennines and the Tiber. It is possible to view the order and arrangement of the regions in relation to a land-based geography, in which land transport rather than maritime transport was the organising feature. Region 1 includes two traditional groupings, Latium and Campania, which suggests its organising feature was not these ethnic groupings but some other form of geographical organisation. In the context of its next region (Apulia), we can begin to see a geographical logic and a relationship between Regions 1 and 2.This relationship revolves around the long-distance transport routes (the Via Appia and Via Latina) across Italy in the direction of Brundisium. This unified geographical concept is accounted for by Strabo in his discussion of inland routes, but is fragmented because he emphasises a maritime organisation for his geography (5.3.6, 5.3.9, 5.4.11, 6.3.7; see Dench 1995:180 on absorbtion of these spatial concepts derived from Rome by Strabo). Moreover, in discussing the roads of southern Italy, he highlights the Via Appia and another route through Region 2 leading north from Brundisium to Beneventum, but then mentions a third road from Rhegium to the Via Appia (6.3.7).This third road coincided with the territory of the Brettii, Leucani and Samnitae, in other words Region 3.Therefore, in these three regions we see an organisation based upon the geography of the major roads. From the point of view of cultural identity, Strabo stresses in all cases that these roads pass through the territories of more than one specifically identified ethnic group. In the case of Region 1 (Apulia), the road north went through the territories of the Peucetii and the Daunii, peoples whom Strabo had found impossible to separate since they themselves did not recognise the division. Effectively, the organisation of the regions was defined by the extant road network, which had coincidentally been systematised during Augustus's lifetime (Suet.*Aug.*37).

Elsewhere, the organisation of individual regions can be seen to have been based around land transport. Strabo's description of Umbria prioritises the Via Flaminia (Pasquinucci 1988), from Ariminum to Ocriculum, as Umbria's defining feature. Certainly, in this case, Region 6 was traditionally associated with the ethnonym Ombrici, but as Strabo points out the presence of the Ombrici could be found as far north as Ravenna, yet the region did not extend that far and was confined to the area defined with reference to the Via Flaminia.

Looking at the overall division of Italy into Augustus's eleven regions, we begin to understand the principles based upon physical and human geography. Regions 1 to 3 have already been shown to be based around the geography of land transport. Regions 4 and 5 can be seen to have followed from the previous division of Regions 1 to 3, as a simple northward progression to account for the Central Apennines. Moving north from Rome, Regions 6 and 7 correspond to the northward route of the River Tiber, the boundary between the two regions. The four regions of recently enfranchised Cisalpine Gaul are dealt with by an east to west progression, first south of the River Po, Regions 8 and 9, and then north of the Po, Regions 10 and 11. This east to west progression broadly corresponds with the transport route—the River Po and the Via Aemilia.

This relationship between the Augustan regions and the road system is confirmed by the source material, from the second century AD, referring to the administration of Italy and the offices of *iuridici, curatores viarum* and *praefecti alimentorum.* A link is made in the titles and area of jurisdiction of these officials; for example, a *iuridicus* could be appointed for a region known as the Flaminia and Umbria (*CIL* 2.2634, 3.6154, 6.1509, 14.3586; 11.376 adds Picenum as well), which stresses the coincidence between the road structure and this ethnonym. To the north, Region 8 is simply referred to as the Aemilia (*CIL* 14.3601, 3993) and an ethnonym is absent. However, to the south of Italy the emphasis on the roads as the division could be forgotten and a greater emphasis was placed on the ethnonyms associated with the regions, for example, the *iuridicus* of Apulia and Calabria (*CIL* 9.1572); in no example known to the author was the numerical identification of the regions utilised. In the north, the regions are simply referred to, for example, Transpadana (*CIL* 5.1874, 4332, 4341, 11.6338), which shows a suppression or loss of the ethnonyms attributed to the peoples of the region, but did not reflect the totality of the ethnic divisions that could be utilised in any particular region.

The presence and absence of ethnonyms in the epigraphic evidence for the organisation of Italy raises the question of what these ethnonyms referred to and why in some cases they survive while in others they are simply absent? We need to recognise that we are not dealing with a formal government structure when discussing the epigraphy that records ethnonyms associated with the office of *iuridicus*. In nearly all cases they are set up by a local population (e.g. the *ordo* of Ariminum sets up statue and inscription to the *iuridicus* for the Flaminia, Umbria and Picenum *CIL* 11.376). We might argue that the ethnonyms could still have had meaning for the population from the fact that some regions were referred to simply by a number of ethnonyms, rather than the structures of land transport. However, this might be missing the point and underplays the power of geography politically to define territory and to name regions (see Pickles 1992). Once a territory had become associated with a set ethnonym, it can

remain in use for a considerable period of time. For example, Procopius (*BG* 5.15.20–30) uses the same ethnonyms to describe Italy as Strabo had 500 years earlier. Therefore, the establishment of the Augustan regions created a strong association between a people and a region. The populations of these individual regions need not have directly identified with the ethnonym(s), which associated them with the region collectively. Indeed, identity could more easily be expressed through the structure of the local city and it is only when the population came into contact with a centralised authority, the *iuridicus,* the curator of roads or the prefect of the *alimenta,* that there was connection with the notion of a wider collective region. This should not be seen as an argument that the ethnonym could not be used or appropriated in order to assert a collective identity, but I know of no cases where it was used for this purpose (it is notable that Italian wines do not take on ethnonyms, but prefer a specific name with reference to the point of maritime export Plin. *N.H.* 14.59–73; Varro *R.R.* 1.2.6–8; for similar case of pottery see Plin. *N.H.* 35.159–61). Perhaps we see in Italy, during the first two centuries AD, a shift from the ethnonym representing a people to an ethnonym representing a territorial division.

