

THE GOVERNMENT IN ROME FROM 88 B.C. TO 82 B.C.

by

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# INDEX

Heading	Page
Summary of purpose . . . . .	1
Ancient historians, their viewpoints and their worth . . . .	1
Modern historians, their viewpoints and their worth . . . .	5
Survey of the situation prior to 89 B.C. . . . .	10
Events of the year 89 B.C. . . . .	12
Events of the year 88 B.C. . . . .	16
Events of the year 87 B.C. . . . .	20
Events of the year 86 B.C. . . . .	25
Events of the year 85 B.C. . . . .	27
Events of the year 84 B.C. . . . .	31
Events of the year 83 B.C. . . . .	33
Events of the year 82 B.C. . . . .	34
The aristocracy and the Cimnan government . . . . .	35
The Equites and the Cinna government . . . . .	38
The proletariat and the Cinna government . . . . .	39
Tribal formation and citizenship prior to 88 B.C. . . . .	41
The new citizens and the Cimnan government . . . . .	43
The Tribune and Comitia under Cinna . . . . .	45
Conclusion . . . . .	46
Appendix I - List of Magistrates from 89 - 82 B.C. . . . .	48
Appendix II - Major Ancient Sources . . . . .	53
Bibliography . . . . .	57

# I

The Government in Rome from 88 - 82 B.C. is a politically important period to students of Roman History, since it is the only period when the democratic party was in complete control of affairs. The traditional picture of these years by writers, both modern and ancient, is one bespattered with the blood of proscriptions, the hunger and filth of economic distress and poverty. In general, complete and utter maladministration. However, after a careful study of extant sources, one cannot help but consider the writers somewhat biased in their opinions.

This thesis is an effort to point out and assist readers in visualizing what Rome was like during those years. The aim is to alter the prevalent opinion, bringing those years into clearer focus and into their proper perspective. The purpose is not to prove that the men of the times like Cinna, Carbo, Flaccus, and Marius were merely much maligned individuals whose good intentions have since been lost in the brilliant rhetoric of Cicero, or in the invective of Velleius, but rather that their government was an honest effort towards the betterment of the underprivileged classes, even though they themselves may have been anxiously working towards the solidification of their somewhat precarious positions as demagogues.

The chief ancient sources from which current opinion concerning these years is derived are Plutarch, Cicero, Velleius Paterculus, Appian, and Sallust. To better comprehend modern historians it is well to analyze these ancient writers as to their own political opinions and the potential reliability of the sources of each. Plutarch's Life of Sulla furnishes a relatively complete chronological study of the years 88 to 82 B.C., since Sulla, though away in the East most of the time, was in

some cases directly, and in many others, indirectly responsible as an influencing factor in the events of those years. Plutarch's chief source was the memoirs of the dictator himself, which are, unfortunately, now no longer extant. In his Life of Sulla, Plutarch mentions his indebtedness to these memoirs, as for example, *καὶ γὰρ τοῖς ὑπομνήμασι γέγραπεν ὅτι...* (Plut., Sull., 6.5). Compare also to this, a similar type of reference in the Life of Sulla, 4.4.

It is only logical to assume that Sulla would not be anxious to give much credit or praise to a government which he actually opposed by force, and one whose policies he completely overturned after the battle of the Colline Gate in 82 B.C. Consequently, no fair assessment of these years should be looked for in Plutarch, for it will naturally be biased because of the nature of the source.

In the works of Cicero the student is presented with a totally different approach to these five years -- that of the rhetorician, orator and philosopher. Since Cicero was not a historian, references to these years are scattered throughout his voluminous writings, and are used as examples in illustrating a point, or as rhetorical analogy, or in a variety of other literary and rhetorical devices. It is a well-known fact that Cicero was an extreme ardent admirer of The Ancient Republic. He spends much space eulogizing the glorious deeds, valiant courage and 'pietas' of the Republican man of olden times. An equal amount of verbiage is given over to vilifying those types which threatened the Republic and who represented, at least to Cicero's way of thinking, the lowest form of character, throttling the Republic by their power and might. In this respect Cicero appears to be an anomaly, since while an admirer of The Ancient Republic, he was also an aristocratic supporter; but this

seeming paradox is easily understood when one remembers that the Republic which Cicero admired was ruled by the aristocrats, or more specifically, the patricians, and Cicero's lifelong ambition was to 'belong' to the best class, to become an accepted member of the aristocracy, and hence his automatic acceptance of the aristocratic view. Consequently, Cinna and his followers can hardly be expected to gain Cicero's praise or admiration, since they had gained their positions through force and violence, were leaders of the democratic party, and appeared to be well on their way to the establishment of a supreme and omnipotent dictatorship in Rome.

Cicero calls Cinna, cruel -- L. Cinna crudelis . . . (Cic., Phil., XI.i.1). A more comprehensive summary of his opinion of Cinna can be found in an earlier Philippic (I.xiv.34): Itaque, ut omittam res avi tui prosperas, acerbissimum eius supremum diem malim quam L. Cinnae dominatum, a quo ille crudelissime est interfectus. Elsewhere Cicero's glowing rhetoric paints a graphic summary of those 5 years.

Cn. Octavius consul armis expulit ex urbe conlegam: omnis hic locus acervis corporum et civium sanguine redundavit. Superavit postea Cinna cum Mario; tum vero clarissimis viris interfectis lumina civitatis extincta sunt. Ultus est huius victoriae crudelitatem postea Sulla: ne dici quidem opus est quanta diminutione civium et quanta calamitate rei publicae.  
(Cic., In Cat., iii.10)

Obviously, Cicero, under his widespread, all-pervading influence, cannot be expected to afford to his readers a fair assessment of those years.

Thirdly, there is Velleius Paterculus, Roman historian and son of a distinguished Campanian family. He was an ardent admirer of Tiberius, having served under him in Germany, and his political views are those of an aristocrat, and as such his opinion of a democratic government in power would be biased. He very bluntly characterizes Cinna as a man lacking in restraint -- Non erat Mario Sulpicioque Cinna temperator (Vell., II.xx.2).

Velleius elaborates on this statement further on when he summarizes Cinna's character.

Ante adventum L. Sullae Cinna seditione orta ab exercitu interemptus est, vir dignior, qui arbitrio victorum moreretur quam iracundia militum. De quo vere dici potest, ausum esse eum quae nemo auderet bonus, perfecisse quae a nullo nisi fortissimo perfici possent, et fuisse eum in consultando temerarium, in exequendo virum.

(Vell., II.xxiv.5)

Elsewhere in his History he describes the flight of the nobles to Sulla, the cruelty of the proscriptions, while notably omitting or else cursorily glossing over other events of that era such as Flaccus' debt law or the coinage law of the praetor Gratidianus. In general, Velleius chooses to grasp the highlights of the era, dwell upon them, while leaving the other events in abeyance.

Next, is Appian, a Greek historian from Alexandria, who lived in the middle of the second century A.D. From his Roman Civil Wars and Mithradatic Wars a great deal of information about the years 88 - 83 B.C. is gleaned; the use made of lost authorities lends it considerable worth. Just as in the case of the three preceding historians, Appian too presents a biased slant on the affairs, and indeed gives quite a gory description of the blood baths of the Marian proscriptions in 87 B.C. (Appian, BC, I.viii.71-74). Appian's hostile attitude towards a democratic administration is to be expected, since he obtained the post of imperial procurator in Egypt from Antoninus Pius and was indebted to Livy, who had well-known aristocratic leanings, as the chief source for his histories. Consequently, he would have aristocratic leanings and sympathies. Also, Appian is largely a mere compiler and his writings are disfigured by oversights and blunders - especially in chronology.

Lastly, there is Sallust. Although his Historiarum Libri Quinque, which is supposed to have comprised the period from the death of Sulla in 78 B.C. to the consulships of L. Vulcantius Tullus and M. Aemilius Lepidus in 66 B.C., remains only in fragmentary form, nevertheless, it is invaluable insofar as some of the fragmentary speeches discuss and refer to this period. It seems fairly safe to assume that this work was probably a source for some of the later historians in writing comprehensive history of the later republic and civil wars. From the remaining fragments it can be assumed that Sallust's attitude, or at least that which he puts into the mouths of his speakers was inimical to Cinna and his administration. This is quite evident in a fragment from the speech of Philippos:

Haec si placent, si tanta torpedō animos obrepsit,  
ut obliti scelerum Cinnae, cuius in urbem reditu  
decus ordinis huius interuit, nihilo minus vos atque  
coniuges et libero Lepido permissuri sitis, . . .  
(Sall., Speech of Phillippos, 19)

As is fairly evident from the above samplings from the chief sources for the years 88 - 82 B.C., the prevailing opinion was hostile and decidedly prejudiced. Consequently, modern authorities in outlining these years have adopted the viewpoints of their ancient authorities, with the result that our viewpoint is also prejudiced; and no attempt seems to have been made to arrive at a better understanding of these years. To take a swift glance at the opinions of this period set forth by modern historians it is only necessary to quickly examine some representative writers.

Sir Charles Oman in his Seven Roman Statesmen of the Later Republic gives perhaps the most lurid descriptive summary of these years:

Their three years of rule had been a disastrous failure; it started with a bloody massacre which alienated every citizen of moderate mind. Then, when constructive measures were necessary, the famous Democratic programme had ended in a fiasco. Cinna had no genius in him, and the code of laws which he produced turned out to be no more than a rechauffée of the out-of-date expedients of Sulpicius and the Gracchi, which had already been tried and found wanting. The one startling novelty had been the dishonest debt-law of Valerius Flaccus, . . .



Cinna and his friends, in short, had staked their success on their power to satisfy all Italy, and to provide a purer and a more efficient government than that of the old senatorial oligarchy. In this they had notoriously failed. So far from being a return to the Golden Age, the three years domination of the Democratic party had been a time of massacre, bankruptcy, and discontent. The chiefs of the dominant faction had proved windbags, and dishonest windbags too.<sup>1</sup>

Equally strong in his criticisms of these years is T.M. Taylor who says:

Policy it had none; no attempts at systematic reform were made; a few scattered enactments were passed, . . . Beyond these two measures [Flaccus' debt law and definite extension of the franchise to all Italian citizens] . . . nothing was done. They gained their position by civil war, fortified it by wholesale murder, and used it to establish anarchy . . . . Never had there been in Rome such an open disregard of all constitutional forms. . . . No sign of opposition to their [Cinna and Carbo] rule appeared, for none dared to give voice to it; the Senate was ignored and terrorised, and any suspicion of resistance served to seal the doom of the offender; the capitalists were exasperated by the law of debt, but they had to bear their spoliation without a murmur; the proletariat found one master as good as another and were pampered by the full renewal of the corn doles, which had been partly suspended in 91 B.C.; the better class citizens, intensely though they resented the abrogation of all constitutional forms, might well doubt whether anything would be gained by restoration of Senatorial power, which could only be achieved by force of arms and would undoubtedly be followed by terrible reprisals; the new burgesses whose addition swelled the citizen list from 493,000 in 86 B.C. to 910,000 at the next census, alone gave a strong support to the party in power. . . . ; no steps were taken to provide for the government of the empire; the future was left to chance; the old constitution remained exactly the same, except of course that Sulla's laws of 88 B.C. had been repealed. In spite of all this utter disorganization Rome itself was quiet, but it was the hush of terror that precedes the breaking of the storm.

