

FROM CITIZEN MILITIA TO PROFESSIONAL MILITARY:
TRANSFORMATION OF THE ROMAN ARMY

A thesis presented to the Faculty of the U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE
Military History

by

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Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

2007

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGEForm Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

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|---|------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| 1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 15-06-2007 | | 2. REPORT TYPE Master's Thesis | | 3. DATES COVERED (From - To) Aug 2006 - Jun 2007 | |
| 4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE From Citizen Militia to Professional Military: Transformation of the Roman Army | | | | 5a. CONTRACT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5b. GRANT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER | |
| 6. AUTHOR(S) ROBERT VERLIČ, CPT, Slovene Armed Forces | | | | 5d. PROJECT NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5e. TASK NUMBER | |
| | | | | 5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER | |
| 7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) U.S. Army Command and General Staff College ATTN: ATZL-SWD-GD 1 Reynolds Ave. Ft. Leavenworth, KS 66027-1352 | | | | 8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER | |
| 9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) | | | | 10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) | |
| | | | | 11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S) | |
| 12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited. | | | | | |
| 13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES | | | | | |
| 14. ABSTRACT FROM CITIZEN MILITIA TO PROFESSIONAL MILITARY: TRANSFORMATION OF THE ROMAN ARMY, by CPT Robert Verlič, page 106. The late Roman Republic faced what looked unsolvable social problems and all attempts made by the politicians from all parties failed or made the situation even worse. Finally the crisis was so deep that the security and survival of the state was at stake. Professionalization of the Roman military brought back stability to the state destabilized from internal conflicts and civil wars. The army became more efficient and expended Roman Empire through the most of the known world of the time, and reached its greatest extent in A.D.116 only two centuries after first military reforms brought the army toward professionalization. The state hierarchy became clearer with the Emperor who was commander in chief and patron of all military forces, and who was now able to conduct all necessary reforms which brought relative peace and stability to the people of Rome. Augustus success and his greatness were only possible because he had a standing army backing up his political work as well as suppressing his opponents. | | | | | |
| 15. SUBJECT TERMS | | | | | |
| 16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: | | | 17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU | 18. NUMBER OF PAGES 106 | 19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON |
| a. REPORT Unclassified | b. ABSTRACT Unclassified | c. THIS PAGE Unclassified | | | 19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) |

MASTER OF MILITARY ART AND SCIENCE

THESIS APPROVAL PAGE

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ABSTRACT

FROM CITIZEN MILITIA TO PROFESSIONAL MILITARY: TRANSFORMATION OF THE ROMAN ARMY, by CPT Robert Verlič, page 112.

The late Roman Republic faced what looked unsolvable social problems and all attempts made by the politicians from all parties failed or made the situation even worse. Finally the crisis was so deep that the security and survival of the state was at stake.

Professionalization of the Roman military brought back stability to the state destabilized from internal conflicts and civil wars. The army became more efficient and expended Roman Empire through the most of the known world of the time, and reached its greatest extent in A.D.116 only two centuries after first military reforms brought the army toward professionalization.

The state hierarchy became clearer with the Emperor who was commander in chief and patron of all military forces, and who was now able to conduct all necessary reforms which brought relative peace and stability to the people of Rome. Augustus success and his greatness were only possible because he had a standing army backing up his political work as well as suppressing his opponents.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

My thanks go first and foremost to my wife Stanka, without who I would probably not had been coming here and have an opportunity to accomplish this project. Second I would like to thank my committee chair Dr. Charles E. Heller for his support, encouragement, guidance and patience throughout the year.

This work is dedicated to

Viktorija Verlič

For never losing her faith

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The main foundations of every state, new states as well as ancient or composite ones, are good laws and good arms. You cannot have good laws without good arms, and where there are good arms, good laws inevitably follow.

Niccolo Machiavelli

In the last century B.C. the Roman Republic hit the bottom in its decline. The state faced huge landless masses that flooded the city while there were not enough men of military age who would fulfill the census requirement for serving in the army. After Rome got involved in long wars, like the Punic wars, its middle class paid the highest price. Because the soldiers were away from their home and farms on the one hand and because Rome expended and got access to cheap food production, most small farmers bankrupted, moved to the city, and were no longer eligible for military service because they did not meet the census requirements. On the other hand, they became a bigger factor on the Roman political stage, and because they were loud and numerous, the Senate was forced to pay more attention to them and keep them peaceful. Sometimes they had a lot of attributes of a mob and were very susceptible to the demagogues. It was the situation Rome faced that brought on the political stage leaders who changed Rome's political, social and military structure.

Men, like Gracchi, tried to save Roman Republic from its total decline by applying social and economic reforms, but there were men, like Marius, Caesar, and Augustus, who sought to transform the state and save it through the reorganization of the army and later to exploit the new professional military as the base which supported and

secured their social and political reforms. That finally made room for the Roman Empire to replace and upgrade the old Republic. It was the new professional army that gave the emperors power to conduct reforms and eventually suppress democratic but corrupted forces in Rome. With the professionalization they opened ranks to all population and saved recruiting problems and partly unemployment as well. By giving money and land to the retired soldiers they had a strong colonization pool for the Romanization of the conquered lands. The army was no longer reserved for Roman citizens, but it opened their ranks to all people in the Empire and even for those outside. The population of Roman citizens expanded due to the franchising of retired foreign soldiers. With strong centralized government it was easier to control vast empire and conduct necessary reforms to bring back stability. Where Demagogues failed, military political leaders succeeded.

The Roman State went through some major changes in its development. At the beginning the Romans were ruled by kings until they transformed the form of government to the Roman Republic. The Republic was run by the Senate who represented all Roman citizens. The citizens of Rome were divided into two major groups: *Patricians* and *Plebeians*. *Patricians* were the nobles of the city while the *Plebeians* were the commoners, mostly from rural areas around Rome. The commoners were normally represented in the Senate through the wealthy *Plebeians*, but it was not uncommon that the champion of the *Plebeians* rose from the *Patricians*.

The Senators competed for public offices, and they got recognition for their success or failure while in the office. The Republic was led by an elected official called *Consul*. Because of their experience from the time when Rome was ruled by the Kings

and in order to prevent one individual from getting too much power there were always two *Consuls* elected for a period of one year. Political and even military power was divided among two *Consuls* and the balance was established by them both competing with and supervising one another. In the time of war or immediate threat to the Republic, the Senate appointed a *Dictator* who assumed the whole power over the army and other resources of the Republic, until the threat was conquered. After a crisis the *Dictator* returned the power over the Republic back to the Senate. There were periods in the time of the Republic when *Patricians* filled most of the public offices and when *Plebeians* did not even compete for the office of the *Consul*, and there were times when the champions of the *Plebeians* were powerful enough to impact the laws in favor of the *Plebeians*. Lastly, there was a constant struggle for prestige and power among both classes.

During the time of the Republic, with citizens providing the core of the military manpower, it was much harder for the individual to accomplish his political goals through or with the help of the military. The soldiers were obliged to serve in the case of a threat against Republic, and they were only authorized to fight “just wars” against those who posed the threat to their freedom or interests. Every war had to be approved by the Senate. There were, of course, always tendencies and desires of those holding the office for a limited period of time to start a war and gain prestige and value in the Senate. However, Consuls always had to obtain permission from the Senate to start a war. To start a war in the time of the Republic, when the citizens represented main strength of the military power, was always difficult for the society and economy. One of the biggest advantages that Romans had, compared to their adversaries and rivals of the time, was flexibility in obtaining Roman citizenship. A slave, for example, was allowed to buy his

freedom, with freedom he had a right to become a Roman citizen and fight for the Republic. That provided much greater draft pool for the Roman Republic's expansionism.

The biggest expansion and conquests during the late Republic period and early years of the Roman Empire can be observed when the first foundations for the professional army were put in place.

An old Roman proverb probably describes best the adaptability and flexibility of the Roman army: *Fas est et ab hoste doceri* (Ovid). The Roman military was a learning organization that learned from its mistakes as well as from its enemies and that was what made it superior to its adversaries. The Roman military started by copying the best tactical unit in the known world of the time, the Greek Phalange, but when that proved inefficient the military immediately replaced it with the legion maniple, which it later upgraded in the legion cohort as a main tactical unit of the Roman Imperial Army.

The Roman Republican army's strength was, from the beginning, based on the heavy infantry. Roughly 4,200 heavy infantry soldiers composed a legion and these were all citizen soldiers. Eventually the army added *Auxiliary* units to the legion in order to overcome the shortfalls of heavy infantry. *Auxiliary* units were noncitizen units, usually contributed by allies and client states. They significantly increased the Roman's military capability. Romans especially relied on the allies to provide cavalry units since they recognized their weakness whenever it came to use it on the battlefield.

The Roman Republic's downfall started with its greatest success, the defeat of Carthage. Romans were victims of their own success because the wealth procured from their greatest victory permanently changed their social and economical structure and with

that started the push for political reforms of the state. The great Roman civil war, 49-45 B.C, which continued through a series of civil wars, 44-30 B.C, until an exhausted Roman Republic finally collapsed and was replaced by the Roman Empire, was a direct product of the changes in Roman society. During the late Republic period and in the early Roman Empire, the military transformed from a citizen-soldier system to a fully professional army. That transformation had a huge impact on the whole Roman society, economy, security, and political and governmental system. Under the rule of Augustus Roman military did not only change its status. When Augustus finally decided to professionalize the Roman military, he also downsized the whole army to twenty-eight legions, and he managed to secure the whole Empire with that force. Even later in the time of the Roman Empire, the total size of the military never exceeded thirty legions.

But Augustus did not come with professionalization on his own, the roots of the professional army go back in time to General and seven-times *Consul* Gaius Marius. Even before him, Romans sometimes broke the census rule and levied all classes and even slaves in the times of great threats, but with his military reforms Marius made it permanently possible for anyone who was fit enough to fight to join the army. These new, mostly poor soldiers signed to serve in the army for a longer time than conscripts. These soldiers did not possess any land and were solely dependant on their salary and the land they would receive when discharged from the army. These first professional soldiers were not so much concerned about the Senate and government in Rome, their loyalty was to the commander that paid them. Marius also changed the authority for recruiting new soldiers in the provinces, so that governors could not only recruit them but also raise

armies if necessary. Before the reforms, raising an army was under the sole authority of the Consuls and the Senate.

The Army was almost fully professionalized under Julius Cesar, but it was Emperor Augustus, who prolonged the time of service for the professional soldier from six to twenty years and formalized the professionalization of the army. Augustus also reorganized *Auxiliaries* who were non-Roman citizen units who complemented the Legion's heavy infantry soldier. He integrated the *Auxiliaries* into the regular Roman Army chain of command, and Roman officers took command away from the tribe leaders.

The Roman army changed from citizen militia to a uniformed professional force because that was the only way that the Roman leaders could conduct the necessary changes to provide security and stability to the state. There were no major changes considering the equipment soldiers used but after the reform all soldiers got the best equipment from the government and if successfully served their time the same new government also provided for their future.

In order to understand the significance and connection between the transformation of the citizen militia into a professional army and the social and the political crises that the Republic faced in the last century B.C., the basics of the Roman Republic government and its military system must be provided.

CHAPTER 2

THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

The military of the Roman republic was under strict control of the Senate, which had the ultimate authority to declare war, finance the war, and appoint commanders of the army. It was virtually impossible for an individual to gain control over the military since the army was built up of citizens capable of bearing arms and equipping themselves for war. These soldiers were citizens first and soldiers second. It was in their interest for the war to be over as quickly as possible, so they could go back to their farms and business. The army of the early republic was primarily defensive force which became more offensive later in the Republic, but it was still not prepared to wage long wars which would be necessary for greater expansion.

Commanders were always appointed from the senatorial ranks and for the majority of them fighting a war was just a step in their political career which gave them more political credit and power after they returned to the Senate.

The Beginning of the Republic and Early Government

The Roman Republic was established in the year 507 B.C. when Lucius Junius Brutus mobilized the people of Rome, who were tired of the tyranny of King Lucius Tarquinius Superbus and expelled the tyrant from Rome. After the king was expelled Lucius Junius Brutus and Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus were elected as the first two *Consuls* of the Roman Republic.

The first consuls kept all the privileges and outward signs of authority, care only being taken to prevent the terror appearing doubled, should both have the fasces at the same time. Brutus, with the consent of his colleague, was first attended by the fasces, he who proved himself afterward as keen in protecting liberty as he had

previously shown himself in asserting it. First of all he bound over the people, jealous of their newly-acquired liberty, by an oath that they would suffer no one to be king in Rome, for fear that later they might be influenced by the importunities or bribes of the royal house. Next, that a full house might give additional strength to the senate, he filled up the number of senators, which had been diminished by the assassinations of Tarquinius, to the full number of three hundred, by electing the principal men of equestrian rank to fill their places: from this is said to have been derived the custom of summoning into the senate both the *Patres* and those who were *Conscripti*. They called those who were elected, *Conscripti*, enrolled, that is, as a new senate. It is surprising how much that contributed to the harmony of the state, and toward uniting the Patricians and commons in friendship.¹

At the head of the Roman Republic were always two *Consuls* who were elected from the members of the Senate for the period of one year. They commanded the Roman army, led the Senate and represented the highest judicial body with the power to make laws. All other magistrates in the Republic except the *Tribunes* were subordinate and were to execute their decisions. Each *Consul* had the power to veto any decision made by other *Consul*. That prevented any individual from becoming too powerful and attempted to restore the monarchy. Only in time of great danger to the Republic did the Senate appointed one *Consul* as a *Dictator*. He then assumed all the power over the military and judicial system for the period of six months or until the threat was suppressed. After that he returned the power over the State back to the Senate.

In the early Republic after *Consul* finished a one year mandate he was usually proclaimed *Proconsul* and ruled one of the Provinces or returned to the Senate. At the time of the early Republic office of the Consul was only reserved for the *Patricians*. It was not until 366 B.C. that Lucius Sextius was elected as the first *Plebeian Consul*.² There were some resistance from *Patricians* to share the office with the *Plebeians* and the law was not always honored, but from the year 343 B.C., one of the two *Consuls* was always a *Plebeian*.³

The Senate was in control of the treasury and *Quaestors* needed a decree from it to distribute public funds. The only exceptions to this were the payments to the *Consuls*. The Senate approved a five year budget that included public works proposed by the *Censor*. Public investigation against any crime committed in Italy was under Senate jurisdiction. The Senate was in charge in dispatching ambassadors to represent the Roman Republic in foreign countries as well as in dealings with the representatives of foreign states in Rome. Finally, it was the Senate that had the sole authority to declare war. Even though *Consuls* controlled the army, it was the Senate who provided supplies for the army and with that also indirectly controlled the commander of the army. After a successful campaign the Senate provided funds for the triumph to celebrate and honor army leaders for their contribution to the Republic, that is, if they decided to honor them.

The career of the Roman magistrate normally started with the position of *Quaestor* (see figure 1). The *Quaestor's* job was to take care of the treasury and financial administration. In the provinces *Quaestors* also acted as deputies to the governors. When a Roman citizen was elected for a *Quaestor* position, he became eligible to be a Senator and could be appointed by the *Censor* if a vacancy appeared in the Senate.

Next in the Roman magistrate hierarchy were *Aediles*. Office of the *Aedile* was an optional position in Rome with no military responsibilities. *Aedile* supervised public places, public games, and grain supplies in the city of Rome. There were always four *Aedile* in the city from whom two were always *Plebeians* and the other two could come from either *Plebeians* or *Patricians* ranks.

Praetors served as judges in law courts, and could also convene the Senate and assemblies. When *Consuls* were not in Rome *Praetors* assumed their administrative

duties. They would also govern provinces not assigned to *Consuls* and were in command of significant military forces.

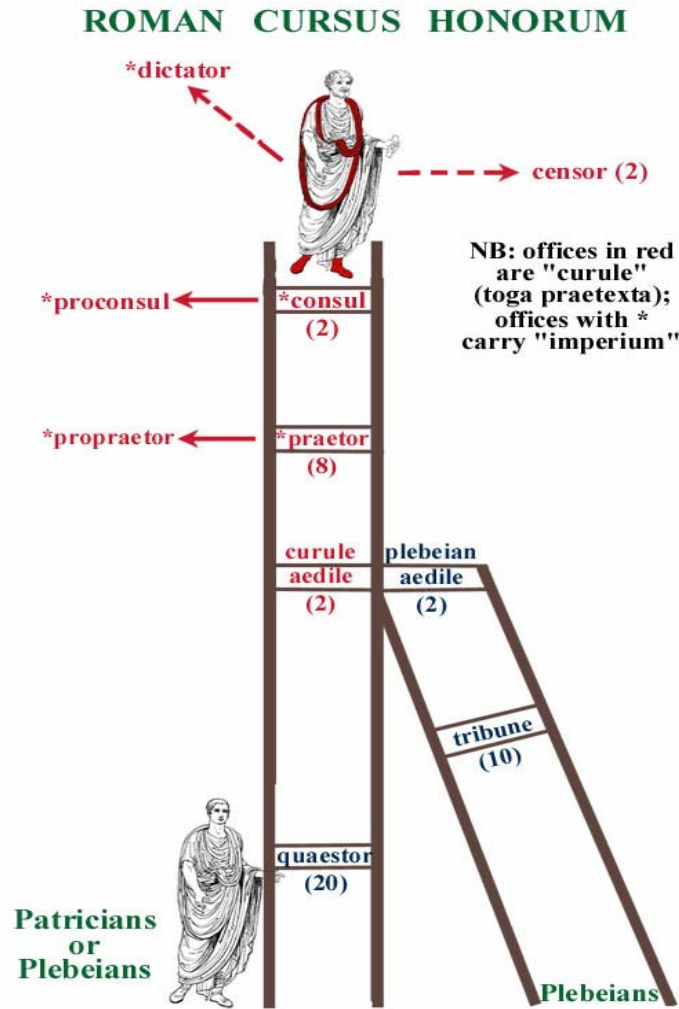


Figure 1. Career of the Roman Magistrate

Source: Barbara F. McManus, "Rome: Republic to Empire," web pages on Roman history and culture (The College of New Rochelle, revised July 2003); available from <http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/Romangvt.html>.