Imagining *Italia*

The eleven regions of Italy and their associated names (ethnonyms and others) were not a natural division of territory. For these regions to have coherence, they depended upon a mythology of descent that denied the basic heterogeneity of the Italian population to create a number of unified regions, which were associated with one or two ethnonyms. Such a view can be seen as a simple denial of history, which is summed up by the expression: 'Once upon a time the land was assigned to specific peoples to cultivate, such as Etruria to the Tusci' (Varro *Men.* frag. 17) or elaborated into a full geographical list of the peoples of Italy who were said to have been present at the Battle of Cannae (Sil. Ital. 8.356–617). The population of Italy could construct itself as part of *tota Italia* or simply by citizenship as Roman. However, what is important is the division of territory according to ethnonym and the association of a common mythology and history with that territory or region (Nicolet 1991:194). This unification of the disparate elements should be seen as the creation of a new 'imagined community', Italy, with which all the disparate local histories and geographies could be unified (Hobsbawm 1990:17, 48–9 on imagined communities). *Tota Italia* must be seen as an 'imagined community' and not as a resistance to 'Romanisation' or the Italianisation of Rome. In fact, *tota Italia* was part of the complexed ideology that unified Rome and Italy politically. In many ways, the imagined community is not a description of the relationship, but a vehicle for achieving and stabilising that relationship politically. The static and unchanging association between ethnonyms and territory, found in the

geographical writers, would have reinforced the stability of the political relationship between Rome and the population of Italy. Moreover, it might have hindered the renegotiation of ethnicity at a regional level and caused the focus of any shift in identity to be concentrated at the level of the city and inter-city rivalry. In this light, we might view the concept of *tota Italia* and the use of ethnonyms in the definition of geography as a method of Romanisation that stressed the distinctiveness of the Italian peoples, but united them politically with Rome at the centre.

13

THE EXTENSION OF STATE POWER

The division of Italy into eleven regions by Augustus has already been discussed in the previous chapter. There I was concerned with the creation of an imagined community that could have been defined as *Italia* based on the regional use of ethnonyms that constituted the people of the peninsula. The eleven regions of Italy were not simply a device to create a united Italy, but were also a method for the organisation of state power and the extension of Rome's control over the city states of Italy. The regions of Italy provided a means for the organisation of geographical knowledge through the Augustan listing of towns (Plin. *N.H.* 3). Indeed, I wish to argue that the system of regions was also a means for the control of the population by a centralised administration in Rome from the time of Augustus. Key to the establishment of this system was Octavian's suppression of brigandage in Italy during the 30s BC. The magistrates of the cities of Italy had been ineffectual in the suppression of violence, because any action against brigandage was fragmented by a system of government based on annual elections locally and a lack of jurisdiction over a wider territory. In terms of government, much was done locally, but there were key problems that could not be dealt with at that level. These tended to involve disputes between towns or basic acts of violence. Most important for the discussion here is the suppression of brigandage. This would seem to have been a constant problem for the Roman state and permeated the culture of travel. Part of Octavian's success in the 30s BC was to create an image of the bandit that was a threat to the moral order of Italy. The fundamental study of banditry by Shaw (1984) has shown how the state was in conflict with the bandits as outsiders within the state. What has not been considered is the organisation of the state for the control of banditry and prevention of the threat of violence to travellers. I will argue here that the division of Italy discussed in the previous chapter facilitated the extension of state power across space via the road system. The argument rests on a number of specific texts that point to a strong case which requires some historical speculation in order for them to provide a coherent picture of the use of the eleven Augustan regions (Figure 12.1).

The nature of travellers

Travel needs to be understood in its cultural context. To do so, we have to relate the action of travelling to the social structure of Roman Italy. It has been shown by others (Wallace-Hadrill 1990a; Saller 1982, 1989 in particular) that the social structure of cities in Italy was dominated by a system of local patronage and that at a wider level certain members of the Roman elite were patrons of communities as well as of individual clients in their own places of residence. For individuals travelling away from their home cities, the action of leaving their home towns took them away from their own patrons and their own systems of redress based on *amicitia* and patronage if injured by another party. The traveller was leaving a familiar world and going into a world full of strangers. These strangers, inevitably, would have been integrated into a system of local patronage to which the traveller could only gain access if well connected. The local patron might have known someone in the city to which our traveller was going, but we should recognise the intense competition between members of the elite and their rivalries that could hinder a traveller in certain situations. Many travellers would have been entering a friendless environment when they left their home town and local region.

Travellers, in particular, are the victims of bandit attacks in the ancient sources. Celsus suggested that a trainee doctor could gain a knowledge of anatomy through the study of corpses of those away from home, without friends or family to bury them, —the gladiator, the soldier and the traveller (*Med.pref.43).* The traveller as victim is highlighted in a legal discussion of likely causes of death: old age, sickness and bandit attack being the common causes (*Dig.* 13.6.5.4). Inscriptions record deaths caused by robbers or bandits (*CIL* 6.234, 20307). The disappearance of a friend of the Prefect of *vigiles* can be found in Pliny's *Letters* (6.25), the man had last been seen at Ocriculum on the Via Flaminia. Similarly, a centurion from Como vanished along with his slaves and all his equipment supplied by Pliny at a cost of 40,000 sesterces. Nothing had been heard of them and Pliny did not know whether his fellow townsman had been killed by his slaves or along with them. We find in the fourth century AD a fear of travel because the roads were infested with bandits (Symmachus *Lett.* 2.32). Characteristically, the victim was the traveller outside his local network of support and seemingly friendless and in a hostile environment. Not surprisingly, the threat of bandits became a feature of most epic journeys in the Roman empire (Winkler 1992).

Armed travellers

It is fairly clear from a variety of sources that travellers were accustomed to arm themselves in response to the threat of banditry in the late first century

BC. Spartacus armed slaves by attacking travellers and seizing their weapons (App.*BC.*1.116; Nippel 1995:38). The most detailed account of the use of armed escorts is found in the narration of the murder of Clodius by Milo on 20 January 52 BC at Bovillae on the Via Appia. The manner of travel was a crucial argument for the defence of Milo in court by Cicero, which rested on the contention that Milo had been ambushed by Clodius and had killed him in self-defence. Milo was travelling in a *raeda* with his wife, women and female slaves; in contrast Clodius had no *raeda,* baggage, Greek companions and other travelling accompaniments (Cic.*Mil.*28). Therefore, for Cicero, Clodius was not simply travelling back to Rome from Ariccia, but was acting as a brigand. This is a classic legal argument (Quint.*Inst.*5.50) and should not be seen as standard practice. A more realistic view of the incident and its context is given by Asconius in his commentary on Cicero's speech. Clodius was on horseback, accompanied by three friends (an eques and two plebians) and thirty slaves armed with swords (*Mil.*31) and the presence of this number of armed slaves was normal practice for the time. Cassius Dio (40.46) in his account of the incident suggests that Milo's slaves were also armed. What is clear from the incident is that for the elite to travel safely, or in this case not so safely, along the Via Appia within the vicinity of Rome they took with them armed slaves. Such a retinue can be seen to have been a response to the threat of robbery, since only in the previous decade members of the Roman elite had been kidnapped by pirates while travelling from Rome to their villas on the major roads of Italy (Plu.*Pomp.*24).

