CAIUS MARIUS AND ROMAN FACTIONAL POLITICS

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PREFACE

Historians have recently given increased consideration to the life of Caius Marius. Heretofore he was recognized as a military leader and statesman of Rome during the second and first centuries, B.C., but little was really known of the man himself. His military ability has long been recognized by historians and his contributions to the development of the Roman army have often been recounted. His activities in the political field are less auspicious and, hence, more obscure. Recent findings reveal Marius as an investor and financier of high standing in Rome. He is currently being shown as having had far more influence in the economic life of Rome than was previously suspected.

The sum of his attributes and accomplishments give cause to question why such an important Roman public figure could be forced to exile himself from Rome. The question is heightened in view of Marius' almost unprecedented position in the city at the end of the Cimbric Wars. The populace and his veterans went so far as to compare Marius to the god Dionysus, and to declare him "The Third Founder of Rome" after Romulus and Camillus. Yet, Marius deliberately chose exile in preference to the scorn of his fellow-citizens in 99 B.C., after the actions of his political agents had outraged the Romans of economic and social consequence.

This thesis examines the factors leading to Caius Marius' fall from power and prestige in the Republic. It evaluates the cause and

effect of factors which contributed to the collapse of Marius' public career and determines the primary cause for his failure in political life.

Marius grew to maturity in an environment of factional politics, hence this Roman phenomenon is defined and Marius' place established in it. Marius rose to prominence in Rome by way of his military ability so his military career is recounted, his contributions to the reorganization of the Roman military system are evaluated, and his triumph after the Cimbric War is established. Marius fell from power because of his political ineptitude, therefore his political life is traced, his political philosophy is evaluated, and his failure in politics is substantiated.

Caius Marius' fall from power must be attributed to political ineptitude, for he was almost without peer in military leadership. Opposite to his military career, Marius revealed an incompetence in the field of public affairs. He did not seem to understand the senatorial factional system, nor was he aware of its power and necessity to the administration of the state. He tended to act as if there were two well defined political parties, the optimates and populares, yet the factions alone had any measurable dimension in the Roman politics of this day. Marius' penchant for vacillation in his political life, his failure to reconcile himself with the senatorial nobles, and his reluctance to be as decisive in his political life as he was in his military career must be regarded as the primary causes for his failure and his exile.

Few human accomplishments are the result of any single person's effort, instead, his work is more often than not only the part of a

greater whole. Such is true of this work. It could never have reached this point without the invaluable assistance and welcome patience of Dr. Neil J. Hackett who encouraged and guided my efforts. Without the urging of John T. Stevens, who pointed me toward graduate work in history, this work would never have started. Finally, to Marjorie who cheerfully accepted the task as breadwinner while her husband pursued this goal. Without her this could never have happened at all.

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CHAPTER I

THE BACKGROUND

The misuse of personal power which resides in dominant political personalities and which originates from military, political, or social popularity has plagued mankind and his institutions from society's inception. No tribe, city-state, nation, or empire has been immune to the influence of this personally directed power in its leaders. No political institution has escaped the influence from power centered in the person of politically inclined aspirants for positions of control. No society has failed somewhere in its history to be altered by those who express their personal power for purposes of self-interest.

The Roman Republic and its institutions were no exception. The trace of Roman history was a continuum of social, cultural, and political forces at work through the medium of various factions by which power was wielded in varying degrees to cause a desired modification of Roman institutions. Indicative of this trend was the abrupt change from a monarchial system to that of a republican form under the influence of the patrician class. Later, the Republic was modified from aristocratic control to a quasi-democracy in which the middle and lower classes exercised their power in the guise of "democratic" leaders. Finally, the Republic fell and an empire was established when the republican form could no longer withstand the hammering of its opponents.

