70d. This may be regrettable, but at least we still have Theophrastus' definition of the maxim.[11]

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11. In conclusion, I want to thank the National Endowment for the Humanities for supporting the research done in preparing this paper. NEH funding has been essential to all the work of Project Theophrastus and is greatly appreciated.

TO BE TAKEN WITH A PINCH OF SALT: THE DESTRUCTION OF CARTHAGE

Those who have paid more than cursory attention to the momentous events of 146 B.C. may have noticed, at least in some accounts, a strange procedure of the Romans:

> Le traitement infligé à Carthage est demeuré dans la mémoire des hommes comme le plus terrible exemple de l'anéantissement total d'un peuple: la ville incendiée, les ruines détruites jusque dans leurs fondations, le sol semé de sel, les survivants vendus en esclavage, les dieux mêmes emmenés à Rome.

Thus G. Picard, one of the great specialists on Carthage.[1]

It seems that this sowing of the ruins of Carthage with salt, apparently as a symbol of its total destruction and perhaps as a means of ensuring the soil's infertility, is a tradition in Roman history well known to most students. When, however, one comes to seek the source, it seems elusive. One would turn first to the most important, Polybius. This eyewitness account is unfortunately known only in fragmentary condition (38. 19–22). He tells the story of Hasdrubal and his valiant wife, then Scipio reflects on the reverses of Fortune. That is all. The epitomes of Livy's history (Book 51) offer no more. The appropriate books of Diodorus are lost—regrettably, since he had a great interest in Carthage. He says simply that the city was razed to the ground (32. 4. 5, 32. 14. 1) or that the Carthaginians were utterly obliterated (32. 26. 2), and the effects of Rome's action are discussed (34/35. 33). For the first surviving account we must wait for Appian (*Pun.* 128–35): after the week's street-fighting to capture Byrsa and the surrender of Hasdrubal, the city was given over to the troops to plunder. Some time later the commission of ten senators arrived. They decreed that no one was to live there. Appian is careful, however, to specify that the ground was not cursed.

What of later historians and epitomizers? Scipio destroyed Carthage utterly (Vell. Pat. 1. 12). Florus emphasizes only the seventeen days which the fire raged after it had been lit by the Carthaginians themselves (1. 31). Scipio *eam cepit ac diruit* (Eutrop. 4. 12). He destroyed Carthage within six months (*De vir. ill.* 58). Orosius tells also of the fire that burned for seventeen days, that every stone was

1. *Le monde de Carthage* (Paris, 1956), p. 76.

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reduced to dust, and that all the prisoners were sold as slaves (4. 23. 5–7). Justin's narrative does not proceed, for Carthage, beyond the Hannibalic war. Book 21 of Dio does not survive, but his epitomator, Zonaras, devoted a lengthy account to the Third Punic War (9. 26–30). He imagines Cato still alive in 146, counseling the destruction of the city, and says it was entirely laid waste and that it was voted an accursed thing to settle there again (thus *perhaps* contradicting Appian).

What other sources might be thought to have a special interest in Carthage? Cicero mentions its destruction a dozen times in his letters and speeches and half a dozen times in his philosophical works, but few talk of more than Aemilianus' command. Attacking the land commission of 63 B.C., Cicero declares (*Leg. agr.* 1. 5) that included in the lands at its disposal will be Carthage, which Scipio "consecrated" (*consecravit*), stripped of all buildings and walls. The purpose of this consecration Cicero is not sure about, so he claims: either to record the Carthaginian disaster, or the Roman victory, or for some religious reason (*oblata aliqua religione*). A different story, not atypical of Cicero, is offered in the same speech (2. 51). And the *De republica* is a dialogue which features Aemilianus. He talks about the reasons for the destruction of Carthage (2. 7), and, more interestingly, in his dream, he has the city's fate at his hands foretold (6. 11). In neither case are any details given.