Octavian and the bandits

It was in the period of disruption and loss of state control that we call the second triumvirate, following Julius Caesar's murder in 44 BC, that we find these armed retainers of the elite being utilised for actions that we would associate with banditry. Suetonius (*Aug.*32) summarises the situation:

> Many pernicious practices militating against public security had survived as a result of the lawless habits of civil wars, or had even arisen in time of peace. Gangs of robbers openly went about with swords by their sides, ostensibly to protect themselves, and travellers in the country, freemen and slaves alike, were seized and kept in confinement in the *ergastula* (prisons) of the landowners; numerous *factiones* too were formed for the commission of crimes of every kind, assuming the title of some new *collegium*.

The situation recalled here emphasises a rural aspect: the seizure of travellers in the countryside and their imprisonment in *ergastula;* and an urban aspect

the formation of new *collegia*. The suppression of these two phenomena, similarly emphasises a rural and an urban aspect:

> Therefore to put a stop to brigandage, he stationed guards of soldiers wherever it seemed advisable, inspected the *ergastula,* and disbanded all *collegia,* except such were of long standing.
> (Suetonius *Aug.*32)

No dating for these actions is supplied by Suetonius, but significantly the problem of violence is controlled both in the city of Rome and in the countryside through the stationing of troops and active inspection of the slave barracks or *ergastula* of Italy. Whether the searches were conducted to seek out the falsely imprisoned or to search for weapons for the arming of slaves is uncertain. The significance of these actions is set alongside all the other actions of Augustus. We have to look to Appian (*BC* 5.132), to understand the significance of the restoration of order in Rome and Italy in the context of Octavian's rise to power. In 36 BC Octavian appointed Sabinus to suppress banditry in both Rome and Italy. Many bandits were executed and a practice of posting guards was established. Order was restored within a year, much to many people's astonishment. As a result, Octavian became hugely popular in Italy and, according to Appian, cities named him among their guardian gods. This may have been a factor in the formation or marshalling of opinion in Italy in favour of Octavian that was later paraded in the *Res Gestae* (25) by Augustus as the allegiance of *tota Italia* to Octavian/Augustus prior to the Battle of Actium in 31 BC. The phrase *tota Italia* does appear in connection with the suppression of banditry. Tiberius was part of a commission to investigate the *ergastula* in Italy and we find the phrase in Suetonius: *repurgandorum tota Italia ergastulorum* (*Tib.*8). I do think the language is coincidental and should be linked to the phrasing of the oath in the *Res Gestae* (25): *Iuravit in mea verba tota Italia sponte sua et me belli quo vici ad Actium ducem depoposcit.* The cause of banditry in the 30s was linked to the elite. This is implied by a decree dated to 33 BC that no senator could be tried for piracy or banditry (Dio 49.43.5), and from the general accusation that it was the elite owners who were under investigation during the inspection of the *ergastula*. Following the speedy suppression of banditry in Italy, a system of control was imposed through the establishment of *stationes* of soldiers throughout Italy and the inspection of the *ergastula* (Suet.*Aug.*32). Finally a new law, the Lex Julia de Vis Publica, was passed that explicitly restricted the carrying of weapons:

> A man is liable under the Lex Julia of vis publica on the grounds that he collects arms or weapons at his home or on his farm or at his country house beyond those customary for hunting or for journey by land or sea… Under the same heading come those

> who have entered into a conspiracy to raise a mob or a sedition or who keep slaves or freemen under arms.
>
> (*Dig.*48.6.1–3, Dion.Hal.*Ant.Rom.*4.48.1)

This law is phrased to prevent banditry above all else in Italy. The operation to suppress banditry was speedy and accomplished throughout Italy within one year. Questions arise over how it was achieved and over the nature of who administered the *stationes* of soldiers and the inspection of *ergastula* once the threat of banditry to the state was overcome. There is no direct evidence for this, but we do know that Augustus was credited with the division of the city of Rome into fourteen regions and of Italy into eleven regions. If we connect the division of Italy and Rome into regions with the suppression of banditry, I think we have a valid explanation of what the regions were originally for. There is no direct connection in the ancient sources for doing this. However, I think it is fundamental that we make this connection.

The division of Italy into eleven regions needs to be understood in terms of a new body of knowledge that allowed for the administration of Italy. This is made clear by Pliny (*N.H.* 3.46):

> We will now give an account of a circuit of Italy, and of its cities. Herein it is necessary to premise that we intend to follow the authority of divine Augustus, and to adopt the division that he made of the whole of Italy into eleven regions, but to take them in order that will be suggested by the coast line, it being indeed impossible to keep the neighbouring cities together; and so in going on to deal with the inland districts we shall follow the Emperor's alphabetical arrangement, adopting the enumeration of the colonies that he set out in that list.
>
> Pliny (*N.H.* 3.46)

The division of Italy into eleven regions did not simply facilitate the description of geography. Since geographical descriptions such as Pliny's of necessity describe Italy from the point of the coastline, beginning with Liguria and ending with Venetia. Also, it should be noted that Augustus established a list of towns within each region (see previous chapter for details). This would place any city in a larger division of Italy for a reason, probably to define which administrative officer should deal with that city.