This thesis directs its primary attention to a short but critical phase in the history of the Roman Republic during which some of the foundations of the later empire were laid by those who struggled as the champions of the *populares* viz à viz the *optimates*. Its focus is Caius Marius, a Roman military genius and savior of his country, who, nonetheless, failed to use his military power and social popularity to cement the stones of the crumbling facade of Roman republicanism. Instead, his efforts in military, social, and political activity actually created an environment in which the forces of reaction and imperial design found their roots.[1]

Marius, the soaring eagle when in military command, soon reverted to a flighty sparrow when faced with the enigmas of social and political control in the Republic. Strong and confident in battle, Marius became indecisive and querulous in the role of a Roman politician.[2] In the short span of almost three years from his thrilling victory in the Cimbric Wars during 101 B.C. to his shameful, self-imposed exile

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[1]Theodor Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, Vol. III (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 462, makes a strong point of Caius Marius' justification for granting enfranchisement *en masse* to two *cohortes* of Italian allies in saying ". . . he justified himself afterwards by saying that amidst the noise of battle he had not been able to distinguish the voice of the laws." Mommsen follows Marius' extenuation with his own opinion that ". . . the new eagle which Caius Marius bestowed on the legions proclaimed the near advent of the emperors."; Lily Ross Taylor, *Party Politics in the Age of Caesar* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949), p. 17.

[2]Plutarch, *Marius* in *Plutarch's Lives*, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (*Loeb Classical Library*, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), XXVIII, 1-3, compares Marius' action in awarding citizenship to the Italian allies, regardless of the law in that matter, and his confusion when trying to address the popular assemblies as his basis for saying Marius' ambition "made him most timorous."

in 99 B.C.,[3] Marius fell from the heights of exaultation as the "third founder" of Rome[4] to the depths of a reviled exile who saw his only chance for vindication in war — one he would promote with Mithridates of Pontus by his own machinations and at Rome's expense, if need be.[5]

The events of this short span in Roman history reveal with startling clarity Marius' incompetence as a politician, a shortcoming which would lead to his fall from power. One must look to the political arena for Marius' weaknesses, for none in Rome of his day could equal his military leadership.[6] Emerging from the Cimbric Wars as one of the greatest heroes Rome had produced to that time, Marius soon revealed himself as a reluctant politician, a stammering and ineffective public speaker, and worst of all, a man of strong animosities but one with no particular party or ideals.[7] Marius would have escaped from the pressure of politics after the Cimbric Wars, had he been able to do so. Unfortunately, the press of promises made earlier to his veterans denied him the relief of retiring from public affairs

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[3]The time period dealt with covers Rome from Marius' birth, c. 155 B.C., until his exile after the return of Metellus Numidicus to Rome in 99 B.C. All dates hereafter are B.C. unless specifically noted otherwise.

[4]Plutarch, Marius, XXVII, 2-3; Stewart Perowne, Death of the Roman Republic (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968), p. 89.

[5]Plutarch, Marius, XXXI, 2-3.

[6]H. H. Scullard, From the Gracchi to Nero (London: University Paperbacks, 1966), p. 60.

[7]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 3; XXIX, 3.

in the cloak of a hero with the public's adulation.[8]

Marius' disgrace and subsequent exile has its roots firmly planted in his display of political incompetence,[9] his inability to select honest and loyal political agents,[10] his lack of rapport and communication with the populace on whose support he was dependent,[11] his failure to retain the continuing support of the equites,[12] and perhaps most importantly, in his inability to establish a working alliance with the senatorial factions of Rome.[13] Marius rose to greater heights than any of his predecessors by his military genius, his strong feel for command, his leadership of Rome and its legions in time of stress, and his sense of the military necessities prerequisite to the physical security of the Republic. Yet, Marius lost everything when he was no longer the focus of Rome's strength and found himself instead subject to the vagaries of a populace whose support was vital to his political program.

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[8]Fritz M. Heichelheim and Cedric A. Yeo, A History of the Roman People (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Inc., 1962), pp. 190-192; Mommsen, History of Rome, Vol. III, p. 456, indicates the press of admirers kept Marius in the public office. He says "the work of Marius seemed to his admirers by no means finished. . ." and further, "his military and political position was such that, if he would not break with the glorious past, if he would not deceive the expectations of his party and in fact the nation, . . . he must check the maladministration of public affairs and put an end to the government of the restoration . . ."

[9]Plutarch, Marius, IX, 1.