It is well known that Sallust dated Rome's corruption from the fall of Carthage. He says simply, "Carthago aemula imperi Romani ab stirpe interiit" (*Cat.* 10. 1). The Augustan geographer, Strabo, says Carthage was destroyed utterly (17. 3. 15). Lucan, interestingly, refers during the civil war to the *semirutas magnae Carthaginis arces* (4. 585). At the end of his *Punica* on the Hannibalic war, Silius Italicus prophesies that the days of Carthage are numbered and that another Scipio will raze to the ground the towers present for the moment (17. 373–75). Plutarch wrote the biographies of the archenemy of Carthage, Cato, of the man who attempted to refound the city, C. Gracchus, and of the great Marius who fled to Carthage in 88 (*Mar.* 40). In none of these does the salt story appear, although it would have been particularly appropriate in that of Gracchus, amid all the evil omens (*C. Gracch.* 10–11). Tertullian of Carthage mentions Scipio and the destruction of Carthage some half a dozen times in his works, and has most important information on the history of the city from the Gracchi to Augustus (*De pallio* 1), but nothing about salt in 146. Augustine, born near Carthage and very conversant with the Republican historical tradition, writing indeed on the reverses of great cities, in a chapter on the decline of Rome says only that Carthage was utterly destroyed (*De civ. D.* 3. 21).

Perhaps some miscellaneous writer includes the story of the salt. Valerius Maximus tells many stories of Aemilianus and of Carthage, but nothing to suggest our story. In his survey of provinces, Pliny the Elder barely mentions Carthage (*HN* 5. 24), but recalls the fate of the city's libraries (18. 22), the silver Scipio captured (33. 141), and Mancinus' plan of the city in the forum (35. 23). There is even a section of his *Natural History* devoted to salt (31. 73–105), its various places of origin and methods of production, and its uses: medicinal, as a seasoning, and in sacrifices, but not in the destruction of enemy cities. Pliny does mention, interestingly, production of salt in Africa, near Utica, where the

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heaps are like hills (31. 81)—so there would have been supplies at hand had Scipio needed them.

There is one very late miscellaneous writer who does, in fact, tell us more about the destruction of Carthage and the rituals than any other writer, Macrobius. He describes the procedure of *evocatio* for calling out the patron deity of a city about to be sacked, and quotes the formula with Carthage's name. Second, he gives the ritual for the devotion of the city to destruction, again including Carthage as the example. The formula asks the infernal gods to keep the Roman army safe and accept the death of the enemy as a substitute (*Sat.* 3. 9. 7–8). Needless to say, once again, there is nothing about sowing salt in the furrows of the ruined city.

Since the ancient sources for the salt story are lacking, its origin must be sought in modern works. The earliest at our disposal are noted not so much for their historical worth as for their moralizing, just where we might expect such a picturesque story to appear. The earliest history of the Roman Republic was by L. Eachard (1694). The commissioners ordered that "none of Carthage should be left, and that it should not be rebuilt, they denounced heavy curses on any that should offer to do it."[2] Similarly, C. Rollin in his *Histoire romaine* (1738–48) mentions only the demolition of Carthage and the prohibition on living there again, but suggests that visitors were allowed to see the ruins![3] This accords with the moralizing nature of his history: the ancient Romans should view the fate of Rome's enemies. In the most brilliant chapter of Montesquieu's *Considerations* (1734), on the methods Rome used to subjugate the world, there is only passing reference to the destruction of Carthage, and in a discussion of internal dissensions, Carthage is said to have fallen because she could not endure Hannibal's reforms.[4]

The great nineteenth-century historians painted the scene more vividly. Mommsen is typical:

> The senate ordered the general to level the city of Carthage and the suburbs of Megalia with the ground, and to do the same with all the townships which had held by Carthage to the last; and thereafter to pass the plough over the site of Carthage so as to put an end in legal form to the existence of the city and curse the soil and site for ever, that neither house nor cornfield might ever reappear on the spot.[5]

The nineteenth century also saw the beginning of the modern exploration and excavation of Carthage. One of the earliest of these excavators was N. Davis, who records that on the arrival of the senatorial commission