There are few parallels for the Augustan division of Italy into regions. In fact, the only parallel for a division of an area into regions from any period of Roman history is in connection with Pompey's suppression of piracy in the Mediterranean during the 60s BC. The similarities between Pompey's actions and those of Octavian in the 30s BC are apparent. Plutarch (*Pomp.*26.3) provides the detail:

> He divided the waters and the adjacent coasts into thirteen districts and assigned to each a certain number of ships with a commander and with his forces thus scattered in all quarters he encompassed whole fleets of pirate ships that fell in his way.
>
> Plutarch (*Pomp.*26.3)

The parallel is striking, as are the common traits of the account of Pompey against the pirates and Octavian against the bandits. Both emphasise speed and the popularity attained through such action as noted by Shaw (1984:33). But, we should also pay attention to the logistics of these two actions: both divided an area into regions and stationed either ships or soldiers throughout those regions. In the case of Augustus and the regions of Italy, we have evidence for the enumeration of towns in each region and we might speculate that similar information would have been held on the *ergastula* of the large landowners of each region as well. The connection between the regions and state power can be established with reference to Cassius Dio's account of the establishment of the regions and *vici* in the city of Rome dated to 7 BC:

> The blame for the fire was laid on the debtor class, who were suspected of having contrived it on purpose, in order that they might have some of their debts remitted when they appeared to have lost heavily. They for their part, however, gained nothing from the fire; but the *vici (stenopoi)* were put in charge of supervisors, chosen from the stenoparchons (*magistri vicorum* or *curatores viarum*?). These men were allowed to use official dress and two lictors, but only in the regions under their administration and on certain days, and they were given control over the force of slaves which had previously been associated with the aediles to save buildings caught by fire. The aediles, however, together with the tribunes and praetors, were still assigned by lot to have charge of the whole city, which was divided into fourteen regions. This is also the present arrangement.
>
> (Cassius Dio 55.6–7)

The account of Suetonius (*Aug.*30) is similar with broadly the same details:

> He divided the area of the city into regions and *vici,* arranging that the former should be under magistrates selected each year by lot and the latter under magistrates elected by the inhabitants of the respective neighbourhoods.
>
> (Suetonius *Aug.*30)

There is no direct reference to the administration of the regions of Italy in Suetonius' account, but later in the same passage we find the information that might allow us to understand how the regions of Italy were administered:

> Further to make the approach to the city easier from every direction, he personally undertook to rebuild the Via Flaminia all the way to Ariminum, and assigned the rest of the roads to others who had been honoured with triumphs, asking them to use their money obtained from the sale of booty in paving them.
> (Suetonius *Aug.*30)

A similar version is found in Cassius Dio (54.8), who dates this action to 20 BC and notes that those appointed to attend to the actual construction of the roads were ex-praetors, each of whom was accompanied by two lictors while carrying out the work. Since these curators were attended by lictors, we may assume that they were in a position of power; notice also that power within the city of Rome was signified by the presence of two lictors attending the magistrates of the *vici*.

No mention is made in the last text of regions, but I think we might supply it. The emphasis was upon travel and enhancement of the ease of travel. Similarly, the suppression of banditry is the suppression of a threat to travellers. The connection between the maintenance of roads and the regions of Italy can also be made through the nomenclature of the *curatores* of roads in Italy (for full listing see Ertmann 1976). These broadly follow those of the regions. For the most part the *curatores* take their name from the roads that led from Rome with which they were associated; further away from Rome they took their names from the regions: Apulia, Lucania, Calabria and Brutium (see Bourne 1960:65–6 on the regions of the *alimenta;* compare Patterson 1987; Woolf 1990 for more recent discussion). The roads often correspond to regions: for example, the Via Flaminia is equivalent to Umbria; the Aemilia to the region of the same name. In Etruria it was a case of combining a number of roads to define the region: the Viae Clodia, Annia Ciminia and Cassia (Ertmann 1976: no.34); the Via Appia was equivalent to the regions of Campania and Latium. Such a connection between roads and the regions of Italy is made explicit in the second century AD, when the *curatores regionum ac viarum* were given the power to punish those who extorted the *vectigalia* (SHA.*Ant.*11). It is also clear from other sources that the *curatores viarum* were not simply concerned with road repair (*Dig.*43.23.3), but had wider powers over the *ager publicus* (see Ertmann 1976:93). The overall pattern in the later evidence is one in which there is a connection between the organisation of power and the regional division of Italy.

The division of Italy and Rome into regions by Augustus and the stationing of soldiers and others involved in law enforcement in those regions

recognised that both the city of Rome and Italy, although separate units, were dealt with simultaneously. The principle is continued by Tiberius in the suppression of lawlessness during his principate. Suetonius (*Tib.*37) provides us with the details:

> He gave special attention to securing safety from prowling brigands and lawless outbreaks. He stationed garrisons of soldiers nearer together than before throughout Italy, while at Rome he established a camp for the barracks of the praetorian cohorts which before that time had been quartered in isolated groups in various *hospitia*.
>
> (Suetonius *Tib.*37)

This represents a tightening up of the control of banditry in Italy and the centralisation of military power in Rome itself. However, we should recognise that power continued to be based on the division of both Rome and Italy into their individual regions. This can most easily be seen from the creation of the office of *iuridicus* during the second century AD (Thomsen 1947:164–78). Here, the link between judicial power and the regions of Italy is made even more apparent if we examine the appellation of the *iuridici* of the second century AD. A *iuridicus* had the power to hear a case as though it were in front of the emperor. The *iuridici* in Italy had their areas of jurisdiction defined according to the regions. There was a *iuridicus* for Apulia and Calabria (*CIL* 9.1572) with sometimes the addition of Bruttium (*CIL* 3.10471–3; *AE* 1990:863); another for the Flaminia and Umbria (*CIL* 3.6154, 14.3586), with the potential addition of Picenum (*CIL* 2.2634, 11.376). A further *iuridicus* held office in Transpadine Gaul (*CIL* 5.1874, 4332, 4341, 11.6338). Another administrative region was composed of the Aemilia and Liguria (*CIL* 6.332, 10.5178) or at another time the Aemilia, Etruria and Tuscia (*CIL* 8.597) or simply Etruria and Aemilia (*AE* 1920: 45); with another *iuridicus* for Liguria, another variant is Tuscia and Picenum (*CIL* 11.206). At all times, the administrative area is defined with reference to the region (Figure 12.1). The structure here is necessary since local administrative units (the cities) could not always administer the law. Also, the *iuridicus* acted as an outside legal force and in many ways prevented numerous cases being heard in Rome. What is clear is that the will of the state was authorised and sanctioned with reference to the regions of Italy.

The control of banditry: success or failure?