Two *Censors* were elected from former Consuls and these were the most prestigious magistrates. They served for five years and had the authority to appoint new

Senators and Equestrians. They also conducted census of citizens and property assessments for tax purposes and granted state contracts.

In order to protect the *Plebeians* from the magistrates in cases of the power abuse the Roman people elected *Tribunes*. By law *Tribunes* had to be *Plebeians* and they served for one year. It was a very complicated system of sharing power since all ten *Tribunes* elected every year, had a power of vetoing any bill proposed by another *Tribune* or magistrate. While in the position they had total immunity. If attacked, their attacker could be killed in the spot.⁴

The early Roman Republic could be described as a peasant state composed of large numbers of citizens owning small pieces of land and representing the biggest part of the Roman citizen army. Junior officers came from the literate population, but senior officers as well as high civil positions were reserved for the aristocracy and wealthy class.

If we look at the late Roman Republic from the political, economic, and social point of view we can hardly find a simplistic answer. Technically, the Roman state was ruled by the masses, but in reality the mass of Roman citizens was represented through the body of the rich and influential upper class that constituted the Senate. This ruling class also ran the provinces and exploited them primarily for their own profit and secondarily for Republic's benefit. From social point of view, Roman community consisted of a small ruling class living mostly in Rome, owning most of the land in Italy and the Provinces and a large working class. Within the working class there were retail-traders and artisans in the cities, slaves in the offices and shops, free peasants owning small plots of land and finally a huge numbers of slaves and tenants on the ruling class

estates. Economic power was concentrated in Italy, especially in the city of Rome, through the banking affairs and the real-estate market firmly in the hands of Roman “capitalists” who had in their possession most of the currency. Goods were freely exchanged throughout the Republic and its provinces with primary goods making most of the trading and exchange.⁵

Military of the Roman Republic

In the time of the Roman Republic, approximately before first century B.C., the Roman Army was composed of free Roman citizens who possessed land. By serving, they were doing their civic duty, basically paying their debt to the society and to the state. It was also the way for a citizen to have a role in the state’s foreign, military and governing policy. The citizen soldiers were in charge of equipping themselves with weapons and armor. In the early Republic men were not fighting for money, but for the preservation of the state and with it the position and land they possessed.

The Roman Republic had strict rules on how to build its army. After the Senate appointed the *Consuls*, it selected *Military Tribunes*.⁶ It appointed twenty-four military *Military Tribunes*; fourteen of them were chosen from the soldiers with five years in service and ten who had served ten years. The time which Roman citizens had to serve varied. A cavalry soldier was obligated to serve ten years, while infantrymen served sixteen years or until age forty-six. The citizens, who were excused from the military service because they were too poor to buy their weapons and equipment, served in the navy. When necessary, infantry soldiers’ service could be extended up to twenty years. In the Roman Republic a soldier could not run for a public office if he did not serve at least ten years in the military.

Consuls annually gathered all Roman citizens obligated to serve in the military on the Capitol.⁷ The junior *Tribunes* divided them into four groups as the standard formation of the Republican military was four legions. The first four nominated junior *Tribunes* were appointed to the First legion, the next three to the Second, the next four to the Third and the last four *Tribunes* were appointed to the Fourth legion. From the senior *Tribunes* they appointed the first two to the First, next three to the Second, next two to the Third and last three to the Fourth legion. With this system each legion had an equal number of officers. Then they conducted a lottery through which they decided which tribe came first to fill the ranks of the soldiers each legion. The *Tribunes* of the First Legion had first choice, the Second Legion second, then the Third and then the Fourth. When they were choosing soldiers from the next tribe according to lottery, the officers from the Second legion picked their soldiers first, the Third Legion second, the Fourth Legion third and the First Legion last. From the next tribe Third Legion filled their ranks first and Second last. They continued the lottery and enrollment of the soldiers until each legion reached its full authorized strength of 4,200 soldiers or in case of exceptional danger 5,000. With this system they assured that all legions had soldiers of equal quality. At the beginning of the Republic they selected cavalry soldiers last but later they changed the system and the *Censor* picked them first according to their wealth and assigned 300 of them to each legion.

After the enrollment the selected *Tribunes* each picked one man, for whom they thought most suitable out of the new soldiers. He then took the oath that they will obey the officers and execute their orders as far as in their power. After they took the oath each

man from the legion came forward and took the oath that he will do the same as the first man.

At the same time *Consuls* sent the orders to the allied cities to send their troops to the designated place and time. The magistrates of the cities chose the men and the men took the same oath as the legions raised in Rome. Then they appointed a commander and a paymaster and send them to Rome.

After taking the oath *Tribunes* selected a day and place for each legion to assemble again without arms and dismissed them. When they assembled again the *Tribunes* selected and divided the soldiers into the four classes; the youngest and poorest were the *Velites* and after them came *Hastati*. Those of the best military age formed the *Principes*, they were the most experienced but not as old soldiers as *Triari* who formed the last line of the legion. The classes differed from one another by age and equipment. The numbers of classes were different as *Triari* numbered 600, *Hastati* and *Principes* each numbered 1200 and the rest of the soldiers *Velites*. When the strength of the legion exceeded normal strength of 4200 soldiers, the additional soldiers were distributed proportionally among the *Hastati*, *Principes* and *Velites* while the *Triari* always stayed at the same number of 600.

The *Velites* were equipped with a sword, javelins and a shield (*Parma*). The *Parma* was a strong circular shaped and three feet in diameter big shield that provided limited protection to the soldier. They also wore a plain helmet covered with wolf's skin or something similar so they distinguish themselves from the others and also to provide them with some protection.

The *Hastati* were next in seniority and they wore the complete Roman panoply. They were equipped with a shield (*Scutum*) that was two and half feet width and four feet long and a palm size thick. They carried a sword, two *Pila*, a brass helmet and greaves. *Pila* was a spear and, it came in two types; stout and fine. The *Hastati* wore a feather like ornament on their helmet in order to look taller than they really were in order to achieve a psychological effect on the enemy. The common soldiers also had a breastplate they wore in front of the heart and called it *Pectorale*--heart-protector. Wealthier soldiers also had a coat of chain-mail called *Lorica* instead of the *Pectorale*. The *Triari* and the *Principes* had the same equipment. The only difference was that the *Triari* carried long spears called *Hastae* instead of the *Pila*.

From each of the classes, except from the *Velites*, they elected ten *Centurions* and then a second ten according to their reputation. The first elected *Centurion* had a seat in the military council. The *Centurions* appointed the same number of rear guard officers *Optiones*.⁸ Then they divided each class, except the *Velites*, into ten companies and assigned two *Centurions* and two *Optiones* to them. The companies were called *Ordines* or *Manipuli* or *Vexilla* and their officers were called *Centurions* or *Ordinum Ductores*. *Velites* were divided equally among all companies. The bravest man in each company was selected to be a standard-bearer *Vexillarii*. When both *Centurions* were present in the company the one selected first commanded soldiers on the right and the second one commanded soldiers on the left side of the company. If only one were present he commanded the whole company. The *Centurion's* job was not so much to initiate attacks as it was to be a good and confident leader capable of holding the ground even when it seemed impossible.

The cavalry was divided into ten squadrons or *Turmae* and from each were selected three officers, *Decuriones*, who appointed three rear-rank officers *Optiones*. The first commander chosen commanded the whole *Turmae*, but all three had the same rank of *Decuriones*. When the commander was not present the second elected *Decuriones* took over and after him the third.

After the *Tribunes* organized soldiers and told them how to arm themselves they dismissed them to their homes. Each *Consul* after receiving equal strength of the Roman and allied troops picked a different spot for the next meeting. When the Roman and allied army assembled together, *Consuls* appointed twelve *Praefecti Sociorum*⁹ to organize and command the allied forces. They selected from the allied forces the best and fittest soldiers for the actual service and they called them *Extraordinarii*. The number of Allied infantry was normally the same as the Roman infantry, but the former had to provide three times as many cavalry. From all allied forces the Romans attached one third of the cavalry and a fifth of the infantry to the two legions and divided the balance into two bodies, the right wing and the left wing.¹⁰

During the time of the Roman Republic, before the reforms of Gaius Marius and the beginning of the civil wars, the Senate had total control over the military, from the raising of troops to the sustainment of the army.

The best example of the civil and Senatorial control over the army and its commander is the story of the Gaul invasion of Italy in year 391 B.C. An unprepared Roman army met the Gaul's army only eleven miles from Rome. The Roman army suffered swift and humiliating defeat and majority of the army fled even before they engaged the enemy. The Gauls were so surprised, at how easy they achieved their victory

over the Romans, that they did not pursued the fleeing Roman army. Next day they entered Rome without any resistance and encountered only old and helpless people in the city. The Senators and men old enough to bear arms left city with their families and decided to take the last stand in the citadel on the Capitol. After plundering the city and killing the population in it, Gauls tried to take the Citadel with a direct attack up the hill. Roman defenders took full advantage of their superior tactical position and successfully charged the Gauls in a counterattack. Gauls realized that it will be impossible to take the hill with force put the Citadel and the Capitol under siege. Meanwhile a Roman army gathered in the city of Veii asked their finest general Marcus Furius Camillus, who was exiled from Rome on the order of the Senate, to take control and save Rome from the Gauls. Despite great danger and urgency of the situation, Camillus dispatched a messenger to the Capitol to obtain permission of the Senate and received the authority to raise an army. The *Comitia Centuria* immediately recalled Camillus from the exile and appointed him *Dictator* by the order of the people and commander of the army. Camillus then took the army and, together with the forces defending the Citadel and the Capitol, totally destroyed the Gaul army and returned to Rome in triumph.¹¹

After he saved Rome from certain destruction Camillus disbanded the army and was satisfied by honors put upon him and the right to assume again his sit in the Senate. That clearly shows us what control had the Senate over the army and the citizen-soldiers that constituted it.

¹¹Titus Livius, *The History of Rome* (The Project Gutenberg eBook, EBook #10828, produced by Jayam Subramanian, Ted Garvin, and PG distributed proofreaders, 25 January 2004); available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/10828>.

²Livy, *A History of Rome, Selections*, trans. Moses Hadas (New York: Random House, Inc., 1962), 174.

³Henry G. Liddell, *History of Rome* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1889), 42.

⁴Barbara F. MacManus, "Rome: Republic to Empire," [web pages]; The College of New Rochelle (revised July 2003); available from <http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/Romangvt.html>.

⁵M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1926), 36-37.

⁶Military tribunes were senior officers in the legion. During the early Republic the two of the six assigned to the legion commanded the legion and the command rotated among them.

⁷Capitol is the location of the Roman government in the time of the Republic. It is located between the Forum and the Campus Martius on the smallest of the Seven Hills of Rome.

⁸Optio means chosen in Latin, because they were chosen by their Centurions. They could be compared with the noncommissioned officer today.

⁹They were Roman officers appointed to command allied forces from the allied tribes in Italy.

¹⁰Polybius, *The Histories*, Book 6, trans. W. R. Paton, Loeb Classical Library, 6 vols. (Harvard University Press: 1922-1927), 313-367; available from <http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Polybius/home.html>. Greek texts and facing English translation.

¹¹Livy, 134-146

CHAPTER 3

DECLINE OF THE ROMAN REPUBLIC

Roman expansionism and long wars, especially with Carthage, reflected strongly on their society. While the oligarchy and aristocracy became richer because of the wars and expansion, middle class and small land owners bankrupted, partly because of the time they spent fighting and not cultivating their land, but more so because of the low prices of the food on the Roman market.

The late Roman Republic controlled great territories and with the conquest of Sicily it was able to provide cheap wheat for the people. Especially rich Senatorial class started to cultivate huge estates all over the state with the slaves procured from Roman expansion. Small land owners were not able to compete with huge estates operating on slave labor and, therefore, migrated as landless mass to Rome. With losing their land owning status they also lost their place in the Roman army since they were not able to equip themselves. The Senate tried to compensate smaller pool of levies by lowering the wealth census for serving in the army, but eventually even that was not enough to provide enough soldiers to fill the ranks. Occasionally, as during the Second Punic War, the Senate ignored the census all together and enlisted anybody capable of bearing arms on the public expense, but that was only in cases of severe and immediate danger to the Rome's existence and after the danger was gone they went back to the old ways.

The conditions in the Republic gave more opportunities to the politicians seeking power on the wings of demagogy and promising the restoration of the old middle class type of state from the old Republic.

Reforms by the Gracchus

Wealth and birth right divided the society of the early Republic into two classes, Patricians, Roman aristocracy and Plebeians, the common people of Rome. Later in the Republic, social system became more complex and the people were divided into five basic social groups (see figure 2):

Senators: The men serving in the Senate of Rome as well as their extended family belonged to the social class of *Senators*. Even so the most of the *Senators* came from noble families, more and more *Plebeians* joined their rank. When the *Plebeian* senator became *Consul* he and his family qualified for noble status as he was then called *Novus Homo* (a new man). *Senators* also had to possess at least 1,000,000 *Sesterces* (equivalent to 330,000 USD)¹ worth of property at the census. *Senators* were not allowed to take part in any nonagricultural enterprise and were not allowed to compete for trade or public contracts. The primary base to enter the *Senatorial* class was political and men of this class wore *Laticlavi* (tunic with broad stripes)

Equestrians: The men with a property of at least 400,000 sesterces together with their extended family belonged to the *Equestrian* class. They were mostly involved into nonagricultural enterprises as trade, public works and other business prohibited to the *Senators*. If *Equestrian* were elected to the Senate they become members of the *Senatorial* class, but that was usually difficult because of the nature of their business. The basis for this class was economic and men of *Equestrian* class wore *Angusti Clavi* (tunic with narrow stripes).

Plebs or Vulgus (Commons): were all freeborn Roman citizens. They were further subdivided to: *Latini*, freeborn people of Italy and *Peregrini*, other free people living in Roman territories.



Figure 2. Social Class and Public Display

Source: Barbara F. McManus, “Rome: Republic to Empire,” web pages on Roman history and culture (The College of New Rochelle, revised July 2003); available from <http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/Romangvt.html>.

Liberti or Libertini (Freed people): were first generation freed slaves. They were still not completely free and they owed certain things or duties to their former masters.

They could not compete for public office. The second generation became free citizens and they could even achieve *Equestrian* status if they had enough wealth.

Slaves; it was possible, especially for the urban slaves to move to the next social class *Liberti*, as they were sometimes manumitted or they saved enough money to buy their freedom.²

At the beginning there were Patricians whose power was in their wealth and the Plebeians whose power was in their number, but in time some of the richest people also emerged among the Plebeians and wealth was not the prime distinction anymore. It was also not uncommon that a champion of the Plebeians came from the ranks of the Patricians, since that was also a way how to get in power.

The beginning of the Patricians taking advantage of the Plebeian mass's power against the Senate was the conspiracy of Aulus Manlius (consul in 385 BC) who became the Plebeians champion shortly after Romans defeated Gallic invaders in 390 B.C. Manlius used the debt problem, which was especially problematic at the time, after the Gauls plundered the city and its surroundings. He accused the nobles of taking the ransom money collected early to save the city from the Gauls. With this money he claimed he would resolve the debt problems of the Plebeians. His attempt to become an undisputed ruler of Rome was short lived as he was put on trial and found guilty on the charge of conspiracy and treason.³

One of the biggest economic issues between the Patrician and Plebeians during the time of the Republic was the debt problem and public land distribution. The Plebeians were in debt because they were fighting in wars for the Republic and were not able to work on their land or in their daily businesses. Because of the numerous wars, they were

forced to take out loans from Patricians. After while they were not able to repay the debt and the public land that they occupied was taken from them by the oligarchy and in most cases so was their freedom.

The power of the Patrician grew at the expense of the Plebeians. Because the immediate payment was compulsory it made payment almost impossible. When all of Plebeian's personal property was confiscated they were brought to court and bound into slavery. Eventually the problem became so great that some measures were introduced to bring the relief to the Plebeians. These measures proposed to reduce their debts, limit the amount of public land (held solely by Patricians) which one man could possess, and grant representation in the consulship to the Plebeians.⁴ The measures were more patch work and they did not solve the core of the problem.

