

ancestors had been a praetor. While quaestor, Saturninus had been in charge of securing a supply of grain (the *cura annonae*), in accordance with the laws passed by the Gracchi. Owing to a shortage in the grain supply, however, he was removed and replaced by a patrician who relieved the shortage and received the credit and popularity. Angry at this, Saturninus then turned violently against the oligarchy of the Senate.

Saturninus was elected tribune for 103 and tried to pass a law offering land in Africa to Marius' veterans upon their discharge from the army. Another tribune tried to veto the bill; Marius' soldiers, throwing rocks at him, ran him out of the assembly, and the proposed bill became law. Saturninus may have passed a grain bill as well; whether or not he did so, just the attempt would have made him more popular and powerful.

Saturninus was elected tribune again for 100. He proposed another land bill, this one to give allotments of land in Gaul to the veterans of the German wars and to found colonies in Sicily and Greece. The bill was unpopular with the common people of Rome; they saw it as too narrow and too favorable to non-Roman Italians, who were to receive land in the colonies. The Senate objected to the bill because one of its clauses required that senators swear an oath to abide by the law; senators who refused to swear would incur a fine and exile. When the bill was being voted upon, the tribunes who tried to veto it were run off by the soldiers; no one else dared oppose the bill at risk to his life. Therefore, the bill passed, and Marius' soldiers in the German wars received land in Gaul.

Many people—including Marius, who had supported him—were now angry at Saturninus for using violence to get the bill approved. Popular opinion against Saturninus peaked when his friend Glaucia, who was running for the consulate, had his main rival assassinated. The Senate passed the *consultum ultimum* and entrusted Marius with preserving the safety of the state. In the ensuing violence Saturninus, Glaucia, and their supporters were killed.

CHAPTER 18

The Italian Wars and the Career of Sulla

By the start of the first century B.C. almost two hundred years had elapsed since Rome had gained control of peninsular Italy. During those years Roman power had spread over many of the Mediterranean lands, a phenomenal success that the Romans could not have achieved without the help of the Latins and the Italian allies.

During that time, however, little change was made to reflect the important role that the Latins and Italian allies had played. The Latins still could not vote in Rome, and the Italian allies had no rights at all against the power of Roman magistrates. Consequently the *Latinum nomen* became less a sign of honor, and more a stigma of second-class status. The conduct of the Roman magistrates was also becoming more obnoxious, and this emphasized to Latins and Italians their inferior position with regard to Romans. In 123 Gaius Gracchus had spoken about this glaring example of the magistrates' abuse of power:

Recently the consul came to Teanum Sidicinum. His wife said that she wanted to bathe in the men's baths. The job of driving out those who were using the baths was given to M. Marius, the quaestor of Sidicinum. The consul's wife announced to him that the baths had not been given up to her quickly enough and that they were not clean enough. Consequently a stake was put in the forum and M. Marius, the most eminent man in the city, was led to it. His clothes were ripped off, and he was flogged. When the people of Cales heard about this, they passed the decree that no one should use the baths when a Roman magistrate was nearby. At Ferentinum, for the same reason, our praetor ordered the

quaestors to be brought forward: one threw himself from the city wall [committing suicide], and the other was seized and flogged. (Aulus Gellius X.3)

In 91 a new tribune, Drusus, wanted to propose a law giving Roman citizenship to the Latins and Italians. He encountered opposition from the Senate, whose members feared encroachments upon their power; from the Roman people, who did not want to share with the allies the benefits of Roman citizenship (free grain, land in the colonies, freedom from direct taxes, higher pay in the army, and shorter term of military service); and even from some of the Italians themselves, who feared that his plans for creating colonies might take their land. Drusus' legislation for colonies, which had already been approved, was declared invalid, and he was murdered before he could bring to a vote his legislation to grant citizenship to the Italians. The knights then coerced the tribunes into passing a law prosecuting all those who tried to help the Italians get the vote, and many eminent Romans were driven into exile.

The Italians could find no more patience. The first rebellion of the Italians against Rome had occurred years earlier at Fregellae, a city long faithful and steadfast to Rome, but pushed too far; it revolted in 125 B.C. and was quickly subdued. Asculum was the next to rebel; in 91 its citizens killed a Roman praetor (who had been sent there precisely to prevent a rebellion) and all Romans residing there. Both sides prepared for war.