The question remains as to how successful was the system of bandit control placed on the areas of Italy, with soldiers based in each region. Shaw (1984: 32) highlights how in certain regions the central authority was weak to the

extent that banditry could not be controlled. He points to evidence from the Theodosian Law Code (9.30.1–5) that highlights Lucania, Picenum, Apulia, Calabria and Samnium as places associated with banditry. These regions were in antiquity associated with transhumance shepherds, in other words those people who tended to be drawn to banditry in the ancient sources (e.g. Strabo 6.2.6). However, there is another way of looking at the problem. The regions of Lucania, Apulia, Calabria, Samnium and Picenum were distinctive in that they were not defined in relation to a major road leading from Rome. The contrast should be made with the regions of Latium/Campania, Umbria, Etruria and Aemilia, all of which contained areas of transhumance, yet were not strongly associated with banditry. I think we may argue that those regions closer to Rome and defined by the major roads under the control of *curatores* can be seen to have been well policed with banditry controlled for the most part. However, in the case of northern Italy we need to recognise that this region was not associated strongly with banditry. The road system and level of urbanisation in this region would appear to have been greater than in southern Italy. In terms of the suppression of banditry, we should understand that the factors of roads, towns and imperial control fit together to form a whole. Those regions characterised by the ancients as under-urbanised, at a distance from Rome and lacking a defined system of roads were subject to banditry. The areas involved in banditry were: Lucania, Calabria, Apulia and Picenum. Thus, where the road system defined a region and connected it to Rome, the authority of the state was greater.

However, the authority of the *curator viarum* did not extend far beyond the area associated with the major roadway to, for example, the transhumance routes. In AD 24 a quaestor held the province of the *calles* of Italy and was involved in the suppression of a slave revolt near Brundisium incited by an ex-praetorian guardsman (Tac. *Ann.* 4.24). Control along the major routes taken by travellers through Italy would seem to have been achieved, but we should note that in the principate of Septimius Severus the bandit Bulla used information on who was taking the Via Appia from Brundisium to Rome to organise the robbery of wealthy travellers (Cassius Dio 77.10). Typically, as in most bandit stories, Bulla was betrayed by a lover. Like governors of provinces, those in positions of authority in the regions of Italy would have hunted down bandits and their collaborators (*Dig.* 1.18.13). It should be pointed out that the hunting down of bandits was a major enterprise associated with experts in that field (Fronto *Ant. Pius* 8). The punishment of the brigands was a visible feature of travel along the roads, since there was a tendency to crucify the bandit at the place where he had committed his crimes (Cic. *Verr.* 5.169). This was done for two reasons: first, to console the relatives of those killed by the bandit; second, to provide a physical reminder to others of the power of the state to overcome and punish banditry (*Dig.* 48.19.28.15). Shaw has shown that the Roman state

was constantly in conflict with bandits and needed to use soldiers to contain them. What has been overlooked is the role of the division of Italy into administrative regions as an element in the suppression of banditry.

So far, we have seen from the relevant source material that there was a close relationship between the Augustan division of Italy and the suppression of banditry. I think we must conclude that there is a connection. Clearly, the system of regions extended state power. Moreover, assigning power to the *curatores viarum* would indicate that the key factor was to protect the traveller—the characteristic victim of bandit attack. In tackling the problem of armed force, different measures were taken in Rome and Italy. However, these measures parallel one another and define the powers of those involved, whether curators of the regions of Rome, *vicus* magistrates in Rome or the *curatores viarum* outside of Rome. Taken together, these measures represent an assertion of geographical power during the principate of Augustus. The re-division and re-definition of the regions of Italy and the *vici* or neighbourhoods in the city of Rome is not a mere coincidence but a reformulation of geographical knowledge and state power to take action within defined geographical spheres. I do not wish to say that the only reason for the division of *tota Italia* into eleven regions was the prevention of banditry; simply that the assertion of the state's power against banditry is one of the more prominent phenomena associated with the regions of Italy. The bandit was defined as an 'other' beyond the consideration given either to citizens or foreign enemies. No doubt the state's will was asserted in a variety of ways through the reorganisation of Italy into eleven geographical units. However, we know next to nothing of these and should remain aware that what we do know is only a fraction of what happened in the past.

14

SPACE-TIME IN ROMAN ITALY

> And what was said by Homer, 'The Earth was common to all', you (Rome) have made a reality, by surveying the whole inhabited world, by bridging rivers, by cutting carriage roads through the mountains, by filling deserts with *stationes,* and by civilising everything with your way of life and good order.
>
> (Aelius Aristides *Orat.* 26.101)

Italy

The unity of Roman Italy depended on a system of roads. The road was as much a part of a definition of the Roman cultural landscape as that of the city or the villa. The roads of Italy bisected the mountains of the Apennines to link the peoples of the Po plain to the rest of Italy. The physical geography of Italy was fundamentally altered by road building, whether to the south by the building of the Via Appia through the Pontine marshes or to the north by the building of the Via Flaminia across the Apennines to the Adriatic sea. A new geographical space was created that was founded on the linear connection of Rome to other places. This new Rome-centred geography ignored the traditional divisions between cities or regions. If we were to take the mountain ranges of Roman Italy as a means to define a region, we would fail to take note of the alteration of geography and create a simplified imagined community that ignored the application of a transport technology in the definition of geographical space. The reorganisation of space caused a concentration of power in Rome, rather than in the cities of her Italian allies (maybe with the exception of Capua). Rome conquered Italy as much by the production of space as by the utilisation of armies for the suppression of her Latin and Italian allies. The key elements of this conquest were the roads, the cities and a system of landholding that together created a unique landscape which was different from the cities of Greece or barbarian Europe. Underpinning it all was a system of land transportation to complement communications by sea or river. The effect was to create over a period of two centuries a unity for Italy that defies definition. Certainly we cannot regard Italy as Mommsen did, as a nation state, nor should we regard the

Figure 14.1 Mount Soracte

cities of Italy as acting as independent city states. Roman Italy does not conform to either of these definitions and should be seen as a unique form of political space. In terms of political entities, Italy was composed of a large number of self-governing cities that were connected together to form a larger political system through their focus on Rome via communications and citizenship. These two elements cannot be separated if they are to have any historical meaning. Citizenship implies a level of common concern that could only be achieved through knowledge of a common bond between places. In the case of Italy, unlike that of Greece, this was not achieved through common myths of descent or a common ethnicity.