Long wars and conquest finally forced large taxes on the Roman society. After the Punic wars majority of the land was in the hands of the rich landlords and the work was done almost entirely by slaves. Citizen soldiers that worked and lived on the land and helped to create the vast Empire, lost most of their land during the time spent fighting for the glory of the Republic. The political stage of the Republic in the second century B.C. polarized into two major parties and a majority of the citizen holding public offices were much more concerned with their parties than with the public interest. The parties had many names through time. The *Patrician* party was most commonly known as *Optimates* when the *Populares*, or a peoples party, represented *Plebeians*.

In year 137 B.C. Tiberius Gracchus who served as a *Quaestor* in Spain noticed that most of the land he passed on his way to Spain was worked by slaves. Soon after that the Slave War broke out. He decided to run for the office of the *Tribune* and was elected

in 133 B.C. He proposed a bill to revise the Licinian Law of 364 B.C. which limited families to possess no more than 320 acres of state land. He proposed that the law should be revised in such a manner that each family could own an additional 180 acres of state land for every son in the family. Whatever state land they possessed beyond the limitation of the revised Licinian Law, they would return to the state and receive compensation for the investments they made to the land. The returned public land would then be redistributed among the landless masses. The tribes⁵ would elect three Commissioners *Triumviri* who would supervise the distribution of the state land and make sure that the land would not end up again in the hands of the rich Landowners. The sale of the distributed public land to the citizens would be prohibited.

The proposed bill was largely supported not only among the common people from the tribes, but it had the majority support in the Senate as well. The rich Landowners bribed one of the *Tribunes*, M. Octavius, to interpose veto on the proposed bill. Tiberius tried to persuade his colleague to reconsider, but eventually he had to remove Octavius from the office through the voting at the public assembly. After that the bill was passed and the *Triumviri* elected, but the reputation of Tiberius was damaged with the deposition of his fellow *Tribune* from office. He had made a lot of enemies and believed his life might be in danger after his time in office would come to an end. In order to secure his reelection he proposed a series of popular bills, but with his popularity raising he was also making more enemies in the Senate. Finally the nobles started to accuse him of seeking the throne and abusing his power. He was elected for the second time in a row for a *Tribune's* office, but that was objected since it had set precedence for the same man to be chosen in two successive years. The assembly meeting was broken up after a hot

debate and they met again next day on the Capitol. The Senate also assembled and after accusing Grachus of treason, the nobles attacked and killed the *Tribune* together with three hundred of his supporters.

After the death of Tiberius Gracchus the struggle between Oligarchy and Democracy intensified, but neither party was never in complete control of the Senate. In the year 131 B.C. Q. Metellus and Q. Pompeius were elected to the office of Censorship. That was the first time that two Plebeians held the office at the same time. Under the leadership of Scipio the younger, Senate changed the agrarian law of Tiberius Gracchus, disbanded the *Triumviri* and gave the judicial power to execute the agrarian law to the Consuls.

The Senate tried to keep the leaders of the popular party and followers of the Gracchus reforms away from Rome and active politics. After years of retirement from public life the younger of two brothers, Caius Gracchus, left his *Quaestor* position on Sardinia and return to Rome to carry on his brother's reforms. He introduced a serious of reforms and severely crippled the ultimate power of the Senate. Among other things he established the law of distributing corn to the poor population of Rome under the market price. He also took the judicial power of prosecuting those accused of corruption and poor governing of the provinces from the Senate and transferred it to an established body of three-hundred man elected among all free Roman citizens who possessed enough wealth to met *Equestrian* standard. He also wanted to extend Roman citizenship to all tribes on the Italian peninsula which would have had tremendous impact on the legionary pool of new conscripts as well as on the public founds. At the end Caius Gracchus had his life ended in the same manner as his older brother. He was violently killed when trying to

escape from his Senatorial enemies after the false allegations of the crimes he did not commit.

Even though the Gracchus brothers were not able to reform the Roman society, in order to compensate for, at least a certain extent, injustice that was done to the lower classes and reinstate the small farmer class that was once the foundation of the Roman society, they marked the path for future reformists.

Gaius Marius and Reforms of the Roman Military

Gaius Marius was born in a plebeian farmer family near Arpinum Italy. He started his career as a legion junior officer and served in Hispania under Scipio Aemilianus. As a veteran officer, at the age of thirty-four, he was elected to the *Quaestor* position and began his political career in the Popular party in 123 B.C. Even so, he had support from the Metteli family, an old and influential *Patrician* family; he decided to pursue the path of Gracchus brothers. He became the champion of the popular party and was elected *Tribune of the Plebeians* in 119 B.C. His support to the *Plebeian's* cause made him enough enemies in the *Patrician* Senate that he was not able to climb the magistrate ladder further. After a couple of unsuccessful attempts to be elected as an *Aedile*, he finally won a *Praetor* office seat in 115 B.C. A year later he went to govern a province in Spain. During his governing of the province in Spain he gained not only military prestige from putting down some insurrections, but returned to Rome as an extremely wealthy man as result of exploiting the silver mines in his province. When he returned to Rome he married Julia Caesar and made his way into one of the oldest Roman *Patrician* families. It was a political marriage between a wealthy *Plebeian* who wanted access to the political

and social elite of Roman life and a poor *Patrician* family desperate to get back into power, but lacked funds to do it.

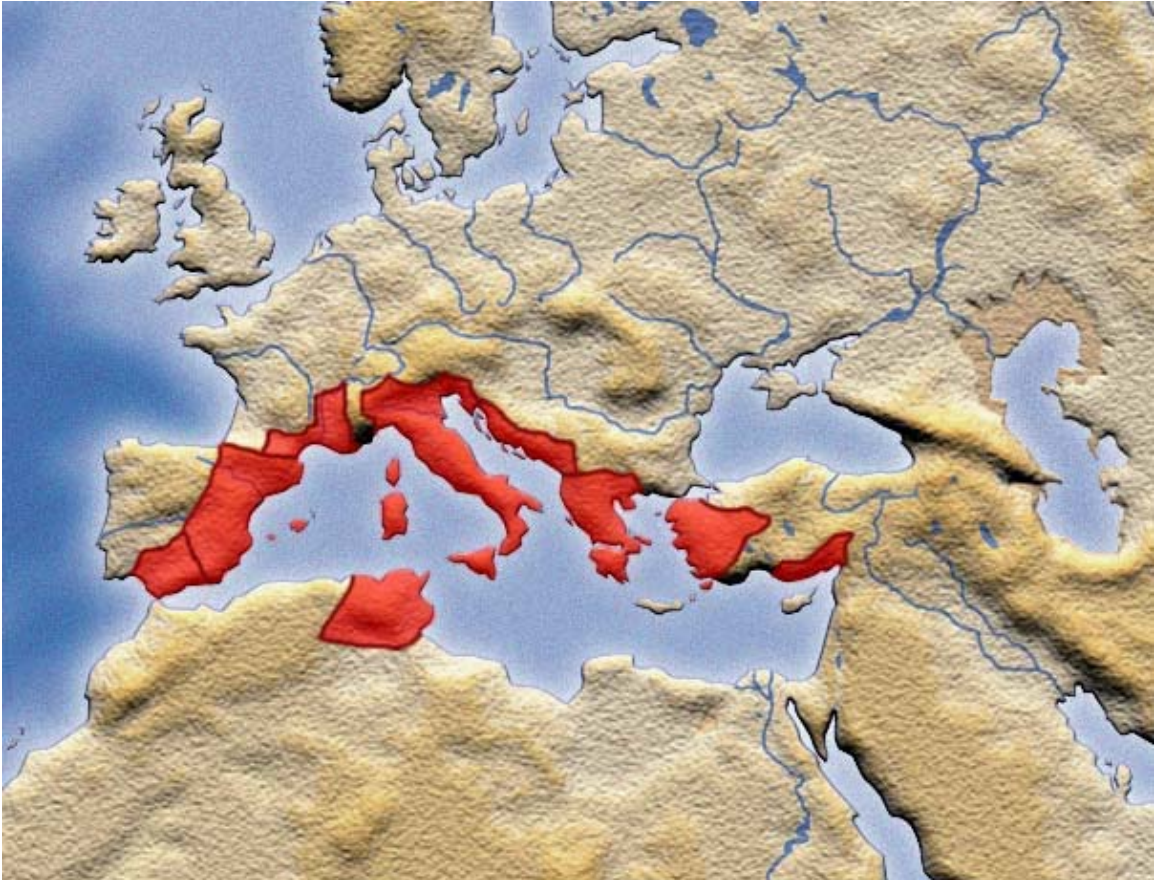


Figure 3. Map of the Roman Republic in 100 B.C.

Source: Franco Cavazzi www.roman-empire.net - The Illustrated History of the Roman Empire

In that time Rome was involved in a long campaign against the kingdom of Numidia known as the Jughurtine War. The war was notoriously famous for the corruption of Roman commanders as well as Roman magistrates. The people were upset with their armies' defeats and commanders coming home richer after every campaign they lost. In 109 B.C. Roman *Consul* Quintus Caecilius Metellus selected Marius to be

his chief *Legat* in his attempt to finish the Joghurtine War. The campaign itself lasted two years without any real success, but Marius exploited that fact and ran for the *Consul* office presenting himself as the only man capable of finishing the Joghurtine War. In 107 B.C Marius was elected *Consul* and appointed commander of the Roman forces in Numidia. He was fortunate enough to finish the war, not so much through his military genius, but because Joghurta was betrayed by his ally, the king of Mauretania and captured by a young *Patrician* officer Lucius Cornelius Sulla. Because Marius was the *Consul* and commander of the army he claimed all credit for the success and made a long life enemy in young, ambitious Sulla.

In 113 B.C. two German tribes, the Cimpri and Teutones, defeated Roman army at *Emona* (today Ljubljana). Fortunately for Rome the tribes continued their advance west and not south. On their way they were joined by Tigurini and other Celtic tribes and started to threaten the new Roman provinces in Gaul in 110 B.C. The Senate dispatched a relief force under the command of M. Iunus Silanus, who was *Consul* in 109 B.C., however he suffered defeat somewhere in the valley of Rhone. In the period from 107 to 105 B.C. the Roman army suffered several more defeats by the invading barbarian tribes. Rome finally sent a significant force of two armies commanded by *Proconsul* Quintus Servilius Caepio and *Consul* Gnaeus Mallius Maximus in 105 B.C. Neither of the commanders were very competent, and they failed to achieve unity of command. Maximus as a Consul that year was a supreme commander of all Roman forces, but Caepio questioned his authority especially since he came from an old Patrician family while Maximus was a *Novus Homo*.

While Maximus was involved in negotiations with the invading Cimbrian army, Caepio, in his desire for fame, immediately launched attack. His army was completely destroyed and the second army followed the same fate shortly after. Rome lost more than 80,000 men at the battle of Arusio. The people demanded Caepio to be prosecuted on his return but the Oligarchy protected him so that no harm came upon him.⁶

Faced with the possible German invasion of Italy and both Roman armies defeated at Arusio, Marius had no resources to build new army from the traditional land-owning classes in Rome. The enlistment situation was so bad that *Consul* P. Rutilius Rufus decreed that no man under the age of thirty-five was to leave Italy.⁷

The people of Rome were in panic, and an old fear, still present from the Gaul invasion and the burning of Rome in 390 B.C. reemerged. The rage of the people turned first against the ruling Oligarchy and their incompetent commanders. The people demanded the prosecution of Caepio, who was arrested and banned from *Proconsul* office. Since the military leaders of the Oligarchy lost the people's confidence in their capability to save Rome, they turned again to the "Champion of the people" and the "Victor of the Joghurtine war." Marius presented himself as a savior once again and was reelected *Consul* in 104 B.C. despite the law which prohibited his reelection. He was named the commander in chief in the Galic war while still in Africa and after that was reelected as a *Consul* five times in a row.⁸

In his war against the Germans Marius broke the law and mobilized landless masses in Rome with promises of permanent employment as professional soldiers in his new army and land as a retirement benefits.

After these reforms every free born citizen was allowed to serve as a volunteer in the new Marius' army. Marius also reformed the military classes and eliminated distinctions between *Velites*, *Hastate*, *Principes* and *Triari*. Officers decided in which line each soldier served, all soldiers got the same armor and received equal training. With unification of the army the old differences between social classes that were also present through different equipment and placement in particular class vanished.

Marius's comrade from the African war, Publius Rutilius Rufus, introduced a new concept of training to the army, one that emphasized training of an individual soldier on the principle used in gladiator fighting schools. With this new method soldiers gained individual skills that clearly distinguished them from old time conscript soldiers and increased the military culture of the new professional soldiers. Marius also reorganized the arrangement of the legion and replaced the lighter *Maniples* as the primary tactical unit with ten *Cohorts* each with its own standard and divided into five or six sections of 100 men. With these reforms Marius also increased the size of a legion from 4,200 to from 5,000 to 6,000 men. The legions still fought in three lines, but it was up to the commanding general how he distributed the *Cohorts*. Marius also replaced the old four standards of the legion the wolf, the ox with a men's head, the horse and the boar which distinguished different parts of a legion with a silver eagle that became single standard for every legion.

Soldiers were still building camps after every day's march, but now they had to carry their own entrenchment tools and equipment in order to speed up the movement. Because of the heavy equipment previously transported by the baggage trains they were called Marius' mules (*Muli Mariani*).⁹

It is likely that Marius saved Rome by opening the military to all free man on the peninsula, but he also endangered stability of the Roman Republic where citizen was also a soldier, but he was first a citizen. In the old Republican army serving in the army was always a burden for the population and sometimes meant financial ruin. In the new Marius' army serving became an opportunity, with the possibility of career and retirement. It also switched soldier's loyalty and hopes from the State and the Senate to the commander, who controlled their present fortune and upon whom they expected to secure their future after they retired from active service.¹⁰ It is probably difficult to speculate that Marius reformed the Roman army because of his political ambitions to seize ultimate power and control over the Roman state. Even with the establishment of the professional soldier class, it took time for the soldiers to adjust to their new role in the society and to become susceptible to the rewards offered by commanders seeking support for their political ambitions. Marius did, in fact, discharge newly established army according to the law and attempted to gain control over the State through political institutions. But even doing so he did get away with much more than Gracchi brothers did during their reform struggle.

When Marius after the engagement on the Raudine plain unconstitutionally gave Rome citizenship on the very field of battle to two cohorts of Italian allies *en masse* for their brave conduct, he justified him self afterwards by saying that admits the noise of battle he had not been able to distinguish the voice of the laws.¹¹

It is, of course, much easier to conduct reforms with well trained, motivated, and professional soldiers in support than with a mob that runs away at the first sign of trouble.

Marius discovered that later as he had to flee into exile after his successful sixth consulship. He had lost all his credibility during his involvement in a plot against the

Senate with the Popular party while he also orchestrated intervention against a revolt with the Oligarchy. After his conduct during the plot became public, he was not even able to present himself as a candidate much less getting an actual position in the magistracies. After losing his reputation in Rome Marius went into exile to the eastern provinces, hoping that some conflict might occur and he could once again emerge as Rome's savior. Unfortunately, for Marius, the Republic remained peaceful and his enemy, Quintus Mettelus, returned to Rome in triumph. With the return of Mettelus and disposition of the rebellious leaders of the Popular party, the Aristocratic party began changing the laws implemented by the Gracchis and their political successors. After the influence of the Popular party was severely curtailed the only thing limiting ruling of the Aristocratic party was the *Equestrian* class, who after the Gracchi's reforms did not only collect taxes in the provinces, but also had the judicial power, through the members of the jury elected among them. It was through the power of the *Equestrian* court that rich class controlled the ruling party in the Senate and convicted their members when they believed they were threatened by their actions or where the magistrates did not govern the province in the interest of the capital.

Marcus Livius Drusus, tribune of the people in 91 B.C tried to reach compromise between the rivalry factions and reform the Gracchi's juries by giving half of the seats in court back to the Senate, but the proposition was opposed by both classes. After it became public that Drusus was preparing a bill to give Roman franchise to all Italians, he lost support of the Senate, *Equestrians* as well as the *Plebeians*. After that the Senate declared all his legislation illegal and he was murdered soon after.¹²

Even if Gracchi's reforms succeed and distributed land again to the poor Plebeian masses the economic reality of the food market would not allow them to successfully compete against huge slave ran estates and imported wheat. It would be only a temporary solution that would inevitable resulted in a same bankruptcy as it did before.

From the military perspective Marius' answer was the only long-term solution for providing enough manpower needed to protect the Roman State and for its further expansion.

Civil Wars

If the beginning of the civil wars, the Social war, is examined as an insurgency within the Roman Republic, with its roots in the unjust relationship between Rome and Romanized cities of the Italian peninsula, the later civil wars had totally different roots.

The standing professional army that emerged from Marius reforms enabled control to slip away from the Senate since the loyalty and motivation of the soldiers were not any more the same as they were in the conscripted units. Army commanders were able to personalize their armies and exploit soldiers for their personal goals which led to a serious of civil wars that finally brought to the transformation of the Roman Republic into Roman Empire.

