

Third Servile Revolt: Romans

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NOVEMBER 10-13, 2016 | MONTRÉAL, QUÉBEC



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Dear delegates,

Welcome to the 3rd Servile Revolt Joint Crisis Committee! My name is Garima Karia, and it is both my honour and pleasure to be chairing this fascinating and fast-paced committee. I, along with the rest of the dais members, thoroughly enjoyed preparing this committee for you, and we are all excited for an incredibly action-packed weekend.

My colleague and friend Gordon Barad will be your Vice Chair. We are both avid MUN delegates ourselves, having competed for our high schools and on the college circuit. Outside of MUN and studying/appreciating political science, Gordon enjoys fishing and I love nothing more than a good brunch. Together, we've been working hard to ensure that the debate and crises of the Third Servile Revolt will keep you on your toes all weekend!

Please don't hesitate to contact me, or any member of the SSUNS secretariat, with any questions you may have leading up to the conference. I look forward to meeting each and every one of you this November!

Sincerely,

Garima Karia

Chair, 3rd Servile Revolt JCC



Historical Background & Context

According to myth, Ancient Rome was founded by the two brother demi-gods, Romulus and Remus, on April 21st 753 BCE.¹ As legend has it, in an argument over which brother would rule the city, Romulus killed Remus and named the city after himself.²

Rome started as a small settlement on the banks of the Tiber River, and rapidly grew in size and strength through commercial activity, particularly trade. The location of the city provided merchants with an easily navigable waterway on which to trade their goods. The Romans used Greek culture and civilization as a model for their own, and thus numerous parallels can be observed between the two civilizations. From the Greeks, they borrowed literacy and religion as well as the fundamentals of architecture.³ The northern Etruscans gave them a model to follow for trade and an urban culture of luxury.⁴ As this continued, the Romans proved their talent for borrowing and improving upon the skills and concepts of other cultures.

The Kingdom of Rome grew rapidly from a trading town to a prosperous city between the 8th and 6th centuries BCE.⁵ When the last of the seven kings of Rome, Tarquin the Proud, was defeated in 509 BCE by his rival for power, Lucius Junius Brutus, Brutus

¹ Mark, Joshua J. "Ancient Rome." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia Limited, 2 Sept. 2009. Web. 30 May 2016.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

went on to reform the system of government and establish the Roman Republic.⁶ Thus, the Senate, along with other democratic institutions, was established.

Though Rome owed its prosperity to trade and commerce in the early years, what set this city apart from the rest was its talent on the battlefield. The Republic's military might made Rome an unparalleled, and mostly uncontested, force in the ancient world. The wars with the North African city of Carthage, better known as the Punic Wars (264-146 BCE), allowed for the consolidation of Rome's power and helped the city grow in both wealth and prestige.⁷ Rome and Carthage had been rivals in trade in the Western Mediterranean and, with the Phoenicians defeated, the Republic held a practically trade monopoly in the region, aside from rogue individual actors, such as pirates, that impeded full Roman control over the seas.

However, as the Republic of Rome grew in supremacy and prestige, the city of Rome began to suffer from the effects of corruption, greed, rebellion, discontent, and the over-reliance on foreign slave labour. To those ends, one of the principal threats became slave rebellions (or servile revolts) against the Roman rule. The First Servile War took place between 135 BC and 132 BC in Sicily⁸, and was spearheaded by slaves Eunus and Cleon. The Second Servile War occurred between 104 BC and 100 BC, also in Sicily, led by Athenion and Tryphon⁹. Both servile uprisings ended victoriously for the Romans, as

⁶ Mark, Joshua J. "Ancient Rome." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia Limited, 2 Sept. 2009. Web. 30 May 2016.

⁷ History.com Staff. "Ancient Rome." History.com. A&E Television Networks, 2009. Web. 30 May 2016.

⁸ "Servile Wars." Heritage History. Heritage History, 2013. Web. 30 May 2016.

⁹ Ibid.



the rebels could not withstand the sheer might, both in numbers and organization, of the Roman army.¹⁰ Now, as the Third Servile Revolt is at hand, and in this year of 73 BCE, the rebels seem to have learned from the outcomes of previous revolts, and have crafted more cunning, advanced strategies in their attempted to overthrow the Republic.