The extension of political space through Rome's expansion and the foundation of colonies presented a key problem, the production of a space of transport and communications (cf. Harvey 1989:255 on Enlightenment space). This was fulfilled initially by the connection of colonies to Rome through building long-distance routes. Later, the efficiency of transport was addressed through the breeding of more efficient animals and the improvement of the road surface by paving. As a result, from the first century BC through to the second century AD, we see the creation of a unified Italy alongside the improved network of roads. For those from outside Italy, to participate in politics it was necessary to have a stake in Italy itself via landownership by the second century AD (Plin. *Ep.* 6.19). Italy had been the place of residence for Rome's political elite. This was made certain through

legislation once members of the political elite were drawn from outside Italy. This elite constituted the most mobile sector of society with estates in several parts of the peninsula. The goods from their estates of necessity would have been traded over considerable distances, since for the maintenance of wealth and status of the owner the estate needed to produce a profit over the long term. The land-holding patterns of the senatorial and equestrian elite required them to be mobile and to visit their various properties. In doing so, they became involved in localised politics, particularly once the emperor had ensured that nobody apart from himself and his family was involved in euergetism in the capital. An outlet for the elite's desire to reinforce their status through the gift of money for public building projects and the donation of prestige goods (e.g. statues) was fulfilled outside Rome. This would suggest that the intervention of the elite became spread over a larger area and in a greater number of cities. The reliance on land transportation may have caused certain of these cities to have been in a stronger position to benefit from the patronage of the Roman elite. At the same time, the mobility of the elite allowed them to draw on greater resources in terms of estates located in a variety of climatic regions and to redistribute a certain amount of these resources elsewhere in Italy. This implies a movement of resources through the peninsula of Italy. However, this economic shift was uneven and would seem to be most apparent in those towns located on key routes utilised by the elite on the move.

The city

The distribution of cities in Italy is markedly uneven. The city as a spatial formation need not have been dependent on a local economy for its survival and the recognition of an urban status. The colonies founded by Rome were initially settlements of citizen/soldiers that gained a status due to their prestige as places of citizenship at an early date. Other foundations such as the *fora* were created through the mobility of capital in the third and second centuries BC. These towns were set up by individuals from Rome with a view to the establishment of urban centres. The elogium of Polla is clear on the fact that a forum and temples were in effect a place or town within the landscape. The impetus for a forum's foundation did not come from the locality but from outside in the person of an Appius or a Livius from Rome. Their surplus pays for the setting up of the town and they gain through the naming of that place. This would imply that the urban pattern of Italy is denser than elsewhere in the Mediterranean, not because the urban hinterlands are wealthier but because the mobile elite of Roman Italy chose to spend its money or social surplus on prestige developments that included the setting up of towns close to their properties (Wiseman 1971:28; Whittaker 1994:134–5). Later, the elite would be involved in the development of public building in these towns (Whittaker 1985:59). The factor of

communications and the mobility of an economic surplus gained from imperialism within Italy promoted urban development.

So far an emphasis on the Roman elite as the agent of urbanisation has been stressed, but we need to be careful to note that a response to their actions was likely to have occurred. Others in Italy would also have been involved in urban development in order to create culturally significant places in the landscape. In any case, the very factor of Rome's cultural hegemony would have led to the Italian elite becoming involved in a similar process of town foundation and monumentalisation. The culture of cities became self-sustaining since, to have been recognisable by the mobile elite, a place needed to have the appearance of a city to travellers or outsiders. Possessing these attributes, it might have been recognised and included in the Augustan list of colonies and *municipia.* The absence of monumentalism would have caused a place to be classified as a *vicus* and it would not have had a town council, a territory or the patronage of outsiders on any scale. The town of Forum Novum in the *ager Sabinus* is a case in point (Figure 14.2). There we find a basilica, monumental tombs and two identical inscriptions recording the setting up of baths, a campus and a *piscina* (*CIL* 9.4786; Filippi 1989: no. 14). The inscriptions themselves are categorical that Forum Novum was a *Municipium* with *Municipes* living there. However, the extent of urbanism here seems almost artificial with a need to say in the inscription

Figure 14.2 Monumental tomb at Forum Novum

repeatedly that the place was a town *(Municipium)*. The act of monumentalism and municipal status are combined and it is possible that both were the responsibility of one man. This means that cities were extremely artificial creations where there was an absence of a history or mythology of town foundation. Even if there had been a tradition of city building in a region prior to contact with Rome, this did not guarantee the interest of the mobile elite in town development in that place. However, the presence of a calendar of festivals from Rome in the town would suggest a still strong connection to the capital (*CIL* 9.4769).

The settlement of veterans in the towns of Italy after the Civil wars of the first century BC marks a further restructuring of space. For example, Augustus was careful to privilege the places in which his veterans had been settled. Indeed, the emperor as the benefactor of cities on his travels should not be ignored in the development of monumental architecture in Italy or benefits from the *alimenta*. Again, the emperor's actions are not confined to a region, a particular place, or type of geography (e.g. hill towns), but can be found in quite disparate areas. However, these actions are limited to cities. Hence, the city was the place of benefaction and distribution of surplus wealth as much as the centre of a local economic formation. If this is the case, the argument over whether a city was of a consumer or producer type seems scarcely relevant because it was integrated into a larger economy that was dependent on a mobility of wealth. The latter can be most clearly seen with reference to the elite, but I would suggest that others such as *negotiators, mancipes* and *mercatores* were also involved in the movement of wealth from one part of Italy to another.

The movement of goods to Rome inevitably meant that a surplus payment was extracted at the point of sale. Hence, those involved in the supply of building materials, agricultural produce, luxuries, etc. gained money that need not have been spent in the city of Rome itself. It seems to me more likely that the *negotiators* and *mercatores* were more concerned with economic activity in their place of birth or place of residence outside of Rome. What these people utilised their profit for remains unknown—for my argument that does not matter—but it does point to an implied mobility of capital and also of ideas. The circulation of goods and ideas created conditions that were as much a part of the foundation of a unified culture of cities in Italy as the establishment of those cities and their monuments. An expectation of the local elites to emulate the culture of the capital provided an additional impetus to the monumentalisation of the cities of Italy in the first centuries BC and AD. The mobility of a surplus and the mobility of a section of the population produced a need for local monuments on a greater scale than had been previously expected.

Therefore, the city and its associated monuments were artificial forms rather than local economic centres. Their survival depended on the continued circulation of the people and the money that had created them.