The rebel Italian confederacy was concentrated in the south of Italy, among Italy's most formidable fighting men, the Samnites, Marsi (hence another name for the war, the Marsic War; it is also called the Social War), Paeligni, and others. Many of their soldiers had fought under Roman commanders. They chose Corfinium as their capital, and renamed it Italia; they coined their own money, on which their symbol, the Italian bull, was represented goring the Roman wolf. The Etruscans and Gauls in the north of Italy did not revolt, nor did the Latins and the Greek cities in the south.

If the Romans had any doubts about the ability of the Italians to wage a successful war without Roman leadership, they were soon corrected. The leadership of the rebel confederacy proved to be

excellent; the rebels defeated the Roman armies in the first battles, even killing two Roman commanders. Sulla and Marius helped turn the tide for the Romans, who were aided also by Pompeius Strabo from Picenum (we will hear more about his son). The rebels had made it clear to the Senate that the war would be fierce; seeing that Rome could eventually lose, or that a victory would be too costly, the consul L. Caesar (uncle of Julius, who was then ten years old) passed a law that gave Roman citizenship to all the Italians who had remained loyal to Rome. The next year, the Lex Plautia Papiria was passed, giving citizenship to the rebels who stopped fighting. The laws had the desired effect, and no more towns and cities joined the rebels' side. The vote was further given to the peoples in Transpadane Gaul.

Some fighting remained, with the Romans eventually gaining control through the victories of Sulla, who used this opportunity to try to exterminate the Samnites. By 88 B.C. most of the fighting was finished, and by 84 all free-born Italians had Roman citizenship. One condition of their citizenship was that they had to adopt Roman government as the model for their local government. The newly enfranchised were still at a political disadvantage, for few would come to Rome to vote, and even then their enrollment in the tribes (where they would vote) was manipulated so as to dilute their voting power.

SULLA TAKES OVER ROME

Although Italy was peaceful, Rome itself became the scene of much fighting and bloodshed. Sulla and Marius, despite having served together in successful wars against Jugurtha, the Germans, and the rebellious Italians, had long nursed a bitter hatred of each other. Marius was envious of Sulla because Sulla had received much of the credit for the capture of Jugurtha: A statue had been placed on the Capitol depicting Jugurtha's being handed over to Sulla, not Marius. Sulla, a cultured man from an aristocratic family, had the lukewarm support of the Senate, even though he had been raised in poverty and his family had not gained high office in two centuries. Marius, however, who came from an equestrian family from outside the town Arpinum and who disdained

the arts, was dear to the common people. The differences between the two soon led to bloodshed, because Marius wanted the command in a war against Mithridates, king of Pontus in Asia Minor, while the Senate had voted that Sulla, consul of that year (88), should receive the command.

Mithridates had taken advantage of Rome's involvement in the Italian Wars by conquering much of Roman Asia Minor and was busy now with the islands in the Aegean Sea. At the same time, one of his sons was reducing Thrace and Macedonia. From his base in Athens he was also inciting revolt in Greece; some Greeks and peoples in Asia Minor looked to him for liberation from Roman oppression. Worst, he had arranged a massacre of all Italians and Romans living in Asia Minor; at least eighty thousand Romans and Italians were killed on the appointed day.

To gain the much desired command against Mithridates, Marius sought and received help from the tribune Sulpicius. Sulpicius had no scruples about using force to get his legislation passed; he maintained a private army of three thousand swordsmen and used a gang of young knights, whom he called the Anti-Senate, to intimidate the assemblies. His Anti-Senate forced one assembly to change the command against Mithridates from Sulla to Marius, and in the ensuing riot the son of the consul Pompeius and many enemies of Marius were killed; Sulla, his family, and his friends were forced to flee for safety.

Sulpicius had sent his men to Campania, where the army was located, to bring it to Marius in Rome, but Sulla arrived first and brought the army back to Rome. This was the first time that Roman soldiers invaded Rome. Marius did not have time to organize effective opposition, but Sulla and his soldiers did have to engage in a few hours of street fighting to take the city. During the fighting, people on rooftops were throwing ceiling tiles down on Sulla and his troops below; Sulla ordered his soldiers to burn down the buildings, and even threw the first torch himself. Marius fled to Africa, where he started collecting a force of his veteran soldiers to fight against Sulla.