Social War

After the death of Drusus Italian cities realized that Senate would not grant them their demands for Roman citizenship. The cities of Italy were no more protected against abusing powers of the Roman magistrates as were the Roman provinces and colonies in Africa. Rich Roman citizens, in the *Equestrian* class, did not only close the door to the

Italian allies for obtaining full Roman citizenship, but also severely restricted the right for them to migrate into Rome. For years allied cities tried to obtain their goals by political means, sometimes through the *Populares* other times through the leaders of the *Optimates*. Every time their bill was presented the parties turned against their leaders and usually they paid their support to extended franchising with their lives. With Drusus also the hope for acquiring the bill by peaceful means died and the allied cities realized that they could obtain equal rights only by united armed pressure against Rome and the Senate. In the year 91-90 B.C. both sides started preparations for war. After first year of the conflict neither side managed to achieve decisive victory. Rome was facing a serious of political processes staged by the “capitalist” juries of the *Equestrian* Court that went on a witch hunt against all moderate political forces.

At the end off the year 90 B.C. Tribune Marcus Plautius Silvanus reformed the jury system by abolishing the system of class classification, so the new jury men could be nominated from all free Romans through the tribes elections. This change in the judicial system, which severely crippled the nationalistic power of the Roman *Equestrian* class, opened the path for peace. In the year 89 B.C. *Consul* Lucius Caesar passed a law that all people of the Italian communities who were not involved in the revolt against Rome could get the Roman franchise, but with the restrictions similar to those applied to the *Libertini*.¹³

In 89 B.C. the war was finally turning to favor the Roman side and under the command of Lucius Cornelius Sulla Roman army finally defeated the rebel cities.

Lucius Cornelius Sulla

Sulla was the first Roman politician and general who fully exploited new professional army for his political goals and eventually took power from the Senate. He was also the first Roman general in history who marched with Roman legions against Rome.

Sulla was born in an old Roman *Patrician*, but not wealthy family and started his career as a *Quaestor* to Marius in his first consulship. He fought with him in the Joghurta war.¹⁴ For years Joghurta avoided decisive battle with Roman army and bought his way out of danger, by either bribing Roman Senators in Rome or Roman commanders in Africa. Mainly through political plots and personal relationships Sulla finally managed to capture Joghurta as he was betrayed by his father in law Bocchus, king of Numidia.

Plutarch reports about Sulla's apprehension of Joghurta:

Here, in general, he gained approbation; and more especially, by closing in dexterously with an accidental occasion, made a friend of Bocchus, king of Numidia. He hospitably entertained the king's ambassadors, on their escape from some Numidian robbers, and after showing them much kindness, sent them on their journey with presents, and an escort to protect them. Bocchus had long hated and dreaded his son-in-law, Jugurtha, who had now been worsted in the field and had fled to him for shelter; and it so happened, he was at this time entertaining a design to betray him. He accordingly invited Sylla to come to him, wishing the seizure and surrender of Jugurtha to be effected rather through him, than directly by himself. Sylla, when he had communicated the business to Marius, and received from him a small detachment, voluntarily put himself into this imminent danger; and confiding in a barbarian, who had been unfaithful to his own relations, to apprehend another man's person, made surrender of his own. Bocchus, having both of them now in his power, was necessitated to betray one or other, and after long debate with himself, at last resolved on his first design, and gave up Jugurtha into the hands of Sylla.¹⁵

Marius as a consul and commanding officer of the winning army claimed the glory and the triumph from the successive end of the Joghurta war for himself. Sulla openly showed his discontent as well as he continued to provoke Marius with his arrogant

behavior. However, Marius recognized potential in the young man and thought he posed no threat to him and continued to use his skills. Sulla has served as a *Legat* in Marius second consulship and as a military *Tribune* in his third consulship. After his third consulship Marius recognized the potential threat from Sulla's military successes and he started to limit his powers and did not give him any further chance for fighting and leading troops into battle. Sulla responded by offering his services to Q. Lutatius Catalus, who was Marius's colleague in the consulship. Catalus, not being a military man, entrusted his whole military powers upon Sulla, who made full use of that opportunity. He was not only highly successful in defeating barbarian tribes in the Alps but also made a fortune for himself and his soldiers.

With his success and reputation fairly established among the population of Rome he entered the political life. He did not succeed to gain the position of *Praetor* at first and had to settle for the office of *Aedile*. Next year, after throwing enough money into his second campaign, he was elected as *Praetor* in Rome. After his *Praetorship* he served in Cappadocia where he looked after the Roman interests in the region and held the talks with the representatives of Parthia for the first time in Roman history.

After he returned to Rome his rivalry with Marius intensified and was put aside only briefly during the Social war. It was during this period that he completely stepped out of Marius' shadow as he performed much better on and off the battlefield than his former "teacher" and by that he secured his fame and devotion of his and others soldiers.

After the Romans successfully finished the Social war they faced a new war in the east. King Mithridates VI of Pontus saw the Roman Social war as a sign of Roman weakness and declared war on the Republic. Sulla, who was a *Consul* at the time claimed

the right to command the Roman army against Mithridates, but Publius Sulpicius Rufus, *Tribune* of the people, denied him of the right and appointed Marius as Roman commander in the Mithridatic war. He deposed Sulla's so-*Consul* Q. Pompeius Rufus from the office and Sulla himself barely escaped death. The Senate stood powerless against the will of Marius and Sulpicius, but Sulla reacted faster than the two conspirators and reached the camp of the Roman army first. When Marius sent military *Tribunes* to assemble "his" army, the soldiers killed the *Tribunes* and under Sulla's command six Roman legions marched upon Rome itself. When Marius heard about the faith of his *Tribunes* he killed Sulla's friends in Rome and sent two *Praetors* Brutus and Servilius to forbid army from entering the city. Soldiers attacked the *Praetors* and sent them beaten and half naked back to Rome. The Roman Senate sent a delegation to Sulla begging him not to enter the city and offering him all rights he was previously denied. Sulla accepted their proposal, but later entered the city anyway and killed all who opposed him. Marius desperately tried to form a resisting force and even called upon the slaves and promised them freedom if they fought Sulla, but he was overwhelmed by Sulla's legions and he finally fled Rome. Sulla then assembled the Senate and forced them to sentence Marius to death and put a bounty on his head. He also wanted to appoint his friends and relatives to the public offices, but the people resented them and elected others just to show him their disapproval of his actions.

While the Romans fought for power in the city of Rome, King Mithridates continued with his campaign and conquered Asia from the Romans, deposed the kings of Bithynia and Capadocia and gained control over majority of Greek cities. When Sulla finally arrived with his army to defeat Mithridates and crush the rebellion he first had to

lay a siege to Athens which allied with the enemy. The war started to turn into a more nasty campaign since Sulla lacked funds and material and he was concerned that the Senate and the people of Rome might depose him once again. So he began to plunder the country and even the sanctuaries to get provisions necessary for his campaign. Thus the true face of the new reformed army came to light. In his work Plutarch gives us probably the best description of what Roman army has turned in to:

Other things were sent away without much notice on the part of the Greeks in general, but in the case of the silver tun, that only relic of the regal donations, which its weight and bulk made it impossible for any carriage to receive, the Amphictyons were forced to cut it into pieces, and called to mind in so doing, how Titus Flamininus, and Manius Acilius, and again Paulus Aemilius, one of whom drove Antiochus out of Greece, and the others subdued the Macedonian kings, had not only abstained from violating the Greek temples, but had even given them new gifts and honors, and increased the general veneration for them. They, indeed, the lawful commanders of temperate and obedient soldiers, and themselves great in soul, and simple in expenses, lived within the bounds of the ordinary established charges, accounting it a greater disgrace to seek popularity with their men, than to feel fear of their enemy. Whereas the commanders of these times, attaining to superiority by force, not worth, and having need of arms one against another, rather than against the public enemy, were constrained to temporize in authority, and in order to pay for the gratifications with which they purchased the labor of their soldiers, were driven, before they knew it, to sell the commonwealth itself, and, to gain the mastery over men better than themselves, were content to become slaves to the vilest of wretches. These practices drove Marius into exile, and again brought him in against Sylla. These made Cinna the assassin of Octavius, and Fimbria of Flaccus. To which courses Sylla contributed not the least; for to corrupt and win over those who were under the command of others, he would be munificent and profuse towards those who were under his own; and so, while tempting the soldiers of other generals to treachery, and his own to dissolute living, he was naturally in want of a large treasury, and especially during that siege.¹⁶

When Sulla finally took Athens after a long siege he let his soldiers plunder and slaughter the city's population to make an example for the other rebellious cities.

After defeating Mithridates army in Greece he made peace with the King, retaking all lost provinces and getting seventy ships and five hundred archers from him.

Mithridates then sailed back to Pontus and Sulla laid a huge public fine upon Asia and quartered soldiers at the individual families which also had to pay each soldiers leaving allowance each day as well as feed them.¹⁷

When Sulla returned to Italy in the year 83 B.C. *Consuls* L. Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus and C. Norbanus met him with large opposition force. After destroying the Norbanus army he intercepted Scipio and dragged on negotiations with him while his men bribed and corrupted his soldiers to join his cause. Scipio's legate Sertorius warned the *Consul* not to negotiate with Sulla since he is, as he said a Fox as much as a Lion, but when Scipio finally broke off negotiation it was already to late. Sulla appeared in front of his camp and Scipio's whole army joined him.¹⁸

The *Consuls* for the year 82 B.C. were C. Papirius Carbo and C. Marius (adopted son of Marius Gaius) Sulla dealt with them quickly and by the end of the year he was in complete control of Italy. After taking control over the Senate he killed all he thought might oppose him. All Roman officers taken prisoners were put to death and soldiers paraded the streets with their heads on the spears, Sulla had massacred 6,000 people alone in the Roman Circus while he addressed the Senate.¹⁹

When Sulla won the civil war in Italy he had twenty-three legions under his command and all 120,000 soldiers expected compensation for their service. That might be one of the reasons for Sulla's cruel treatment of his opponent. Not only did he want to eliminate all political opposition, but he also needed the money and land to compensate his soldiers. By giving away state land for over ten "colonies" to his soldiers he did not only repay them for their service, but also secured himself with a huge reserve army in case of need. Sulla then appointed himself as a life term *Dictator*. The *Consuls* were still

elected by the *Comitia*, but it was he who appointed the candidates. When Lucretius Ofella presented himself as a candidate without his permission Sulla's bodyguard killed him on the spot and justified his action by addressing the Senate: "A husband," he said, "was troubled with vermin. Twice he shook his tunic, but they continued to annoy him, and the third time he burned it. Let those," he added, "who had twice been conquered by arms, beware of fire third time."²⁰

Roman historian Gaius Sallustius Crispus gives a description of what the Roman Republic transformed to after Sulla exploited the reformed army for his political goals:

After Sulla had recovered the government by force of arms, everybody became robbers and plunderers. Some set their hearts on houses, some on lands. His victorious troops knew no restraint, no moderation, but inflicted on the citizens disgraceful and inhumane outrages. The whole period was one of debauched tastes and lawlessness. When wealth was once counted an honor, and glory, authority, and power attended it, virtue lost her influence, poverty was thought a disgrace, and a life of innocence was regarded as a life of mere ill nature. From the influence of riches, accordingly, luxury, avarice, pride came to prevail among the youth. They grew at once rapacious and prodigal. They undervalued what was their own; they set at nought modesty and continence; they lost all distinction between sacred and profane, and threw off all consideration and self-restraint.²¹

Sulla liberated 10,000 slaves formerly owned by his enemies, gave them instant citizenship and made freedmen out of them. He appointed his friends to fill the empty ranks among the Senators and raised the numbers of *Quaestors* to twenty. In order to control Senatorial appointments easier he abandoned the office of the *Censor*. He took the judicial power away from the *Equestrian* order and returned it to the Senate. His main goal was to return absolute power to the Senate and to the Patricians by eliminating all what was achieved through the reforms of Gracchi brothers and their followers. In the year 80 B.C. he resigned his Dictator's office and retired to the Naples where he shortly died from the diseases caused probably by his decadent life style.

The First Triumvirate

After Sulla's death Rome fell into a vacuum of political instability, the Sulla's revolution and his constitution which entrusted all power in to exclusive hands of the Senatorial Oligarchy was facing severe problems. They were facing stronger and bigger opposition every day. People saw that no law exists any more as long as you are serving the right master. Military service was no longer mandatory to begin a career as a magistrate. Age limit, which was honored from the beginning of the Republic, was no longer honored and young man like Pompeius were given Triumph before they were even eligible for the Senate.

Manny, too, who recalled Sulla's victory, when they saw common soldiers risen to the rank of senator, and others become so rich that they feasted and lived like kings, hoped each for him self for like fruits of victory if he took the field. Besides this, young man who had maintained a wretched existence, by manual labor in the country, tempted by public and private doles, had come to prefer idleness in the city to their unprofitable toil; these like others, batted on the public ills. Therefore it is not surprising that man who were beggars and without character, with illimitable hopes, should respect their country as little as they did themselves.²²

From this political and social chaos two strong figures appeared and took the lead on the political stage, Gneus Pompeius and Marcus Licinius Crassus.

Gneus Pompeius was born in September 106 B.C. in a wealthy *Patrician* family. His father Gneus Pompeius Strabo was a Roman general and young Pompeius served under him during the Social war in Italy.²³ Pompeius father died in 87 B.C. shortly after the Social war and young Pompeius spent his early years between the Marius and Sulla's struggle for power. During the time when Marius' party²⁴ ruled Rome, he mostly stayed in his private live, since that was not a good time to be a reach *Patrician*. Young Pompeius got his chance for glory when Sulla returned to Italy in 83 B.C. Pompeius,

seeing that more and more people were joining Sulla decided to raise an army in Sulla's support. Pompeius was only twenty-three years old when contrary to all Roman laws, he summoned three legions for Sulla's cause and marched down the Italian peninsula to join forces with Sulla. For a man of his age to command Roman legions and commissioned Roman officers was a precedence for that time and people in the Italian cities where he was levying soldiers compared him to Alexander the Great. Plutarch in his works writes about Pompeius:

For on the one hand, never did the Romans give such demonstrations of a vehement and fierce hatred against any of their generals, as they did against Strabo, the father of Pompey; during whose lifetime, it is true, they stood in awe of his military power, as indeed he was a formidable warrior, but immediately upon his death, which happened by a stroke of thunder, they treated him with the utmost contumely, dragging his corpse from the bier, as it was carried to his funeral. On the other side, never had any Roman the people's good-will and devotion more zealous throughout all the changes of fortune, more early in its first springing up, or more steadily rising with his prosperity, or more constant in his adversity, than Pompey had. In Strabo, there was one great cause of their hatred, his insatiable covetousness; in Pompey, there were many that helped to make him the object of their love; his temperance, his skill, and exercise in war, his eloquence of speech, integrity of mind and affability in conversation and address; insomuch that no man ever asked a favor with less offense, or conferred one with a better grace. When he gave, it was without assumption, when he received, it was with dignity and honor.²⁵

On his way to join forces with Sulla, Pompeius defeated Marius' generals on several occasions and proved his military talent to such extent that Sulla himself greeted the young man as an *Imperator*

After Sulla became Dictator of Rome he entrusted his young general with commanding his forces in order to destroy the remains of Marius' forces. Pompeius defeated Marius supporters on Sicily and shortly after in Africa as well. When he finally returned victorious to Rome, Sulla gave him a title of Magnus, but he refused to give him a Triumph, even so he was proclaimed an *Imperator*²⁶ by his soldiers in Africa.

Pompeius refused to disband his legions and he camped in front of Rome with his soldiers until Sulla finally gave up and allowed him a Triumph.

After Sulla's death Q. Lutatius Catulus became leader of the Aristocratic Party and was elected *Consul* in 78 B.C. with M. Aemilius Lepidus as his colleague. Lepidus was elected only because of the Pompeius support even so Sulla warned Pompeius against the man. After Sulla's death and being elected *Consul*, Lepidus summoned the remains of Marius' forces and took up arms against the Senate. Since Catulus was no match for Lepidus, the nobility turned to Pompeius, who successfully suppressed the revolt that has spread through Italy into the Cisalpine Gaul as well. Lepidus had to flee to Sardinia where he died before he could be prosecuted.

But even before suppressing Lepidus, Rome was faced with much greater danger in Spain where Quintus Sertorius, a former general of Marius was ruling the province in the name of the old government and the Marius' Party. He gained great popularity among the local tribes and organized a great force to compel Rome and resist Sulla's dictatorship. Rome has already dispatched an army under the command of Metellus Pius, but they were not able to reconquer the provinces. The Senate then decided to send Pompeius to help him, but he resisted and demanded more authority.