[10]Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 7-8.

[11]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 1-3.

[12]Plutarch, Marius, XXX, 3.

[13]Plutarch, Marius, X, 1; XXX, 1-4; XXXI, 1.

Marius entered Roman political life with his election to the tribunate in 119. Rome at this time was governed by the "restored" oligarchy which returned to power with the demise of the Gracchii and the temporary cessation of the *populare* ascendency over the senatorial control of Rome. The Senate was once again the primary device of administration for the Republic, but with the significant difference that factions within the senatorial party were the controling factor, not the senatorial concensus. Marius found himself confronted in the political arena with the recurrent friction of the *populares* against the *optimates* on one side, and the powerful forces of the senatorial factions on the other. For the rest of his political life, Marius was a focal point of the conflict between the populists and the nobility and the target for the frustrations of the factions within the Senate, who resented Marius' rise to power.

Marius' failure to understand the nature of the senatorial factions, his inability to reconcile himself with them once he had alienated them, and his vacillating program toward these senatorial factions were the primary causes for his political debacle in 99 B.C.

CHAPTER II

ROMAN FACTIONAL POLITICS

Rome grew from a tribal community to a monarchial city-state on the banks of the Tiber River. It flourished under the benign conditions of its environment so strongly that Rome would eclipse even Carthage as it prospered. Though not untouched by what had previously happened in Mediterranean civilization, Rome was destined to create new political forms for society. It would conquer the world and give it a fundamental belief in law and orderly government. This heritage did not occur without internal upheaval and social paroxysm; these Rome suffered frequently, at least until the advent of empire stabilized its political activity.

The aristocrats who overthrew the monarchy to form an oligarchic republic seem to have had three basic purposes in mind. First, they wished to eradicate the hated monarchy without weakening the executive power of the state; next, to establish more effective participation of the citizenry in the government; and finally, to ensure the ultimate power of the state should rest in a council of elders.[1] Significantly, these aristocrats also created in the minds of the Romans a hatred for

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[1]John Dickenson, Death of a Republic (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 5.

monarchy or any aspect of regnum.[2] This attitude permeated the political life of the Republic until its fall, caused by those who preferred empire to the chaos of factional politics.[3]

The Senate began and remained throughout the Republic the most vital mechanism in Roman politics. Formed by selection on a life basis by the consuls from the original aristocrats, the Senate could convene only at the call of the highest magistrates. Fairly early in the Republic the plebeians were able to secure recognition of their political presence in Rome. However, this was done more through their own assemblies than in the Senate. Nonetheless, by the advent of the Punic Wars the plebs had gained the right to stand for election to various magistracies.

Sallust recognizes the peace which followed the Punic Wars as the dividing line between the moderation in government which preceded the wars, and a wantonness and arrogance in public affairs fostered by the prosperity of the wartime aftermath.[4] As the Senate was drawn by this time from holders of the principal magistracies, significant numbers of wealthier plebs began to appear in the halls of the Senate — and more wished to do so.[5]

In theory the Senate was not a legislative body; its function was

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[2]Wallace E. Caldwell, The Ancient World (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston), p. 344.

[3]Lily Ross Taylor, Party Politics in the Age of Caesar (Berkely: University of California Press, 1949), pp. 22-23.

[4]Sallust, The War With Jugurtha, translated by J. C. Rolfe (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1965), XLI, 1-3.

[5]Cyril E. Robinson, A History of the Roman Republic (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1932), pp. 46-47.

advisory in nature only. Yet, in actual practice, it was the dominant political power in Rome after the Punic Wars.[6] It could draft legislation for submission to one of the assemblies. Its veto of laws passed contrary to accepted procedures was a source of power, as was its right to interpret laws or to present decrees (valid only if not vetoed by a tribune). Its strongest power rested in the control of appropriations and external diplomacy. Extremely important to the Senate was its authority under emergency to appoint "dictators" and to pass the senatus consultum ultimum. The latter was a "final decree" or resolution which declared the state to be in danger and charged all officials "to see to it that the Republic take no harm."[7] It was this device which provided the Senate with final power over an official but its nature required it to be used only sparingly and with cautious deliberation.[8]

The founders of the Roman Republic created an admirable form of government. From its inception it had the capability to correct abuses of power through constitutional means. This capability could be exercised through action of the magistrates, by the prestige of the Senate, or by the expressed will of the people. But the founders of the Republic did more than this. In a fervent desire to deny any possible return to monarchy they fostered an inimical and lasting fear of regnum, and thus a continuing desire for liberty as well, in the

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[6] Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 6.