Sulla now held power in Rome. He had the Senate set a price on the heads of Sulpicius and Marius, and had Sulpicius hunted down and killed. One story says that one of Sulpicius' slaves killed his

master; Sulla rewarded the slave with his freedom, and then had him thrown from the Tarpeian Rock for killing his master. Sulla made some changes in the Roman constitution: the Popular Assembly could no longer legislate, and legislation from the Comitia Centuriata would need the Senate's approval. Then he went east, to fight Mithridates.

MARIUS AND CINNA TAKE OVER ROME

During Sulla's absence from Rome, Marius returned to Rome with his veterans, where he joined the new consul, Cinna. They took over Rome and had a reign of terror in which they murdered many leading members of the aristocratic party as well as Sulla's supporters and family. Metella, Sulla's wife, fled with their children to Sulla (who was besieging Athens, which supported Mithridates) and brought him the news that their house in Rome and their villas had been burned down. Marius soon died, having drunk himself to death.

Sulla, meanwhile, was working to deprive Mithridates of his base in Greece. To do this he had to conquer Athens, which was obstinate in its support of Mithridates; Sulla captured Athens in 86 B.C. and let his soldiers loot and kill in Athens as they wished, for during the siege the Athenian tyrant Aristion had shouted obscene jokes about Metella to him, complete with gestures. Sulla then joined forces with the governor of Macedonia, and together they defeated Mithridates' troops in Greece in two separate battles. Sulla and Mithridates met in the Troad, in the northwest corner of Asia Minor, and concluded a treaty, which was lenient to the Asian king. Sulla's soldiers were angry that Mithridates, after organizing the massacre of many thousands of Italians, should even retain his kingdom, but Sulla was too preoccupied with problems in Rome to spend much time bickering with Mithridates.

SULLA RETAKES ROME

While Sulla was in Greece and the East, his enemies in Rome had solidified their opposition to him, so that Sulla had to fight to return to Italy in 83 B.C. In this he was helped by his lieutenants

Crassus and Pompey. Then only twenty-three years old, Pompey on his own initiative had raised a force of more than six thousand armed men and joined forces with Sulla. Sulla and his allies defeated the consul Norbanus and Marius' son in battle. The opposition that Sulla faced from the consul Scipio was easily removed when Scipio's troops deserted him for Sulla. Sulla again defeated the younger Marius, who committed suicide; he then almost lost his last battle outside of Rome, at the Colline Gate. Crassus saved the battle for Sulla, who had had to take refuge in his camp.

Having gained control over Rome, Sulla killed his enemies with a vengeance that was even more bloodthirsty than that of Marius; his victims were mostly *equites* and *populares*. When someone complained to him that people did not like living in uncertainty over whether or not executioners would be coming after them, Sulla responded by drawing up proscription lists: A reward of two talents was given to the person bringing Sulla the head of a person whose name was on the list. Sulla's victims in the proscriptions are estimated to have numbered around six thousand.

Sulla, although fierce in his revenge, nonetheless saw that Roman government needed to be reformed. He had himself appointed "dictator for the sake of reestablishing the republic," with immunity for his past acts and the power of life and death over others. Then he began to reform the republic. To the Senate, which needed new men after all the recent executions and wars, and whose quality of leadership had, to say the least, stagnated, Sulla added three hundred new members, all from the equestrian class; he also hoped that the mix of the two orders, patricians and equestrians, would lessen future conflict between them. He probably also had in mind the unification of Italy, for many of the new members were non-Roman Italians. Another reform put certain restrictions in the *cursus honorum*: The minimum age for consuls was now forty-two; for praetors, thirty-nine; and for quaestors, thirty. He further passed the requirement that a man must wait ten years between his first and second consulship; the same applied to tribunes. Other changes voided the tribunes' unlimited ability to legislate in the Popular Assembly and put restrictions on the tribunate: A man becoming tribune was now

barred from further political office. He restored the law courts to senatorial control. After making those reforms and others, L. Cornelius Sulla Felix (Lucky) retired in 79 B.C., after having been dictator for three years. He died the next year.

LEPIDUS AND SERTORIUS

Sulla's reforms and the restored senatorial rule were immediately challenged in the year after his retirement. The two consuls elected for 78 were Catulus, who was pro-Sulla and pro-Senate, and Lepidus (father of the future triumvir), who was opposed to Sulla and the Senate. Through their year in office, the two argued so frequently and vehemently—Lepidus wanted to repeal Sulla's reforms, and Catulus did not—that the Senate compelled the two to swear that they would not resort to violence against each other.

