



Stasis in Roman Sicily

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ABSTRACT: This article seeks to examine the evidence for three instances of *stasis*-prevention efforts from the period of Roman dominion known to us through the medium of Cicero's *Verrines*. In doing so, it will build on the work of Berger who examined the phenomenon of *stasis* in Sicily and Southern Italy during preceding eras and of Eilers who examined the Roman patrons of Greek cities. The article establishes a timeline for the Romans' efforts and then draws conclusions about the people involved in *stasis*-prevention in the province and the Romans' hands-off approach to civic government in Sicily during the Republic.

KEY-WORDS: *polis*, *stasis*, Sicily, Cicero, Heraclea, Halaesa, Agrigentum

Shlomo Berger demonstrated via a survey of the Greek cities of Southern Italy and Sicily that there is sufficient evidence to show that an average of one instance of *stasis* occurred in one of the cities of the region at least every seven years.¹ His inquiry and evidence-set, however, are limited to the 'Greek' world and, thus, preclude examples from the Roman era. Berger did note that the danger of *stasis* continued to be real even during the Romans' period of dominion; it was so integral a part of the *polis* life that it undoubtedly resurfaced throughout the *poleis* during both the Hellenistic and Roman eras.² This paper seeks to build upon the work of Berger by examining the evidence for three instances of *stasis*-prevention efforts from the Roman era known to us through the medium of Cicero's *Verrines*. In doing so, it will seek to order them chronologically and then draw conclusions about the Romans' approach to and means of government on the island based on their example.

All of the cities of Sicily, not merely the *foederatae* and *liberae ac immunes*, enjoyed the same level of benefit in terms of Roman rule. They were taken into the friendship and alliance of the Roman people, as Cicero stated, "on the basis that they would retain the same laws which they had before and be subject to the Roman people on the

¹ Berger (1992) 107. Gehrke (1985) previously demonstrated that the frequency of *stasis* was much higher in other parts of the Greek world; however, this higher degree of frequency is undoubtedly due to the wider spectrum of available source evidence, principally epigraphic.

² Berger (1992) 9.

same conditions as they had formerly been subject to under their own princes.”³ Thus they could pursue their home-affairs utilizing the structures to which they had become accustomed over time, those of *polis* government. This form of government was prone to a number of difficulties, however, the primary one among them being *stasis*.

For the purposes of this paper, I define *stasis*, which derives from the Greek verb *histemi* (“to stand” or, more properly in this case, “to arrest”),⁴ broadly as a breakdown of the social order within the *polis* which effectively ended the functioning of civic government.⁵ *Polis*-based government has as a general feature no real bureaucracy, with the citizens holding power either via their assembly or via holding elected office. As a result, as Newman long ago stated, “*to stasiazein* occurs when a number of citizens of a state form themselves into a faction for the attainment of some political end by legal and illegal means ... those involved in *stasis* are prepared to carry out its aims by illegal means if necessary.”⁶ In short, the problem of *stasis* was one which the Romans had to take very seriously indeed.

The danger of *stasis* was inherent in every *polis* and, as such, it is no surprise to find *staseis* occurring with some degree of regularity within the Hellenized cities of Sicily.⁷ This was observable in the 3rd century B.C.; King Pyrrhus of Epirus noted this fact to his Greek confidant, Cineas, while discussing how prosperous, well-populated, and easy to conquer the island was: “for all is faction there, her cities have no government, and demagogues are rampant now that Agathocles is gone.”⁸ Owing to the continued use of Greek-style political structures, the problem persisted long after the coming of Rome.