[7] Dickenson, Death of a Republic, p. 12.

[8] Plutarch, Marius in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), XXX, 2-4.

minds of the people.[9] Now that the royal power had passed to the consults, the people found a new target for the arrows of political discontent. The frustrations of the people resulted in overt conflict with the patrician class for the right to enter the magistracies, even to the consular level, if possible.

The demand by the plebeians for political recognition resulted in the later creation of pressure from the masses which resembled the nature of a political party, hence the tendency to look at the populares (those who espoused the cause of the "people") in the neat mirror of modern political structure. The opposition, the optimates, who were the "best" of Roman aristocracy, is often similarly regarded. The friction between these two political groupings resulted in inexorable pressures before which the optimates were forced to bend. Power, as always, tended to return to the greatest number. Thus the aristocracy was coerced by the people to compromise with the form of a popular state. This period of constitutional modification was the cauldron in which the witches brew of factional politics of the Republic was boiled.[10] It occurred roughly from the codification of the Twelve Tables, c. 450, to the Hortensian Law of 287 which ended the struggle of the orders by making tributa legislation de jure

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[9]Montesquieu, Consideration on the Causes of the Greatness of the Romans and Their Decline, translated by David Lowenthal (New York: The Free Press, 1965), p. 83.

[10]Frank Frost Abbott, A History and Description of Roman Political Institutions (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1911), pp. 49-54, indicates the patrician element in the Senate, not the Senate itself, lost power and prestige at this time. He sees the Hortensian law "robbing the patricians of the last exclusive political power of any importance" but he also indicates the mantle of the patricians fell on the shoulders of the novus nobilitas, not the "democracy" or the populares.

without senatorial approval.

The substance of the government in this period was an elaborate system of checks and balances which depended primarily on the existence of veto powers and collegiality of officials. These highly polished restraints and balances served to maintain the health of the state for some time into the second century. By this time the magistracies were open to all and the assemblies both elected magistrates and processed legislation. Theory and practice are often not the best of running mates. Hence, in practice, the administration of the state had become the lot of the Senate by mid-second century. Magistrates were usually drawn from the senatorial class and returned to the Senate at the end of their term. The tribunate now led to the Senate via the cursus honorum, thus the tribunes tended to defer to the Senate for their own well-being. In the same sense, the Senate respected the tribune's close connection with the power of the comitia tributa. An inherent weakness in the Senate was its inability, because it was only advisory, to control the actions of the officials and the assemblies by constitutional methods. Still, the Senate, not the assemblies ruled Rome — an oligarchy that governed in the name of the people.[11]

A new wind began to blow across the political sea after the exhausting wars of the third and second centuries. The stalwart soldier-farmer was generally the greatest casualty of these wars. The small landowner and entrepreneur suffered from the distorted economic flows in commerce, the mores maiorum (old ways) crumbled before sensual and mercenary relationships, the ancient verities dimmed through diffusion

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[11]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, p. 14.

in a polygot society in the mélange that now was Rome, and new elements — aggressive seekers of political power for personal aggrandizement entered into public life in Rome.[12]

There were increasing signs of grave consequence for the government. The populace displayed indications of growing discontent with senatorial government. They resented the oligarchic nature of the Senate which had now degenerated into groups aligned in accordance to the ranking of public offices held by each group. Consular families naturally held the focus of influence by virtue of the prestige and wealth they had accumulated. These groupings often combined with lesser cliques to gain a balance of power in the Senate. Though these factions contained plebeian elements, their natures were essentially patrician and normally conservative in outlook. Outsiders were excluded and the groups jealously guarded their perogative and monopolistic power which now tended to be less responsive to new interests and problems demanding the attention of the government.[13]

Economic changes incidental to long periods of very successful warfare seriously disrupted the traditional balance of Roman life. The booty of war and the spoils of conquered provinces swelled the coffers of noble and middle level families alike. Generals and provincial governors grew wealthy from the spoils of conquest but the long suffering citizen-soldier lost his shirt and his farm. Property was consolidated in the hands of the wealthy and the freeman of old became a tenant, or worse, a slave on the latifundia. Manumitted

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[12]Stewart Perowne, Death of the Roman Republic (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968), pp. 54-55.

