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| The Social War |

When the Italians realised they weren’t going to get citizenship, they rose up against Rome.

Eight tribes including the Samnites, the Marsi and the Apulians joined forces. Some tibes such as the Latins remained loyal to Rome.

There were 100,000 men under the command of Poppaedius Silo of the Marsi and Papius Mutilus of the Samnites. The Italian soldiers were battle-hardened, most of them having served in the Roman armies.

The consuls of Rome for the year 90BC were Sextus Julius Caesar and Publius Rutilius

Lupus.

The Romans suffered terrible losses in the first year of the war, but managed to regroup and inflict terrible losses on their enemy also. The consul Lupus was killed in battle and his men almost completely wiped out. The surviving consul, Sextus Caesar, returned from the war to Rome at the end of the year to conduct the consular elections for the next year (89BC). More importantly he pushed through the **“Lex Julia”** which offered full Roman citizenship to all tribes s in Italy which had not revolted. This necessary political concession took much of the wind out of the Italian rebels’ cause and prevented any significant future rebellions.

The Lex Julia was followed by the Lex Plautia Papiria. This allowed citizenship to those who met three conditions: he must claim citizenship in an Italian city that was a Roman ally, he must have already established residence there before the passing of this law, and must then present himself to a [praetor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Praetor) within the specified time to be considered for citizenship. Unlike the Lex Julia, which only granted citizenship to entire cities, the Lex Papiria Plautia could be used to grant citizenship to individuals in addition to entire cities.

The social war was more or less over in 88 BC apart from the Samnites who held out. It ended when Sulla took command of the south of the country, defeated the Samnites and captured their base. Silo was killed in battle that year by Drusus’ brother. It is likely the war would have gone on for longer if the Romans hadn’t made concessions.

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| The Civil War |

Gaius Marius and Lucius Cornelius Sulla were two very different men whose paths converged first on the battlefield and then in the political arena.  Marius was a *novus homo* from Arpinum whose ancestors were from a moderately distinguished equestrian background.  He made a name for himself by not only capturing King Jugurtha of Numidia, but also by doing it his own way.  In this Jugurthan War, Marius had a lieutenant named Lucius Cornelius Sulla.

    It is commonly believed that Marius’ victory was due in large part to this man.  Sulla was of the old patrician Cornelian family, but of the lineage that had not established itself in recent Roman politics.  Sulla was a harsh and unfeeling man who is said to have made his money by killing both his step-mother and his mistress.  He was well known for his blazing red hair and his two canine teeth that he would bare when angry.

 At first, the two excellent Roman military geniuses got along well with each other, but when Marius took almost sole credit for the Jugurthan victory and gave almost no attention to Sulla’s efforts, the latter became very bitter with his former general.  Sulla then went on to distinguish himself in the Social War and was also given the command in the war against Mithridates of Pontus in 88.

As the consul of Rome, Sulla prepared to depart once more for the East to fight against King [Mithridates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mithridates_VI_of_Pontus" \o "Mithridates VI of Pontus) , a command that Marius (now an old man) had coveted. Marius convinced the [tribune](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tribune) [Publius Sulpicius Rufus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Publius_Sulpicius_Rufus" \o "Publius Sulpicius Rufus) to call an [assembly](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deliberative_assembly) and reverse the Senate's decision on Sulla's command. Sulpicius also used the assemblies to eject Senators from the [Roman Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Senate) until there were not enough senators to form a *quorum*. Violence in the Forum ensued and the efforts of the nobles to effect a public lynching similar to that which had happened to the brothers [Gracchi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gracchi) and [Saturninus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucius_Appuleius_Saturninus" \o "Lucius Appuleius Saturninus) were smashed by the [gladiatorial](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gladiator) bodyguard of Sulpicius. Sulla was forced to take refuge in Marius' house, and possibly made a personal plea to stop the violence, which was ignored. Sulla's own son-in-law was killed in those riots. Sulla took the name ‘Felix’, meaning ‘lucky’ after he had hidden in Marius’ house and avoided death.

Sulla fled Rome and went to the camp of his victorious Social War veterans, waiting to cross to Greece from the south of Italy. He announced the measures that had been taken against him, and his soldiers stoned the envoys of the assemblies who came to announce that the command of the Mithridatic War had been transferred to Marius. Sulla then took six of his most loyal [legions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_legion) and marched on Rome. This action was an unprecedented event. No general before him had ever crossed the city limits with his army. It was so unethical that most of his senatorial officers (with the exception of one, probably [Lucullus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lucullus)) refused to accompany him. Sulla justified his actions on the grounds that the Senate had been neutered and the *[mos maiorum](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mos_maiorum" \o "Mos maiorum)* ("The way things were done", or "the custom of the ancestors", which as a reference amounted to a Roman constitution although none of it was codified as such) had been offended by the negation of the rights of the consuls of the year to fight the wars of that year. A force of armed [gladiators](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gladiator) raised by the Marians (Marius offered freedom to any slave that would fight with him against Sulla) failed to resist Sulla's organized military force and Marius and his followers fled the city.

Sulla immediately took control of the city by methods that were incredibly harsh by even Roman military standards.  Sulla had Sulpicius Rufus murdered along with several other Marian supporters (Marius fled to Africa) and passed several laws before leaving for what he hoped would be a lucrative campaign in Greece.

One of the new consuls immediately had Marius recalled to Rome and the two attacked the allies of Sulla and eventually captured the city.  What followed was a slaughter like none other seen at that time.  Marius and his army of vicious and undisciplined slaves terrorised Rome. Hundreds of senators were killed and their heads displayed in the forum. Marius was named consul for a record seventh time but died soon after.