One of the best sources of information concerning the governmental structures of the cities of Sicily in the Roman era is a comparatively recently discovered series of tablets from Entella, a city located in the interior of western Sicily. The tablets record a series of decrees of the city’s council and assembly and have been the subject of much discussion since their discovery, largely on account of their mysterious nature.⁹ The decrees, datable to between 254 and 241,¹⁰ and eight in number,¹¹ record decisions taken at Entella. Though they are of a much earlier date than the subject of this study, they are nevertheless instructive. Entella was relatively unimportant in the grand scheme of the province’s history; as such, the chance survival of a series of decrees passed by both its council and assembly provides a glimpse into the structures and workings of an ordinary, and most likely very typical, Hellenized Sicilian city in

³ Cic. *Verr.* II.iii.13. All translations of the *Verrines* are from the Loeb edition of L.H.G. Greenwood.

⁴ On the distinction between the two possible translations of *histemi*, see Kalimtzis (2000) xv.

⁵ *Contra* Wheeler (1951) who argues that *stasis* is a condition of violent internal conflict; Lintott (1982) similarly focuses on the violent aspect. Kalimtzis (2000) xv, however, defines *stasis* as an “arrest of *homonoia*” (together-mindedness or what the Esperantists would call discord amongst the *samidealistojn*) within the *polis* which is no doubt much closer to the actual reality of the phenomenon.

⁶ Newman (1902) 284.

⁷ The frequency of the *stasis* phenomenon is evidenced by Aristotle who, for example, devoted the entirety of book five of his *Politics* to the question of *stasis* and its causes. As Kalimtzis (2000) 2 points out, though, Aristotle was merely a participant in a much longer philosophical dialogue concerning the phenomenon.

⁸ Plut. *Vit. Pyrr.* 14.4. Translation by B. Perrin in the Loeb edition.

⁹ See, especially, Loomis (1994) 127-128 with n. 2 for a bibliography prior to 1994; see also Ampolo (2001).

¹⁰ See Loomis (1994) 139-153 and the Addendum on 160; see also Curbera (1994). Ampolo (2001) xi-xiii suggests *c.* 249 as the most probably date; 43-45 discusses all previous views as to the dating of the tablets.

¹¹ Though nine tablets have been published, up to thirteen are rumoured to exist; one of the nine which has been published has since been demonstrated to be a forgery. See Prag (2002).

the process of “enjoying the diversity and genuine autonomy of Greek *polis* life.”¹² It is precisely this diversity that Rome’s policy of non-interference in civic governance allowed to continue.

The Entella Tablets demonstrate that thoroughly Greek administrative structures prevailed in the cities. The example of but one tablet will demonstrate this. Lines 1-3 of Tablet IV (B1) record the names Kipos, son of Soios, and Theodoros, son of Mamos, and the year in which the decree was passed were the archons.¹³ The presence of a council, or *boule*, in the city is confirmed by lines 4 and 5, as is the existence of a *bouleuterion* in which they met in line 16. The honoree’s name and filiation (Tiberius Claudius, son of Gaius of Antium) is also recorded as are his deeds which merited the decree. The decree as a whole was passed by the city’s assembly (*halia*) as is shown by lines 16 and 17. Thus, the tablet reveals not only evidence as to whom the *boule* was honoring and why, but it also speaks of the two main deliberative bodies present within the city as well as the chief posts in the local administrative structure.

Further epigraphic evidence points to the existence of popular assemblies in many of the cities of Sicily, many of which also possessed a *boule* to guide them.¹⁴ The Senate House, or *curia*, at Syracuse even in the time of Cicero was still referred to as a *bouleuterion*.¹⁵ Hellenistic life permeated the *poleis* of Sicily and, indeed, it is far more proper to think of them as *poleis* in terms of their civic administration than as Roman-style *civitates*. They were so thoroughly Hellenized, in fact, that Cicero identified the need to explain to his Roman audience that the Sicilians in their cities still utilized the Greeks’ method of reckoning the calendar, as well as to explain to them a variety of the Sicilians’ peculiarly *polis*-based religious ordinances.¹⁶