> orders were given, in the name of the senate, that the city should never be inhabited again, and dreadful imprecations were denounced against those who, contrary to this prohibition, should attempt to rebuild any part of it.[6]

2. *Roman History*[7] (London, 1713), p. 233.
3. *Histoire romaine*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1836), p. 439.
4. *Considerations*, chaps. 6 and 8.
5. *History of Rome*[8], vol. 3 (London, 1895), pp. 257–58. So Niebuhr, *Lectures on the History of Rome*[3] (London, 1870), p. 479; T. Arnold, *History of the Later Roman Commonwealth*, vol. 1 (London, 1845), p. 32; H. Liddell, *History of Rome*, vol. 2 (London, 1855), p. 130; V. Duruy, *History of Rome*, vol. 2 (London, 1884), p. 144.
6. *Carthage and Her Remains* (London, 1861), p. 168.

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Another characteristic nineteenth-century archaeological writer was G. Boissier. In an expansive and evocative mood he wrote:

> It was not sufficient to destroy Carthage; it was necessary to prevent it from springing up again. Scipio, having razed it to the ground, had priests pronounce solemn imprecations against anyone who should attempt to rebuild it. But curses did not suffice. In order to blot out forever what remained of the Carthaginians in Africa, more efficacious measures were resorted to: Rome was obliged to occupy the country it had just conquered.[7]

Turning now to our own century, for an authoritative account one would resort instantly to S. Gsell:

> Arrivée en Afrique, elle [the commission] invita Scipio à détruire entièrement ce qui restait encore de Carthage. Sur son avis, Publius prononça des imprécations qui consacraient le sol de la ville et en interdisant l'usage aux hommes, l'accès n'en fut pas défendu, mais personne ne devait désormais y établir sa démeure.[8]

It may further be noted that the story about the site of Carthage being ploughed over in the first place, which begins with Niebuhr, began to be doubted—as well it might, since no source mentions it:

> The common belief that the city was levelled to the ground and a plough run over it is based on the exaggerated account of the late writer Orosius (fifth century A.D.). Actually the ruins remained for centuries afterward. In fact, Plutarch tells us that Marius once sat among them. And they remained on an immense scale. For centuries, the old walls, temples and other buildings were a quarry for ready-dressed stone.[9]

It is typical of the confusions which beset this topic that authors who have detected an invention (the plough) and spoken such sense about the ruins should

7. *Roman Africa* (London, 1899), p. 92. For other nineteenth-century accounts to the same effect, see V. Guerin, *Voyage archéologique dans la régence de Tunis*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1862), pp. 55–56; C. Tissot, *Géographie comparée de la province romaine de l'Afrique*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1884), pp. 632–33; A. Church and A. Gilman, *Carthage* (London, 1886), p. 301; R. Bosworth Smith, *Carthage and the Carthaginians* (London, 1894), p. 359.

8. *Histoire ancienne de l'Afrique du Nord*, vol. 3 (Paris, 1920), p. 403. Other histories of this century which know nothing of salt are: G. Ferrero, *Greatness and Decline of Rome*, vol. 1 (London, 1907), p. 44; W. Heitland, *Roman Republic*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, 1909), p. 171; M. Rostovtzeff, *Rome* (London, 1927), p. 76; E. Pais, *Histoire romaine* (Paris, 1940), p. 645; M. Cary, *History of Rome*[2] (London, 1954), p. 192; L. Pareti, *Storia di Roma*, vol. 3 (Turin, 1953), p. 216; G. de Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, vol. 4.3 (Florence, 1964), p. 73; A. Boak and W. Sinnigen, *History of Rome*[5] (New York, 1965), p. 138; A. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 75–76; J. Brisson, *Carthage ou Rome?* (Paris, 1973), p. 373; A. Heuss, *Römische Geschichte*[4] (Braunschweig, 1976), p. 122.