Political Conditions

Although the Republic is dealing with a revolt, it is comparatively much more stable than in the previous decade. From 91 BC to 80 BC the Roman Republic endured the Social Wars and conflict between Cinna and Sulla, as well as the fallout of Sulla's reign with a complete reshuffling of the Senate. While these events took place several years ago their consequences reverberate today. The integration of the Italian states into Roman citizenship rights by Sulpicius Rufus is still not complete. Some are still aggrieved by the long term nature of their integration with Rome. For a period during Cinna's reign and Sulla's political faction, the Republic's ideals and traditions were shaken tremendously and have only recently begun to solidify into a stable government that is not threatened by internal turmoil.

The military too is a representation of the political transformation that the Roman Republic has underwent in the last 50 years. Its growing inclusion of the proletarii was essentially completed with Marius' reforms, creating a professional army. However, the army was based on a patron-client system which meant some instability due to political

¹⁰ Mark, Joshua J. "Ancient Rome." Ancient History Encyclopedia. Ancient History Encyclopedia Limited, 2 Sept. 2009. Web. 30 May 2016.



figures invoking the troops who respected and obliged to respect their patrons' desires. However, with the final victory going to Sulla, the Roman armies are now directly under the Republic's control who designate the generals and troop allotment.

Another military issue that reflects some political tensions is the lopsided volunteering of the countryside plebeians versus the urban plebeians. This economic-based cleavage suggests tensions will remain between the those living in the countryside and those who reside in Rome and the other Italian cities. Becoming overly reliant on small scale farmers for military service could prove disastrous for the country's food supply, Rome has always had factions in the Senate competing for dominance over political affairs and controlling important positions with like-minded patricians – the wealthy elites of the cities. But the unprecedented aggressiveness Sulla showed in rule has created some serious hidden resentments between certain patrician families, with many losing much of their wealth and prestige through the leader's proscriptions, while other families took decisive advantage of this and gained much wealth and prestige. So far the aggrieved families seem resigned to what occurred and move on. But it is impossible to know for sure the extent of discontent harbored by the victims, if they're still alive.

Roman Political Structure

The basic outline of Republic political structure starts with the multiple assemblies that comprise Roman lawmakers. The Comitia Centuriata had several important roles as a popular assembly; they elected the consuls each year, had the power to declare war (the



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

Senate would make the proposal to do so and the assembly would almost always follow their recommendation), and formally enacted the Senate's drawn up proposals. The other important assembly meant to bridge the two classes was the Concilium Plebis. Any law passed by them was binding to the patricians and plebeians – the lower working class. Although, once again the laws they passed were at the Senate's unofficial behest. They also elected the tribunes who represented concerns of plebeians.

Also a prominent part of Roman bureaucracy were the *cursus honorum*: administrative offices in varied importance. There were only two *consuls* a year who had the power of Imperium – or power of command. They attended to matters of the Senate and war and proposed laws. After a consul finished a term they could be a pro-consul and govern over republic territories. *Praetors* also had imperium and dealt with judicial issues. A quaestor was tasked with financial affairs while an aedile presided over infrastructure and maintenance. There was also the censor who scrutinized the lists of citizens and property and reviewed the behavior of senators for any mishaps.