A goodly portion of the evidence for Berger’s work on *stasis* in the Greek cities of Southern Italy and Sicily stems from epigraphic evidence. For the Roman period in Sicily, however, there are no similar surviving inscriptions describing *stasis* events. That the Romans were actively involved in the prevention of *stasis* within the cities of Sicily cannot be doubted. The governors of Sicily as well as Sicily’s patrons, as will be shown, by necessity had to maintain the continuity of civic government in order to ensure the regular supply of corn for Rome and her legions as well as any additional revenue generated from the province, such as that stemming from the charging of the *portoria* or *scriptura*.¹⁷

Preventive Efforts

Three instances of *stasis*-prevention may be cited which are known, all of which concern civic reorganizations whose goal was clearly *stasis*-avoidance and whose stipulations were meant to be still in effect at the time of Verres’ governorship, as he

¹² Loomis (1994) 154. See 139 and n. 21 on the paucity of datable inscriptions even on stone from this era from the interior Sicilian cities. On the Hellenized aspects, especially as regarding nomenclature, see Gallo (1982) 917-921 and 940-944.

¹³ Lines 14 and 15 further testify to the existence of the archonship. See Berger (1992) 68 on other public offices in the Sicilian cities.

¹⁴ On Sicilian popular assemblies, see *IG XIV*, 256, 288, 353-356, 434, 453, 952-953. On the *boule* in Sicily, see *IG XIV*, 952-953; see also Berger (1992) 67.

¹⁵ *Cic. Verr.* II.ii.50.

¹⁶ On the explanation of the calendar, see *Cic. Verr.* II.ii.129; on the religious ordinances of Syracuse, *Cic. Verr.* II.ii.126; of Cephaloedium, II.ii.128. See *SEG* 43.630 for the c. 5th century sacral legislation of Selinous.

¹⁷ On this, see Clemente (1988) 105-114.

abrogated them. The fact that there are only three which are known need not be taken as evidence that *stasis*-preventing measures were not regularly taken; Cicero felt that the three cases were sufficient to prove his point during the Verres trial, a point which dealt specifically with the charge of his tampering with the elections to local senates: “You must not expect me to deal with every city in turn; let me observe comprehensively that so long as Verres was praetor no man could become a senator unless he had first paid Verres money.”¹⁸ That these interventions of the Romans were designed to prevent *stasis* is made clear by Cicero’s statement about the first of them which he treats, concerning the laws given to Halaesa by C. Claudius Pulcher: “owing to an internal dispute regarding the way of filling vacancies in their Senate, they asked the Roman Senate to legislate for them.”¹⁹

Berger has noted that the question of the composition of the local *boule* frequently led to episodes of *stasis* in the *poleis*: “Issues related to the integration of new citizens and the distribution of public offices were central, and repeatedly endangered the foundation of the *polis*’ structure.”²⁰ Similarly, requests for mediation are indicative of a city undergoing the final stages of *stasis*.²¹

According to Cicero, following the request for mediation, these laws were given to the Sicilians by the Senate and People of Rome, “by them, I say, for when laws are given to our allies and friends by a man who has received his military power [*imperium*] from the People and his legislative authority from the Senate, those laws must be held to be the gift of both the People and the Senate.”²² These laws are, in the order which Cicero describes them, the *leges* which were given to the city of Halaesa by the praetor C. Claudius Pulcher in 95, the *leges* made by Scipio and given to Agrigentum between 131 and 129, and the *leges* set down by P. Rupilius in 132/1 for Heraclea.²³ While Cicero most likely chose to list the three in an order which was not chronological for stylistic reasons, the subsequent discussion attempts to follow chronological lines as closely as is possible.²⁴

The *leges* for Heraclea

The first of the cities which needs to be examined with regard to a civic reorganization is, unfortunately, the one about which Cicero tells us the least. Heraclea was a city of the *decumanae* class and was situated on the southern coast of Sicily, west of Agrigentum.

¹⁸ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.125.

¹⁹ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.122.

²⁰ Berger (1992) 60, 67-68. For examples, see his nos. 4, 10, 27, 50 and 59. See also Arist., *Pol.*, 1306.