Of books on Carthage, see A. Audollent, *Carthage romaine* (Paris, 1901), pp. 29–30; D. Sladen, *Carthage and Tunis*, vol. 1 (London, 1906), pp. 161–62; O. Meltzer and U. Kahrstedt, *Geschichte der Karthager*, vol. 3 (Berlin, 1913), p. 661; Lenchau, s.v. "Karthago," *RE* 10 (1919): 2235; V. Ehrenberg, *Karthago* (Leipzig, 1928), p. 37; P. Romanelli, *Storia delle provincie romane dell'Africa* (Rome, 1959), p. 35.

9. F. Heichelheim and C. Yeo, *History of the Roman People* (New York, 1962), p. 157. Similarly, D. Harden, *The Phoenicians* (London, 1962), p. 74, first says the city was pillaged and burned to the ground and the site ploughed over. He then goes on to admit that burning is confirmed by the ruins, "but ploughing up is another matter." The only archaeologist I know to discuss the question—perhaps, indeed, the originator of the caution—is F. Kelsey, *Excavations at Carthage* (New York, 1925), pp. 16–17. He made two points: that Carthage was built to some extent of stone, and that from his observations of cities which had been bombed in the First World War, no such complete destruction could have been carried out at Carthage.

A reader has kindly offered another suggestion. In the founding of ancient cities, the most important rite was the drawing of the *sulcus primigenius*. Perhaps the Romans simply ploughed up and destroyed the boundary furrow. See C. Thulin, *Die etruskische Disciplin*, vol. 3 (Göteborg, 1909), pp. 3 ff.

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make such a blunder as to ascribe the story of the plough to Orosius, who says nothing at all about it. One is tempted to connect the intrusion of the plough with Niebuhr's notorious interest in matters agricultural.

Who, then, has told the story of the salt? The earliest version I have found is highly significant: the *Cambridge Ancient History*. In 1930, B. Hallward wrote:

> Buildings and walls were razed to the ground; the plough passed over the site, and salt was sown in the furrows made.[10]

From here the story can be traced step by step. Following Hallward come H. Scullard, G. Walter, G. Picard, B. Warmington, S. Raven, G. Herm, S. Tlatli.[11] As the story is handed down, details are added or changed: the spreading of salt was meant to consecrate the site eternally as cursed (Walter) or "to signify that it was to remain uninhabited and barren forever" (Warmington), or "to make the soil unfruitful" (Herm). The spreading or "sowing" of salt (Scullard, Picard, Warmington) even becomes finally a more genteel "sprinkling" (Raven). The modern origin of the story seems, then, to have been the influential *Cambridge Ancient History,*[12] a chapter written by a young historian who wrote hardly anything else. So few words have rarely had such an influence!

This still does not reveal the ultimate source of the story. That is another paradox. It must be Judges 9:45, a famous biblical crux. At the capture of Shechem by Abimelech, "he killed the people in it, pulled the wall down and sowed the site with salt" (New English Bible). Since this is the only mention of salt for such a purpose in the Bible, the passage has attracted much attention. Various commentaries on the book see the sowing of salt as a covenantal curse, a means of ensuring desolation, a ritual to avert the vengeance of the shades of the slaughtered, a purification of the site preparatory to *rebuilding,* or a preparation for final destruction under the *herem* ritual.[13]

As a firm starting point, we may note that "salt ground" is in Hebrew the equivalent of desert.[14] On the other hand, Shechem was later rebuilt, by the late tenth century (1 Kings 12:1, 25). The best discussion of the passage is by S. Gevirtz, who collects parallel cases where cities were destroyed and cursed so that future habitation was not supposed to occur, and where rituals were carried out.[15] The range of instances is striking, but most of them are Assyrian.

10. *CAH* 8:484. Of Hallward, I can find only that, after gaining a double first in the Tripos 1921–22, he was a student at the British School in Athens, then became a Fellow at Peterhouse and University Lecturer in Classics, 1926–39. Apart from the chapters in the *CAH* (vol. 8, chaps. 3, 4, and 15 on the Hannibalic and Third Punic wars), for the 1920s to 1940 he is cited in *L'année philologique* only for "Cicero Historicus," *Cambr. Hist. Journ.* 3 (1931): 221–37.