There yet remained Sertorius, a very different general from Lepidus, in possession of Spain, and making himself formidable to Rome; the final disease, as it were, in which the scattered evils of the civil wars had now collected. He had already cut off various inferior commanders, and was at this time coping with Metellus Pius, a man of repute and a good soldier, though perhaps he might now seem too slow, by reason of his age, to second and improve the happier moments of war, and might be sometimes wanting to those advantages which Sertorius by his quickness and dexterity would wrest out of his hands. For Sertorius was always hovering about, and coming upon him unawares, like a captain of thieves rather than soldiers, disturbing him perpetually with ambuscades and light skirmishes; whereas Metellus was accustomed to regular conduct, and fighting in battle array

with full-armed soldiers. Pompey, therefore, keeping his army in readiness, made it his object to be sent in aid to Metellus; neither would he be induced to disband his forces, notwithstanding that Catulus called upon him to do so, but by some colorable device or other he still kept them in arms about the city, until the senate at last thought fit, upon the report of Lucius Philippus, to decree him that government. At that time, they say, one of the senators there expressing his wonder and demanding of Philippus whether his meaning was that Pompey should be sent into Spain as proconsul, "No," replied Philippus, "but as *proconsuls*," as if both consuls for that year were in his opinion wholly useless.²⁷

After that Pompey left for Spain where the rebellion was finally crushed after six years of fighting, not because of Pompey's brilliance, but rather because Sertorius was betrayed and assassinated. On his return from Spain in 71 B.C. Pompey also caught the remains of the Spartacus army of slaves and killed all 6,000 of them, claiming later the success for finishing the great slave revolt as well as reconquering Spain.

While Pompey was fighting the revolt in Spain his political rival, Marcus Licinius Crassus, was busy with the largest and most dangerous slave revolt in the Roman history. Crassus was the richest and because of his wealth the most influential man of his time. He was not born as rich as Pompey but he had made his wealth through various speculations that were only possible under special circumstances of his time.

Crassus never was the man that refused to accept, or give money for them. Moreover observing how extremely subject the city was to fire, and falling down of houses, by reason of their height and their standing so near together, he bought slaves that were builders and architects, and when he had collected these to the number of more than five hundred, he made it his practice to buy houses that were on fire, and those in the neighborhood, which, in the immediate danger and uncertainty, the proprietors were willing to part with for little, or nothing; so that the greatest part of Rome, at one time or other, came into his hands. Yet for all he had so many workmen, he never built anything but his own house, and used to say that those that were addicted to building would undo themselves soon enough without the help of other enemies. And though he had many silver mines, and much valuable land, and laborers to work in it, yet all this was nothing in comparison of his slaves, such a number and variety did he possess of excellent readers, amanuenses, silversmiths, stewards, and table-waiters, whose instruction he always attended to himself, superintending in person while they learned, and teaching them himself, accounting it the main duty of a master to look over the

servants, that are, indeed, the living tools of housekeeping; and in this, indeed, he was in the right, in thinking, that is, as he used to say, that servants ought to look after all other things, and the master after them. For economy, which in things inanimate is but money-making when exercised over men becomes policy.²⁸

While Pompey's strength came from his military success and popularity, Crassus was his wealth. Even so Crassus was furious with Pompey trying to take credit for what he considered his successful campaign against the slave rebellions. They created an alliance and run together for *Consul* even so neither of them had legal right to run for the office. According to the Laws of Sulla they did not qualified since Crassus was still *Praetor* and Pompey was too young and he had never served even as a *Quaestor*. But they learned well from Sulla and refused to disband their armies until the Senate finally broke the law and appointed them *Consuls* for 70 B.C.²⁹

During his *Consulship* Pompey supported the cause of the Popular Party and in that time he became close to the younger of the two, in what will become known as the first Triumvirate, Gaius Julius Caesar. Pompey with the support of Caesar reinstated *Tribunes* of the Plebeians and took exclusive judicial power again from the Senate and divided it between the *Senatorial* and *Equestrian* class. After his time in office Pompey returned to private life until he was recalled in 67-66 B.C. to clean the Mediterranean sea of the pirates, and was again bestowed with the powers never entrusted upon anyone in Roman history. The Senate, against the will of the *Optimates*, granted Pompey complete authority on the sea and fifty miles deep into the main land. After he defeated the pirates and established himself as a maritime commander, he fought the third Mithridates war. He finally returned to Rome in 61 B.C. to find out that another man, Gaius Julius Caesar, had taken his place as a favorite of the *Plebeians*.

Caesar was born in an old *Patrician* family and his aunt Julia was married to Marius. When Sulla defeated Marius, Caesar was spared mainly because of his youth, but when he refused to divorce his wife Cornelia he had to flee to Greece where he spent time studying rhetoric. After Sullas' death he returned to Rome where he first worked as an advocate and then started his public career as a *Military Tribune* and than a *Quaestor* for 69 B.C. He started to pick up the remains of the Marius Party and gained more and more popularity among the *Plebeians*. In 63 B.C. he was elected to the office of *Pontifex Maximus*.³⁰ With his election to such high visible position, he became a rising star on the Rome's' political stage. During that early period Caesar was relatively poor and he was in deep debts, especially after costly election campaign for the position of *Pontifex Maximus*. After the end of his *Praetorship* in 62 B.C. he was pressed hard by his creditors and he had to turn to Crassus for help. Crassus saw a strong ally in Caesar against Pompey and repaid all his debts so Caesar could went to *Hispania* which was allotted to him and govern there. During his time in Spain he did well on the civilian as well as military side of his governing, but when he returned to Rome, he preferred to run for a *Consulship* than receiving a *Triumph*.³¹

Caesar was elected *Consul* for the year 59 B.C. During his *Consulship* he created a political alliance with Pompey and Crassus, what was later known as the First Triumvirate. Suetonius reports of this political alliance:

He likewise brought about a reconciliation between Pompey and Marcus Crassus, who had been at variance from the time of their joint consulship, in which office they were continually clashing; and he entered into an agreement with both, that nothing should be transacted in the government, which was displeasing to any of the three.³²

During that time Caesar often presented his bills together with Pompey and Crassus and was often backed by the soldiers of both, which they kept armed in the city. His most valuable bill was agrarian when he distributed public land in Campania to the veteran soldiers of Pompey and that was something that *Optimates* heavily objected, but were finally put to rest by the soldiers of Triumvirs. With this law Triumvirs secured themselves with a huge pool of potential soldiers for the future. He also married his daughter Julia to Pompey in order to further strengthen their alliance.

After his Consulship, Caesar got a province of Cisalpine-Gaul, Illyricum and later even Gallia-Comata for the precedent period of five years. In that time he started to levy and equip troops on his own account and with a four year extension he subdued the whole of Gaul and brought Roman army deeper in Europe than any Roman commander before him.

During nine years in which he held the government of the province, his achievements were as follows: he reduced all Gaul, bounded by the Pyrenean forest, the Alps, mount Gebenna, and the two rivers, the Rhine and the Rhone, and being about three thousand two hundred miles in compass, into the form of a province, excepting only the nations in alliance with the republic, and such as had merited his favor; imposing upon this new acquisition an annual tribute of forty millions of sesterces. He was the first of the Romans who, crossing the Rhine by a bridge, attacked the Germanic tribes inhabiting the country beyond that river, whom he defeated in several engagements. He also invaded the Britons, a people formerly unknown, and having vanquished them, exacted from them contributions and hostages. Amidst such a series of successes, he experienced thrice only any signal disaster; once in Britain, when his fleet was nearly wrecked in a storm; in Gaul, at Gergovia, where one of his legions was put to the rout; and in the territory of the Germans, his lieutenants Titurius and Aurunculeius were cut off by an ambushade.³³

When it was time for the Consular elections for 55 B.C. Caesar returned to Rome to help Pompey fight the Patrician Oligarchy that had become too powerful and started to challenge the authority of the Triumvirate. Triumvirs presented Crassus and Pompey for

their second term as candidates for Consul, but the Senate resisted until young Crassus, who was at the time serving under Caesar in Gaul, started to approach Rome with his legion. Senate submitted again to the will of the Triumvirs and elected both into the office where they prolonged Caesars *Proconsulship* in Gaul for additional five years. Since Caesar was now breaking all kinds of Roman laws all together, he was counting on being reelected Consul by the time when his Proconsul power would come to an end and he would legally obtain his army.³⁴

After Crassus' death in his Parthian campaign³⁵ and the death of his daughter Julia the balance in the Triumvirate was broken. Pompey, threatened by Caesars military glory and power of his troops joined the Noble's camp with Cicero and tried to shorten Caesar's *Proconsulship* for a year in order to force him to disband his army. Cicero mitigate some negotiations between both and even came to an agreement with Caesar to continue governing Gaul with only one legion in his last year before he ran for the office of the *Consul*. Caesar's last proposal was to disband eight legions and gave up all provinces and only keeps Gaul together with two legions,³⁶ but as Plutarch reports it was L. Cornelius Lentulus Crus, Consul in 49 B.C. that was uncompromising and did not want to negotiate with Caesar.³⁷

After negotiations failed Caesar crossed Rubicon and conquered Italy. He conquered Italy in sixty days without any bloodshed. Pompey fled Italy and Caesar finally defeated him in the battle at Pharsalus, where Caesar's veteran Gallic army prevailed against Pompey's mostly allied army. Pompey managed to escape to Egypt where he was assassinated. Caesar did not return to Rome until 45 B.C. where he did not

follow the bloody path of Sulla, but pardoned most of the Pompey's supporters and officers.

After his return to Rome he celebrated four Triumphs in less than a month and paid each of his foot soldiers 20,000 additional sesterces to the 2,000 he paid them at the beginning of the civil war. He then allotted the land to his veterans, but not by disposing former owners, and then turned his attention to the matters of state. He reorganized the calendar giving it 365 days and filled the empty ranks of the Senate and the magistrates with Plebeians. He reformed the jury ranks by opening it only to *Equestrian* and *Senatorial* while he excluded the *Tribunes* of the Treasury³⁸ who until then also filled the jurors positions. He sent eighty thousand colonist to settle over sea in Carthago and Corinth while he also stopped the drain of the population by decreeing that men between twenty and forty years could not be absent from Italy for more than three years at a time unless they were in the military service. He was extremely strict in executing justice and for that he used his *Lictors*³⁹ as well as his soldiers.⁴⁰ Caesar understood best of all how important personal loyalty is, when it came to the matter of controlling the Roman state. He personalized his troops through all the time that he led them and in that he was more successful than Pompey, Sulla or Marius before him. Even in times of trouble his soldiers did not desert him. The Roman military in Caesar's time was not a disciplined force as one might think. The officer corps was made from the governing class while the subjects, provincials and *Plebeians* filled the lower officer and soldier's ranks. Generals were almost totally independent of central government and they relied on the resources of their provinces for the upkeep of their armies. The legions had were not a tool of the government anymore, but of their leaders, especially in the political sense. They soldiers

served to the one who paid them the most. From the military point, the army had been a miserable as their leader and most of the time totally disorganized, but under competent leaders, like Pompey or Caesar it attained a military perfection that by far outmatched the old republican army. Legally each citizen still had a general obligation to serve in the military, but in reality some people avoided the levy all along while others served for thirty years or longer. The ranks, even as important as Centurion, were granted based upon personal friendship or sold to a higher bidder. Because of the corrupted bureaucracy and magistrates payment did not come on time or in proper quantities. The result of all these deficiencies was that legions pillaged the provinces, mutinied against their officers and ran away at the first sight of the enemy.

The first priority in Caesar's military reforms was reconstitution of discipline into the army's ranks. To attract better quality soldiers and especially officers into the army, he established a bill that stated that before holding a municipal magistracy one had to serve either three years in a cavalry unit or six years in the infantry. Realizing the spirit of the nation was too weak for compulsory military service, Caesar abandoned associating military service with honorary offices. He also did not try to reestablish the Roman *Equestrian* cavalry. While most of the heavy infantry came from the lower orders of the Roman bourgeoisie, the cavalry and the light infantry was filled from the lower class. One of Caesar's biggest military innovations was the incorporation of foreign mercenaries, especially Germans into the cavalry. His next innovation was introduction of more permanent and centralized command and control to the legion through the position of *Legati Legionis*. Until then six military tribunes, who were nominated by governor and bourgeoisie commanded a single legion by rotations. The *Legati Legionis*

were organic to the legion and were appointed by the supreme commander in Rome. This made a stronger and more centralized command for the Roman military. An office of supreme commander was entrusted to a single man, *Imperator*, in Rome and while the governor still had the authority over the military in his province, the *Imperator* had a supreme authority over all military forces across the Empire and he could always take control over military units by himself or entrust it to one of his delegates. From the establishment of the *Imperator* it was he and no longer the governor appointing *Centurions*, most military tribunes⁴¹ and *Legati Legionis*. With those changes Caesar prevented the armies from falling into disorganization or to transfer their allegiance to a governor or any other appointee or commander.⁴²

Because of his large conquests Caesar realized that the need for the standing army defending the borders of the Empire was greater than ever, but he also learned from the civil wars that it is inevitable to regain centralized control over the troops and its leaders. He planned to avenge Crassus' defeat at Carrhae and secure the Roman Empire by finally destroying Rome's only remaining Parthian rival, subduing the Empire of Scythia and annexing German territory as far as to the Northern ocean.⁴³

Soldiers were drawn to Caesar not only because of his charisma but because they understood that serving with Caesar always meant a chance for more money, land, power and glory. Caesar was finally brought down by his own idealism, when he started to believe that the people would protect him because they would lose more than gain if he died. He refused to use bodyguards or a Praetorian guard. Instead he relied on the *Lictors* and his sense of indispensability to the nation to protect him. His downfall was even quicker because of his constant aspirations to become a king of Rome. That finally

brought together approximately sixty conspirators under the leadership of Marcus and Decemius Brutus and Caius Cassius, who killed Caesar on the fifteenth of March 44 B.C. The assassins misjudged the public affection for Caesar, and when Brutus made a speech to the people the day after assassination, the crowd stood in silence and after the Caesar's funeral all their rage was turned against conspirators who had to flee Rome and Marcus Brutus and Cassius shortly met the fate of their victim.

The Second Triumvirate

What Marius did not understand, Sulla did not care for, and Caesar exploited for the first time in the history of Rome to the full potential, was the importance of the constant control as well as to have a large army to his disposal at all time. Both Octavian and Marcus Antonius understood and learned that lesson well.

In his will, contrary to the majority in Rome and especially contrary to what Marcus Antonius thought, Caesar made young Gaius Octavian his heir and adopted son, by leaving him three fourths of his wealth and his name as well. Marcus Antonius read Caesar's will at his funeral, and that sparked civil revolts and outbreaks all over the city. Caesar's executors had to flee Rome in order to avoid the rage of the masses and his veterans.

Why Caesar changed his mind and named Octavian his heir and successor is very difficult to speculate. He was a relative to Caesar and tried to follow him to his African campaign, but his mother did not allow him to go, on the ground of his poor health. His uncle though showed already then a special affection toward his young nephew by letting him ride in his Triumph in 46 B.C. In 45 B.C. Caesar sent Octavian to finish his education to Apollonia where the troops for the Parthian campaign were gathering. It was

in Apollonia where Octavian found out about his uncle's assassination. Caesar's soldiers offered to march on Rome under his command, but he thanked them and sailed to Calabria.

On reaching Calabria he found out in Brundisium that Caesar had left him majority of his estate, adopted him as his son and naming him his heir on the head of the Roman state (see figure 4).



Figure 4. Roman State in 44 B.C. at the Time of Caesar's Death

Source: Franco Cavazzi www.roman-empire.net - The Illustrated History of the Roman Empire.

Octavian did not come from a highly respectful family in Rome and Marcus Antonius used that fact more than once in his letters.

Augustus himself, however, tells us nothing more than that he was descended of an equestrian family, both ancient and rich, of which his father was the first who obtained the rank of senator. Mark Antony upbraidingly tells him that his great-grandfather was a freedman of the territory of Thurium, and a rope-maker, and his grandfather a usurer. This is all the information I have any where met with, respecting the ancestors of Augustus by the father's side.

But Mark Antony, treating with contempt Augustus's descent even by the mother's side, says that his great grand-father was of African descent, and at one time kept a perfumer's shop, and at another, a bake-house, in Aricia. And Cassius of Parma, in a letter, taxes Augustus with being the son not only of a baker, but a usurer. These are his words: "Thou art a lump of thy mother's meal, which a money-changer of Nerulum taking from the newest bake-house of Aricia, kneaded into some shape, with his hands all discoloured by the fingering of money."⁴⁴

Suetonius in his *Lives of the Twelve Caesars* does not have much good to say about his early life and his struggle for power. Anthony was most resentful against young Caesar and did not let go any opportunity to humiliate him in public or private. Octavian turned for help to the last Roman Republican, Cicero. With his help he soon gained Senate support and Anthony was forced to negotiate.