This implies that the city was a surplus product. Once the surplus ceased to circulate, the city adjusted its structure to the new situation which would have been reflected in a reduction in the building of monumental structures. This would suggest that the urbanisation of Italy did not necessarily reflect the economic development of its associated region. It could instead be directly dependent on the continued intervention of one or more mobile member of the elite (local or otherwise). It is the elite's surplus that created and made cities. Their use as economic *foci* for markets and trade should not be ignored though. It is this element that defines the ancient city as a place within the local economy and was a necessity for the city to develop a stable population as well as a monumental centre, local government and periodic markets. It seems likely that many towns were set up and simply failed. Those that do survive vary in sophistication and complexity. For example, Forum Novum should be seen as a monumental centre with a periodic market and a very small permanent population. At the other extreme, towns such as Pompeii, Ostia, Cremona or Aquileia reveal a far greater level of sophistication and much larger urban populations. All would be classified simply as towns by the Augustan list of places in Italy, yet there were qualitative differences in scale at work. These reflected the position of a city in relation to the social surplus generated by the mobile elite from the region or who came to the city itself. Forum Novum was poorly positioned for this (see Figure 14.2), whereas the neighbouring towns on the major roads, such as Falerii Novi or Ocriculum (Figure 14.3), were better placed. This very localised variation in urban development would suggest that the pattern of urbanism and monumentalism should not be seen in terms of regional development. The distribution of a monument type in, say, Campania as compared to Samnium has little to tell us since the viewing of these monuments and their meaning was focused on travellers or people from neighbouring cities. Similarly, distance from the capital need not be the defining feature for urban development beyond forty miles or so of Rome. The pattern of urban development in Italy needs to be defined within the context of the action of a few members of the elite over relatively long time periods. On the basis of one monument being built by one or two members of the elite, the actual number of people involved in the creation of an urban infrastructure of monuments was limited, especially since it occurred over a period of at least 200 years to produce our archaeological record for any urban site in Italy.

The state

The role of the Roman state in the creation of a new space-time geography needs to be recognised. The building of roads and the foundation of colonies were acts that distributed the Roman/Latin population across the Italian peninsula but at the same time kept a

Figure 14.3 Artificial platform for a temple(?) at Ocriculum

connection to Rome. A further impetus to the alteration of Rome's population in space was the massive mobilisation for warfare in the second and first centuries BC with about 10 to 20 per cent of the population mobilised and a greater number displaced by the economic demands of war on the peasantry (Hopkins 1978). Migration to Rome through poverty was a key factor in that city's growth, but also in the circulation of information at Rome about the nature of other parts of Italy. A corollary to this was the expansion of estates held by the elite in areas at a distance from Rome. The resettlement of veterans in colonies in the first century again redistributed a large population. The presence of so much mobility points to a system in flux that only becomes settled at the end of the first century BC. This would mean that family histories or local oral traditions featured the migration to or from a place, or the effect of the arrival of migrants or settlers to an area. The presence of exslaves would only add to the sense of past mobility. Equally, Italy had supplied the troops, equipment and infrastructure of army supply and as a result many of those living in Italy would have had direct experience of travel or have heard oral traditions of travel. The expansion of Rome and the unification of Italy was a process that affected most parts of the peninsula and stressed a history of migration (forced or otherwise). This would suggest that culturally the local populations of Italy would have been accustomed to the idea of travel and have knowledge of other

parts of Italy and the empire. In this sense, it was not just the magistrates or the elite who had experience of the provinces and places beyond Italy down to the first century AD, but also the majority of the population as well.

To return to hegemony and the relationship between Rome and the cities of Italy. The dispersed nature of Rome's territory (*ager Romanus,* colonies) meant that a system of communication was necessary between the magistrates at Rome and the citizens resident further afield. This was fulfilled partly by road building, but also by the establishment of centres of government. These were mostly towns with an *ordo,* but could be *conciliabula*. The latter were centres for state control, in particular the collection of taxes before 167 BC and the levying of citizens for army service, but without any form of city government. Many centres of state control were initially *fora* that were later reclassified as *municipia*. In the period of establishment of these *fora* the state was hardly involved, unlike the case of colonies. The situation of transition in the newly conquered territories and the speed of change in the third and second centuries BC restricted the activities of magistrates to the control of armies and their recruitment. In terms of control of territory, the settlers and their patrons were not closely supervised, nor did the state have the apparatus to do so. Hence, the setting up of towns *(fora)* was based on individual action

The establishment of an ideology of *tota Italia* by the very end of the first century BC was a means to extend Roman hegemony by an emphasis of unity through difference. The alternative of a citizenship of all Romans could be utilised at certain moments, but could cause offence to individual ethnic groups that had fought Rome. In many ways, the creation of the Augustan regions of Italy and a geographical knowledge of those regions that associated them with a specific ethnonym was to prevent further development of new ethnicities in Italy. Each city was part of region, which was in turn part of *Italia;* while each individual was a citizen of Rome and a citizen of their home town. This dual identity via *Italia* and citizenship promoted a conception of a greater space than that of the locality and might be seen as a means for the creation of an identity that contrasted Italy with the provinces. At the same point in time, the definition of a person's position was redefined with reference to the person of the emperor. The emphasis in Suetonius's *Lives of the Caesars* on place of birth, family tradition and imperial residences outside Rome points to an importance of location of the emperor in Italy as much as Rome. The emperors were as much Italian as Roman, like most of the senatorial elite of the first century AD. Spatially, Rome and Italy were linked and part of a production of space that stressed the hegemony of Rome as the centre of the system. The renegotiation of that hegemony was worded in the duality of Rome as opposed to Italy, but was solved through an inclusive view of

diversity—*tota Italia—that* assumed a Roman hegemony in the person of Octavian and the later emperors.

The government of Italy by Rome then was based on the independent city as the key agent of law and order. In the period of Rome's expansion, many cities simply acted independently as long as they did not challenge the hegemony of Rome. However, with the presence of a concept of *tota Italia* and consent from the population of Italy to Rome's position, it was possible to extend state power across the peninsula. The re-ordering of geography, to define which places were privileged as colonies, named as towns, and to locate them within the Augustan regional listings, created a form of knowledge that could locate individuals and their property in space (within certain city territories).The suppression of brigandage by Octavian in the thirties BC may have been the impetus for this division of space. Hence, I would say it was related to the control of violence and the pursuit of those seen as lawbreakers. However, what we do not see in our source material is how far this system of control extended to other aspects of political control, for example, *maiestas* or treason. The presence of magistrates (*curatores viarum, iuridici* and prefects of the *alimenta*) across Italy may have increased the flow of information to the emperor. Rather than being seen as threats to the local of communities of Italy, these people were commemorated in the language of patronage. In effect, they were access points to the emperor and agents of the emperor's benefaction to local communities in Italy. No doubt at times their role could become quite sinister—that is not alluded to in the evidence though. What we see is the emperor's patronage spreading through the agency of others across space to the cities of Italy.