11. Scullard, *History of the Roman World* (London, 1935), p. 334; Walter, *La destruction de Carthage* (Paris, 1947), pp. 508–9; Picard is quoted at the beginning of this paper; Warmington, *Carthage* (London, 1960), p. 205; Raven, *Rome in Africa* (London, 1968), p. 33; Herm, *The Phoenicians* (New York, 1975), p. 263; and Tlatli, *La Carthage punique* (Paris, 1978), p. 290.

12. The late Professor Scullard admitted to me in a letter that the *CAH* was his source.

13. See G. Moore, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges* (Edinburgh, 1895), p. 263; see also the commentary on Judges by A. Cohen in *The Interpreter's Bible,* vol. 2 (New York, 1953), p. 758; R. Bolling, *Judges* (New York, 1975), p. 180 (Anchor Bible); J. Martin, *The Book of Judges* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 126.

14. See Deut. 29:23, Job 39:6, Psalms 107:34, Jer. 17:6.

15. "Jericho and Shechem," *VT* 13 (1963): 52–62.

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A Hittite text of king Anitta of Kussara tells of the destruction of Hattusa, the Hittite capital, in about 2000 B.C. The site was sown with cress.[16] The Assyrian king Adadnirari I (1307–1275) destroyed and burned the city of Taidu and strewed *kudimmus* over it (A. K. Grayson, *Assyrian Royal Inscriptions* [*ARI*], 1. 392). The *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (8:493) explains this word as "a kind of salt or lye obtained from a plant," and gives three uses: as a condiment (at royal banquets), as a medicine (in salves), and in symbolic acts, as here. The city of Arinna, destroyed by Shalmaneser I (1265–1235), was strewn with *kudimmus* (*ARI* 1. 528). Tiglath-Pileser I (1115–1076) captured and burned the city of Hunusa, which was meant never to be inhabited again. The site was strewn with *sipu* (ARI 2. 238). This word is a *hapax legomenon,* which the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* defines as a mineral (16:205): "Instead of *sahlu* seeds and *kudimmu,* alone or with salt, the symbolic act signifying the annihilation of the destroyed settlement is here described as performed by scattering over the site a mineral called *sipu.*" Finally, the ravaging Ashurbanipal (668–626) on his eighth campaign, against Elam, after laying waste the land, scattered it with salt and *sahlu* (*LAR* 2. 811).[17] This is taken by most commentators again to be some kind of plant.

Here we have a clutch of Jewish, Hittite, and Assyrian texts ranging over nearly one and a half millennia which describe the scattering of a variety of minerals and plants over the site of a destroyed city or land, in one case salt alone (Shechem), in another salt and some form of plant (Elam). The common link joining all these instances is the desire to render the site uninhabitable. The best-known case, of course, is that of Shechem, since it occurs in the Old Testament.

Here, then, must be the origin of the idea that Carthage also was sown with salt.[18] The sources, on the other hand, tell us certainly that Carthage was utterly destroyed and that no one was to live there. About religious sanctions, Appian stresses that the site was not cursed; Cicero in more special pleading mentions "consecration," without being able to explain it. It is the devotion to doom which Macrobius describes. Of salt and the plough there is nothing. It is also to be stressed, as few have seen, that utter destruction does not mean that such a mighty city disappeared without trace: there must have been extensive ruins, even if one does not take too seriously the apophthegma of Marius (Plut. *Mar.* 40).

It is significant that a scholar as careful as Gevirtz noted the story of Carthage and salt but declared that he could not find the source.[19] The "sowing of salt" at Carthage is a contamination from the widely known rituals of city destruction in

16. See *Die Boghazkoi-Texte in Umschrift* (Leipzig, 1922–), 1:7, and *Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazkoi* (Berlin, 1921–44), 36:98, most conveniently translated in Gevirtz, "Jericho," p. 53.