Octavian, Anthony and M. Aemilius Lepidus met on a small isle on the middle of the river Lavinus near Mutina. After two days of negotiation they came to the terms for the establishment of the Second Triumvirate. They split all the provinces among themselves and all of them agreed to assume consular powers for the term of five years. Lepidus was to stay in Rome as *Consul* for next year⁴⁵ and obtain three legions for the protection of the city while they assigned other seven to Anthony and Octavian so they each had twenty legions for the upcoming war against Cassius and Brutus who controlled provinces on the other side of the Adriatic Sea. In order to assure soldiers loyalty, they also decided to give them, besides the gifts and booty, eighteen cities of Italy as colonies

divided among them just like conquered lands. When they informed the soldiers they applauded, embraced each other and the reconciliation were complete. After that they put together a list of those who had to die, including 300 *Senators* and 2,000 *Equites*⁴⁶

The Triumvirs learned Caesar's lesson well and would not make the same mistake. They wrote:

Marcus Lepidus, Marcus Antonius, and Octavius Caesar, chosen by the people to set in order and regulate the republic, do declare that, had not perfidious traitors begged for mercy and when they obtained it become the enemies of their benefactors and conspired against them, neither would Gaius Caesar have been slain by those whom he saved by his clemency after capturing them in war, whom he admitted to his friendship and upon whom he heaped offices, honours, and gifts; nor should we have been compelled to use this wide-spread severity against those who have insulted us and declared us public enemies. Now, seeing that the malice of those who have conspired against us and by whose hands Gaius Caesar suffered, cannot be mollified by kindness, we prefer to anticipate our enemies rather than suffer at their hands. Let no one who sees what both Caesar and ourselves have suffered consider our action unjust, cruel, or immoderate.⁴⁷

After defeating Cassius and Brutus at the battle of Philippi in 42 B.C., Octavian proved once more not to be the soldier as his great uncle. He was saved only by Anthony's troops after his camp was overrun by the enemy. He went back to Italy while Anthony went to settle the matters in the east. Octavian was to fulfill the promises to the soldiers by distributing to them land and cities in Italy. He faced huge problems with the population as well as with his soldiers because nobody was happy and they all believed they had been mistreated. The disciplines was long gone from his troops, as desertions, during the civil wars were as common as never before and always rewarded from the opponent.

After securing his affairs in Italy Octavian entered into a decisive naval battle against Sextus Pompey who threatened Rome's grain supplies. Before this final battle in so called Sicilian war he lost two fleets and as Anthony recalls the battle:

You were not able to take a clear view of the fleet, when drawn up in line of battle, but lay stupidly upon your back, gazing at the sky; nor did you get up and let your men see you, until Marcus Agrippa had forced the enemies' ships to sheer off.⁴⁸

After finally defeating Sextus in 36 B.C., Octavian entered into the next five years' arrangement with Anthony and eliminating Lepidus who had lost all military significance by giving up most of his troops in entering Triumvirate, while the remains of his legions deserted him and joined Octavian.⁴⁹

While Octavian spent the next years rebuilding the West, Anthony followed the path of Crassus and decided to try Roman luck on Parthia once again. His campaign was a total failure and he lost 20,000 foot and 4,000 cavalry. His campaign was partly lost because the Armenian allies deserted, and since they represented majority of his cavalry units and were used to the Parthian way of fighting that might have been a decisive point of the campaign.⁵⁰

Because Anthony had been absent from Rome for so long, he had lost all touch with reality. He divorced Octavia in 32 B.C. and publicly married Cleopatra, and declared her son Caesarion to be Julius' heir, challenging Octavian's legitimacy. He also dispatched his will to Rome, where he stated his wish to be buried in Alexandria. Octavian took full advantage of his decisions. He publicized Anthony's will and accused him of trying to transfer the power of Rome to Alexandria. Octavian mobilized the whole Italy together with all western provinces to swear allegiance to him as their leader against Anthony. When both finally met, Octavian's army commanded by Agrippa consisted of 250 galleys of war, 80,000 foot, and 20,000 cavalry. Anthony's army had 500 war ships and a 100,000 foot and 12,000 cavalry.⁵¹ Plutarch, who was not very fond of Cleopatra, even accused her to persuade Anthony to take his chance in a naval battle. Even so

Anthony has superiority in numbers, Octavian's troops had moral superiority and when the battle started on second of September 31 B.C. the winner was already decided before the battle.

On the one side commander and soldiers alike were full of ardour, on the other was general dejection; on the one side the rowers were strong and sturdy, on the other weakened by privations; on the one side ships of moderate size, not too large for speed, on the other vessels of a size that made them more formidable in appearance only; no one was deserting from Caesar to Antony, while from Antony to Caesar someone or other was deserting daily.⁵²

When Anthony finally boarded Cleopatra's ship his whole army collapsed and the ships either sunk or surrendered to Octavian. Troops that survived were partly demobilized and partly incorporated into his army.

Next year Octavian followed them to Alexandria where Anthony killed himself and Cleopatra did the same shortly after to avoid being put on display in Octavian's upcoming triumph. On the sixth of January Octavian returned to Rome and took the name Augustus on the sixteenth of the same months and began to rule as the first Roman Emperor.⁵³

¹William Stearns Davis, ed., *Readings in Ancient History: Illustrative Extracts from the Sources*, vol. 2, *Rome and the West* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1912-13), 166-172. Prof. J. S. Arkenberg, Dept. of History, Cal. State, Fullerton, modernized and scanned text, copyright Paul Halsall, June 1998; text available from Internet Ancient History Sourcebook <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/14resgestae.html>.

²Barbara F. McManus, "Rome: Republic to Empire," web pages on Roman history and culture (The College of New Rochelle, revised July 2003); available from <http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/Romangvt.html>.

³Livy, *A History of Rome*, trans. Moses Hadas (New York: Random House, Inc., 1962), 156.

⁴Ibid., 157.

⁵For certain largely formal purposes the Assembly was organized in conformity with the ancient territorial 'tribes' into which the Roman people (including citizen abroad) was divided. The tribes were also the units for taxation, census and recruiting. Tradition recorded that in 444-367 B.C. the commander of their contingents had, at intervals, been given the authority of *Consuls* (Tacit. *The Annals of the Imperial Rome*, 408).

⁶T. Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. 3, trans William Purdie Dickeson, D.D. and LL.D. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), 438-439.

⁷H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of From from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68*, 5th ed. (Methun and Co., Ltd., 1959; reprint University Paperback 1982), 52.

⁸Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. 3, 442.

⁹H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of From from 133 B.C. to A.D. 68*, 5th ed. (Methun and Co., Ltd., 1959; reprint University Paperback 1982), 56.

¹⁰Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. 3, 452-489.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 462.

¹²Scullard, 60-63.

¹³Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol, 3, 516.

¹⁴Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, vol. 4 (Loeb Classical Library ed., 1916), 3; available from http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Sulla*.html.

¹⁵Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans (Plutarch's Lives)*, trans. by John Dryden, rev. Arthur Hughs Clough), available from <http://whitewolf.newcastle.edu.au/words/authors/P/Plutarch/prose/plutachslives/index.html>

¹⁶Plutarch, *The Parallel Lives*, vol. 4, Loeb Classical Library ed., 1916; available from http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Sulla*.html, pg 14.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 26-29.

¹⁸Henry G. Liddel, *History of Rome* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1889), 605.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 609.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 613.

²¹Sallust, *Life in Rome in the Late Republic, c. 63 BCE: Conspiracy of Catiline* (Internet Ancient History Sourcebook, © Paul Halsall, October 1998). Text available on line: <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/ancient/63sallust.html>, chapters 11-16.

²²Naphtali Lewis and Reinhold Mayer, *Roman Civilization*, vol. 1, *The Republic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), 273.

²³The rebellion of the Italian cities against Rome from 91-88 B.C. Strabo together with Marius served as advisor to Consul Publius Rutilius Lupus in the northern theater.

²⁴Marius came to power with the support of the Popular party but after he assumed complete control of the majority of the Popular party, party was also called Marius party.

²⁵Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans (Plutarch's Lives)*.

²⁶Honorary title used by the soldier for their generals after they won a great battle. The title was mandatory for a general to hold a Triumph later in Rome. Commander was authorized to use the title after his name until the Triumph.

²⁷Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans (Plutarch's Lives) Pompey*, trans. John Dryden, rev. Arthur Hughs Clough; available from <http://whitewolf.newcastle.edu.au/words/authors/P/Plutarch/prose/plutachslives/index.html>.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Liddel, 625-626.

³⁰The *Pontifex Maximus* was the high priest of the Ancient Roman *College of Pontiffs*, which was an establishment whose members were the highest-ranking priests of the Roman religions. At its head was the *Pontifex Maximus* as the most important person Ancient Roman religion

³¹According to the law, man wishing to have a Triumph must wait outside the city until approved a Triumph, but in order to run for the office of the *Consul*, one must present him self personally in front of the Senate. Caesar tried to run for the office in *Absentia* but his opponents denied him of that right and he finally decided for *Consulship* rather than having a *Triumph*.

³²Tranquillus C. Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (The Project Gutenberg EBook produced by Tapio Riikonen and David Widger, trans. Alexander Thomson, M.D., revised and corrected by T. Forester, Esq., A. M., 22 October 2006); available from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6400/6400-h/6400-h.htm>, XIX.

³³Ibid., XXV.

³⁴According to the law Caesar was not eligible for the second Consulship until 49 B.C when his *Proconsulship* would expire as well

³⁵Seeking military glory equal to his partners in the Triumvirate Crassus during his governing of Syria decided to conquer Parthia Romans suffered one of their most humiliated defeat in history. Roman infantry proved most inefficient against Parthian heavy cavalry and cavalry archers.

³⁶Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, XXIX.

³⁷Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans (Plutarch's Lives)* Caesar.

³⁸The tribunes of the treasury were typical wealthy equities who, if necessary, fronted funding while awaiting the returns of the tributum and tribute. (From republican taxation to imperial tribute by David Hartman)

³⁹Lictor was a member of special class of a civil servant they did not served in the military but performed as a bodyguard to the *Consuls* and *Praetors* and *Aedile*. The number of *Lictors* differentiated upon the importance of the position.

⁴⁰Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, XXXVII-XLV.

⁴¹In part Caesar still allowed the Roman burgesses to elect some of the military tribunes

⁴²Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. 5: 351-358.

⁴³*Ibid.*, 356-357.

⁴⁴Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, II-IV.

⁴⁵In year 42 B.C. he was *Consul* for the second time together with L. Munatius Plancus.

⁴⁶Appian, *The Civil War* (Loeb Classical Library, 1913); available from http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Appian/Civil_Wars/1*.html, Book 4, 2-5.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁸Tranquillus C. Suetonius, *The Divine Augustus*. The translation of Alexander Thomson, R. Worthington (New York, 1883); available from Ancient History Sourcebook, copyright Paul Halsall, October 1998; <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/suetonius-augustus.html>, 16.

⁴⁹In the Sicilian war Lepidus secured surrender of Sextus supply base Messana. He wanted to explore that and demanded from Octavian for the Sicily to be added to his

African province, but his soldiers deserted him and Octavian allowed him to obtain the rank of high priest and remain in retirement until his death in 13 B.C. Perowne S. *Death of the Roman Republic*, pg 258-259

⁵⁰Plutarch, *Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans (Plutarch's Lives) Antony*.

⁵¹Ibid.

⁵²Paterculus C. Velleius, *Compendium of Roman History*, Book II, trans. F. W. Shipley (London, 1924); available from http://webu2.upmf-grenoble.fr/Haiti/Cours/Ak/Anglica/VelleiusPaterculus2_Shipley.htm.

⁵³Naphtali Lewis and Meyer Reinhold, *Roman civilization, Selected Readings*, vol. 1, *The Republic* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), 307.

CHAPTER 4

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

Transformation of the Roman Republic into an Empire was a final legalization of the process and state of affairs that started almost hundred years ago. The Emperor ruled with almost total sovereignty and his rule was secured as long as he kept control over the army.

The Senate became the tool in the hands of the Emperor and lost all its power. The army did not go through major changes in means of equipment and strategy, but it had gained a permanent centralized command and authority.

Even so the transformation brought peace and stability after almost hundred years of internal struggle, transfer of power to the new Emperor always represented danger for the stability of the Empire, unless the conditions for succession were firmly clear and established before an Emperors death.

The Age of Augustus

The end of the Republic begin with the dictatorship of Julius Cesar who really laid the foundations for the upcoming Empire and Augustus later transformed it into the *Principate* with the end of the second civil war round 30 B.C. Augustus formed his type of government on Republican foundations, but it was, in fact, as despotic as one of his uncle. His power came from the control of the military even so the Senate was technically still in charge of the country.

In theory Augustus was only first citizen, but this was a citizen who controlled elections to all the magistracies and the command of all armies. Neither oriental despot nor living god, the *principes* was in theory still bound by the laws and subject to the will of the Senate .But the direct power controlled by Augustus, the

power of its legions, far outweighed the authority of the Senate, and senators gave this power its due in their eager obedience.¹

Augustus' security strategy was made of three parts: his military power, constituted in Roman legions, security forces provided by the client states, and buffer states such as Armenia.

Even before Augustus, Rome had legions permanently stationed across the territory to defend their borders, but the regulations were not changed and these legions, over fourteen, were treated in the same manner as the legions raised and maintained during the wars with Hannibal. The number of legions raised reached its peak during the first and second Civil War, when until the battle at Actium sixty legions were commissioned.² Many of these soldiers were levied by force and had no desire for a long military service and that is why mutinies were frequent and why Augustus disbanded most of these legions. Augustus faced the problem of securing the vast Empire he inherited from his uncle and the need of the armies' loyalty to maintain his *Princeps*' position. He decided to reform the military so it would suit his needs. After consulting his main confidants, Agrippa argued for the old Republican military system which included all citizens for a shorter period of time, while Maecenas argued for a long military services within a professional army loyal to the Empire. Agrippa feared that strong professional army might become a threat to the Empire and would lead again to civil war. In his speech against the Monarchy and professionalization of the army Agrippa stated:

On the other hand, a general levy weighs heavily upon the masses, the more so because they suffer the loss while the others reap the gain. Now in democracies those who contribute the money as a general rule also serve in the army, so that in a way they get their money back again; but in monarchies one set of people usually engages in agriculture, manufacturing, commerce, and politics,--and these are the classes from which the state's receipts are chiefly derived,--and a different set is under arms and draws pay.³

In his speech Agrippa warned Augustus and recalled the memory of Marius and Sulla whose natural deaths saved them from assassins and Caesar and Pompey who were both killed in their pursuit for absolute power.

Maecenas on the other hand argued that Augustus already established a monarchy long time ago and that there was no turning back. He advised Augustus not only to appoint magistrates, but also, in the same manner as Caesar did before, appoint a new Senate, with introducing new families to the Senatorial class, providing enough wealth to those loyal, but not meeting the required census and expelling those not worthy to serve in the Senate. Maecenas also argued that age limits should be reintroduced again in the public offices as well as in the Senate and military service. Maecenas argued that both higher classes, Senatorial and Equestrian should be kept opened and as large as possible in order to provide bigger pools to draft suitable candidates for the offices and needs of the Empire. He thought that *Equites* should be enlisted into military and on going civil service at the age eighteen since they were at the prime of physical and mental fitness, while they could still be shaped and educated according to Emperor's needs. Maecenas argued for the establishment of a professional army:

A standing army also should be supported, drawn from the citizens, the subject nations, and the allies, its size in the several provinces being greater or less according as the necessities of the case demand; and these troops ought always to be under arms and to engage in the practice of warfare continually. They should have winter-quarters constructed for them at the most advantageous points, and should serve for a stated period, so that a portion of life may still be left for them between their retirement from service and old age. The reason for such a standing army is this: far removed as we are from the frontiers of the Empire, with enemies living near our borders on every side, we are no longer able at critical times to depend upon expeditionary forces.⁴

Maecenas advocated that citizen militia posed greater risk for civil war since you had bigger pool of possible soldiers that someone could levy and use them to support his

cause. He argued that it is better to charge special taxes upon the population who wished to be exempted from military service and would rather pay tax than serve years, guarding the frontiers of the Empire. He also argued that standing army would be much more professional and efficient than the old militia.

Augustus decided to go with Maecenas' suggestion, and Agrippa supported the reforms as faithfully as if he would propose them himself. Augustus realized that revolutionary approach of his uncle might turn against him so he introduced his reforms gradually through his long period of rule.

Roman military forces were significantly reduced under the ruling of Augustus and they never reached the size from the time of the Republic again. The reason for that was professionalization of the military since the upkeep cost was the sole responsibility of the Emperor. He came up with a delicate system of managing to secure the Roman Empire with less forces and relying more on the Roman allies. At his time Augustus managed to control the Roman Empire and its borders with no more than twenty-five legions. But with his standing army being as small as it was, every legion had much bigger impact on the security of the Empire. Disasters as Crassus' or Anthony expedition to Parthia would probably have resulted in collapse of the Empire security and probably in the destruction of the Empire itself. Augustus soon experienced the delicacy of his security system with the annihilation of Varus column in the Teutoburg forest.⁵

With the establishment of the professional army Augustus prolonged the normal length of service during the Republic from six to sixteen years. The legality for this action was probably based on republican regulations, where citizens were obligated to serve six years, but with a possibility of extension to sixteen years or even twenty in the

time of special crises. From that point of view the required sixteen years in active service and additional four years in reserve introduced in A.D. 5, made some sense for the soldiers joining the new army. Augustus also established military treasury *Aerarium Militare* that was funded from the five percent tax on inheritance and one percent tax on auction sales held in Rome.⁶ This was the first time in history that someone attempted to come up with a permanent solution for the disbanded soldiers. But for the *Aerarium Militare* to fill up, he had to prolong service time in the army. With the establishment of the soldiers' pension system Emperor started gradually to replace land allotments to the retired soldiers with money rewards.

Roman Imperial Army

Soldiers of the Roman Army in the time of the Empire can be divided into three categories: *Legionaries* who were the citizens of Rome, *Auxiliary* troops, and *Numeri*.