The Government of Rome in the Republic

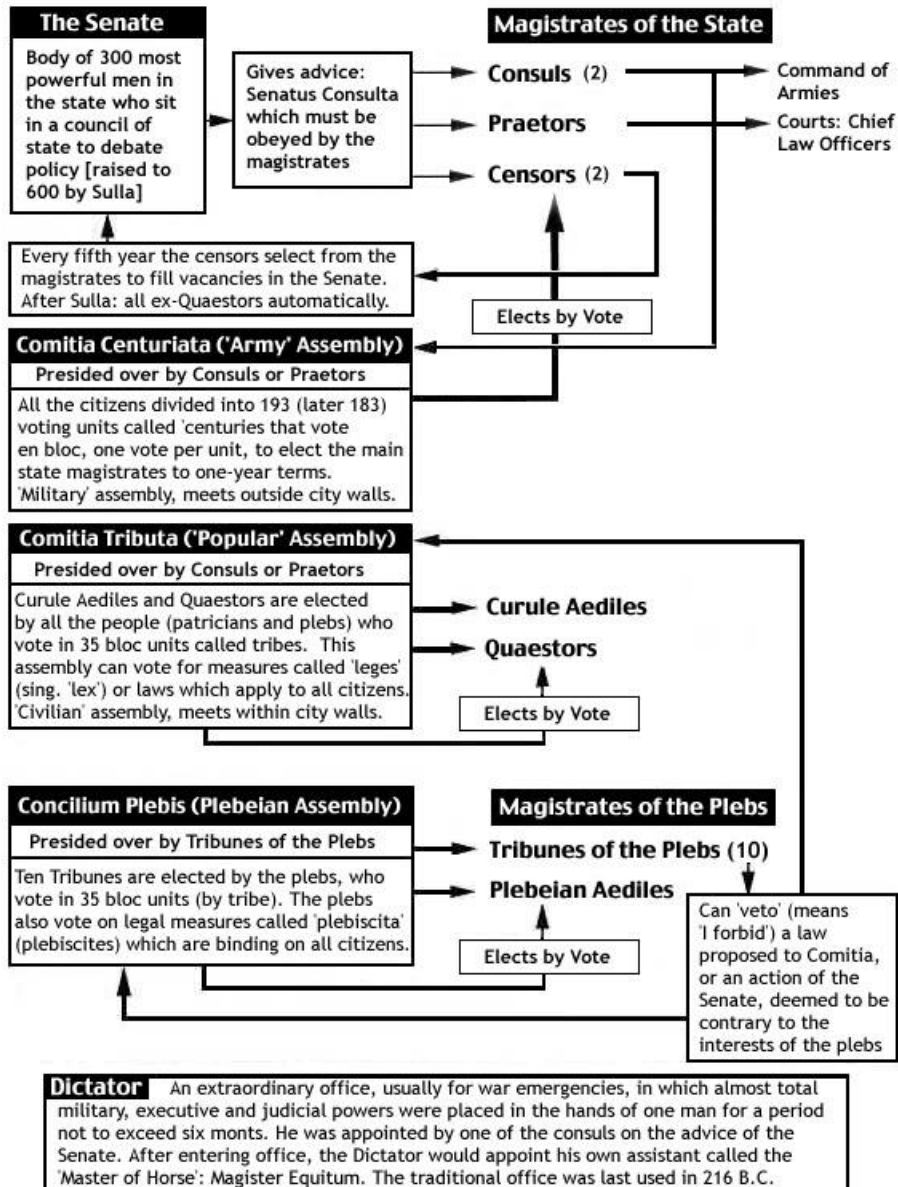


Figure 1: How the Roman Republic Governed



Threats: Social

There are many social issues that threaten the Roman Republic at this time. One issue concerns the way in which Romans chose to treat their slaves in response to previous revolts, so as to prevent them from joining the rebellions and strengthening the insurgency.¹¹ Roman masters currently are very brutal towards their slaves, often abusing them physically and mentally. Would treating them more harshly or more amicably curtail this consequence?

Another social implication worth considering is disease, and its impact on Roman soldiers and civilians. Due to poor hygienic conditions, as well as the condition of sewers and public baths, as well as the diet of the time, ailments from influenza to sexually transmitted diseases spread like wildfire and infected large numbers of people.¹² The Antonine and Cyprian plagues are known for doing just that, and both respiratory and blood-borne diseases such as malaria and mentagra were very common.¹³ Delegates must consider this issue and ways to improve these conditions, especially considering the importance of the Roman army's health in this time of need.

In relation to the military, there is a noticeable widening gap between those who were wealthy and those who weren't in the country. This rural dissatisfaction is said to be aiding Spartacus and strengthen his contingent.¹⁴ Combined with the high level of

¹¹ Cavanaugh, Jeffrey. "How Inequality, Diversity And Empire Brought Down The Roman Republic." MintPress News. MintPress, 09 Apr. 2014. Web. 30 May 2016.

¹² Scheidel, Walter. "Disease and Death in the Ancient City of Rome." The Companion to Ancient Rome / Stanford University (2009): n. pag. Apr. 2009. Web. 30 May 2016

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.



corruption in government, greed, and over-reliance on foreign slave labour, local slaves have been quick to join the rebellion, and limiting this influx has become another social concern for the Romans.