Moving away from Taylor and Oman, who were both Victorians with all the prejudices of that class conscious age of England, one finds that G. P. Baker is equally eloquent and hostile to those years:

<sup>1</sup> Sir Charles Oman, Seven Roman Statesmen of the Later Republic, (London, 1902), p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> T.M. Taylor, A Constitutional and Political History of Rome, (London, 1899), pp. 290-292.

The three years which followed illustrate a characteristic which often, perhaps usually, marks popular revolutions: they proved that the revolt of the Populares was not a bid for a new creative effort, but a revolt for certain particular reforms. There was nothing to prevent them from introducing any millennial ideas they might possess, and of making the Roman World, if they desired, a political paradise. But having extended the franchise to the Italians, the Populares could positively think of nothing else, except to cancel Sulla's laws, and return to the old system, and to organise an army to fight Mithradates. . . . This was surely a very small mouse for so very great a mountain to produce. When we look back upon the bloodshed, the damage done, and the hatred engendered, we may well stand astonished at the amount of energy one party had expended to prevent, and another had expended to achieve, such results. Perhaps nothing illustrates better than such an instance the core of truth in the creed of the cynics, who think the folly and evil of humanity larger than its wisdom or its goodness.<sup>3</sup>

Coming down to more modern historians whose viewpoints, while still unfavorable, are more terse than their predecessors, one finds A. A. Trever who says: "Roman politics during the absence of Sulla present a sordid picture of inefficiency, and brutal revenge."<sup>4</sup> Nor did the ensuing nine years change the opinions of C. E. Van Sickle who wrote that: "For the next three years, Cinna and a small clique of his supporters governed Italy quietly enough, but corruptly, inefficiently, and in flat defiance of constitutional precedents."<sup>5</sup>

And so the list of historians condemning Cinna and his party continues, while only the eloquence of each marks the difference between them. Perhaps the most striking comparison between all of them is their similarity

<sup>3</sup> G.P. Baker, Sulla the Fortunate: The Great Dictator, (London, 1927), pp. 216-217.

<sup>4</sup> A.A. Trever, History of Ancient Civilization, II (New York, 1939), p. 184.

<sup>5</sup> C.E. Van Sickle, A Political and Cultural History of the Ancient World, II (New York, 1948), p. 275.

in viewpoint about Cinna to the hostile and aristocratic ancient sources. None of the writers seem to have made any conscientious effort to examine the reliability and credibility of their sources, but rather seem to have blindly followed them, accepting their verdict without careful examination and review of the case.

"Like a voice crying in the wilderness" is Harold Bennett, whose thesis, which is a sincere effort to study Cinna and his times, is rather refreshing to read. He is making an honest effort to summarize these years with a fairly positive approach, when he says:

[Cinna was the] least democratic of all leaders of senatorial opposition except Sulpicius whose program he inherited. He achieved his end, carried out his pledges, and gave Italy a government which, if not good, must have been at least tolerably free from abuse; but his measures were temporary and his vision limited. Far from grasping the tremendous issues which equalization of Italy involved, he failed even to make adequate preparations for the safeguarding of his own position. Ambitious, courageous, strong of will and firm of purpose, Cinna nevertheless lacked those essentials of true statesmanship, political insight and constructive imagination. The one permanent achievement of his career was the equalization of the Italians, but his historical importance rests upon his example rather than his performance, and undoubtedly the chief point of his significance in the evolution of Roman government lies in his plan of cloaking absolute power behind the forms of constitutional government.<sup>6</sup>

Even Mr. Bennett cannot help but permit the negativism with which this period is surrounded to pervade his work, as he says in rather harsh terms:

The merits of Cinna's administration, however, are mainly negative. Apart from the equalization of the Italians, not a single example of constructive statesmanship can be assigned to his credit. This may be due in some measure to the hostility of the historians who were the sources of the extant records, and to the fact that all traces of

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<sup>6</sup> Harold Bennett, "Cinna and His Times," University of Chicago Thesis, I (1923), pp. 68-69.

Cinna's innovation must have been completely swept away in the Sullan reaction, but it is hardly possible that any important reform could have been executed, or even projected without some reference to it having been preserved. A fair conclusion would be that certain minor reforms and adjustments may have been made, but that nothing on a large scale or of permanent influence was attempted. From this again it is apparent that Cinna made himself master of Rome not from any conviction that the existing government needed remodelling, nor as the representative of any party of reform, but simply to gratify a personal ambition for power.<sup>7</sup>

It seems apparent that even Mr. Bennett in his efforts to reevaluate Cinna and his administration, has placed his stress on the wrong criteria as a basis for judgment and as such has been unduly harsh in his criticism. Rather than assess the government in terms of its own era, he has chosen to apply the ideas and concepts of his age and times as a foundation on which to judge Cinna and his administration. It is as if Mr. Bennett were seeking to find in Cinna another "Teddy" Roosevelt or, anachronistically speaking, a Franklin D. Roosevelt.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pp. 67-68

## II

Now that a brief survey of the opinions of ancient and modern writers has been given, it is best to turn and chronologically review the years 88 - 82 B.C., themselves and thus set forth the historical facts before proceeding to a discussion of the events and their influence.

Rome in 89 B.C., had come a long way from the little collections of mud huts gathered on the Palatine and first ruled over by a series of kings of both Latin and Tarquin dynasties. She had survived invasions and major wars to become master of Italy and lord of the Mediterranean area through the downfall and destruction of Carthage in the Punic Wars. Internally she had evolved a Republican form of government whose various orders had struggled between themselves - the Patricians to solidify, strengthen and gain power, and the Plebians to gain equalization of rights and freedoms. The period of the struggle between these orders from 494 B.C. to 287 B.C., saw the formation of the Tribune and Comitia Tributa, the codification, the writing down of laws by a decemvirate in the form of the Law of the Twelve Tables, the passage of important laws such as the Valerio-Horatian Laws in 449 B.C., the Publilian Law of 471 B.C., the Canuleian Laws of 445 B.C., the Licinio-Sextian Laws of 367 B.C., and the Laws of Publilius Philo in 339 B.C., and the addition of new magistracies such as quaestors, aediles, etc. The period 494 B.C. to 89 B.C., was one also of economic upheaval and the gradual decline of the small farmer due to the importation of slaves, the growth of the massive estate and devastation of wars. Politically the Senate and the aristocracy, which composed its body, strengthened their stranglehold upon the rest of the citizenry until two reformers, the Gracchi, made abortive attempts to alter the status of the aristocratic elements within the state, and introduce certain reforms to alleviate the plight of the small

farmer, enfranchise and incorporate into the Roman state the Italian and Latin Allies who were crying for equalization with Rome. Of great significance and importance was the reorganization of the army under Marius, the latest of the reformers. The distinctions created by Servius Tullius were abolished - the legionaire could be placed in any place in the field at the discretion of the officers, all carried the 'pilum' and short sword, the manipule was abolished as a unit and replaced by the cohort, the full strength of the legion was raised from 4,200 to 6,000 divided into 10 cohorts of 600 each, the different standards of each legion were replaced by the Silver Eagle and, finally, the property qualification for service was abolished with the result that any Roman citizen could volunteer. This last innovation resulted in the growth of a large professional soldiering class which was loyal to its general, as opposed to the state, and finally gave rise to military dictators like Marius, Sulla, and Julius Caesar. During his six consulships, the last of which was reported to have been obtained through bribery, Marius defeated Jugurtha, and saved Italy from the Cimbri and Teutoni. In his sixth consulship he allied himself with Servilius Glaucia and Appuleius Saturninus and this was to spell his downfall, as they were opposed by the Censor, Metellus, and driven out of Rome, with the result that the year 99 B.C. was marked by a strong reaction against the Democratic party.

The question of Italian citizenship and the resulting pressure had been increasing and now reached fruition. The Italians had long been agitating for citizenship, since they were subject to military service without promotion, compelled to quarter and feed troops, and subject to many other injustices, such as taxation. Above all, they wanted a redress for their grievances before a court of law, and this they would only get through citizenship. In the past Italians who visited or who were domiciled

in Rome, had sometimes contrived to pass as citizens, but in 95 B.C. the consuls, Lucius Crassus and Mucius Scaevola carried a law which required an inquiry into doubtful cases and the subsequent banishment of residents who could not make their claims good. This was bitterly resented and turned the minds of the Italians to civil war. In 91 B.C., Drusus made himself the champion of enfranchisement. After his election as Tribune of the Plebs he embarked upon a program of reform which included the debasement of the coinage, the enrollment of 300 Knights into the Senate, and the selection of juries from a mixed group of Senators and Knights. With this program he hoped to gain support for proposals to extend the Roman citizenship, but failed, and was then accused of complicity with the Allies in a plot to murder the consuls at the Latin festival. His death was speedily followed by the Social War.

So at the dawn of 89 B.C., Rome found herself torn by internal strife, and in a period of civil war and revolt which eventually led to the dissolution of the Republic and the foundation of the Principate and Empire. Rome was at the bloody close of one era and on the threshold of a new one. The year 89 B.C. saw the opening gambit which led to the Mithradatic War. A senatorial commission headed by M. Aquilius succeeded in restoring the rightful monarchs, Nicomedes and Ariobarzanes, to the Bithynian and Cappadocian thrones respectively, but then proceeded to exceed their instructions by encouraging Nicomedes to invade Pontus itself in order to obtain the means of paying back the money which they had lent him. Consequently, the Roman Senate may be held responsible for the Pontic invasion of Bithynia and Asia which was to culminate in the massacre of some 80,000 Italians there the following year.<sup>8</sup> The resulting conflict caused by the

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<sup>8</sup> H. Hill, The Roman Middle Class in the Republican Period, (Oxford, 1952), p. 141.

actions of this commission made the equestrian Middle Class deeply anxious about the fate of its investments in Asia, and had the Senate employed a bold policy in the East they might have won this powerful, influential, wealthy class over,<sup>9</sup> but they pursued a contrary course. Also the Knights had been deprived of their monopoly in the law-courts by the *lex Flautia Judicaria* which had established mixed juries and, in addition, were also harassed by financial difficulties. The combination of these things made this group quite uncertain about its policy.<sup>10</sup>

The year 89 B.C. was also one of financial crisis. Money was scarce and the number of debtors was increasing. The *Lex Papiria Nummaria* reduced the weight of the copper As to one-half Uncia - mox lege Papiria semunciarum asses facti (Pliny, *NH*, XXXIII.xiii. 46). In any case, it was only a token coin and the 'semuncia' was a common weight for the small change of Italy. Perhaps the greatest indication of the dire financial situation was the murder of the Praetor Urbanus, Asellio. The creditors were pressing for payments whereupon the debtors, relying on an obsolete law which made usury penal, refused to pay. Consequently, Asellio appointed arbitrators to settle the dispute. The result of this action is described by Valerius Maximus:

Creditorum quoque consternatio adversus Semproni Asellionis praetoris urbani caput intolerabili modo exarsit. Quem, quia causam debitorum suscepit, concitati a L. Cassio tribuno pl. pro aede Concordiae sacrificium facientem ab ipsis altaribus fugere extra forum coactum inque tabernula latitantem praetextatum discerpserunt.