[13]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, p. 15.

slaves, unemployed, and alien poor rubbed elbows in Rome and transmitted their frustrations to each other. Foreigners flooded into Rome bringing diverse cultural mores which chafed at the bonds of the mores maiorum.

The Roman's instinct for order and regularity, his sensible respect for the established patterns of conduct, and his innate moderation were eroded to reveal a base metal uncommon to the mold of his ancestors. The tone and organization of Roman society had divided the state into selfish groups — the senators nervously worried about their dignitas and auctoritas; the equites sought even more wealth than they had already amassed as publicani for the Senate; and the proletarii demanded subsidies, entertainment, and any form of excitement the state could provide.

The stage was set for one hundred years of revolution which had its inception in the office of tribune of the people, as it was exercised by aggressive, self centered political opportunists and sincere servants of the people alike. Neither the optimates nor the populares can be regarded as irresistible forces or immovable objects. Each had the capability for compromise if they had so chosen, yet the collision of the tribunes with the senatorial factions rocked Rome to its very foundations.[14] Sallust views this period as one of contest between two parties, between whom the "state was torn to pieces." He charged the nobles with abusing their position and the people of the same charge regarding their liberty, thus:

> . . . by the side of power, greed arose, unlimited and unrestrained, violated and devastated everything, respected

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[14]Ibid., p. 17.

> nothing, and held nothing sacred, until it finally brought about its own downfall. For as soon as nobles were found who preferred true glory to unjust power, the state began to be disturbed and civil dissension to arise like an upheaval of the earth.[15]

The intensity of the struggle between the orders of the Roman Republic, i.e., the optimates versus the populares, was exacerbated by an even more fierce yet far more subtle conflict raging within the midst of the aristocracy itself. One finds the term "factional politics" used to describe the strife which rent the Senate into groups of various followers of different Roman political trends. This phenomenon of Roman politics seems to have developed almost as much from the nature of the Roman himself than to have any close relationship with the normal development of the constitutional form of the Republic. Whereas the growth of the Republic was hammered out at the forge of class struggle, factions have their roots deeply imbedded in the mores maiorum of the Roman past. These values were modified by the collective thirst of the optimates for power and the self-aggrandizement it brings.

The Roman was born to the ways of the farmer-soldier who knew from his inception twin responsibilities — duty to the state and duty to his family. He was steeped in the thought that with the sound of the signal he must rise instinctively to the defense of the state; he knew with equal instinct he owed his family the same debts of loyalty and protection.[16] This concept is seen in the idea of familia, expressed so vividly in the aspects of the pater familias who was both

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[15] Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 6.

[16] R. H. Barrow, The Romans (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1967), p. 19.

tyrant and protector to his brood. Significantly, the responsibilities of the pater included the protection of the slaves and freeworkers on the family estates. Here was the first glimmer of the concept of clientela which would ultimately become the cornerstone of aristocratic patronage.

Clientela may be defined as the relationship of an inferior entrusted by custom or by himself to the protection of a stranger more powerful than himself.[17] The relationship demanded certain services and observances in return for the protection of the patronus. Manumission, the awarding of freedom to one under the power of a stronger person, was the most common and historically persistent means by which the condition of clientela was fashioned.[18] Since the pater familias held such power in his social relationship over more unfortunate persons, it is reasonable the concept of clientela derives in great part from the freeing of slaves and the subsequent relationship of the freedman with his patron.