Gangs of unemployed Romans, put out of work by the influx of slaves brought in through territorial conquests, became thugs hired to do the bidding of whatever wealthy Senator would pay them, earning the resentment of the rest of the Republic's citizens¹⁵. The wealthy elite of the city, the Patricians, became ever richer at the expense of the working lower class, the Plebeians,

Rome also found itself divided across class lines ideologically. The ruling class called themselves *optimates* (the best men) while the lower classes, or those who sympathized with them, were known as the *populares* (the people).¹⁶ These names were applied in a very ideological manner, and the two clashed repeatedly, equally contributing to the social tension during the 3rd Servile Revolt.

Military

The Roman military is structured such that when a consul is leading an army he usually took two legions that roughly equated to 10,000 men. A Legion has ten cohorts of 480 men with each cohort holding six centuries, which contain 80 men, the first cohort traditionally will have a greater number of troops. Legions also had traditional starting

¹⁵ Cavanaugh, Jeffrey. "How Inequality, Diversity And Empire Brought Down The Roman Republic." MintPress News. MintPress, 09 Apr. 2014. Web. 30 May 2016.

¹⁶ Ibid.



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

battle line that included their small amounts of skirmishers and cavalry. The typical legionary carries a scutum, pilum, and gladius, as well as a helmet and body armour.

The only battles Romans have had to fight on the Italian Peninsula since the Punic Wars have been small scale in nature, as the previous political struggles have rarely involved pitched battle, rather quick decisive show of force. The Roman army in this time period are currently four times larger than their usual size. The swelling in numbers is due to the hasty drafts that have required large numbers of men to be dispatched to fight on the borders. At the moment war is waged in Hispania between Sertorius and the local Lusitanians against a large force of Romans led by Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius and Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus. There is a large expedition led by the Roman consuls to dispel the resistance of King Mithridates in Pontus, not to mention the growing disruption of maritime trade by pirates in the east Mediterranean.

The military has also suffered in the not so long ago civil war between Marius' *populares* and Sulla's *optimates*. The result of Sulla's victories and proscriptions meant the military was internally purged. Afterwards the military had to quickly replenish its ranks so the Republic would not be vulnerable to any external strife. A combination of all these conditions have left the military personnel in Italy severely weakened and of poor quality.

However, unless there is serious threat to Rome itself there would be no need to recall any troops to be stationed in Italy, and would be potentially dangerous for the frontlines. The conflict as it is now would have to be handled by men who can be called upon for immediate danger from their homes. The military challenge will be to effectively



balance multiple fronts while at the same time being resourceful and efficient with deployments and decisions regarding strategy and providing sufficient numbers.

Questions to Consider

- What military tactics can be used to match the slaves' new-found revolt strategies?
- How can social threats be kept at bay while simultaneously prioritizing military offensive against the slave rebellions?
- How do the political threats (aside from the slaves) differ in intent and capability? How do they differ from the slaves? Is there a possibility for coalitions to form?

Character List

Crassus – Very prominent member of the Licinni family. Incredibly wealthy, with a certain amount attributed to extortion and coercion from the use of his private fire brigade and the proscriptions of Sulla which he added names to. Was not accepted by the *optimates* but courted the people a lot. Noted for the revival of the old practice of decimation when he first took command. Was a member of Sulla's faction so had respect of Sulla's veterans. A decent orator too.

Quintus Marcius Rufus - Roman commander who led troops against the Celtic army, led by Castus and Cannicus.

Lucius Quinctius - A homo novus (that's a big deal) associated with populares. Definitely a Roman more oriented towards legislative affairs and public speaking. A cavalry officer



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

who executed feigned battle very well at Cantenna. Then later led the chase against Spartacus, unfortunately was beaten by him.

Cnaeus Tremellius Scrofus - A quaestor. His family has had prior history of attaining praetorship. Was involved in chasing Spartacus down after battle of Cantenna and was wounded heavily after being beaten by him.

Mummius - Related to a famous general who subjugated the Achaean League. Was responsible for the fiasco that caused Crassus to commit decimation.

Quintus Arrius - Was responsible for the defeat of Crixus as an advisor for Gellius, a propraetor at the time. Later politically was involved more with Crassus' faction than much later with Caesar.

Cato the Younger - Esteemed family connections. A stoic philosopher who fought under Gellius in 72 BC.

Marcus Lucullus - Was marginally involved in war towards end. Previously governor (proconsul) of Macedonia and had to deal with suppressing Thracian raids. Brother of Lucius Lucullus who was in charge of the armies fighting Mithridates. Requested by Crassus to help in Spartacus' war so Pompey couldn't interfere as much. Was consul in 73 BC and had multiple offices prior. Was of the very prominent Licinia, who were a plebeian clan. In fact, the Lucullans were a branch of the family much like the Crassi (Crassus was of the cousin branch). Both were different lines of the Licinia.