(Val. Max. 9.7.4)

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 140.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.



Undoubtedly, the most significant event of 89 B.C. was the passage of a series of three laws, Lex Julia, Lex Plautia-Papiria, and Lex Calpurnia, granting citizenship to the Italian Allies. The purpose behind these laws was, of course, to aid in quelling the rebellion which had broken out among most Italian communities. The first mentioned law, the Lex Julia, was actually passed in 90 B.C. by the consul L. Julius Caesar, and it offered full citizenship not only to the Latins, but also the Italian communities who were not actually in arms. The second law, the Lex Plautia-Papiria, was carried in a plébiscite in 89 B.C. by the two tribunes, Silvanus and Carbo, and it stated that all persons who were domiciled in Italy and who were enrolled as burgesses by allied communities might obtain Roman citizenship by applying for it within 60 days. The third law, the Lex Calpurnia, authorized the generals to confer citizenship upon Italian soldiers in Roman armies as a reward for valour. The first two laws were probably hasty war measures designed to reduce the number of insurgents, but it is unlikely that they provided any final settlement so far as the status of the new citizens or that the second measure set up a form of procedure entirely different from that employed both before and after it.<sup>11</sup> In the same year, Strabo passed a citizenship law regarding urban communities north of the Po, the terms of which were as follows:

Neque illud dici potest, sic eam coloniam esse deductam quemadmodum post plures aetates Cn. Pompeius Strabo, pater Cn. Pompei Magni, Transpadanas colonias deduxerit. Pompeius enim non novis colonis eas constituit sed veteribus incolis manentibus ius dedit Latii, ut possent habere ius quod ceterae Latinae coloniae, id est ut petendo magistratus civitatem Romanam adipiscerentur.

(Asconius, 3C)

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<sup>11</sup> A.N. Sherwin-White, The Roman Citizenship, (Oxford, 1939), p. 133

The distribution of these newly made citizens into the already established tribes creates a complex problem for modern scholars, since several conflicting versions of their enrollment procedure are found. Appian says that the Romans did not enroll the new citizens into the thirty-five existing tribes, lest they should outvote the old ones in the elections; but rather they were incorporated into ten new tribes which voted last (Appian, BC, I.vi.49). Velleius says that they were enrolled into eight tribes so that their power and number would not weaken the prestige of the older citizens (Vell., II.xx.2). A fragment of Sisenna states that L. Calpurnius Piso added two new tribes (H. Peter, Hist. Rom. fr., p.179.17). T. Rice Holmes suggests that the authorities can be reconciled on the assumption that Velleius omitted to state that his eight tribes were new and that Appian carelessly conveyed the impression that the ten tribes were formed simultaneously, since Appian later says that the Lucanians and Samnites were enrolled into two tribes.<sup>12</sup> Heitland offers a similar solution to the problem and says:

It is submitted as a probable solution of the problem that, in default of censorial registration, presiding magistrates let the new citizens vote in Tribes chosen by lot, that these Tribes were eight in number and last in the order of returns, for the reasons given. Further, that two new tribes were created, probably to contain some special batch of new citizens, perhaps the soldiers enfranchised under the Calpurnian law. Lastly, that Appian has confused the ten Tribes in which the new citizens voted with ten new Tribes, whereas there were but two. If he did, it would be no more than he has done in other passages; certainly he had no clear notion of the politics of the Roman Republic. In any case the arrangement was of such short duration that error was not easily to be avoided in referring to it.<sup>13</sup>

However, since this particular problem is relatively unimportant insofar as

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<sup>12</sup> T. Rice Holmes, The Roman Republic, I (Oxford, 1923), p. 356.

<sup>13</sup> W.E. Heitland, The Roman Republic, II (Cambridge, 1923), p. 449.

any discussion of Cinna and his administration is concerned, it is best, now that the certain basic events of 89 B.C. have been set forth, to commence a chronological outline of the events from 88 B.C. to 82 B.C.

The year 88 B.C. was one of violent change and counter-change. The ill-omened opening of the year forecast well the events to follow. The new year commenced with the massacre of 80,000 Italians in Asia by Mithradates - Per ea tempora Mithradates, Ponticus rex, . . . , occupata Asia necatisque in ea omnibus civibus Romanis, quos quidem eadem die atque hora redditis civitatibus litteris ingenti cum pollicitatione praemiorum interimi iusserat, . . . (Vell., II.xviii.1-2). The causes of ~~this~~ massacre have been mentioned previously. Since Mithradates was now regarded as a formidable enemy of the Roman state, the province of Asia was assigned to Sulla, as proconsul for 87 B.C. While Sulla, as consul in 88 B.C., was clearing up the last of the Italian rebels, Sulpicius Rufus, Tribune of Plebs, working in conjunction with Marius, promulgated certain laws which henceforth became known as the Sulpician Rogations. These rogations were a complete reversal of the policy which had been pursued for the last two years and meant the triumph of the rebellion so nearly suppressed.<sup>14</sup> The rogations were three in number: a bill to recall those exiled by the Varian commission which had been created to inquire into the treasonable correspondence of Drusus with the Italian Allies; second, a bill to allow new citizens and freed men to be distributed throughout all the tribes - Quum P. Sulpicius tr. pl. auctore C. Mario perniciosas leges promulgasset, ut exsules revocarentur et novi cives libertinique in omnes tribus distribuerentur, . . . (Livy, Ep., LXXVII), and third, a law that no senator should incur a debt of more than 2,000 drachmas: νόμον δὲ κυρώσας μηδένα συγκλητικὸν ὑπὲρ διακλιᾶς δραχμᾶς ὀφείλειν...

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 452.

(Plut., Sull., viii.2). This was a clever and sinister triad of proposals, since the recall of the Varian exiles might possibly neutralize those members of the Optimates party who belonged to Sulla's group, while the equality of the distribution would conciliate the members of the Populares party with the Italians, whereas the third would destroy the Senate, as it was then constituted, for there could have been few large landlords who had not borrowed and incurred debts during the war.<sup>15</sup>

Before the breaking of the storm Sulpicius managed to carry through a few more measures. The command in Northern Italy was given over to Cn. Pompeius, proconsul, thus excluding Q. Pompeius, the new consul, who was also a partisan of Sulla. There was also a law offering Marius the command in the Mithradatic war (Plut., Sull., viii.2). It is also reported that Sulpicius brought about, through emissaries in his faction the murder of a man who was not only the son of Q. Pompeius the consul, but also the son-in-law of Sulla (Vell., II.xviii.6).

These laws met with the violent opposition of the Senate, and the consuls proclaimed a 'justitium' which Sulpicius, relying on a mob of armed supporters, declared illegal, driving the consuls from Rome and passing the laws. Sulla, who was with his army at nearby Nola (Vell., II.xviii.4), assembled his troops and entered the city, taking armed possession of it (Vell., XX.xix.1). Once in Rome Sulla declared the twelve persons exiles, who were responsible for this, among whom were Marius, Marius the Younger, and Sulpicius, and drove them from the city (Vell., II.xix.1). Sulpicius was overtaken and slain by horsemen in the Laurentine marshes and his head was brought back to Rome and exhibited on the front of the rostra (Vell., II.xix.1).

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<sup>15</sup> Baker, p. 178.

Sulla, now in complete control of the city, proceeded to put into effect a series of laws. The first has already been mentioned - the exile of the Marian supporters. Among those outlawed were men who appear to have been of equestrian rank - Q. and Cn. Granius, M. Laetorius, and P. Albinovanus.<sup>16</sup> It is not strange at all that Sulla should have outlawed those of the equestrian order, since "Sulla was above all things an aristocrat: he loathed the urban multitude and all its works, and when he put himself forward as a candidate for the quaestorship in B.C. 107, it was as a strict Optimate".<sup>17</sup> A second law provided that all measures receive the previous sanction of the Senate before being presented to the Tribes for their approval (App. BC. 1.59). This was obviously aimed at the tribunate and tribal assembly. A third law which was passed to strengthen the Senate, added 300 new members, who were chosen from the 'best men', to this body (App. BC. 1.vii.59), while a fourth law put some further limitations and restrictions on the Tribunes (Appian, BC. 1.59). Another law was passed regarding colonies: exinde colonias deduxit (Livy, Ep., 77). An imperfect reference in Festus tells us that a Lex Unicaria was passed in that year and that it dealt with applying interest payments on the principal of debts (Fest. 516L). It may be supposed that this law on the uncial rate of interests was enacted to settle the dispute which had terminated in the murder of the praetor Asellio.<sup>18</sup> It should be here pointed out that in the midst of all Sulla's new laws and reforms no attempt was made to deal with the outstanding political problem of the times - the admission of the new citizens into tribes and centuries.

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<sup>16</sup> Hill, p. 143.

<sup>17</sup> Oman, p. 120.

<sup>18</sup> George Long, The Decline of the Roman Republic, II (London, 1866) p. 228.

Sulla then held elections to fill the vacant magistracies for the year 87 B.C. It is now that Lucius Cornelius Cinna appears on the scene. Cinna, although not a Sullan supporter, was permitted by Sulla to be elected to the consulship after he bound him by a solemn oath that he would be favorable to his policies (Plut., Sull., X.3-4). Octavius, a recognized supporter of Sulla, was elected as his colleague (Plut., Sull., X.3-4). Even at this time Cinna was gaining support as opposed to Sulla - dissociatis animis civium cum alii Sullanis, alii Cinnanis faverent partibus (Nepos, Atticus, 2.2), and was being associated with the Marian faction (Diod. Sic., xxxvii. 2.14). However, it is hardly possible that Cinna could have taken part in the plots and plans of Marius and Sulpicius, for if he had been implicated in any way with them, he would surely have fled the city.<sup>19</sup>

Plutarch states that even now resentment against Sulla was growing and this the people showed by their rejection of Nonius, his nephew, and Servius, who were his candidates (Sull., X.2). However, as Plutarch says, Sulla pretended pleasure at this: *ὁ δὲ τούτοις τε προσεποιεῖτο χαίρειν*, . . . (Sull., X.2). Sulla, his mission accomplished, then left with his army for the East and opened the Mithradatic war; unfortunately, he had already set dangerous precedents. Not only was his seizure of Rome the first example of the use of a Roman army to drive out political opponents, but he had set a far more dangerous precedent in his use of the proscription. Also, nothing had been done to remove the general discord and discontent in the city, and Sulla had shown a complete disregard of constitutional forms in the passage of his laws. Scarcely had he left Italy when strife and dissension commenced.

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<sup>19</sup> Bennett, p. 6.

The conditions which prevailed in Italy now are indescribable.

The years 88 - 87 B.C. are almost unparalleled in history and as Oman says:

The conduct of the two parties was absolutely insane: there is no parallel for it in history save one: the state of France in 1793-94, when foreign invasion, domestic insurrection, and bloody proscriptions in the capital were all in progress at once, bears much similarity to the state of Italy in B.C. 88-87.