17. Since Grayson's splendid modern translations of the royal inscriptions have not yet reached the Sargonid dynasty, we still rely on D. D. Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia,* 2 vols. (Chicago, 1926–27) (=*LAR*).

18. "St. Jerome is sometimes quoted in this context as showing that salt was used in Roman destruction rites (in Matt. 5.13 = *PL* 26.35) . . . but he is referring back to the destruction of Shechem, not to any known Roman ritual" (J. Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town* [Princeton, 1976], p. 70, n. 141). I have not found in any of the references above any mention of Jerome.

19. "Jericho," p. 60.

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the ancient Near East. Now, more than fifty years after its first appearance in Roman histories, it is time to excise it—along with the ploughing up of the whole site—from the tradition.[20]

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20. There is a bizarre recent note on the *consecratio* of Carthage. In 1966 there was published what purports to be an old inscription concerning this act, restored *ad formam tituli et litterarum* by a procurator Augusti, Classicius: see *CRAI* (1966): 61–76. As soon as the inscription was presented to the Academy, it was pronounced a forgery by L. Robert, J. Carcopino, and others, because of aberrant grammar, letter-forms, forms of proper names, and, not least, the suggestive name of the restorer: Classicius!

ACHAEMENIDES' UNFINISHED ACCOUNT: VERGIL *AENEID* 3. 588–691

Vergil's Achaemenides episode (*Aen.* 3. 588–691) is based on *Odyssey* 9. 177–566, with the Ben Gunn elements (*Aen.* 3. 590–95) perhaps suggested by Apollonius' description of the prophet Phineus (*Argon.* 2. 197–201) in a passage drawn on earlier by the poet, first for the encounter with the Harpies (3. 225–69; cf. *Argon.* 2. 263–83) and subsequently for its prophetic content (*Argon.* 2. 318–425; cf. Helenus' prophecy at *Aen.* 3. 374–462).[1] Vergil's lines are designed as a kind of replay of the Sinon episode (2. 57–198), except that now the tone is reversed: Achaemenides' despair is genuine, and this Greek helps the Trojans to escape from danger instead of treacherously exposing them to it. Doubtless Vergil is already moving away from the anti-Greek atmosphere of *Aeneid* 2, and toward the reconciliation that will gather pace later in the epic; and the formal balance serves to underline this aspect of the episode's function. It is in a similar spirit that Achaemenides is allowed to express pity (613) and admiration (628–29) for Ulysses, before an audience who but lately cursed the island of Ithaca for nurturing such a man (273).[2]

But there is a feature of Vergil's treatment that may be worth a closer look. There can be no doubt that what the poet gives us in these lines is essentially the Homeric version of the episode, suitably modified. It is appropriate, for example, that in this now peripheral account Homer's two days should be conflated into one, with just two Greeks devoured by the giant instead of the original six. Similarly the Noman trick, so crucial in the mouth of the boasting Odysseus, could now disappear, since it had no real relevance to Achaemenides' plight. Otherwise Vergil has followed Homer quite closely, from the initial description of Polyphemus (619–20; cf. *Od.* 9. 190–93) to the eventual blinding of his single

1. Since Vergil was clearly bent on exploiting the Phineus episode to the full in *Aeneid* 3 and Achaemenides is his own original creation, it may well be that Apollonius' striking description of the emaciated Greek triggered off the whole idea of the later episode. Certainly it emerges as an ideal way of putting those features to use in the new epic context.

2. For a much fuller treatment of the episode, and a particularly fruitful discussion of Achaemenides' name and its possible implications, see A. G. McKay, "The Achaemenides Episode," *Vergilius* 12 (1966): 31–38. Cf. also E. Römisch, "Die Achaemenides-Episode in Vergils *Aeneis*," in *Studien zum antiken Epos*, ed. H. Görgemanns and E. A. Schmidt (Meisenheim-am-Glan, 1976), pp. 208–27.

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