The basic tactical unit of the Imperial army was the 480 men strong *Cohort*. Ten *Cohorts* built a *Legion* in which the first *Cohort* had five double strong *Centuries*. A *cohort* was built up from six *Centuries* and was the smallest units in the Imperial Army. The *Century* which was originally probably hundred men had according to Polybius eighty men. *Century* was divided into ten sections *Contubernia*, eight men strong. They shared a tent, a mule, and a pair of rooms in the permanent barracks, and they were probably also a mess unit.⁷

One-hundred-twenty-man cavalry unit *Equites legionis* and around sixty-man artillery units (*Catapults* and *Balistas*) were also attached to the *Legion*. In total one legion had close to 6,000 men.

At the head of each *Legion* was *Legatus Legionis* who was normally a *Senator* that had previously served as *Praetor* or in another senior position in Imperial magistracy. Since this was only a short appointment, three to four years, and represented just a stage in the *Cursus Honorum*, the competence of the commander was often questionable. The next in the chain of command was senior Military Tribune. There were still six Military Tribunes *Tribuni Angusticlavi*, but the senior one was called *Tribunus Laticlavus*, and he already served as a Military Tribune and a *Quaestor* before entering the Senate. Serving as *Tribunus Laticlavus* was a step in a career if someone wanted to become *Legatus Legionis* and commanded a *Legion*. The third senior officer in the *Legion* was *Primus Pillus*. He was professional senior officer usually over fifty who came from the Centurion ranks and was in command of the first *Century* of the first *Cohort*. The position was very well paid and at discharge the officer achieved *Equestrian* rank. Next in seniority to *Primus Pillus* came *Princeps*, who was responsible for the Headquarters, Staff and Training.

The legionnaire's equipment in the Imperial army was almost totally uniform. The soldiers wore a linen undergarment and woolen tunic over it that covered their body up to their knees. During the winter they were allowed to wear leather trousers that reached below the knee. On their feet they wore famous military boots *Caliga*, from which the third Roman Empire got his name.

Then they felt shame and pity, and remembered his father Agrippa, her grandfather Augustus, her father-in-law Drusus, her own glory as a mother of children, her noble purity. And there was her little child too, born in the camp, brought up amid the

tents of the legions, whom they used to call in soldiers' fashion, Caligula, because he often wore the shoe so called, to win the men's goodwill.⁸

In the early Imperial army the body armor was still the same as in the time of Julius Caesar. Legionaries wore mail, but in the late Imperial army the body armor became a more complex suit. They wore a bronze helmet with iron skull-plate inside and additional protection of the neck and the face as well as two large cheek-pieces covering the sides. Each man carried *Scutum*, a large shield curved to shield his body. For the offensive each soldier still had two *Pilums* and a sword *Gladius*. *Gladius* was two feet long and two inches wide double-bladed weapon. It was used mostly for thrusting at short range, similar to the bayonet later in history.⁹

Auxiliary troops, which could be considered more as a combat support units complementing legions were composed from Cavalry (*Ala Quingenaria* with 512 horsemen, *Ala Miliria* with a round 1,000 horseman), mixed units (*Cohors Equitata Quingenaria* 380 foot soldiers and 120 horseman, *Cohors Equitata Milliaria* with 760 foot and 240 horseman) and Infantry (*Cohors Quingenaria* with 500 men, *Cohors Miliaria* with 1,000 men and *Numerus* with 300 men). The *Auxilia* were armed with offensive weapons: bows, slings, throwing spears, long swords, thrusting spears and cavalry heavy lances.¹⁰

The preferred battle order for the legion to fight was the *Triple Acies* (the triple line of *Cohorts*), but they were also using double line. They achieved flexibility by using the *Cohort* instead of the lighter *Maniple* as the main tactical unit. From the imperial time *Maniple* is no longer mentioned, and in all records, when they were describing who did

some work or actions the records mention a Legion as a whole, particular *Cohort* or even *Century*.¹¹

While soldiers of the Legion were still mainly citizen volunteers, the *Auxilia* were built from non citizen soldiers. The custom of hiring foreigners to serve in the Roman army became more and more practice in the time of late Roman Republic. As Romans provided excellent heavy infantry, they did not prove to be so successful in other services. Since their territory expanded the Romans had more nations to choose from and they soon realized that some nation, because of the peculiar way of life, had more talent for a particular type of warfare. The Romans levied their best archer units from the eastern part of Mediterranean and slingers from the Balearic Islands. Since there were not enough specialized soldiers among the conquered nations, they also started to use mercenaries. Livy reports of units of archers and slingers from Siracuse used against Hanibal in the Second Punic war in 217 B.C. In early time using and levying *Auxilia* units were more exemption and a supplement to the legions but as Rome grew the use of foreign *Auxilia* units became standard.¹²

During the decline of the Roman Republic round first century B.C. massive use of indigenous forces against Roman troops is observed, and they proved highly efficient, when led by the right leader. When Sulla returned to Rome in 83 B.C. and defeated Marius Popular Party a Roman general Quintus Sertorius retreated to Spain, but was not appointed magistrate. He further retreated to Africa where he conquered Mavretaina and defeated Sulla's forces. Admired by the local tribes in Spain, they called them to become their leader. He successfully resisted all Sulla's attempts to size Spain. Almost all his

army was composed of non Roman, Spanish and African soldiers. Plutarch reports of his achievements:

For with two thousand six hundred men, whom for honour's sake he called Romans, combined with seven hundred Africans, who landed with him when he first entered Lusitania, together with four thousand targeteers and seven hundred horse of the Lusitanians themselves, he made war against four Roman generals, who commanded a hundred and twenty thousand foot, six thousand horse, two thousand archers and slingers, and had cities innumerable in their power; whereas at the first he had not above twenty cities in all. From this weak and slender beginning, he raised himself to the command of large nations of men, and the possession of numerous cities; and of the Roman commanders who were sent against him, he overthrew Cotta in a sea-fight, in the channel near the town of Mellaria; he routed Fufidius, the governor of Baetica, with the loss of two thousand Romans, near the banks of the river Baetis; Lucius Domitius, proconsul of the other province of Spain, was overthrown by one of his lieutenants; Thoranius, another commander sent against him by Metellus with a great force, was slain, and Metellus, one of the greatest and most approved Roman generals then living, by a series of defeats, was reduced to such extremities, that Lucius Manlius came to his assistance out of Gallia Narbonensis, and Pompey the Great was sent from Rome itself in all haste with considerable forces.¹³

Sertorius remained undefeated until he was assassinated in 72 B.C. by Roman nobility led by Perpenna Vento who joined him in fight against Sulla. Perpenna tried to use Sertorius' Spanish army against upcoming Pompey but almost all native troops deserted him and Pompey had little trouble defeating his remaining forces, and executing conspirators.

Caesar used Germans as the primary levies for his cavalry units and he formed and trained entire legions of Gauls. To distinguish Gaul legions from the Roman legions he did not give them a numerical distinction but he gave them a name (for example *Legion Alaudae* and *Ferrata*)¹⁴. *Alaudae* was the first legion levied from non Roman citizen and the name means the Larks in Gaul. The soldiers of *Alaudae* were paid and equipped by Caesar himself, but because of the precedence in levying foreigners into this

legion the Roman Senate did not recognize *Alaudae* as a Roman legion until much later.¹⁵

In 89 B.C. Spanish *Auxiliaires* were granted Roman franchise after the siege of Asculum as the first *Auxiliary* unit to be fully franchised after the discharge. Under Augustus that became a common practice for almost all *Auxilia* soldiers to receive Roman citizenship upon discharge so their sons were available for serving in the legion. The biggest problem that Romans had to face with their *Auxilia* units was their attachment to their region of origin. If the main cause for the great rebellion of the Roman legions in A.D. 14 were demands for early release and pay increase, main reason for Thracian *Auxilia* troops revolt were the rumors that they are being sent to serve in other part of the Empire.

The *Numeri* on the other hand never received Roman citizenship; they were the smallest unit (a round 300 men) and were probably a lot cheaper than *Auxilia*. There is not much known about *Numeri*. They were ethnic units and from the composition, size and cost efficiency they were probably the best suited type of units for this new fragmented deployment.¹⁶

The reason why Romans started to recruit *Numeri* units after second century A.D. was probably in the Romanization of the conquered nations which lost their warlike spirit. This might have been the first indicator of the decline of the Roman Empire, since enlistment of the peasant barbarians to fight other barbarians surely did not contribute to the effectiveness of the Imperial army.

Security of the Roman Empire

Because of the experience from the time of the late Republic, when military leaders like Sulla and Caesar used their soldiers for their own political agendas, Augustus decided to separate the army from their commanders and keep loyalty of the soldiers to himself. He was the only one from whom commanders, as well as soldiers got their rewards and promotions. One of the ways for constantly reminding the soldiers to whom they owed their loyalty was the establishment of coins, carrying his image, which were used to pay the soldiers. Commanders were no longer allowed Triumphs and all successes and victories belonged to the Emperor. Military service was still important for holding prestigious public offices, but the length of service in high positions with the army was carefully observed and significantly shortened in order to prevent the soldiers from getting too attached to their leaders.

Augustus ruled most of the provinces directly as Proconsul through his appointees *Legati Augusti* and he ruled the provinces that contained most of the military bases. Caesar started to use the *Legates* on a larger scale to provide more efficient command over the troops previously commanded by the *Military Tribunes*, but it was Augustus who finalized this process by appointing individual *Legat* to command individual legion for a longer period of time, and they named them *Legatus Augusti Legionis*. These individuals were young men of the late twenties who already served previously in the *Roman Cursus Honorum* and later in the Claudian area that became a standard practice and basically a part of the Senatorial career pattern in the *Roman Cursus Honorum* itself. Officers of *Equestrian* rank had much more possibilities because of the newly conquered territories and since *Military Tribunes* were now employed as the military governors of

the newly established provinces and territories. The career possibilities also increased for *Centurions* who now easily entered *Equestrian* rank and even became *Tribunes* and *Prefects*. In the new state competence outweighed the birth.¹⁷

Augustus as well as his uncle before him had to build his navy from scratch and because he lacked naval talent he had to do it twice. After the battle at Actium his fleet operated mainly from two bases, Misenum and Ravenna. The main role of the fleets was to protect the supply routes and transporting the troops to an area of operations. Augustus kept one fleet in each port with each fleet's strength of 10.000 sailors.

After the civil wars and colonization of Julius Cesar, the adult male citizen population in Italy, amounted to roughly 1,200,000 men, of whom 900,000 would have been *Iuniores*, i.e., the primary group of citizen of military age.¹⁸

In early Empire period troops were still not stationed in the permanent bases. Instead they were stationed almost in the same manner as during the movement. The purpose of the early Empire military was to act as an expeditionary force ready for a quick deployment in case of the threat from the outside as well as from inside. The army was mostly kept busy fighting insurgencies inside the border of the Empire. Even one of the biggest blows to Roman military from that time; the annihilation of the Varus' column in Teutoburg forest, was considered an internal conflict.¹⁹

The only genuine outside threat to Roman security of that time was the linear threat from Parthia, the only major power. It was not as much of a problem as small nonlinear threat from insurgencies and small scales attacks and penetrations throughout the long border.

Sending citizens and especially veterans to the colonies was also a powerful tool in spreading Roman influence further throughout the Empire. Settling colonists did not only spread cultural and political influence, but also improved security conditions in the colony by settling potential defenders on the frontier. With creation of this “disposable” military power, we can observe the military used not only as a power projection to the possible adversaries and allies, but also as a strong tool when going after political power and influence.

Major actors, allowing this new military not to be pinned down with linear defense of the Empire borders, were *Client States*. There was just one significant problem with client states performing their role well and that was capability of their ruler to run his state with a certain degree of competency. Once a client state was ruled by a competent ruler, the Roman Empire had no intention to question his authority as long as he performed well in providing security and whatever else was needed for the wellbeing of the Empire. Problems usually arose when a succession took place since capability of running the country wisely, was not always passed down to the client state ruler’s successor. That is why some parts of the Roman Empire were changing status during different periods under the Roman rule from client states to the provinces and back to some kind of the client state or monarchy. It all depended on the availability of competent leaders in the occupied nation. When the nation was not capable to provide a competent leader, Rome changed its status to a province and sent a Roman governor to bring the country back on track. Probably the best example of that policy was Judea, ruled very successfully by the king Herod, but not with much success from his son and was finally made a province through annexation in A.D. 10 Later on Judea again became a client

state under Domitian's favorite, Julius Agrippa; and under Claudius, regaining the same size and territory as it was under Herod. Later again lost a client state status it was finally annexed and run as a province in A.D. 44²⁰ It was cheaper and more convenient for the Empire, to have a client state, at least on the border of the Empire, in charge of securing the border with their own military force than providing security by Roman legions and taxing the province to pay for it.

The client state security system was approached differently depending on the person filling the *Principate* office. Octavian, for example, did not punish any of the major client state rulers that fought on the side of his former rival Anthony; he only punished minor players who could not threaten the delicate balance.²¹

With his downsizing of the military force, maintaining security of the vast Empire was everything, but an easy task. We do not have any precise reports how legions were positioned across the Empire until the death of Augustus and early years of the ruling of Tiberius.

After Augustus death Tiberius was left with a vast empire (see figure 5) with just a fraction of the force Augustus had, when he became an Emperor.



Figure 5. Roman Empire in A.D. 14

Source: Franco Cavazzi, *The Illustrated History of the Roman Empire*; available from www.roman-empire.net.

According to Tacitus in A.D. 23 the legions were positioned as follows:

Germania Inferior:

1. I Germanica
2. II Augusta
3. V Alaudae
4. VII
5. XI
6. XIII Gemina
7. XIV Gemina
8. XVI
9. XX Valeria
10. XXI Superior

Dalmatia:

11. IV Scythica

- 12. V Macedonica
- Moesia:
 - 13. VIII Augusta
 - 14. IX Hispania
 - 15. XV Apollinaris
- Syria:
 - 16. III Gallica
 - 17. VI Ferrata
 - 18. X Fretensis
 - 19. XII Fulminata
- Egypt:
 - 20. III Cyrenaica
 - 21. XXII Deiotariana
- Africa:
 - 22. III Augusta
- Spain:
 - 23. IV Macedonica
 - 24. VI Victrix
 - 25. X Gemina²²

The first test of control over this new professional army rose when Augustus died in A.D. 14. The soldiers saw an opportunity to press with their demands on the new emperor and a series of mutinies started. The mutiny began in the province of Pannonia and was soon put down by Tiberius' son Drusus, but shortly after the armies stationed on the Rhine River also began to revolt. The main demands of the soldiers were fixing the service at sixteen years and the money reward after discharge. If the mutiny in Pannonia was quickly suppressed that was not the case in Germania.

The number of troops in Germania was much larger and their impact on the Empire far more important than troops in any other part of the state. The army was positioned on the Rhine River, the natural border between the Roman Empire and the German barbarians. The army was divided to the Army of Upper Germany commanded by Gaius Silius and the army of Lower Germany, commanded by Aulus Caecina Severus.

The supreme commander of all Roman forces in Germany was Germanicus, who was married to Augustus granddaughter Agripina and was also adopted by Tiberius.

The soldiers in Lower Germany broke into a large scale mutiny, the old soldiers demanded discharges and the new soldiers recruited from the bottom of the society demanded increased pay. Their rage turned first against *Centurions* and even the *Legates* lost all control over them. The loudest were veterans, some of them already serving thirty years in the army. When Germanicus, who was in Gaul when the mutiny started, came to camp, they surrounded him and demanded immediate release. Germanicus was faced with a dilemma, if he used *Auxiliary* troops from the loyal tribes he would start a civil war and if he gave up to their demands there might be no end to their demands and this would endanger the stability of the state. Finally he approved the immediate discharge to the old veterans and promised soldiers to pay them their rewards. Legions V. Alaudae and XXI. Superior went even so far that they refused to move to their winter camps before they received their cash rewards in full. Germanicus had to pay them from his own funds and during the march the money, extortionate from their commander, was carried among the legion standards, as reminder of soldiers' mutiny. After securing peace among the legions of Lower Germany he turned to the remaining legions in Upper Germany, where he did not have much trouble in obtaining their loyalty. There were many accusations against Germanicus' handling of the mutiny, for not using loyal troops and allies against the rebels. Finally, even Germanicus was not sure he can keep things under control and he sent his pregnant wife and son away from the camp where they lived with him and the soldiers from the beginning of his command to allied Gaul tribes to seek sanctuary. Tacitus reports that with this decision, knowingly or unknowingly, he finally

achieved victory over the rebels. Soldiers were begging him not to send his son like a hostage to the Gauls and they pledged their loyalty to him. He returned his family to the camp and restored the discipline among the troops. He punished the leaders of the rebellion and dismissed many of the officers who behaved inappropriately. When the soldiers at the core of the rebellion of the Legions V. Alaudae and XXI. Superior heard that Germanicus put many to death and he was ready to march against them the loyalist among them under the command of their *Legatus* Cecina took the matter into their own hands:

Caecina read the letter confidentially to the eagle and standard bearers, and to all in the camp who were least tainted by disloyalty, and urged them to save the whole army from disgrace, and themselves from destruction. "In peace," he said, "the merits of a man's case are carefully weighed; when war bursts on us, innocent and guilty alike perish."