²¹ Berger (1992) 105. For examples, see his nos. 12, 35, 41, 59 and 63. For examples of interstate arbitration stemming from *stasis*, see Ager (1996).

²² Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.121.

²³ The dating of the first *leges* in the series is secure owing to the presence of the names of the consuls at the time of their passing at Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.122; concerning the second set’s dating see Brennan (1993) 178-83 and Covino (2012). The last in the sequence clearly stem from P. Rupilius’ time as magistrate in the province, on which see Broughton (1986) 497-8.

²⁴ The case of Heraclea would have been within the living memory of the trial’s spectators and, as such, would have provided the most freshly damning evidence. Additionally, the cases of Agrigentum and Heraclea are too similar to warrant a chronological exposition when Cicero could rearrange them and report that at Heraclea “[Verres] behaved the same way.” Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.125. See also the commentary at Brennan (1993) 182.

At Heraclea he [Verres] behaved the same way [as at Agrigentum]. Settlers had been established there too, by P. Rupilius, who had instituted similar laws to regulate elections to the senate and the proportion between the old citizens and the new. There this man [Verres] not only took his money as he did everywhere else, but also ignored the distinction of the old from the new class, and the proportion between them.²⁵

Heraclea is unique among the three examples of *stasis*-preventing civic reorganizations in Sicily in that its citizens' seems to have come about as a preventative measure at the time of the induction of the *coloni* by the consul Rupilius while he was on the island in 132/1. The subsequent two cases which Cicero has discussed by this point in his speech both mention a direct petition by the Sicilians to the Roman Senate in order that either their immediate or their potential problem with *stasis* be eliminated. Such is not reported to be the case in the instance of Heraclea, though an appeal to the Senate for laws to govern how the new colonists should be included in the civic governmental structures ought not be ruled out of hand, as it is present in the other two examples and, indeed, is a readily identifiable signifier of *staseis* elsewhere. At this stage, though, having already told virtually the same story twice, Cicero may have deemed it unnecessary to repeat such details a third time for his audience. It is necessary to turn to the better fleshed-out examples in order to learn more of the Romans' means of counteracting *stasis* in the province.

The *leges* for Agrigentum

The second city which needs to be examined in whose civic affairs Verres chose to meddle is Agrigentum. His meddling there brought about a discussion by Cicero of a Roman-era instance of a *stasis* event in one of the vital income-producing cities of the *decumanae* class.²⁶ The city's constitution is one which is believed to have been altered among the earliest by the Romans on the island, probably by Scipio Aemilianus at some point between 131 and 129.²⁷

The city of Agrigentum, the Greek Akragas, is located on the southern coast of Sicily and was a renowned sea-port with extensive trading links to Africa. Additionally, it had a very long history of interaction with Rome, at whose hands the city had suffered a great deal. The city was a Punic stronghold during the First Punic War; at the fall of Agrigentum in 262/1, 25,000 slaves were taken from the city.²⁸ Despite the fact that the Carthaginians set fire to the city and tore down its walls but a few years later, it survived to become a part of the newly created Roman province.²⁹ The city fared no better during the Second Punic War, when it again sided with the Carthaginians against Rome; at its recapture, all of its citizens as well as their goods and property were sold and their leaders beheaded in 210 as an example for the rest of

²⁵ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.125.

²⁶ Concernings Verres and Agrigentum, see Havas (1969) 66.

²⁷ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.123-4 only notes that the laws were "made by Scipio"; all possible identity options are examined in Covino (2012) who concludes, as did Brennan (1993) 178-83, that the Scipio is most likely Scipio Aemilianus. *Contra* Münzer *RE* XIV.1216, 1223; Gabba (1959) 310, n. 9; Scramuzza (1959) 234; Rizzo (1968-1969) 375-376, n. 27; Goldsberry (1973) 241 and 274, n. 100; Broughton (1986) 334, n. 2; Shackleton-Bailey (1992) 65 who each held the belief that the city was resettled in the aftermath of the Second Punic War.

