

to establish good relations with the city on the Tiber that controlled a long stretch of the central Italian coastline, and it would obviously have made sense for them to keep on good terms with the new republican regime that seized power in Rome after the expulsion of Tarquin, when all previous agreements would have been automatically terminated. For their part the new Republic's leaders might have hoped to gain recognition for themselves by a formal agreement with Carthage, and at the same time would have wanted to assert their claim to the position of hegemony in Latium which the kings had formerly possessed. The first year of the Republic is therefore a plausible context for a treaty between Rome and Carthage.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

1 THE EXPULSION OF THE KINGS

The end of the Roman monarchy is presented in our sources as an episode in the dramatic saga of the family of the Tarquins. It may be useful to summarise the main outlines of this famous story, which, though immortalised in Livy's prose narrative and the verses of Shakespeare and Lord Macaulay, may not be as familiar to modern readers as it once was.¹

According to the story Tarquinius Superbus was overthrown in 509 BC by a group of aristocrats who set up a republican government under two elected annual magistrates, the consuls. The incident that prompted the coup was the rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius, the tyrant's second son. The virtuous Lucretia killed herself, and the outrage provoked by this tragedy led to an uprising against the ruling family. Curiously enough the leaders of the revolt were themselves close relatives of the tyrant (cf. above, p. 123). They included L. Junius Brutus, the king's nephew, and L. Tarquinius Collatinus, his cousin once removed and husband of the unfortunate Lucretia. Her father, Sp. Lucretius, was also in the plot, along with an influential friend, P. Valerius Publicola.

The king, who was conducting a war against Ardea, hastened back to Rome on hearing news of the coup, but found the gates barred against him; meanwhile the leaders of the revolt went to Ardea and won over the army, which expelled the king's sons.² Brutus and Tarquinius Collatinus became the first consuls, and Brutus made the people swear never again to tolerate a king and to punish with death anyone who tried to restore the monarchy. He then proposed that all members of the Tarquin clan should be banished. He himself escaped the effects of this measure because he was related to Tarquin through his mother; but his colleague, Tarquinius Collatinus, was a member of the *gens* and consequently had to resign his office and leave the city. His place as consul was taken by Valerius Publicola.

The domestic drama continued when Brutus' two sons became involved in a conspiracy to restore the Tarquins, along with the Vitellii, the brothers of Brutus' wife, and the Aquilii, the nephews of the exiled Collatinus. The plot