Upon this, they sounded those whom they thought best for their purpose, and when they saw that a majority of their legions remained loyal, at the commander's suggestion they fixed a time for falling with the sword on all the vilest and foremost of the mutineers. Then, at a mutually given signal, they rushed into the tents, and butchered the unsuspecting men, none but those in the secret knowing what was the beginning or what was to be the end of the slaughter.

The scene was a contrast to all civil wars which have ever occurred. It was not in battle, it was not from opposing camps, it was from those same dwellings where day saw them at their common meals, night resting from labour, that they divided themselves into two factions, and showered on each other their missiles. Uproar, wounds, bloodshed, were everywhere visible; the cause was a mystery. All else was at the disposal of chance. Even some loyal men were slain, for, on its being once understood who were the objects of fury, some of the worst mutineers too had seized on weapons. Neither commander nor tribune was present to control them; the men were allowed license and vengeance to their heart's content. Soon afterwards Germanicus entered the camp, and exclaiming with a flood of tears, that this was destruction rather than remedy, ordered the bodies to be burnt.²³

This was the new professional Roman army, the army that was product of the Civil Wars and whose loyalty was to the paymaster. Soldiers were in their profession for money and profit could be incredibly efficient and motivated if lead by the likes of Julius Caesar or if not, a mob, capable of plundering and looting their province and run away from the enemy even sooner than the weakest citizen militia.

After Germanicus put the rebellion to an end he decided to play on soldiers' remorse and invade Germany to avenge Roman disaster of A.D. 9. He crossed the Rhine and caught the Germans off guard. He first attacked the German tribe of Marsi and reached Teutoburg Wood six years after the Varus disaster. He buried the fallen Roman soldiers and rescued two Roman Eagle standards. In two years campaign, with decisive battle fought at the Wessre River at A.D. 16, he not only successfully avenged Varus' defeat, but also subdued Germans east of the Rhine frontier and retrieved the third Eagle. The war with the Germans had a lot of civil war attributes since a lot of Germans fought in the Roman *Auxiliary* units. The leader of the German tribes and Defeater of Varus, Arminius, use to be commander of the German *Auxiliary* units and while he was now fighting the Romans, his father in law Segestes, as well as his brother Flavus, were both in the Roman camp fighting for the Empire. For the German campaign Germanicus used 12,000 regular troops, twenty six *Auxiliary Cohorts* and eight Cavalry regiments, and if we know that *Auxiliary* forces were mainly from the loyal local German and Gaul tribes we can almost cal the German invasion a German Civil War.²⁴

Tiberius soon revoked all that Germanicus promised to the rebellious soldiers and transferred Germanicus back to Rome because of fear from his growing popularity and jealousy since Germanicus even surpassed Tiberius' invasion of Germany when he

submitted almost all German tribes between the Rhine and Elbe Rivers. Even King Moroboduus, who was the only German leader that did not submit to Tiberius, had to accept Germanicus' peace terms. After Germanicus returned to Rome he shared Consulship with Tiberius and was assigned to rule Eastern Provinces where he died in mysterious circumstances.²⁵

Tiberius, a very competent general in his youth, preferred diplomatic over military means. He was much more pleased with Drusus' conspiracies in Germany that lead to constant internal fight among the German tribes than by Germanicus' military success in Germany, Cappadocia and Commagena. He tried to avoid wars at any cost and in his ruling he followed instruction of Augustus not to expend Roman Empire further. The rebellion in Germany was not the last Tiberius had to face. The Romans faced a serious wars again led by their former Auxiliary commander Tacfarinas in Africa from A.D. 17 to 24. In A.D. 21 the Romans faced the revolt in Gaul led by Florus and Sacrovir. The Auxiliary soldiers also revolted in Thrace because of the fear from being sent to serve away from their home province.²⁶ So even if Tiberius wished to further expand, he was too busy securing the vast border and fighting internal insurrections.

Later in the time of Flavians, another change occurred in the means, of how Romans secured their borders. They started to use the linear concept defense, which was more efficient against low than high intensity threats. The Roman tactics of that time relied on the obstacles they built in the British isles (Hadrian Wall) running from Tyne to Solway, and those in Upper Germany, Raetia and *Fossatum Africae*. The purpose of these obstacles was to slow down the enemy and provide border security with lesser forces.²⁷

With Roman Army, switching to linear defense around second century A.D., it also started to build permanent bases. Because of the relative peace period during this time soldiers had the means to obtain at least semi-proficiency with training and exercises. Because of the Roman Empire policy switched from expansionism to stabilization, there was not much action for the military to show its real efficiency. Soldiers were receiving all kind of benefits and luxuries at to their bases and settled down, had families and lived in relative peace. Lack of experience and perhaps also the élan and drive that old Roman Republican army possessed was more or less gone. Probably the biggest evidence of the poor spirit of the Roman Army from that time was the defeat they suffered under the command of Cestus Galus by the Jews during the insurgency a round A.D. 66.

Later in under the rule of Flavians the military acted as a power projection; with mainly heavy infantry units and expeditionary force, but to use army as expeditionary force to fight on the other parts of the Empire brought instability to the region where they pulled the forces away from. They compensated that with what we now call modularity. The units used as expeditionary units formed from the stationed legions were called *Vexillationes*. They were ad-hoc build unites used to reinforce or face threat out of their area of responsibility; usually they included large proportion of *auxiliary* troops.²⁸

With professionalization of the army the roman citizens started to give place to the conquered nations to provide military force for the Empire and gradually with army assuming more defensive role the Roman expansionism was gone together with Roman soldiers. Hundred years after legalization of the new professional Roman army the

Empire achieved its' greatest extent and from that time on it was only fighting to secure what they achieved in the first hundred years élan.

¹Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Roma Empire* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 21.

²L. Keppie, *The Making of the Roman Army*, paperback ed. (Oklahoma: B T Batsford, 1984; reprint Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998), 145.

³Cassius Dio, "Roman History," trans. Earnest Carry (The Loeb Classical Library. London: William Heinemann. New York: MacMillan CO. 1914); available from http://www.brainfly.net/html/dio_cass.htm, book 52, chap. 6.

⁴Ibid., Chap. 27.

⁵In A.D. 9 Three Roman legions under the command of Publius Quinctilius Varus was annihilated. Suetonius, *The Lives of Twelve Caesars, D. Octavius Caesar Augustus*, Chap. 23.

⁶H. M. D. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (Oxford Press, 1928; reprint Heffer & Sons, Ltd., Cambridge and Barnes and Noble, Inc., New York, 1971), 77.

⁷Graham Webster, *The Roman Imperial Army of the First and Second Century A.D.*, 2d ed. (Harper and Row Publishers, Inc., 1979), 114-116.

⁸Tacitus, *The Annals of the Imperial Rome*, trans. Michael Grant (Publications Ltd., first published 1956, reprinted with revision 1959, revised edition 1971; reprint Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1993), 56.

⁹Webster, 116-132.

¹⁰Luttwak, 14-15.

¹¹Keppie, 173-174.

¹²Webster, 142-143.

¹³Plutarch.

¹⁴Caesar created this legions 52 B.C. in his war against Vercingetorix.

¹⁵Jona Lendering, "Legio V Alaudae;" available from http://www.livius.org/le-lh/legio/v_alaudae.html.

¹⁶Luttwak, 122.

¹⁷Keppie, 146-151.

¹⁸P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 B. C.--A. D. 14* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1971), 124.

¹⁹Collin Michael Wells, *The German Policy of Augustus: An Examination of the Archeological Evidence* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1972), 52.

²⁰Luttwak, 39.

²¹*Ibid.*, 30.

²²D. M. H. Parker, *The Roman Legions* (Oxford Press 1928; reprint with alternation by Heffer and Sons, Ltd., Cambridge and Barnes and Noble Inc, New York, 1971), 119.

²³Tacitus, 59-60.

²⁴*Ibid.*, 61-90.

²⁵In his *Annals* Tacitus accuses Cnaeus Calpurnius Piso and his wife Plancina to poison Germanicus supposedly with the approval of the Emperor himself.

²⁶Webster, 57-58.

²⁷Luttwak, 61-70.

²⁸Ernest Richard Dupuy and Trevor Nevitt Dupuy, *The Encyclopedia of Military History: From 3500 B.C. to the Present*, 2d rev. ed. (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1986), 147-148.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Professionalization of the Roman military brought back stability to the state destabilized from internal conflicts and civil wars. The army became more efficient and expanded Roman Empire through the most of the known world of the time, and reached its peak in A.D. 116 only two centuries after first military reforms brought it toward professionalization (see figure 6). The state hierarchy became clearer with the Emperor who was commander in chief and patron of all military forces, and who was now able to conduct all necessary reforms which brought relative peace and stability to the people of Rome. Augustus' success and his greatness were only possible because he had a standing army backing up his political work as well as suppressing his opponents.

Roman Republic from the first century B.C. was a decadent state with a lot of, as seemed unsolvable problems. The Republic was run by an Oligarchy which controlled the Senate and was represented by the Optimates Party. The Senate was in theory controlled by two parties but in the last century B.C. there was hardly a distinction between the "*Plebeian*" Popular Party and Aristocratic Optimates Party. They were both controlled by rich citizens and money could buy everything. In order to have a successful political career one had to go through a series of positions in the civil as well as military service. The success of individual's career was firstly depended on the amounts of capital he invested in his career. For example, when Julius Caesar ran for the office of Pontifex Maximus in 64 B.C. he almost became bankrupted and it took him years and a big financial stimulant from his future colleague, Marcus Crassus, to remain on the political

stage. Even lower career steps in the Roman *Cursus Honorum* were a heavy financial burden for the officials, especially since they first had to bribe Senators and other political leaders to be elected, and later satisfy the anticipation of the mob that desired constant “bread and games,” amusements and easy life.



Figure 6. Roman Empire A.D. 116 at Its Largest Extent

Source: Franco Cavazzi, *The Illustrated History of the Roman Empire*; available from www.roman-empire.net.

Rome was facing huge disparities among their citizens. On the one hand Oligarchy got richer after every campaign and the Plebeians sinking lower into debts and forced to sell their land to the Oligarch because domestic economic production could not

compete with cheap imported food. Landless masses then flooded Rome and mostly lived on the public expense and generosity of the Oligarchs. This change of the social structure had several impacts on the Roman Republic. One was on Rome's food market since the food was now produced by cheap slave labor and imported from regions with better comparative advantages for agriculture. That improved overall quality in the people's lives because it took much less to feed the population, and the accumulation excess could now be invested in other projects and branches. Huge landless masses of Roman citizens had now much more time and were concentrated Rome. With that one witnessed the appearance of demagogues in the Plebeian Party. Demagogues gained support among the Plebeians by promising quick solutions for problems of the common people and by supporting popular causes. Most of the time these leaders had no intention of keeping their promises from their "election campaign" and they were in the politics exclusively for their own profit. Individuals who sincerely tried to solve the problems of the common people were mostly just doing quick fixes with no long term solutions and if they started to threaten the primacy of the Senate over total control of the judicial, military and legislative power they were executed or assassinated. The support of the masses never lasted long. Social changes also had a huge impact on the security situation of the Republic because they shrink conscript pool that military could count on by deposing middle class of their land. From the early time of the Republic, census allocated citizens into military ranks. Those unable to afford military equipment were not eligible for service in the Roman legions. The Senate tried to compensate the shrinking of military eligible citizens by lowering census criteria and in times of great danger they even ignored the census law and enlisted everybody and equipped them on the public expense,

but that was only temporary solution that did not have long term effect and did not restore the poll of levies. It was not in the interest of ruling Senatorial elite to have a standing army since it was much easier to control citizen militia. Another thing that Senatorial class limited was the length of the mandate for the Consuls who controlled the armed forces among other things and they also implemented a rule that a minimum of ten years had to pass until men could run for Consul again. Through all regulation the ruling class obtained complete control over the state and members of the Senate rotated key positions among themselves.

The crisis eventually became so deep that in the year 107 B.C. Gaius Marius reformed the Roman military by opening its ranks to all citizens capable of bearing arms and equipped them at the public expense. He also franchised great number of *Auxiliary* troops and the Senate stood powerless because it could not remove Marius from power as long as he controlled the military. When Marius finally decided to disband standing army and return into the politics, he was soon defeated and had to flee Rome. The Popular party, also named Marian Party because of their leader, was almost totally destroyed and the Senate was controlled by Sulla, who realized the importance of standing army in backing up his political ambition. During Sullas' conquering of Italy, it became common for the rich political leaders to raise and equipped armies on their own expense without the authorization of the Senate. But even then, after Sulla achieved his political goals he disbanded his military and retired into private life. It was Caesar who kept a standing army all times during his career as well as during his dictatorship. He also made progress in levying foreign troops into the legion and giving soldiers Roman citizenship. But all Caesar's actions was never legalized and established as rules, all Caesar's actions were

spontaneous and done according to how the events flew and what he needed at any given time for successful implementation of his plans and plans. After Caesars assassination his successor Emperor Augustus finally opened discussion in the Senate and heard arguments for and against long standing professional army and decided to establish, organize and gave it solid foundation.

The equipment of the professional army did not distinguish much from its Republican predecessor, but since state provided equipment, all soldiers were uniformed and there were no more distinctions among different social classes visible in the legion.

Augustus established clear chain of command within the army and he was commander in chief as well as paymaster. It was he, upon whom soldiers and officers looked for promotion, pay and secure retirement. He established military budget from scratch and because he realized that he could not afford a standing army as big as it was during the civil wars he had to rationalize according to what he could afford to pay. Overcoming the problem of using economy of force, he as well as his direct successors compensated relative small numbers of Roman legions with allied *Auxiliary* forces.

If one compared the efficiency of both armies purely from the expansion of the state, we can take a look on the map of the Roman state conquered by the old Militia before the first reforms in 108 B.C. (figure 3) and a map of the Roman Empire conquered in the next two centuries after reforms (figure 6) and one can realized how much more efficient they became.

The biggest advantage that standing army had in the military sense was their nonattachment and separation from civilian life. In the time of the Republic military leaders, normally *Consuls*, had interest in going to war. Military success was the only

way to distinguish themselves from other Senators during their year in office and also the only legal way to prolong their power. Soldiers called into service had no direct interest in fighting anything else than defensive wars, protecting their land and lives of their families. The longer the war lasted, the more were the soldiers losing since profit from their success went to the ruling elite and made citizen-soldiers even poorer than they were before the war. That was literally a rich men's war and a poor men's fight, in which the poor became poorer and the rich became richer. In the case of professional soldiers there were no land or business they had to return to. Their business was the war and only in war they had a chance to climb the military hierarchy, gain wealth by looting enemies' territories, get prizes and procure land that could be distributed among them. The soldiers were motivated to serve and obey their "patron" the Emperor, and the Senate lost all control over them. It was in soldiers' interest for the Emperor to stay in power since that meant a job, a steady pay and a secured future. Once established there was no returning back to the old Republican citizens' military. On the other hand citizens much rather paid extra tax as it was no burden comparing to years of military service. Instead of serving as soldiers a lot of them started to make business with the military in providing them with supplies, so everybody profited from the professionalization. The role of the Oligarchy was severely hindered by these processes and changes and their control over the state through the Senate transformed into so called military dictatorship, with even some Emperors coming from the ranks of the military rather than from the Senate. And as we can learn from Niccolo Machiavelli, it was always much easier to reform a state if you have a strong military to back your reforms up, and that is exactly what the new professional army did for Rome.

APPENDIX A
IMPORTANT MILESTONES

| B.C. | |
|----------------|--|
| 753 | Foundation of Rome |
| 510 | Expulsion of the last Roman king Tarquinus Superbus |
| 494 | First Tribunes of the people appointed |
| 443 | Censors appointed |
| 390 | Rome burned by the Gauls |
| 367 | Licinian Law; one <i>Consul</i> must be <i>Plebeian</i> |
| 264-241 | First Punic War |
| 218-201 | Second Punic War |
| 149-146 | Third Punic War; destruction of Carthage |
| 133 | Tiberius Gracchus reforms |
| 123-122 | Caius Gracchus reforms |
| 112-106 | Joghurtine War |
| 107 | Marius' reforms |
| 91-88 | Social War; Italian cities force Rome to grant them citizenship |
| 88 | Sulla as the first Roman takes control of Rome by using his military |
| 88-82 | First Civil war |
| 81-79 | Sulla's dictatorship |
| 60 | First Triumvirate is formed |
| 58-51 | Caesar conquered Gaul and invaded Britain |
| 53 | Battle at Carrhae; Crassus death |

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 49-45 | Second civil war |
| 48 | Battle of Pharsalus; Pompey defeated |
| 44 | Caesar assassinated |
| 43-31 | Third Civil War |
| 43 | Second Triumvirate |
| 36 | Lepidus forced out of Triumvirate |
| 31 | Battle of Actium |
| 30 | Octavian establishes his absolute power and ruled Rome as Augustus |
| A.D. | |
| 14 | Death of Augustus |

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