²⁸ Diod. Sic. 23.9.1; Polyb. 1.18.7; 1.19.14.

²⁹ Diod. Sic. 23.18.1-2.

the rebellious and wavering cities.³⁰ Following the city's destruction during the First Servile War, the Romans introduced settlers from other Sicilian towns which led to the *stasis* situation described by Cicero.

In Cicero's accounting of Verres' transgressing the regulations concerning the composition of the three cities' senates, I have briefly alluded to the fact that he does not do so in chronological order. He treats Agrigentum and its laws second, after having described those of Halaesa; however, despite being second in Cicero's speech, Agrigentum's *stasis* and reorganization are of the most importance more widely. Cicero states:

Agrigentum has ancient laws, made by Scipio, controlling elections to its senate; these contain the same provisions as those mentioned [for Halaesa] and the following one besides. There are two classes of Agrigentines; one comprises the old population, the other settlers from Sicilian towns whom, by order of our Senate, the praetor T. Manlius established in Agrigentum. In view of this, the laws of Scipio provided that the number of settlers in the Senate should not exceed that of the original inhabitants. Verres, always a leveler of privileges when bribed, and ready to remove distinctions and discriminations everywhere if paid to do it, not only blotted out all those of age, rank and profession, but also made confusion of that concerning the two classes of citizens, the new and the old. A senator belonging to the old class died; and since an equal number of senators of either class then remained, the election in his place of a member of the old class was legally necessary, in order that this class might be in the majority. [Verres appointed a new man.] The Agrigentines sent Verres a deputation, to tell him what the law was, and to point out that it had been observed without break...³¹

In this episode, Cicero describes the settlement of Manlius after which Scipio Aemilianus was called upon to draw up the rules for the composition of the senate so as to avoid, via a constitutional means, the possibility of a *stasis* event arising from a factional struggle for power between the old citizens and the new.³² It is clear that the governor at the time of the crisis was not involved in mediating the dispute. The citizens instead turned directly to a Roman who had come to their city's aid in the past for aid in this instance.

This fact is quite telling in terms of the governor's involvement with the cities. The previous example has the governor, Rupilius, acting so as to prevent *stasis*. Had this been the only example of a Roman intervening as a mediator with a view to *stasis* prevention known from the province, one might have concluded that he was acting in his official gubernatorial role or in his capacity as the man designated to bring peace to the province. In this way, his conduct would be akin to that of the *imperator* C. Valerius Flaccus in Spain where he arbitrated a dispute which was recorded on the *Tabula Contrebiensis* or that of L. Mummius, the victor over Corinth, intervening in a

³⁰ Liv. 26.40.13-14.

³¹ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.123-124. It is interesting to note that it is the death of a senator which provoked the crisis in the time of Verres; this would indicate that Scipio may have made the membership of the senate for life instead of annually as was more often the case. See Goldsberry (1973) 606.

³² Concerning the very typical *stasis*-generating divisions caused by old *versus* new citizens in a *polis*, see Berger (1992) 65.

dispute between Sparta and Messene in Greece.³³ However, as the following example of Halaesa will show, the example of Rupilius' actions cannot be taken as being indicative of how the governors interacted with the cities. It must be viewed as a special case, perhaps stemming from Rupilius' service in Sicily in the slave war which had just ended.³⁴

The Sicilian cities were largely self-governing and did not require a heavy Roman hand to guide them. They were highly Hellenized entities and, as such, had a long history of going to outside powers to mediate their internal disputes. Thus a more trenchant comparison which may be drawn from these first two examples is to the many instances in the Greek world in which Rome was called upon to arbitrate disputes.³⁵ The final city which received regulations from the Romans, Halaesa, then, remains to be considered, and it will be shown to be of special relevance, given its different status to those of the previous two examples.