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| Sulla and Mithridates |

On a spring day in 88 B.C., in a plot Mithridates masterminded, all Romans and Italians living in certain Anatolian cities were killed. Perhaps as many as 150,000 were massacred; even those who had sought sanctuary in temples. Then Mithridates army liberated mainland Greece from Roman control and exploitation. This hastened the end of the social war as the Romans realised they needed to deal with Mithridates.

In 87, Sulla returned to the east, landing in the Greek city of Epirus. Greeks in the area switched alliances from Mithridates to Rome. Sulla went to the area near Athens known as [Boeotia](http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/mapsgreeceparts/g/092107Boeotia.htm) where he defeated two of Mithridates' generals. He then invaded Athens, but his lack of a fleet made it difficult. Sulla sent [L. Licinius Lucullus](http://ancienthistory.about.com/cs/people/a/uc_lucullus.htm), brother-in-law of [Clodius Pulcher](http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/romansc/p/032110ClodiusPulcher.htm) of Cicero and Catullus-fame, to acquire ships. Meanwhile Sulla succeeded in cutting off Athens from its harbour and defeated the city. Many were slaughtered, but the city was saved. He then defeated the Greek-Pontic forces at Chaeronea, causing serious loss to Mithridates' forces, in March 86.

Following the death of Marius while in office, the Roman replacement or suffect consul of 86 B.C. was Valerius Flaccus. He led an army to Asia to replace the forces of Sulla, who didn't want to be relieved and didn't know Flaccus was coming. After arriving in Thessaly Flaccus chose to head to the Hellespont, preferring to confront Mithridates than Sulla.

Flaccus' troops mutinied and killed him, replacing him with his legate C. Flavius Fimbria, who captured Pergamum, which had become Mithridates' capital. By this time, Sulla had a fleet and could cross the Hellespont (the strait between Greece and Asia Minor joining the Aegean Sea and Propontis), but he wanted to return to Rome because he had heard about Marius attack.

Before Sulla returned to the West, Mithridates was ready to make a deal with him. According to the treaty they agreed to, Mithridates kept Pontus, but Sulla forced him to give up the section of Paphlagonia he had earlier promised to withdraw from, give up prisoners and deserters, and give Sulla what he had needed so badly, war ships and lots of money. Sulla then stationed Fimbria's men in an Asian garrison, restored the vassals and organization of the Roman province of Asia, and collected what became crippling fines.

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| Sulla as Dictator |

In 84 BC, Sulla returned to Rome, bringing with him two young commanders, Crassus and Pompey. He renewed the civil war against the Marians, now led by Young Marius, which he won soundly after Crassus’ victory at the Colline Gate, and entered Rome as Dictator.  He then proceeded to gain immunity for all of his actions past and present and created a new kind of slaughter by posting proscription lists that itemised every Roman citizen Sulla wanted dead because of suspected Marian loyalties.  In all, Sulla killed 10,000 people through the civil war and his proscriptions.

Despite this horrible onslaught, over the next three years, Sulla reformed much of the Roman political system to the benefit of the state and was hailed as Rome’s saviour by most of Rome.

He introduced the Leges Corneliae.

1. Anyone who became Tribune could not hold a higher office.
2. A Tribune could not veto a law.
3. 300 of his supporters were introduced into the Senate.

When Sulla died in 78 amidst retirement in Campania, after finishing his consulship of 79 and holding elections for the next year, a massive state funeral was given to him and his life was celebrated.  It can be correctly argued that the Sullan reforms staved off the end of the Republic for another fifty years.

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| Government under the Republic |

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| Under the Republic, two ( TTTwo ***elected*** consuls shared the head of government. Consuls were members of the Dr Senate, who had been elected to serve for a one year.  The Senate was composed of leaders from the [**patricians**](http://rome.mrdonn.org/plebs.html)**,** the noble and wealthy families of ancient Rome. They were the law makers. They controlled spending. Members of the Senate were not elected. They were chosen by the Consuls. Once chosen, they served for life. There were 300 seats in the Senate. When a seat opened, a new Senator was selected by the current Consuls.  The Assembly was composed of all the [**plebeian**](http://rome.mrdonn.org/plebs.html)citizens of Rome, the common man. The Assembly did not have a building. It was the right of the common man to assemble in [**the Forum**](http://rome.mrdonn.org/forum.html) and vote.  In the beginning, the Assembly had very limited power. They could vote for or suggest laws, but the Senate could block their decisions. The Assembly could vote to declare war, but again, the Senate could override them.  However, the Assembly had one power that was very impressive - it was the Assembly who voted each year on which two members of the Senate would serve as Consuls. As a noble, if you wanted to rise to the level of Consul, the highest position in government under the Republic, you needed to gain the support of the *plebeian* class. Since it was the Consuls who filled empty seats in the Senate, if the Assembly chose their Consuls well, they could slowly gain power in government by putting people in charge who were sympathetic to their needs.  Some members of the Assembly became quite powerful in government in their own right. Some tradesmen were very wealthy. There is an old expression - money talks - which means the rich seem to be heard more easily than the poor. |  |

**Structure of Government Under the Republic**

**Consuls Senate Assembly**

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| PATRICIANS | PATRICIANS | PLEBEIANS |
| 1 year term | Life term |  |
| Consuls chose the Senators |  | Elected the 2 Consuls |
| Ran the government, overseeing the work of other government officials. | Advised the consuls. Advised the Assembly. | Elected government officials including judges. |
| Directed (commanded) the army | Directed spending, including tax dollars |  |
| Acted as judges | Approved or disapproved laws made by the Assembly | Voted on laws suggested by government officials |
| In an emergency, consuls could choose a dictator – a single ruler to make quick decisions. | Made decisions concerning relationships with foreign powers | Declared war or peace |
| Both consuls had to agree on their decisions. Each had the power to Veto the other. In Latin, veto means “I forbid.” |  |  |