Once Lepidus learned what province he would govern as a proconsul, he left Rome before supervising elections for the next year. He enlisted soldiers to take to the province he was to govern, but never actually left Italy; instead, he stayed in northern Italy with his soldiers. The Senate eventually called him back to Rome to oversee the elections; Lepidus returned, but he came leading his army against Rome and demanding a second consulship for himself and the restoration of the tribune's powers.

The Senate passed the *ultimum consultum* and called upon Pompey for extra help. Catulus defeated Lepidus outside Rome, while in Mutina Pompey defeated and (despite having given a promise of safety) killed Brutus, Lepidus' lieutenant (and father of Julius Caesar's murderer). Lepidus soon died; and his soldiers fled to Spain.

The challenge that Lepidus posed to senatorial authority in Rome was small, because he was inexperienced. All too soon the Senate learned what problems a brilliant opponent could cause. Their teacher was named Sertorius.

Sertorius, like Lepidus, was opposed to Sulla and oligarchic government. He had given his support to Cinna and Marius, but disagreed with them over the murders of their political enemies. When Sulla returned to Italy after conquering Mithridates, and

was winning his battles against his Roman enemies, Sertorius went to Spain as governor, to hold out against Sulla and his supporters.

In Spain Sertorius found the local people bitterly resentful of Roman rule. He managed to make himself popular among the Spanish by ruling fairly and reducing taxes. Nonetheless, after becoming dictator, Sulla sent one of his supporters to govern Spain in Sertorius' place. Sertorius and the replacement governor fought a battle for control over Spain; Sertorius lost, and fled. After spending some time with pirates in Africa, he was invited by the natives of Lusitania (modern Portugal) to command their army. It did not take him long to win the hearts and minds of the people with his fair dealing and his magical fawn.

It happened that a hunter had scared a doe, which had just given birth to a milk-white fawn. The doe escaped from the hunter, but left the fawn alive for the hunter to capture. The hunter gave the fawn to Sertorius; soon he had the fawn so well trained and accustomed to him that it would follow him, show no fear of people and crowds—even in the middle of the camp—and come when he called. Sertorius convinced the local people that the fawn was a gift from the goddess Diana and that it told him secrets. For example, he would receive secret scouting reports and tell the people that the fawn had told him; with that divinely given information, he would then conquer the enemy. Or he would secretly hear of a victory by one of his lieutenants; he would then crown the fawn with garlands and tell the people that good news was on the way—news that eventually arrived. The people believed he was some kind of god and followed his every command.

Sertorius did not disappoint the people: His brilliant strategies and use of guerrilla warfare led him and his small army of fewer than ten thousand to win battles against overwhelming odds. He defeated many Roman commanders and inflicted many defeats on Metellus (son of the Metellus who had fought against Jugurtha), the latest Roman to be sent against him. Desperate, the Senate ordered Pompey (who, wanting another command, hesitated to disband his army after defeating Brutus) to go help Metellus against Sertorius.

About the same time that Pompey arrived in Spain to help Metellus, the remnants of Lepidus' army, twenty thousand soldiers

led by one Perperna, arrived too and joined Sertorius' side; Sertorius now had a large army, and all the Spanish tribes from the Ebro River to the Pyrenees Mountains were on his side.

Sertorius greeted Pompey by inflicting a humiliating defeat. Pompey was supposed to protect an allied town, which Sertorius was besieging; Sertorius tricked Pompey, so that Pompey could neither attack Sertorius nor help the allied town—he could only watch as Sertorius besieged the town, let the inhabitants escape alive, and then burned down the town. In another battle, Pompey's forces were defeated, and Pompey himself narrowly escaped being captured by leaving his horse—with its golden ornaments and expensive equipment—to the enemy. The morning after another battle, as Pompey was wounded and his forces scattered, Sertorius readied his forces for the final blow to Pompey when he learned that Metellus had arrived to help Pompey. "If that old woman [Metellus] had not been there, I would have spanked that child [Pompey] before sending him off to Rome!" said Sertorius (Plutarch, *Sertorius* XIX).