The *leges* for Halaesa

Halaesa, unlike the other two cities which have just been examined, was not among the cities of the *decumanae*, as it was ranked among the *liberae ac immunes*. As such, it is curious to think that the Romans would care to intervene at all, as they would reap no obvious benefit from preventing *stasis* within the city. The fact that Halaesa, though, situated on the northern coast of Sicily between Panormus and Messana, had grown in size and wealth so as to become one of Sicily's premier cities by the time of Verres' governorship cannot be ignored. This growth, of course, was not due purely to its self-governance and freedom from tax; it no doubt was more related to the city's maritime trading activities as well as its location on the main north coastal route and as a terminus of the road from inland Henna.³⁶ Regardless, as a result of their wealth, it cannot be doubted that the citizens of Halaesa would have had their fair share of contacts in Rome to ply when their city had troubles:

The people of Halaesa were made independent in recognition of the many valuable services and benefits rendered to Rome by themselves and their ancestors; but not long ago, in the consulship of L. Licinius and Q. Mucius, owing to an internal dispute regarding the way of filling vacancies in their senate, they asked the Roman Senate to legislate for them. The Senate honored them by passing a decree appointing the praetor C. Claudius Pulcher (son of Ap. Claudius) to draw up for them regulations for filling the aforesaid vacancies. Claudius, having secured the help of all the contemporary members of the Marcellus family, in accordance with their advice provided Halaesa with regulations, laying down a number of points, such as the age of candidates (those under thirty were excluded), the professions disqualifying

³³ On the Spanish example, see Birks, Rodger, and Richardson (1984) 48 and Richardson (1983) 40; on the Greek, cautiously see Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.3. *IOLympia* 52.52-55 and 63-66 may cast doubt on Tacitus' account of Mummius' authority as deriving from his status as *imperator*, given that it is a contemporary inscription which recorded the event in question. Therein, Mummius is called *hupatos* and *anthupatos*, which does not reference his status as *imperator*. On the inscription, see Ager (1996) nos. 150 and 159.

³⁴ On the slave war, see Bradley (1987) 145-6 and Brennan (1993).

³⁵ See Ager (1996) nos. 158, 159, 163 and 164 for examples from 146 to 90 of third-party arbiters assigned by Rome to moderate the disputes of the Greek world.

³⁶ On the inland road from Henna, see Wilson (1990) 13. On the acquisition of sea-based wealth during this period at another city on the northern coast, Tyndaris, see *IG XIV.375*.

membership, the property qualification and all such other points. All these regulations, supported by our magistrates and thoroughly approved by the inhabitants, were faithfully observed until Verres became praetor.³⁷

The internal dispute mentioned by Cicero can only be one thing – *stasis*. By 95, it is clear that the city's governmental arrangement had brought about a scenario whereby factions had begun to form. Outside help was deemed a necessity in order to stave off a breakdown of the social order within the *polis*. As such, the citizens appealed to Rome for assistance, which they received in the form of the praetor C. Claudius.

C. Claudius is a curious individual to have been selected for this task. Given their hereditary patronage over the island, the logical assumption would be that one of the Marcelli ought to have been asked directly; however, it may have been the case that there was no suitable Marcellus at this stage within Rome at the time of Halaesa's need.³⁸ Claudius was the praetor in charge of the *repetundae* court for that year. From Cicero's text, it would seem as though he exceeded his remit in this instance, for he did not only provide assistance in the matter of the vacancies, but instead went on to legislate a number of other things into Halaesa's laws, such as the age restrictions and property qualifications.³⁹ Nevertheless, his changes were acceptable to the people of the city, and just as with Heraclea and Agrigentum, the citizens of Halaesa received their new laws, as Cicero stated, as a gift of the Senate and People of Rome.