The Roman economy

The implications of the nature of Roman space-time for any economic model are manifold.The models from the Finley-based school of ancient economics draw attention to the importance of space-time in terms of the cost of transport overland.The attraction of central place theory in this context is the assumed immobility of the economy due to the high cost of transportation (e.g. Morley 1996). We can refocus the space-time question to present land transport as possible throughout the year and the certainty of the goods arriving being high; compared to the disadvantages of sending goods by sea and the limited period of sailing and uncertainty of when or if they will arrive. The advantages of a system based on land transportation become more prominent. Further, a dependency on sea transport would have placed a limitation on the economic and hegemonic ambitions of Rome to the locality of Rome and the seaboard of the Mediterranean. The road system of Italy expanded that area to include a larger region. Still the limitation of cost needs to be considered. If we view not cost but profit, we

might actually arrive at a more realistic answer. I do not wish to exaggerate this to create long-distance land transport for bulk goods, but suggest instead that the market in Rome and the cities of Italy would provide key locations for the sale of agricultural produce at a profit. This is not to say that I see the economy as a modern form of capitalism, but would wish to move the Finley model of the ancient economy so that it included the potential for the movement of goods across space by a reduction in the relative cost of land transport.

The changes in the efficiency of the road surface (e.g. by bridge building, Figure 14.4) and the use of improved breeds made a significant impact on the overall economic profit of the trade in goods over a distance (*contra* Finley 1973:126–7). This does not turn the consumer city into a producer city; if anything my conception of the economy of towns actually reduces the role of towns in the economy. The reasons for this are that I regard the expenditure on monuments to be drawn not necessarily from a city's hinterland but from a variety sources that need not be local. Hence, the townscapes of Italy are in reality the display of elite surpluses across the landscape. If we consider the number of people involved in the creation of the buildings of a Roman town and the number of acts of expenditure involved, we would find that an upper limit in terms of buildings would be about thirty and that the number of people involved could have been as

Figure 14.4 Bridge at Fosso dei Tre Ponti on the Via Amerina
Source: British School at Rome Archive, John Ward Perkins Collection

few as ten. The time frame in which such action would have taken place would be from 100 to about 400 years with a mid-range of about 250 years. These figures are in no way accurate, but illustrate just how little was required to produce the monumental archaeology of a Roman town. These monuments should be seen as an expression of the elite's surplus that could have been spent in this way. Therefore, the towns of Italy were formed from the periodic expenditure of the elite. Other benefactions, such as meals or games, were also located in the towns. The town was a public arena for elite expenditure and expression of their cultural values. For this to have any meaning, it was necessary to have onlookers in the town or from the countryside around the town. Their absence would literally prevent monumental development from taking place. Hence, in regions of nucleated settlement monumentalism would flourish, whereas in regions of *viritim* or dispersed settlement, monuments and even towns could literally be absent. In short, the Roman city was a product of an elite culture of display or conspicuous consumption. The competition between elite families in a city or between local cities was more likely to have been a stimulus for urban development than the economic prosperity of a given city. The economic wealth of the local elite was also a key factor for monumentalism, as can be clearly seen from building activity at Rome from the third century BC onwards. Certainly, cities were the place for markets and trade; but the profit derived from such activity would seem to return to the countryside with relatively small-scale investment in urban production.

The road

The road was the fundamental element for the production of territorial space in the creation of a Roman empire. The road caused places to become unified that were distant, for example, Rimini and Rome. The road structured the Roman view of space that was linear and emphasised the connectivity between cities (places of local government). Equally, the road altered the nature of space by connecting places that were divided by ranges of mountains and also by simply avoiding contact with former rivals to Rome such as Veii. In this sense, the road was a mechanism of Roman power that physically reshaped the landscape after Roman control had initially been asserted through military intervention. The ability to alter the nature of space and to produce a cultural form that emphasised the interconnection between cities created a new viewpoint of territory that was no longer fragmented or divided (Figure 14.5). The emphasis on Rome as the centre of the road system assured the city's cultural and political dominance over the places on the roads themselves. The description of space provided by the geographers and the itineraries point to the importance of the interconnectiveness of the road system in the formation of territorial geography. In short, the road contains the cities along its course and adjacent

Figure 14.5 A road viaduct maintains a flat surface for the traveller across a valley; Ponte del Diavolo on the Via Salaria

to it, but it also orders those cities so that they are no longer independent. Any city in Italy was placed in relation to other cities to which it was near or to which the road led. The road later became a means for the control of banditry and the administration of the *alimenta*. The spatial dimension here emphasised a linear view of space, rather than a viewpoint based around a bounded area. The former had clear advantages in a culture that was centred on the metropolis of Rome by the roads that led to it. In the cultural landscape of Italy, the road was as important as the villa, the city, rivers or the sea because it connected the other elements. The natural features of rivers and the sea alone could not have produced the unity of Italy (*contra* Ward-Perkins 1962; compare Purcell 1990). Equally, aspects of the human landscape (villas, agriculture and cities) depended on the transportation of people and goods to and fro. Few villas or towns were so well placed that they did not require the use of part of the road system for the movement of goods to or from them. In this sense, the road was a crucial element in the development of Italian agriculture and the urbanised economy of Italy.

Once in the provinces, the Roman view was to produce a new landscape that was dependent on a system of roads and interconnection via overland transportation. This would reproduce a recognisable cultural format that was distinctly Roman. What made a province Roman was the road system as much as towns utilising Roman architectural forms or the villas in the

countryside. To a certain extent, Roman culture and identification with Rome depended on the presence of a means of transport between places. Those places tended to become increasingly uniform in response to each other. If there was not a road system to promote cohesiveness, the system could fragment into a series of independent places or city states. The fragmentation of space would also have occurred in circumstances in which it was not certain who was the Roman emperor. The emperor's presence was seen in the milestones along the roads, mentioning his intervention to maintain, renew, or build them. Thus the emperor, like the road, stretched across space to unify places that were naturally disunited. Both were interrelated elements in the creation of a Roman consciousness and an alteration of identity in the first to second centuries AD. The road was a device of power that produced a distinctly Roman space across Europe and the Mediterranean.

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