That civil war should arise, when every man and every sesterce was still wanted to preserve the state from dangerous external troubles, is all the more astonishing because in B.C. 88 both the Optimate and the Democratic parties were in a deep state of discredit. No one could say that the rule of the Senate during the last thirty years had been anything but feeble and incompetent. On the other hand, all the main items of the Democratic programme had been tried and found wanting.<sup>20</sup>

Cinna, the new consul, now became the man of the hour, and he was destined to dominate the Roman political scene until his death in 84 B.C. like the colossus of Rhodes. What sort of dream and ideals Cinna had are not known, but his earlier activities show no indication of a definite goal, but only a general striving after personal advancement.<sup>21</sup> "He appears at this time as a man of no political convictions, but simply as an unprincipled opportunist, ready to serve wherever the reward would be greatest, building with broken faith and perjured oath an ascent to power but dimly discerned."<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, "the Democratic faction found a new leader in the consul for B.C. 87, L. Cornelius Cinna, . . ."<sup>23</sup> However, it does seem safe to assume that at the time of his election Cinna as yet, had not aligned himself with the Populares party, since "he surely would not have done so [taken Sulla's oath] if he had been elected as an anti-Sullan champion,

<sup>20</sup> Oman, p. 112.

<sup>21</sup> Bennett, p. 62.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Oman, p. 127

for Cinna was neither a weakling nor a fool, and Sulla at this time would hardly have ventured to depose a legally elected consul against whom he could allege nothing save that he held democratic views."<sup>24</sup>

Shortly after his election Cinna tried to subvert the existing order of things: *παράλαβὼν δὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν εὐθὺς ἀπεχείρει τὰ καθεστῶτα κινεῖν* , . . . (Plut., Sull., X.), and soon became associated with Marius and his faction - an association which was probably part of his opportunistic policy<sup>25</sup> - since he attempted the passage of a bill which would bring about the recall of Marius and the other exiles (App., BC., I.viii.64). He also attempted to carry a bill which would enroll the new citizens and freedmen in all the tribes (Vell., II.xx.2). Appian states that Cinna was bribed by 300 talents to attempt the passage of this bill (App., BC., I.viii.64). This led to quarrels between Cinna and his colleague, Octavius, and the latter, after a massacre of some 10,000 of Cinna's supporters (App., BC., I.viii.64), drove Cinna from Rome, whereupon the deposed consul set out for Campania (Vell., II.xx.3). Octavius's action in regards to Cinna is without precedent. Indeed as Bennett says on the subject:

This step was unconstitutional and is without parallel in Roman history. . . . , but in all these cases [the suspension of Caesar from the praetorship and Metellus from the tribunate in 62 B.C. and Caelius Rufus from the praetorship in 48 B.C.] , as certainly in the last, the suspension was probably brought about technically through the *maius imperium* of the consul. In the case of Cinna, however, the constitutional defect was covered by the timely discovery in the Sibylline books of an oracle which made it clear that only in this way could the peace and security of the state be restored.<sup>26</sup>

After Cinna had left Rome, Lucius Cornelius Merula, the Flamen Dialis, was chosen consul in Cinna's place (Vell., II.xx.3).

<sup>24</sup> Bennett, p. 6

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 63

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 8.



Arriving at Nola, Cinna gained the support of Appius Claudius's army there - first, by corrupting the centurions and tribunes, and, finally, even the private soldiers by the promise of largess (Vell., II.xx.4). Here at Nola he gathered together a large following, after which, having recalled Marius and his son, he was joined by them as well as the others who had been banished with them (Vell., II.xx.5). Cinna then divided his army into four parts, of which Marius commanded three legions, Cn. Carbo was placed in charge of another part of the troops, while Sertorius, who had also joined Cinna, took control of a third party, and the rest followed Cinna (Orosius, V.19.9). Octavius and Merula fortifying Rome, sent men into the cities which adhered to their cause and into Cisalpine Gaul (App., BC. I.viii.66). Gnaeus Pompey, who was in command of the army East of the Apennines, was summoned to defend the city (Vell., II.xxi.1). Cinna and his troops advanced, surrounded the city, and Marius seized the Janiculum hill on the West bank of the Tiber, while Cinna sent forces to occupy Arminium so that no help might come from the North (App., BC. I.viii.67-67). Cinna gained admittance to the city when Appius Claudius, the military tribune, opened the gates, but he was soon driven out by Octavius and Pompey (App. BC. I.viii.68). To gain more support the Senate granted citizenship to the Italian peoples: Italicis populis a senatu civitas data est (Livy, Ep., LXXX), and also made overtures through the person of Caecilius Metellus, for peace to the Samnites, but these were turned down and thereupon Marius, having granted the Samnites all that they asked, won them over to his side as allies (App., BC. I.viii.68). Marius then cut off the food supply whereupon the Senate became alarmed and sent envoys to Cinna to sue for peace (App. BC. I.viii.69). Merula, in order to make the road to peace easier, offered to resign his post as consul, and this Cinna accepted but

he refused to swear that he would abstain from bloodshed, merely promising that he would not willingly cause the death of anyone (App.BC. I.viii.70). Whereupon Cinna entered the city as consul and the tribune voted a repeal of the decree of banishment which had been directed by Sulla against Marius and his followers (App. BC.I.viii.70).

Once the control of the city was again in Cinna's hand a great holocaust of death and murder ensued. The first to suffer was Octavius, who, having withdrawn to the Janiculum with the nobility and the remnants of his army, was attacked there by Censorinus and the cavalry, and his head was cut off and sent to Cinna (App.BC. I.viii.71). Now commenced the famous Marian proscriptions, which have been described by Appian as a bloodbath in which the heads of the victims were exposed in the forum and spies were sent out to search for their enemies of the senatorial and equestrian orders who were killed remorselessly without any reverence for the gods (App.BC.I.viii.71). The names of some of the proscribed have been given by Appian and Florus - Gaius Julius, Lucius Julius, Atilius Serranus, Publius Lentulus, Gaius Nemetorius, Marcus Baebius, and Marcus Antonius, the elder and younger Crassus, Catulus, Fimbria, Ancharius (App.,BC.I.viii.72 and Florus, II.9. 14-17). Merula did not die at the hands of his conquerors, since the old priest opened his veins on the altars after charges had been brought against him (App.,BC.I.viii.74).

Ancient authorities would have one believe that the number killed during the proscriptions was extensive, but, although the list of individual victims which has come down is probably far from complete, names of celebrities such as Antonius, Crassus, Octavius and the Caesars are put in juxtaposition with comparatively obscure individuals such as Ancharius, Baebius and Numitorius (Nemetorius) and it would hardly be likely that any of the more imposing names would have been omitted.<sup>27</sup> Dio is quite vague about the

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

proscriptions, merely saying that the total number of those who perished is beyond finding out, but that the slaughter continued through five whole days and nights (Dio, Hist., Frag. xxx-xxxv.102.11). Consequently, it does not seem likely that the extent and size of the Marian proscriptions was too great, especially when one remembers that the rank and file of the Senate at the end of Cinna's rule still contained a strong Sullan element as is clearly seen by the action which this body took upon Sulla's manifesto in 84 B.C. Another factor to be considered in a discussion of the numerical proportions of these proscriptions is well analyzed by Harold Bennett who says:

It will be seen, therefore, that the wholesale slaughter vaguely described by certain ancient writers is not substantiated by a close examination of the evidence, but that in this matter also we have to recognize the invention of a partizan historian. Nowhere do we find any actual statistics of the alleged massacres; an omission which in itself might easily be accidental, but considered in connection with the other evidence seems more likely to mean that the pro-Sullan historians had good reason for preferring to confine themselves to extravagant figures of speech.<sup>28</sup>

The many slaves who had joined Marius and had been freed and enrolled in the army during the siege of Rome, now commenced abusing their freedom, and took advantage of this period of lawlessness by breaking into and plundering houses and killing the persons whom they met in the street - their own masters particularly (App., BC.I.viii.74). Cinna ordered them to cease their murder and pillage, but they refused to heed him; therefore, he surrounded them one night with his Gallic soldiery, killing them all (App., BC. I.viii.74). This action, as Bennett suggests, throws some light

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Ibid., pp. 34-35.

upon the relations of Marius with the other leaders, showing that when occasion arose, they did not hesitate to act without his consent and perhaps even against his wishes.<sup>29</sup> This assumption by Mr. Bennett is borne out by Plutarch who says that Sertorius actually rebuked Marius and made Cinna more moderate through private interviews and entreaties (Plut., Sert., V.4).

The only political event of this year was the formal repeal of the laws which had been enacted during Sulla's consulship (App., BC. I.viii.73). Thus came to a close a year which contained the most bloody internal strife that Rome had ever known, and it left the democrats in complete control of affairs. No consul was elected for 86 B. C. in place of Octavius, and Cinna and Marius merely declared themselves consuls for the coming year without election - Cinna for the second time and Marius for the seventh time as the augury of the seven eaglets had foretold (App., BC. I.viii.75).

Marius celebrated the beginning of his seventh consulship by ordering Sextus Licinius, a senator, to be thrown from the Tarpeian rock (Livy, Ep., LXXX). However, he did not live to enjoy his position for long, for he died of an illness at the very beginning of it, and Valerius Flaccus was chosen consul-suffectus in his place (Vell., II.xxiii.1-2). The exact date of Marius's death was the Ides of January (Livy, Ep., LXXX). The Cinna administration was now faced with the necessity of dealing with a financial crisis which was almost unprecedented in the history of the republic. Credit was destroyed, ready money was in abnormal demand and there was a panic among the capitalists which had been caused by the Mithradatic war and the sudden stoppage of remittances from Asia. In his role as consul-suffectus, Flaccus, in an effort to ameliorate the present financial crisis,

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 30.

brought about the passage of the Lex Valeria which decreed that one-fourth only of a debt should be paid to the creditors - In huius locum suffectus Valerius Flaccus, turpissimae legis auctor, qua creditoribus quadrantem solvi iusserat, . . . (Vell., II.xxiii.2). The fault of this law lies, of course, in the fact that it relieved the debtor whether solvent or not,<sup>30</sup> and as such could hardly be expected to gain any favour with the equestrian order.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, the Lex Valeria was an honest attempt to restore order and to assess the losses where they would be least felt.<sup>32</sup> Also, during this year Pompey (later called the Great) was brought to trial in an effort to recover some of the estate which his father had taken in war (Val. Max., 5.3.5). It was undoubtedly due to the state of the finances that he was put on trial, since the financial situation was even further complicated by the state of the currency, for, ever since the currency had been tampered with by Drusus, the number of bad denarii had been on the increase.<sup>33</sup> The youth, however, was acquitted.

Perhaps the most important event in 86 B.C., was the election of two censors, L. Marcius Philippus and M. Perperna, which was done prematurely because of an urgent need for reorganization in two departments which required the use of exclusively censorial powers - revision of the senatorial roster and the distribution of the Italians and 'Libertini' into tribes.<sup>34</sup> In their 'lectio senatus', they struck from the roll all those against whom exile had been legally pronounced. This list included Appius Claudius Pulcher, an uncle of the Censor Philippus (Cic., Dom. 84). During this year, they also seemed to have carried out the registration of the new

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<sup>30</sup> Long, p. 251.