The Problem of *stasis* and the Role of the Governor

The common links between the three instances of *stasis* prevention and the intervening Romans must now be considered. It has been shown that it was not one of Rome's regularly dispatched magistrates who gave the people of Agrigentum their rules for determining the composition of their Senate so as to avoid factional-struggle; it was a man predisposed to be friendly to a city which he had helped before in the past, Scipio Aemilianus. In the case of Halaesa, too, the citizens turned to a member of the family which held a close bond to the province in the form of C. Claudius. Even Rupilius may be viewed as a Roman who fits into this pattern of men who had served Sicily (or whose families had done so), having recently brought an end to the slave insurrection in the province. With this as the emergent pattern, it is quite clear that the Roman governors' policy with regards to the cities was largely one which took a decidedly hands-off approach.

Rome did not need her magistrates in the province to set about interfering with the ways of the cities. Their freedom and immunity from interference was guaranteed by their status as set by Rome. In reviewing these three examples, it has become apparent that if a city's constitution needed amending in order to combat the onset of *stasis*, it was not carried out by the magistrate on the spot. The cities, when they needed assistance, reached out to Rome on their own accord and in their own way.

The Romans, by allowing the cities to specifically invite their patrons or others familiar to them from amongst the Roman citizenry to intervene in their affairs so as to prevent *stasis*, can thus be seen to be participating in a wider pattern of interstate involvement across the Hellenized world.⁴⁰ This pattern is demonstrated by the increasing the number of times in which Rome was called to arbitrate in other

³⁷ Cic. *Verr.* II.ii.122.

³⁸ For the basis of the Claudii's patronage in Sicily, see Eilers (2002) 51-6.

³⁹ On age and property restrictions in *poleis*, see Arist. *Pol.* 1035b.

⁴⁰ See again Ager (1996) and nos. 158, 159, 163 and 164 which apply to the Romans' involvement.

disputes or called upon for protection instead of Hellenistic kings or other cities such as Carthage.⁴¹ Indeed, Hellenistic kings themselves even sought Rome's assistance at times.⁴²

The Romans were aware that the cities of Sicily ought not be allowed to fall into *stasis*. To allow them to do so would be to allow them to neglect their treaty or the otherwise imposed duties such as the provision of troops and ships. It would also interfere with their collection and shipment of the grain-tithe due to them, or just the grain's shipment in the case of Halaesa, as local governmental functions such as the inspection, collection and possibly storage of grain were organized on the civic level.⁴³ That Rome did not choose to exercise her power over the cities of Sicily by having her governors directly intervene at the first sign of *stasis* is instructive. While recognizing that cities in *stasis* are of no use to the wider Roman community, nevertheless Rome chose not to be heavy-handed about it, assisting the civic governments as and when called upon to do so by the Sicilians themselves, following on in the long-established Sicilian tradition, inherited from the Hellenistic world, of mediation. Whereas before, the cities of Sicily looked to their colonial 'mother-city' for their mediation needs,⁴⁴ or even to Carthage due to her influence over the island, in the Roman era the Sicilian cities henceforth were driven by necessity to look to Rome, but not to her immediate representative, in their effort to combat *to stasiazein*.

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⁴¹ The most notable example of the latter would be, of course, be Saguntum, prior to the Second Punic War. They made their appeal by claiming kinship with the Ardeans, a people who lived to the south-west of Rome. On this, see App. *Iber.* 7; Liv. 21.7.2; Plin. *HN* 16.216. Sicilian appeals of this nature had also been made, such as that by the Mamertines in 264, by Segesta in 263, and by Centuripa in c. 241. On the Mamertines, see Polyb. 1.10.2; on the Segestans, see Cic. *Verr.* II.iv.72; II.v.83; Diod. Sic. 23.5; Zonar. 8.9; on the Centuripans, see *SEG* 42.837.

⁴² See Str. 5.3.5 where Demetrios Poliorketes sought Rome's assistance in curbing Etruscan piracy by appealing to their common Greek ancestry.

⁴³ Cic. *Verr.* II.iii.73; II.iii.171-172.

⁴⁴ See Shepherd (1995) on mother-city relationships with the Sicilian colonies.

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