An understanding of the social values of the early Roman in his relationship with others engendered a sense of validity to the design which clientela would take in the last century of the Republic. The Roman virtues have their foundation in religio which had a sense of binding a man to something external and to which he admitted subordination.[19] This feeling is best summarized by the virtue of pietas which required the Roman to concede the rights of the gods; acknowledge

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[17]E. Badian, Foreign Clientelae (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 1.

[18]Ibid., p. 2.

[19]Barrow, The Romans, p. 22.

the claims of family, state, friends, and benefactors on him; to discharge his duties to them accordingly; and to realize that all these claims existed because they were sacred. The demands of pietas, dutiful performance of one's obligations, and officium, duty and services, constituted in themselves a code of conduct. This code was beyond the law, yet it often rendered recourse to the law unnecessary.

The addition of certain key virtues to this basic code makes it easier to understand the demanding relationship of the patron to his client, or patrocinium. Consideration of such revered virtues as gravitas, the sense of importance of the matter at hand, firmitas, the idea of tenacity in responsibility, constantia, a firmness of purpose; all tempered by the concepts of disciplina which provides steadiness of character and clementia or the willingness to forgo one's rights, provide the basis for understanding that to the early Roman "a bargain made was a bargain kept."[20] Understanding that it is historically normal for the purity of a virgin faith or belief to be tempered over the course of time by the influences of individualism, materialism, and cupidity, thus rendering that faith a device to serve one's own interests, makes it reasonable to suggest that the relationship of patrocinium should suffer the same fate. It is in the context of service to self or personal cause that the once noble patron-client relationship degenerated and formed the mortar by which Roman factional politics was cemented to the facade of the Roman Republic

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[20]Ibid., pp. 20-23.

in its last century.[21]

During the last century of the Republic patrocinium came to denote the power derived from various relationships. To the relationship of patrocinium was added the tie between the one who pleads in a court of law and his client. For example, Caius Herennius was brought as a witness against Caius Marius in the trial concerning Marius' alleged bribery in the elections of 115. Herennius pleaded a relationship of lawyer-client, which automatically exempted him from testifying since such testimony would be a breach of his patrocinium.[22]

Distinguished Romans who conquered provinces, or governed them, added these areas and their population to their patrocinium. The war with Jugurtha had its roots in the patrocinium under which Masinissa of Numidia attached himself to the house of the Cornelii Scipiones until he died, making Scipio Aemilianus the executor of his estate.[23] Jugurtha thus offended Roman honor when he defied the will of Masinissa. The powerful Roman held a claim on municipia he founded or protected, colonies he may have established, the individuals within these entities, or on persons of lower social or political

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[21]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, p. 23; Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 1-10, refers to the breakdown in the government of Rome during the period from the conclusion of the Punic Wars to the advent of Tiberius Gracchus. He says "thus, by the side of power, greed arose, unlimited and unrestrained, violated and devastated everything, respected nothing, and held nothing sacred, until it finally brought about its own downfall."

[22]Plutarch, Marius, V, 4-5.

[23]Badian, Clientelae, p. 164, (citing Valerius Maximus, II, 4.) comments on Masinissa's attachment to the Scipiones and his advisory to his heirs to follow his example. Once this relationship was established the house of Masinissa and Numidia were given the protection of the Scipiones and from them that of the state.

position he may simply have befriended.[24] The passage of time may leave only relics of these bonds but the memory often served more realistically as an indication of the relationship than did the original ties of reality.

As Rome grew so did the concept of patronage. To those concepts already discussed, the ideas of amicitia was added. In this matter, the friendship of disparate parties assumed the relationship of clientela.[25] The depth of this relationship is revealed by Plutarch in his passage about the hereditary "guest-friend" of Metellus, one Turpillius, who served as chief of engineers for that noble. Placed in charge of the city of Vaga, he allowed it to be captured from him and was brought to trial for treachery at the insistence of Caius Marius. Metellus strongly supported Turpillus and only reluctantly, after extreme pressure had been brought to bear, did he pass the sentence of death. Significantly, the Metelli's friendship for Turpillius made him a client, but now the reverse happened for Caius Marius. The hatred of Metellus, because of this affair, was borne by Marius to the end of his career.[26]

A Roman's political career usually began with his joining an older politician to take advantage of the elder's vast knowledge of public affairs. Thus, it was inevitable that this sort of arrangement would translate the ethics of friendship to the pragmatic

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[24]Matthias Gelzer, The Roman Nobility, translated by Robin Seager (Oxford: Wm. Clowes and Sons, 1969), p. 62.