<sup>31</sup> Hill, p. 146.

<sup>32</sup> Bennett, p. 41.

<sup>33</sup> Heitland, p. 465.

<sup>34</sup> Bennett, p. 43.

citizens and it is probable, although not clear, that these were distributed over all the thirty-five tribes, according to the promise of Cinna; but there is no reason to assume that they were distributed in equal number. It is rather safer to think that local considerations and personal influence had more weight than did any notion of symmetry.<sup>35</sup>

During this period most of the provinces adhered to the Optimates, with the exception of Africa which fell easily into the hands of the democrats; consequently, the East was to be their next objective.<sup>36</sup> It was undoubtedly with this view in mind that Flaccus was sent to the East with Fimbria as his second-in-command (App., BC. I.viii.75). A plan of campaign had probably been formulated in Rome before their departure and it appears to have been as follows: they were to make a formal demand upon Sulla for the surrender of his command and if he refused they were to summon his army to desert; and if this failed, they were to invade Asia and undertake an offensive against Mithradates which would lead to a negotiated peace and coalition against Sulla who was already in financial straits and who, if deprived of the fruits of victory and shut out of Asia, would then have little chance, even if he could continue to command the loyalty of his troops, to cause Cinna and his government any further anxiety.<sup>37</sup> However, Fimbria, the prefect of the Horse, murdered Flaccus and took command of the army (Vell., II. xxiv.1). Mr. Bennett gives the probable date for Flaccus's death as December, 86 B.C., since Velleius (II, xxiv.1) speaks of him as vir consularis at the time of his death.<sup>38</sup>

The year 85 B.C. still found Fimbria in Asia continuing his manoeuvres against Sulla, where he defeated the forces of Mithradates' son

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<sup>35</sup> Heitland, p. 466.

<sup>36</sup> Baker, p. 217.

<sup>37</sup> Bennett, pp. 45-46.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 50.

at Miletopolis and permed in Mithradates himself at Pitane in addition to sacking Cyzicus and Illius (AP., Mith., 52-53). Sulla marched towards Fimbria, who was approaching northward, and at Sulla's approach, Fimbria's men began to desert him, whereupon he took his own life (AP., Mith., 59-60). Sulla, thereupon quickly brought to a close his war with Mithradates and prepared to return to Rome to meet his enemies (App., BC. I.ix.76).

Cinna and Carbo had declared themselves consuls for this year - Quum L. Cinna et Cn. Papirius Carbo, a se ipsis consules per biennium creati, . . . (Livy, Ep., LXXXIII). It is highly doubtful if they actually forced the Centuries at word's point to vote as directed, as this would have been likely to renew the civil war, an event which was not to the interest of the men in power.<sup>39</sup> It is more probable, as Mr. Bennett suggests, that Cinna and Carbo announced their candidacy, but raised no formal objection to competitors and when there was no opposition to them, they declared that they were elected by acclamation.<sup>40</sup>

The finances at this time were still in a shaky position despite the Lex Valeria. There was no law which compelled the acceptance of plated coins as legal tender and this situation bore heavily upon the poorer classes while it was a source of profit to those who had reserves for manipulation.<sup>41</sup> Whereupon Marius Gratidianus issued an edict<sup>42</sup> which restored the denarius to its standard weight - igitur ars facta denarios probare, tam iucunda plebei lege, ut Mario Gratidiano viciatim tota statue dicaverit (Pliny, NH., 33.132). Unfortunately, sources do not give too complete an account of the terms of this edict. It must have been costly for the government to remove the bad denarii from circulation, and re-issue good denarii. It is not

<sup>39</sup> Heitland, p. 467.

<sup>40</sup> Bennett, p. 60.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> There is some question concerning the exact date of Marius' praetorship, for a discussion of this see T.R. Broughton, Magistrates of the Roman Republic, II (New York, 1952), p. 59, n. 1.

stated who bore the expense of this costly reform, but it must be assumed that the public treasury did so, and if this is so, those in power must have been more embarrassed than ever by their lack of funds.<sup>43</sup> Nevertheless the government, in this case, must definitely be held free from any suspicion of selfish or ulterior motives. It is clear, however, by the extravagant honors paid to Gratidianus that this measure had the approval of the masses, but, owing to the way in which he was tortured when Sulla returned in 82 B.C., that the Senatorial class disapproved.

A census was also held in this year and the figures of this census are preserved for us in the chronicles of Eusebius - descriptio Romae facta inventa sunt hominum CCCCLXIII milia (Jerome, Chr. ad ann. 84, p. 151 Helm). There is considerable dispute about the exactness of this figure since it shows only a small increase over the 394,336 recorded in 115/114 B.C. Heitland accounts for this fact by suggesting that the figures can hardly have been complete as there was no doubt a large army abroad with Sulla and that it was quite likely that full advantages had not as yet been taken of the recent franchise laws.<sup>44</sup> Bennett, however, seems to offer a more logical solution to the problem through an emendation:

The figures for this census are given in the Hieronymus-Eusebius chronicle under Olympiad 173, 4 = 85 B.C., as 463,000. As this seems too small an increase over the total for 115/114 B.C. of 394,336, Beloch conjectured that the D had fallen out, and would read 'DCCCCLXIII milia.' Others account for the low figure by assuming that the census was not complete. There is no reason, however, why it should have been incomplete, except in the case of those absent with Sulla, and as there was not another census until 70 B.C., we must assume that the Italians were satisfied at this time. An emendation,

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<sup>43</sup> Heitland, p. 466.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.



therefore, seems necessary, but I should prefer to think that the first letter of the numeral has been corrupted rather than lost, postulating as the true reading 'DCCCLXIII milia.' This is slightly less than the figure for 70 B.C., (910,000), and is about what we should expect, as the losses of 82 B.C. would be offset by the return of the Sullan army.<sup>45</sup>

The rest of the events within the city itself were relatively unimportant with the exception that Velleius notes that in 85 B.C. Publius Laenas, Tribune of the Plebs, threw Sextus Lucilius, Tribune of the previous year, from the Tarpeian rock (Vell., II.xxiv.2). People also commenced leaving Rome and fleeing to Sulla, and Velleius says that this was brought about by the indictments of Laenas - . . . , et cum collegae eius [Laenas], quibus diem dixerat, metu ad Sullam profugissent, aqua ignique iis interdixit (Vell., II.xxiv.2). This is confirmed by Plutarch who says that since Cinna and Carbo were now treating the most eminent men with injustice they were fleeing to Sulla - *Κίννα δὲ καὶ Κάρβωνος ἐν Ῥώμῃ τοῖς ἐπιφανεστάτοις ἀνδράσι χρωμένων παρὰ νόμους καὶ βασιλῆως, πολλοὶ τὴν τυραννίδα φεύγοντες . . .* (Sull., xxii.1).

Cinna and Carbo were now faced with the need to make preparations to meet Sulla on his return from the East. Consequently, the two consuls dispatched legates to all parts of Italy to gather soldiers, money and supplies; they made a special effort to gain the friendship of the leading citizens of Rome and appealed especially to the newly created citizens, pretending that it was because of them they were thus threatened (App., BC. I.ix.76).<sup>46</sup> Thus, did the year 85 B.C. come to a close and it was a year of great uneasiness, for, although the Marian party was still dominant, it was preoccupied with plans for securing the

<sup>45</sup> Bernett, pp. 44-45 - See also footnote 48.

<sup>46</sup> Appian suggests this as the reason why Carbo and Cinna did not bother to return to Rome to hold the consular election, but merely declared themselves consuls for that year (App. BC. I.ix.77).

retention of its power; nor could Cinna completely trust his newly created citizens and, in addition, there were large numbers of men in both Samnium and Lucania who were either still in arms, gathered in armies or ready to be embodied at short notice.

The year 84 B.C. saw the continued preparations on the part of the two consuls, Cinna and Carbo, for the gathering of supplies, money, and men to meet Sulla. At this point, Sulla addressed a letter to the Senate in which he stressed the plight of those who had fled to him as refugees from Cinna, the action taken by the government against him in confiscating his property, and announced that he would soon be back to take vengeance on them (App., BC., I. ix. 77). The Senate became so terrified at this that it ordered Cinna and Carbo to cease their bellicose preparations until an answer from Sulla should be received to the messages sent to appease him (App., BC. I. ix. 77). Despite their promises, both consuls continued their activities and traversed Italy collecting soldiers whom they sent over the Hadriatic to Liburnia to meet Sulla (App., BC. I. ix. 77). The first detachment arrived safely, but the second was overtaken by storm and those who returned to Italy safely went off to their homes, refusing to fight (App., BC. I. ix. 77). The rest, meanwhile, who were awaiting transshipment, refused to go, whereupon Cinna, becoming indignant, called an assembly in order to terrify them; but one of the lictors who was clearing a road for Cinna, was struck by a soldier and when Cinna ordered the arrest of that soldier, a mutiny arose in which Cinna was killed (App., BC. I. ix. 78). Carbo, who was now sole consul, recalled the rest of the troops from Liburnia and refused to return to Rome, where he had been summoned by the Tribunes in order to hold an election (App., BC. I. ix. 78). When threatened with the reduction of rank to that of private citizen, he set a date for the elections, but postponed them to the following day due to unfavorable omens, and, when on that day lightning struck

the temple of Luna and Ceres, the augurs prorogued the comitia beyond the summer solstice (App., BC. I.ix.78).

The conditions and state of the government in Rome at this time were pathetic. Chaos, both mental and physical, was everywhere and as Heitland says:

The weakness of the government in Italy at this juncture was probably beyond our power of imagination to conceive. There was the Senate, in which the reactionary party was reviving, but uncertain how far it might venture to go without provoking another massacre on Marian lines. There was the consul, rash and insufficient, flustered and endeavouring to make up for lost time in organizing the means of resistance to Sulla. There was the Assembly, consisting mainly of the city populace, interested in its own food-supply and amusements, and becoming conscious of its own impotence through the bloody revolutions of the last four years. And all over Italy were the great mass of citizens new and old, who either distrusted the good faith of the Roman government or doubted its stability. The fear of a reaction brought about by the return of Sulla seems to have been on the whole the predominant feeling, but this feeling could not find effective expression in the lack of a strong and inspiring leader.<sup>47</sup>

Sulla threw an even greater panic into the Senate by his answer in which he declared that he would never be on friendly terms with men who had committed such crimes, but that he would not prevent the city from extending clemency to them; in addition to this, he demanded his former dignity, his property and the priesthood, and the restoration to him in full measure of whatever other honors he had previously held (App., BC. I.ix.79). Carbo, however, prevented the acceptance of any of Sulla's demands, and in an effort to get the support of the Italians he induced the House to give them citizenship - Novis civibus SC. suffragium datum est (Livy, Ep., LXXXIV).<sup>48</sup> In addition to this, a Senatus consultum

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<sup>47</sup> Heitland, pp. 484-485.