Gaius Verres - Was governor of Sicily during revolt. Indicated to have thwarted the crossings over the Messina straits by Spartacus in some sources. Cicero had him convicted of charges of corruption soon after and stated Crassus was what stopped.

Roman Families

Aemilia - Similar old origins, the prominent member of the family died in 77 BC with his son being around the age of 18 at this time, so is less relevant. Manius Aemilius Lepidus is of age and was appointed praetor in 69 BC. However relevance is also limited. A more significant individual who was consul in 77 BC was Mamercus Aemilius Lepidus Livianus. He was a promagistrate in 74 BC serving under someone clearing the Mediterranean of Ligurian Pirates. In 70 BC he was Princeps Senatus although that title had lost some value after Sulla.

Valeria - Very high up in society, the first consul was a Valeria. Seemed to have usually been pro-plebeian. Marcus Valerius Messalla Niger a respected orator. Was documented for active in 80 BC and in the late 60s (63 BC and later).

Manlii - Another of the old powerful noble families. A member around this time period was Lucius Manlius Torquatus. His closest time of activity to events was in 68 BC when he was elected Praetor. A pro-Sulla man.



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

Cornelia- An esteemed family who produced many fine politicians and generals. Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius Scipio Nasica was around in this time period and was well connected however documentation of him during our time period is limited.

Gnaeus Cornelius Lentulus Clodianus - He was consul in 72 BC and was relieved of command of troops after failing to deal with Spartacus. Was a censor in 70 BC and helped Pompey purge many political enemies and senators. Highly active in this time period. Also Sulla's generals were a sub unit of the Cornelii so he was widely supported by them. Considerable resentment should remain for the family. Also to be noted is the large scale of the Cornelii and their sub gens. So many that they all competed against each other.

Cassia - An ancient family. Who were once patricians but then seemingly expelled to be plebeians. Their name prominently comes up many times. A relevant member is a man who lost to Spartacus near Mutina when he was pro-consul of Cisapline Gaul in 72 BC, and was consul in 73 BC, Gaius Cassius Longinus Varus.

Aurelia- A plebeian family around since the second Punic War. At this time era many members were in high positions. Marcus Aurelius Cotta was consul in 74 BC and afterwards fought hard against King Mithridates of Pontus. He returned to Rome in 70 BC after a great victory at Heraclea. Was expelled from Senate in 67 BC. He had a brother who was consul the year before him and another who was a praetor in 70 BC and consul in 65 BC. Gnaeus Aurelius Orestes was consul in 71 BC.

Ancilia- A family with plebeian origins in mid 3rd century BC. Manius Ancilius Glabrio was consul in 67 BC.



Third Servile Revolt: Romans

Caecilia- A rather conservative family that is plebeian in origins. During our time period there were several prominent members of the family. One was Quintus Caecilius Metellus Pius who was a very successful general under Sulla and the latter half of the 70s campaigned in Spain and later returned in 71 BC. And is closely related to the Cornelia man with the same name. Quintus Caecilius Metellus Creticus was heavily involved in defending Gaius Verres with other friends, he was consul in 69. In the time area around 67 BC he campaigned in Crete for Pompey's anti piracy war. Lucius Caecilius Metellus was also involved in defending Verres and was a brother of Creticus. He was praetor in 71 BC, governor of Sicily a year later, and died in office of consul in 68. His other brother Marcus was praetor in 69 BC. Many other members of this family distinguished themselves in the following years for battle or politics.

Hortensii- Not terribly significant. But in this time one member of the family, Quintus Hortensius Hortalus was the best orator in the world next to Cicero, which secured him multiple positions that were around our time period. Most significantly consul in 69 BC

Marcia- A longstanding family. However due to generation transition the only member of the family who was of active prime age was Quintus Marcius Rex, who was consul in 68 BC

Servilii- A very old plebeian household who have been present in republican politics the most notable in this time period is Publius Servilius Vatia Isauricus who was consul in 79 BC. For the next five years he campaigned in Cilicia against pirates and had a very great success. Afterwards he was a leading member of the Senate and a member of the college of Pontiffs.



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