Pompey, desperate, sent a letter to the Senate, demanding more money and soldiers; otherwise, he wrote, he would leave Spain. Rumors in Rome said that Sertorius would arrive in Italy before Pompey did. Metellus, also desperate, offered a reward of a hundred talents of silver and twenty thousand *iugera* (twelve thousand acres) of land to the person who killed Sertorius. Sertorius had even been invited by Mithridates to enter into an alliance against Rome, yet Sertorius did not like the provision that if victorious, Mithridates would gain the Roman province of Asia; Sertorius thought that would be dishonorable to himself.

Despite his success, Sertorius too was in trouble. His fawn disappeared, and he lost a few skirmishes; his hold on the people was slipping, even after the fawn had returned. When Pompey's reinforcements—two legions and a large sum of money—arrived from Rome, the morale of the Spanish plummeted. They had been fighting Rome for more than a century. Rome's resources seemed infinite. As their morale collapsed, Sertorius became more imperious, which caused more resentment among his followers. His very successes in military and political matters filled some of his officers with envy.

A conspiracy was formed against his life. His officer Perperna assassinated him and took over the command. But Perperna was no match for Pompey, who soon returned to Rome, victorious.

SPARTACUS

Rome soon faced another rebellion, this one in Italy. In 73 B.C. a Thracian gladiator named Spartacus led other gladiators in Capua to revolt, and soon many other slaves joined him. The slave army grew so large—numbering seventy thousand men—that Spartacus was able to divide it into three different bodies. Spartacus had the realistic goal not of sacking Rome but simply of making it to the Alps and from there escaping to freedom. Under his leadership the slave army won battles over three different Roman commanders, even capturing one praetor's camp and another praetor's lictors and horse. Eventually the slave troops defeated a consular army of ten thousand soldiers.

Finally, the Senate put Crassus (Sulla's former lieutenant) in charge of the Roman forces, and he won some battles against the slave army. Crassus was eager to complete the war before Pompey arrived from Spain, for he feared that Pompey would get the credit for the victory. Crassus won the last major battle with Spartacus' army, but the fugitives from Spartacus' forces fell in with Pompey's army, which destroyed them; six thousand of the Spartacans who survived were crucified along the Appian Way, to serve as a warning to other slaves. Pompey sent a letter to the Senate with the information that while Crassus had defeated the slave army in a pitched battle, Pompey had "ripped the heart and soul out of the rebellion" (Plutarch, *Crassus* XI). What Crassus had feared became true: Pompey got the credit for the defeat of Spartacus.

CHAPTER 19

The Rise of Pompey

Upon his return to Rome in 71 B.C., after destroying the remnants of Spartacus' army, Pompey did not immediately disband his army; he simply camped his troops outside of Rome while he asked the Senate for a triumph and for permission to run for the consulship of 70. Since people were worried about his intentions, Pompey replied that he would disband his army as soon as he had celebrated his triumph. Pompey had to ask the Senate for permission to run for the consulship because he had not gone through the *cursus honorum*: to run for the consulship, one had to have served as a quaestor and praetor, and the minimum age was forty-two.

In his thirty-six years of life, Pompey had not been elected to any of the offices in the *cursus honorum*. He had fought in his father's army during the Social War, and after his father's death, he had gathered an army of his father's ex-supporters and joined Sulla. Sulla sent Pompey to fight in Gaul, Sicily, and Africa, where he earned the title *imperator*. Upon Pompey's return to Italy, Sulla himself rode out to meet Pompey along the way to Rome, and even addressed him as *magnus* (great), yet at first he refused Pompey's request for a triumph, citing a law that the man holding the triumph must be at least a consul or praetor. Pompey reminded Sulla that people worship the rising, not the setting, sun. Pompey was the first knight to be granted a triumph. He wanted his chariot to be pulled by four elephants, instead of horses, but had to abandon that plan when it was discovered that the elephants would not fit through the city gates. After Sulla's death, Pompey fought Brutus, Lepidus' lieutenant (and father of Caesar's future

History Terms for Paul Zoch, pgs. 157-164

Tribune Drusus

Italian Confederacy/Social War

Lucius Cornelius Sulla Felix

Mithridates IV of Pontus

Sulla Invades Rome

Marius and Cinna Invade Rome

Proscription Lists

Sulla's Reforms

Lepidus

Sertorius

Spartacus