<sup>48</sup> This passage from Livy's epitome is subject to considerable discussion. Hugh Last suggests that this might be the reason for the small census figure in 85 B.C., while Long, p. 255, says that the Senate was making a last appeal to insurgents and promised citizenship to all who were still in arms. See also Sherwin-White, p. 131, and texts of footnotes 44-45.

was carried, through the pressure of Carbo and the Marian faction, which stated that all armies wherever serving should be disbanded (Livy, Ep., LXXXIV). This was probably a desperate move to bring into clear relief the illegality of Sulla's position, for Sulla did not obey this, but continued his own preparation. At the end of 84 B.C., the newly elected Tribune, M. Iunius Brutus, carried a bill for the colonization of Capua (Cic., Leg. Agr. 2.89, 92-93, & 98), which was doubtless to be used as a military base for operations.<sup>49</sup>

Once Sulla landed in Italy at Brundisium the actual fighting commenced and the year 83 B.C. was one of constant military engagements. The two consuls of that year, Scipio Asiaticus and C. Norbanus, were both in the field with armies, but Sulla succeeded in defeating Norbanus at Mt. Tifata, while Scipio's army deserted him at Teanum (Vell., II. xxv.2-4). Pompey, who meanwhile had succeeded in raising a strong army of his own from the district of Picenum, proceeded to join Sulla (Vell., II. xxix.1-2). Carbo, who in 83 B.C. was proconsul in Italy and Cisalpine Gaul, hastened back to Rome, where he effected a decree in which Metellus and all the other Senators who had joined Sulla, should be declared public enemies (App., BC. I. x.86). It was at this time that the capitol was burned, but the doer of this deed is uncertain, for it is variously attributed to Carbo, the consuls, or somebody sent by Sulla (App., BC. I.x.86). During this year, P. Cornelius Cethegus well judging of the prospects of his faction in 83 B.C. went over to Sulla who pardoned his offences and found him useful. Sulla was also sending messengers to all parts of Italy to collect troops either by friendship, money, fear, or promises (App., BC. I. x.86). The results of the first campaign were definitely in Sulla's favour.

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<sup>49</sup> Heitland, p. 486.

The consuls for 82 B.C. were Papirius Carbo (for the second time) and Marius, the nephew of the great Marius, who was then only 27 years old (App., BC. I. x.87). Both sides were relatively idle during the winter months, but once spring came, there were severe engagements on the banks of the river Aesis between Metellus and Carinas, the latter a praetor under Carbo's command (App., BC. I. x.87). Marius, with his army, was defeated at Praeneste by Sulla and the youth was killed while trying to escape (App., BC. I. x.87-88). Carbo, meanwhile, went to Picenum to assist Carinas, but was checked there by Metellus and Pompey, and upon hearing of Marius's defeat, retired to Ariminum (App., BC. I. x.87). Carbo and Sulla then fought a severe battle near Clusium which lasted all day, and in the plain of Spoletium Pompey and Crassus, two of Sulla's officers, killed some 3,000 of Carbo's men and besieged Carinas, whereupon Carbo sent reinforcements, but these ambushed, were killed by Sulla (App., BC. I. x.89-90). At last, after a series of many tragic defeats and severe losses, Carbo completely abandoned hope and fled to Africa with his friends (App., BC. I. x.92). Sulla and a cavalry force then hastened to Rome where, after a bloody battle outside the Colline gates, they took possession of the city (App., BC. I. x.93). So the year 82 B.C. came to a close and saw once more Sulla in complete control of the city.

The events which followed Sulla's victory at the Colline gates are a matter of other history and record. Plutarch aptly summed up the situation at this point by saying that insofar as tyranny was concerned, there had not been a deliverance from it because of Sulla's victory, but rather a mere exchange of control - τοῦτο καὶ τῷ βραδυστάτῳ Ῥωμαίων νοῆσαι παρέστησεν ὡς ἀλλαγὴ τὸ χρῆμα τυραννίδος, οὐκ ἀπαλλαγὴ γέγυνε. (Sull., xxx.4).

## III

Now that the basic chronology and certain elemental facts and data have been set forth, it is time to turn to a discussion of the effect of Cinna's rule on the different groups involved with the new government. An effort will be made to visualize, through empathy, the feelings and emotions of each group of citizens in respect to this new government and the government's effect upon their individual lives. It must be remembered that in any discussion in which specifically delineated classifications are arbitrarily used that there is a certain amount of fluidity between the various ranks and social orders, since no class or social group is absolutely static. Consequently, the divisions of the Italians and Romans into the classification of 'Nobilitas', Equestrians, Proletariate, farmers, and new citizens is not nearly so clear-cut as it appears to be.

The Senatorial 'Nobilitas', composed of high-ranking Patricians, Knights and Plebians had long been in control of the government, but with the advent of the Cinna government, the Roman Republic for the first time was completely in the hands of the Democratic party, and the Aristocratic party was out of control. In 88 B.C., the Senate was controlled by the dictates of Marius and Sulpicius - ἡ δὲ σύγκλητος ἦν μὲν οὐκ αὐτῆς, ἀλλὰ τοῖς Μαρτίου καὶ Σουλπικίου διωκέτο προστάγμασι . . . . (Plut., Sull., ix.2). However, because of the brief return of Sulla that same year, the Senate and the Aristocratic party received a momentary return to power and control, since this was especially guaranteed by the addition of the 300 new members to the Senate who were chosen from the 'best men' (App., BC. I. vii.59). Their power and control, however, was short-lived, for with Sulla's departure for the East and the advent of

Cinna in 87 B.C., the Democrats became firmly entrenched and were not dislodged until the return of Sulla in 82 B.C. During those years in which Cinna was in power, the evidence does indicate that the Senate continued to exercise authority over those matters which fell into its recognized sphere, and it was far from a body forced into any servile acquiescence to the will of the consul.<sup>50</sup> However, senatorial influence in other spheres was probably at a very low ebb during this time, for few new laws were enacted and there can be little doubt that these new laws were proposed directly to the citizens' assembly by the magistrates.<sup>51</sup> However, in provincial affairs, as has been previously mentioned, the provinces, with the exception of Africa, still remained loyal to the Optimates, whose membership roll contained many Senators; so, in that regard, the Aristocrats were still supreme.

Undoubtedly many Aristocrats of the Senatorial order lost their lives during the Marian proscriptions of 87 B.C., but as has already been pointed out, the number of these was not sufficient to alter the aristocratic and hence pro-Sullan character of the Senate. Also, it is stated that those adherents who fled to Sulla in 84 B.C. were of Senatorial rank. (App., BC. I. x.86). Financially, the members of the Senate were in rather dire straits and some had undoubtedly incurred large debts as is evident by the terms of one of the Sulpician rogations *-νόμον δὲ κυρώσας μηδένα συγκλητικὸν ὑπὲρ δισχιλίας δραχμῶν εἰσφέρειν, . . .* (Plut., Sull., viii.2). It is doubtful if the Senatorial aristocracy felt too heavily the stoppage of the remittances from Asia, since they had been prohibited by the Lex Claudia in 218 B.C. from entering into any commercial speculation, although it is not known to what extent this law was obeyed, for there were certainly

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<sup>50</sup> Bennett, p. 65.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., p. 66

some Senators, such as Crassus a few years later, who did engage in commercial speculation. It appears uncertain whether the passage of either the *Unicaria Lex* in 88 B.C. or the *Lex Valeria* in 86 B.C. had any adverse effect upon the finances of the Senatorial aristocracy. Quite the contrary was probably true, since both of these laws related to debt, and usury was a business of the Equestrian Order. Because both of these laws did to some extent alleviate the debtor (this is especially true of the *Lex Valeria*, which made the debtor only liable for one-fourth of his debt), they were undoubtedly welcomed by those Senators who were in debt. However, the restoration of the debased coinage by Gratidianus in 85 B.C. was quite unwelcome to the Senatorial Order, since, as a deflationary measure, it would reduce prices of farm products of which this Order was the chief wholesaler and, consequently, might reduce some to a state of relative pauperism.

In summary, it is safe to conclude that the Senatorial Order, while not pleased with the rule of the Democrats, was not oppressed or harassed to any great extent. It is true, of course, that undoubtedly most of them offered little opposition to any of the bills which were put before them, considering it more prudent and ultimately safer to accede to the wishes of the party in power; but with the exception of a minority who probably were actually politically dangerous or had made influential and powerful enemies, they had little cause to fear the proscriptions. The Senatorial aristocracy must have been on the whole, however, relatively content (or if not content, at least not actively discontent), for none of the ancient sources mention any revolutionary plan to overthrow the existing government, and it is quite safe to say that had there been any, the pro-Sullan historians would have chanced upon it and mentioned it. It is true, of course, that when Sulla drew near to Italy, quite a few of the Senators fled the



city to join him, but this appears to be indicative more of a show of active support for him, than due to any maltreatment at the hands of Cinna's party, since, had there been any maltreatment, the Senators would undoubtedly have fled immediately rather than waiting until Sulla drew near, and also there are no references to any crimes committed against this group by Cinna; indeed, the only reference to this maltreatment is in a letter of Sulla's (App., BC. I. ix.77), and this is, of course, to be expected.

High finance was in the hands of the Equestrian Order who formed the financial class in Rome. In 123 B.C., Gaius Gracchus instituted the passage of a Lex Iudicaria by which the control of the law courts, formerly in the hands of the Senate, passed over to the Knights by giving to this order the right to sit on juries, and, therefore, political as opposed to merely economic significance. A Lex Iudicaria of 98 B.C. partially destroyed the Knights' monopoly of the courts by stating that the 'Album Iudicum' should contain the names of all members of the Senate together with the names of 300 Equites and that mixed Juries should be chosen from this list. In 91 B.C. the Lex Nummaria, which was passed by Drusus, debased the coinage by the admixture of an alloy of one-eighth copper in the silver denarius, and this inflationary measure was undoubtedly a great blow to the Equestrians, since this greatly depreciated the real value of their money. Consequently, in 89 B.C., as has been already stated, the Middle Class had been deprived of its monopoly of the law courts and was harassed by financial difficulties.

The Knights fared little better in 88 B.C., for that year saw the passage of the Lex Unicaria which, although it was a great relief to the debtors, struck a blow at the Knights, who as the financial class, were primarily the creditors. Also, the return of Sulla in that year was a great blow to them. Since Sulla disliked and distrusted the Middle Class

it was not likely that he would serve their interests in Asia, and had his rehabilitation of the Senate proved successful, the Knights could expect no help from that body, so it was only natural that they should support Cinna in his efforts to undo what Sulla had done.<sup>52</sup> However, it is very doubtful if the Equites received the support from Cinna that they had hoped for, since the Lex Valeria was a bad financial blow to them, although as advocates of pure money, they welcomed the restoration of the coinage by Gratidiamus. Despite the shortage of money which the coinage restoration made, Cinna did not order any proscriptions of this wealthy group by which to fill the state coffers. Although their fortunes drooped somewhat under the Cinna government, no record has come down of any unrest amongst this group and none that we know of left Rome to join Sulla upon his return. Even though their financial status was impaired by Cinna and some of their members undoubtedly died during the Marian proscriptions, nevertheless, they seem to have remained loyal to Cinna and his government as a body, evidently preferring his rule and administration to that of their enemy, Sulla.

The Proletariate represented the third group or order in Rome at this time. Over a period of years the masses of the urban population had been swelled by the small farmers, who poured into Rome, because of the continual ruination of their farms. The trend had been accelerated by the cheap grain doles of Gaius Gracchus and the devastation caused by the Social War. The urban proletariate had had little share in the advantages accruing to the Optimates and Knights from Rome's expansion.

Consequently, at the time of Cinna's control the masses in Rome contained both poor Plebians and ruined farmers, and it was of this group

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<sup>52</sup> Hill, p. 114.

that Cinna became the champion. Their condition and problem was mainly an economic one - they were oppressed by the old, severe debtor laws and the devaluation of the silver denarius under Drusus in 91 B.C. had made matters even worse for them. The little money which they possessed was no longer worth its real value, and prices were going up because of the devastation caused by the social wars and the lack of foreign wheat. The revival of an antiquated debt law by the Praetor Asellio, was of some relief to them, but this was short-lived and ended in the Praetor's murder. As could be expected the Lex Valeria was a great relief to these poor debtors, for they found it considerably easier to pay off their debts. The restoration of the debased coinage to its full value was an even greater boon to them, since, as a deflationary measure, it would lower prices and put more real money into circulation; therefore, it would be easier for this group to earn and get more money. The Corn doles to the urban masses were continued, since no source mentions their stoppage, and it is safe to assume that if they had been stopped, there would have been considerable upheaval and rebellion in this group. Perhaps this group, more than any other, was in favour of the Cinna administration, for the government had made an honest effort to ameliorate their condition and give them a certain degree of self-respect. Sulla, as the champion of the aristocracy, would, of course, be their enemy. In the matter of the small farmer who was still left on his farm, nothing seems to have been done in the way of any agrarian reforms, but undoubtedly the financial reforms affected him just as much as it did the urban masses, and, consequently, may to a certain extent be considered a measure of agrarian relief, for it gave the small farmer a better opportunity to pay off his debts, and the mortgage on his farm.

Consequently, the poor citizen in Rome during this time, found that he was on the road to economic and financial rehabilitation. He had little to fear from the Marian proscriptions, for he was not an important enough individual to be of any concern to the leaders. He probably continued to receive his corn doles, and although money was scarce, he did find that the value of his money was rising, the amount of his debt was lessened, and prices were dropping. He would have little or no interest in foreign affairs, or in the political problems which would be confronting the Senators. There seems to be no question that this group lived in apparent contentment - or at least in as much contentment as any group could be expected to live in during these troubled times.

The problem of the libertini and new citizens was a completely different one, and their position and attitude is a difficult one to determine. The question of the grant of the highly-cherished Roman citizenship to new communities had long been a problem for the various parties. Due to the political set-up prevalent in Rome, principles of enfranchisement are closely linked with the creation of tribes and the distribution of the new citizens into tribes. Perhaps the most outstanding principle to remember in any discussion involving enfranchisement is that prior to 89 B.C. it was as communities, not as individuals, that the Italian allies were incorporated into the Roman state under various laws.<sup>53</sup>

Since 241 B.C., there had been thirty-five Tribes organized on a geographic basis, but enrollment in these Tribes was another matter. In 312 B.C., Appius Claudius enrolled all the 'Libertini' into Tribes and substituted money for land-qualification and enrolled individuals into the Tribes without distinction. However, in 304 B.C., Fabius Rullianus, the

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<sup>53</sup> Sherwin-White, p. 130.

Censor, removed all non-freeholders into the four city Tribes. Membership in a Tribe did not constitute full citizenship, as is seen by the fact that in 332 B.C. when two new Tribes were created, some of the allies enrolled in them (Lanuvium, Pedum, and Nomentum) became 'cives sine suffragio'. Consequently, during this period the classification of Italian inhabitants may be broken down into two main groups - Citizens ('cives') and Allies ('socii'), and the 'cives' may be sub-divided still into two further groups ('cives Romani' or full citizens, and 'cives sine suffragio' or citizens with no public rights), while the 'socii' may also be sub-divided into two groups ('Coloniae Latinae' or Latin colonies, and 'civitates foederatae' or Italian allies). Until the middle of the second century B.C., the Latins residing at Rome possessed the right of voting in one Tribe which was drawn by lot, and could only gain full 'civitas' in three ways (settling at Rome on the condition that they left a son in their native town, holding a magistracy in a Latin town, or accusing and then procuring the conviction of a Roman magistrate on the charge of financial irregularities). Full franchise was given to all old Latin towns with the result that after 200 B.C. full 'civitas' extended all over Latium and 'cives sine suffragio' disappeared.

However, the question of citizenship for a large majority of the Italians was still a pending problem. "As long as Rome wanted a large citizen body, so long was the Roman 'civitas' freely bestowed; it was only when the Romans felt their position well assured, and their strength sufficient that they restricted jealously the extension of their citizenship."<sup>54</sup> At the close of the Punic Wars, Rome had ceased to be so generous with the distribution of citizenship, and reformers like the Gracchi

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<sup>54</sup> Taylor, p. 146.

were constantly agitating for an extension of the Latin 'civitas'. Those allied states who were still outside the citizenship grew restless and discontent because of certain injustices and lack of legal rights, and commenced fighting. Soon a full scale social war was under way. It was not until then that the Romans saw the necessity for an extension of their franchise. This was done in 89 B.C. by the passage of the three laws which related to an extension of the franchise for the allied states - the Lex Julia, Lex Plautia Papiria, and Lex Calpurnia. There is no doubt that these were emergency measures passed to bring a swift conclusion to the social wars, and it is evident that these largely quieted most of the uprisings, but, as seen by the provisions of the laws, the franchise had still not been extended to all the Allies, and these communities were still trouble sources.

When Cinna came into power, there was still considerable upheaval amidst the new citizens, the 'Libertini', and those who had been excluded by the laws of 89 B.C. Whatever provisions had been made for the enrollment of the new citizens into Tribes, it apparently was unsatisfactory, as the influence and power of their vote was nullified. The 'Libertini' to a large extent were confronted with a similar problem, for in 168 B.C. all freed men had been compelled to vote in only one of the city Tribes which was chosen by lot. Sulla, had made no effort to deal with this pending problem during his return in 88 B.C., and, consequently, it appears unlikely that he would be looked upon with favour by the members of these groups. Cinna and his faction, on the other hand, did cope with the problem, although not without ulterior motives. Shortly after his election to the consulship, Cinna aligned himself with this group when he attempted the passage of a bill which would enroll all the freed men and new citizens into all the Tribes (Vell., II.xx.2). From this moment on he gained the support, military and political, of this large group.

During the fight with Octavius, his colleague, he and Marius offered the 'civitas' to the Samnites, a thing which the Senate had refused to grant them although they had granted it to other Italian peoples. This was an obvious means to gain more support in their struggle against Octavius and the Aristocrats. Accordingly, Cinna fulfilled his promise to these new citizens when they were distributed in 86 B.C. by Philippus and Perperna throughout the thirty-five Tribes. This was, of course, another political manoeuvre on the part of Cinna by which he hoped to gain a majority of legislative support in the Tribes. Both a military and political motive must surely have been in the back of Carbo's mind when he persuaded the house to grant 'suffragium' to these new citizens, which might mean that they had been enrolled in the Tribes as 'cives sine suffragio'.<sup>55</sup>

Despite the ulterior motives which the party harboured, it must be admitted that in the equality of distribution and in the grant of the 'civitas', the government was not only fulfilling, as it were, a 'campaign promise', but, in addition, settling a question of long standing trouble and dispute, as well as accomplishing something which was merited by the Italian Allies and was long overdue. How unwavering was the loyalty and support of this new group, is not known, but it can be assumed that Cinna and his party never completely trusted them or had any confidence in their support, for on the return of Sulla, Carbo and Cinna whipped up resentment against Sulla in order to gain the support of the new citizens (App., BC. I. ix.76). Also, the Cinna detachment of troops, who were earmarked for Liburnia, might easily have been recruited from amongst the new citizens, since it is well-attested that the consuls traversed Italy to collect troops. If this be the case, as seems likely, the Cinna faction's lack

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<sup>55</sup> See Livy, Ep., LXXXIV, and Footnotes 44 - 45, and 48.

of confidence in the support of the new citizens was well-founded, since some deserted, returning home, while another group mutinied and murdered Cinna. It is doubtful if the new citizens as a whole, with the exception, of course, of the 'Libertini', whose economic problem would be similar to that of the other urban masses, would be at all influenced by the economic reforms in the capitol. Since the Italians had recently been in rebellion against Rome, their economic problems would not be parallel to those of the older Roman Citizens, as there would be no economic intercourse with the Roman citizens, but would tend to be internal ones which only they themselves could settle.

Nevertheless, the allegiance of these war-like Italian 'novi cives' belonged to Cinna, as much as their support belonged to any one faction. The average 'novus civis' was only concerned to get his 'civitas' and, consequently, freedom from arbitrary acts of magistrates, freedom from tribute and taxes, the right to partake of equal justice, promotion in the armies, etc.; but his real allegiance still belonged first to his own small community and did not extend to the Roman State as a whole, until at a later date when he, as an individual, and all the other new 'groups' had become completely assimilated and synthesized into the larger corpus of the Roman State.

The role of the Senate under the Cinnan government has already been mentioned, and in passing it is well to look briefly at the role played by both the comitia and the tribunate under the government. There is no evidence that Cinna attempted to promulgate arbitrary legislation or substitute a magisterial edict in place of the vote of the people. "It would appear, . . . , that Cinna's plan was to establish an absolutism while appearing to retain the established magistracies of the republic in



strict constitutional form; . . . ."56 Consequently, the comitia was certainly retained as the supreme legislative authority of the state, although there are few recorded instances of its activity. The tribunate is not heard of, although, in line with Cinna's apparent policy, it is safe to assume that it carried on its regular function when necessary and where needed.

Any summary of Cinna's administration is necessarily difficult since some of the sources are merely fragmentary, others are imperfect, and all extant ones are biased. However, this must be said about Cinna: namely, that in the short time in which he was in power, he made an honest and sincere effort to tidy up the economic situation and to satisfy the Italians.<sup>57</sup> The financial laws which were carried in his administration relieved the oppressed state of the many debtors, and at the same time curbed run-away inflation and high prices through the restoration of the denarius. In no way did Cinna make any effort to tamper with the machinery of the government as it had been established, which was, of course, a characteristic of Sullan tyranny. Unfortunately, the true worth and value of the Cinna government can never be determined, since it was faced from its inception with the task of putting economic conditions to right and assisting the masses to rise above the social and political inferiority to which they had been pushed by the aristocrats in a few brief years; while it had taken the aristocrats years of rule - or perhaps it would not be improper to say misrule - to place affairs in this chaotic state. No sufficient length of time elapsed in which to see whether or not the long-term efficiency and worth of Cinna's policies would be proven, since

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<sup>56</sup> Bennet, p. 65.

<sup>57</sup> Hill, p. 145.

as early as 85 B.C., Cinna had to commence preparations to meet Sulla, and he had only gained a real grip on the government by 86 B.C. So, with the exception of scarcely three years, the remaining time was spent in constant war and turmoil, from the battle with Octavius to the battles with Sulla, and then, when Sulla returned to power in 82 B.C., he proceeded to annul all Cinna's legislation. All that can be said is that, on the surface, and for the majority of the groups and orders, it was a period of relative contentment and stability, and quite free from internal unrest and dissatisfaction.

Nor is it fair, as in the case of many modern historians, to measure the worth of a government by the number of major reforms which it institutes. The fact that Cinna's government, although instituting no history-making reforms, did apparently keep the people happy, solve some of their grievances, and commence the stabilization of the economy, makes it a good government. For a government under which the people are unhappy and discontented, and yet makes no attempt to alleviate the conditions of the persons whom they govern, regardless of its gigantic reforms, must be termed a bad government; whereas any government under which the large majority of the people are content and which makes an attempt to remedy any abuses which exist, even though it does not institute epoch-making reforms, must be termed a good government. According to this definition, therefore, the government of Cinna must be termed good, and that of Sulla, bad, for what is a government, but an abstract concept translated into concrete form, which is administered by various individuals, whose sole purpose is to guide, care for, and satisfy, within certain limitations, the people over whom it has power.

## APPENDIX I - LIST OF THE MAGISTRATES FROM 89 - 82 B.C.

(Based on T.R. Broughton, Magistrates of the Roman Republic, Vol.II)89 B.C. - A.U.C. 665Consuls

Cn. Pompeius Strabo

L. Porcius Cato

Censors

P. Licinius Crassus

L. Iulius Caesar

Praetors

Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius

Ap. Claudius Pulcher

? C. Cosconius

P. Gabinus

? Q. Oppius

? (Cn. Papirius) Carbo

A. Sempronius Asellio - Pr. Urbanus

? P. Sextilius

Tribunes of the Plebs.

L. Calpurnius Piso (Frugi)

L. Cassius

L. Memmius

C. Papirius Carbo

M. Plautius Silvanus

Quaestors

? Q. Minucius (Thermus ?)

88 B.C. - A.U.C. 666Consuls

L. Cornelius Sulla

Q. Pompeius Rufus

Praetors

? Q. Ancharius

M. Iunius Brutus

? L. Licinius Murena

? C. Norbanus

Servilius

? P. Sextilius

Aediles

? Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer

Tribunes of the Plebs.

P. Antistius

P. Sulpicius Rufus

87 B.C. - A.U.C. 667Consuls

Cn. Octavius

L. Cornelius Cinna

Consul Suffectus

L. Cornelius Merula

Tribunes of the Plebs.

Sex. Lucilius

P. Magius

? M. Marius Gratidianus

? C. Milonius

M. Vergilius

Quaestors

? C. Claudius Marcellus

L. Licinius Lucullus

86 B.C. - A.U.C. 668Consuls

L. Cornelius Cinna

C. Marius

Consuls Suffectus

L. Valerius Flaccus

Censors

L. Marcius Philippus

M. Perperna

Praetors

? L. Cornelius Scipio Asiagenus (Asiaticus)

Aedile or Iudex Quaestionis

P. Antistius

Tribunes of the Plebs.

P. Popillius Laenas

Quaestors

? Hirtuleius

85 B.C. - A.U.C. 669Consuls

L. Cornelius Cinna

Cn. Papirius Carbo

Praetors

? M. Marius Gratidianus

Quaestors

? M. Terentius Varro

84 B.C. - A.U.C. 670Consuls

L. Cornelius Cima

Cn. Papirius Carbo

Praetors

C. Fabius Hadrianus

? M. Marius Gratidianus

Quaetors

M. Fonteius

M. Iunius Silanus

C. Verres

83 B.C. - A.U.C. 671Consuls

L. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus (Asiagenus)

C. Norbanus

Praetors

P. ? Burriemus

? C. Papirius Carbo (Arvina)

Q. Sertorius

Aediles of the Plebs.

? L. Critonius

? M. Fannius

Tribunes of the Plebs.

M. Iunius Brutus

Quaestors

M. (Pupius) Piso (Calpurnius Frugi)

82 B.C. - A.U.C. 672

Consuls

C. Marius

Cn. Papirius Carbo

Dictator

L. Cornelius Sulla Felix

Master of Horse

L. Valerius Flaccus

Praetors

Q. Antonius Balbus

C. Carrinas

L. Iunius Brutus Damasippus

? Magius

M. Perperna (Vento)

Aediles, Curule

? P. Furius Crassipes

Aediles of the Plebs.

M. Pomponius

Tribunes of the Plebs.

? Q. Valerius Soranus

Interrex

L. Valerius Flaccus

APPENDIX II - MAJOR ANCIENT SOURCES FOR THIS PERIOD

Ammianus Marcellinus - 30.8.9.

L. Ampelius - 42.2; 40.1; 42.1.

Appian - Bellum Civile I.vi.48 - I.x.

Mithradatic Wars 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29-66, 93, 112.

Appuleius - Apologia 17.

Asconius (Clark Edition) - p. 3, ll. 5-12; p. 22, ll. 5-8; p. 23; p. 24;  
p. 25; p. 64; p. 73, ll. 25-27; p. 74, ll. 1-4;  
p. 79, ll. 3-4; p. 80; p. 84.

Aurelius Victor - De Viris Illustribus 63.1; 67. 6; 69. 2-4; 70. 1-4;  
74. 1-2; 75. 7-8.

Bellum Africanum 22. 21; 56; 67. 6; 68. 2; 69. 1-4; 70. 1;  
75. 8.

Augustinus - De Civitate Dei 2.22; 2. 24; 3. 7; 3. 27-28.

Caesar - Bellum Gallicum 1. 47. 4.

Charisius - 354.

Cicero - Academicae Quaestiones 2.1; 2.2; 2.11 & 61; 11.

De Lege Agraria 1.10; 2.38; 3.5 & 6; 11. 89-99, 92-93 & 98.

De Amicitia 1.2; 2.

Pro Archia 4.7; 7; 9-11.

Ad Atticum I. 18.6; VII 7.7; VIII 3.6; IX 10.3; IX 14.2; IX 15.2.

Pro Balbo 8.21; 9; 21.

Brutus 55; 56; 62-64; 90; 178-179; 180; 182-183; 203; 223-224;  
226-227; 230; 306-308; 311.

Pro Caecina 87; 101.

In Catilinam i.4; iii.10.24.

Pro Cluentio 11.

Pro Cornelio Fr.29.



Cicero - De Oratore i. 25; ii. 274; iii. 2-3; iii. 8-11.

De Divinatione 1. 4; 1. 72; 2. 65.

In Caecilium 63.

Oratio de Domo Sua 31, 83f; 32, 84; 83, 84.

Ad Familiares IX 21. 3.

De Finibus 1. 39.

Pro L. Flacco 14. 32; 25. 61; 52; 55; 57; 57; 77.

Pro M. Fonteio 1-2; 5-6; 43.

De Haruspicum Responsis 20; 41; 43; 54.

Rhetorica ad Herennium 1.25; 2. 45; 4. 31.

Pro Lege Manilia 7; 8; 11; 19; 28.

De Legibus 1. 42; 2. 47; 2. 52-53; 3. 20; 3. 36; 3. 42.

Pro Murena 11; 15; 32.

De Deorum Natura 2. 14; 3. 21; 3. 80-81.

De Officiis 3.20.80; 3. 80-81.

Philippics 1.14.34; 2.42.108; 5.16.43; 8.2.7; 11.1.1; 11.13.33;  
12.11.27; 13.1.1-2; 14.8.23

In Pisonem 84.

Pro Plancio 51; 88.

Pro P. Quinctio 17; 24; 24-25; 28-30; 63; 65; 69.

Ad. Q. Fratrem i.1.33.

Pro Quinto Roscio Amerino 12.33; xliii.125.

Pro Rabirio Postumo 10.27.

Post Reditum ad Quirites 3.7.

Pro Sestio 21.48; 36.77; 48; 77.

Pro Scauro 1-3 (Oxford Text).

Tusculum Disputations 5.14; 5.54f.

In Vatinius 23.

In Verrem 1.11; 1. 37-38; 2.1.11; 2.1.34-40; 2.1.89; 2.1.143;  
2.3.117; 2.3.217; 4.60.135; 4.151; 5.8.

- Corpus Inscriptionem Latinorum - 1<sup>2</sup>.1.p.60; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.683; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.891-892;  
 1<sup>2</sup>.2.710-712; L 1505 = X 4669; I 558 = 6905;  
 X 8070.2; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.733; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.719-724; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.714;  
 1<sup>2</sup>.1.p.195; 1<sup>2</sup>.2.738; 1<sup>2</sup>.pp.215 & 220.
- Dio Cassius Cocceianus - 102. 5-12; 107-109.
- Diodorus Siculus - 37.2.1; 37.2.8; 37.2.13-14; 37.29.2-5; 38.1-4; 38.6-10; 38.16.
- Eusebius - Chronicles. ad ann. 84, p.151 Helm.
- Eutropius - 5.4; 5.6-7; 5.3.
- Florus - 1.40.1-13; 2.9.
- Frontinus - Strategemata 3.17.5.
- Gellius - 4.4.3.
- Iulius Exsuperantius - 3.4; 3.15; 4; 7; 8.
- Iustinus - 4.4; 38.3.8.
- Licinian - p.23 Bonn; p.25; p.24f; p.27; p.39.
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- Lucian - Zeux 3; ed. Bonn; pp. 23, 25, 27, 29.
- Memnon - 34.
- Nepos - Atticus 2.1-2; 4.1-2.
- Obsequens - 56.
- Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae - 440.
- Orosius - 5-6.
- Julius Paulus - Sententiae 5.21.
- Pausanias - 1.20.4-7; 9.7.4-6; 10.21.6.
- Pliny - Natural History 2.92; 7.68; 7.156; 7.158 & 165; 11.252; 13.24; 22.12;  
 14.95; 33.13.46; 33.46.132; 33.5.16; 33.14.48; 34.12.27.
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 and Sulla.
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Sallust - Catilina 33.2.

Historia 1.77.7 M; 1.28 M; 164 M; 2.78 M; 3.33; 5.13 M; 4.69.11-12 M;  
Fr I 22 kr = 126 M; 127 M; 1.77.19 M; 1.64 M.

Seneca - De Ira 3.18.1.

Sisenna - Fr. 81; Fr. 129; etc.

Strabo - 9.1.15, 396C & 2, 398C; 9.1.20, 398C; 10.1.9, 447C; 12.3.34, 558C;  
13.1.27, 594C; 13.1.54, 609C; 13.3.5, 621C; 13.4.17, 631C; 13.594;  
14.2.3, 652C.

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Historia 3.51; 3.72; 3.83.

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5.3.5; 5.5.4; 5.6.4; 6.1.8; 6.2.8; 6.5.7; 6.9.6; 7.6.4;  
8.6.2; 8.6.4; 8.9.2; 8.13.4; 8.15.7; 9.2.1-3; 9.7.3; 9.7.4;  
9.7. ext.1-2; 9.12.5; 9.13.1-2; 9.15.1.

Varro - De Re Rustica 1.1.10.

Velleius Paterculus - II.xvi - II.xxix.

Verrinus Flaccus - 1.37.

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