[25]Badian, Clientelae, p. 13.

[26]Plutarch, Marius, VIII, 2-3.

values of politics.[27] Associated closely with the concept of amicitia was the process of hospitium which demanded the offerer of hospitality to be credited with the loyalty of the recipient. An indication of the esteem the Roman held for the value of friendship and hospitality may be drawn from Cicero in his orations against Verres in which Cicero says "God help me, I will not say that you were bound to him by friendship, which is the most glorious thing in the world, nor by hospitality, which is the most sacred . . . "[28]

In general, clientela presupposes the offering of a beneficium (loosely a benefit) in return for the recipient's officium (duty and services) as requisite to the establishment of a moral basis for the relationship. Further, the idea of clientela as the basis for patronage, places the patronus in the position where his potestas (power) may be drawn solely from the concept of his patrocinium as the relationships multiply and fructify within themselves. The present day concept of "political patronage" shows some resemblance to this Roman device and bears out the relationship suggested above. Carried one step further, there need only be several such patrocinia at work within the political structure of the Roman Senate to result in the fractioning of that body into factions at odds with each other. Knowing that these factions vied with each other for influence in the state, or joined occasionally for mutual benefit, makes the idea of factional politics an understandable cause for the nature of the Roman

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[27] Gelzer, Roman Nobility, p. 104.

[28] Cicero, The Verrine Orations, translated by L.H.G. Greenwood (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1946), II, ii, XLV, 110-111.

Senate after the Punic Wars.

The fluidity of the factional concept may be grasped from Plutarch's Life of Marius where he describes Metellus' interdiction from fire, water, and shelter for his refusal to swear the oath to support Saturninus' legislation. Here Plutarch tells us "The best citizens, however, sympathised with Metellus and crowded hastily about him, but he would not allow a faction to be raised on his account, and departed from the city, following the dictates of prudence."[29]

There was potential danger to the patronus in building his power on the basis of patrocinium. Friends do not always remain friends and the very strong patronus found inimici (enemies) were acquired as easily as amici. A further danger existed in the simple appearance of growing power. The Roman feared the tyranny of regnum almost inherently, a heritage from the days of the overthrow of the monarchy by the aristocrats. Thus, the patron faced the possibility of gaining enemies by an ill-conceived personal action, as well as the potential of a sundered faction if it appeared he was acquiring too much power. The Scipios, according to Badian, were the outstanding example of a case in which invidia led to the fracturing of an extremely strong faction. The Scipios "surpassed all in tactlessness, adopting cognomina (distinguishing family names) from the whole of the orbis (circle) they had conquered." The Scipios fell — a warning to others who had strong ambition.[30]

The greatest potential weakness of the Senate was a lack of

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[29]Plutarch, Marius, XXIX, 8.

[30]Badian, Clientelae, pp. 166-167.

positive control over the actions of Roman magistrates. Its authority was based more on respect accrued over time than from any legal restraint on the elected authorities. Its constitutional position was advisory and its advice could be ignored. Yet, the Senate by the middle of the second century had, for all practical purposes, gained the control in the administration of Roman affairs. Sallust says of this period that "Affairs at home and in the field were managed according to the will of a few men, in whose hands were the treasury, the provinces, public offices, glory and triumphs."[31]

Senatorial control was accomplished mostly through its factions which exercised patrocinium over many magistrates, even to the level of the peoples' tribunes. Nonetheless, the situation was tenuous since opposition to the existing system could quickly disrupt this intricate machine. The consuls could take a course of their own design or the tribunes could fail to speak for the Senate by their audacious use of the veto and the assembly concensus.[32]

By the middle of the second century there were signs of increasing discontent in Rome and displeasure with its senatorial government. This stemmed from many factors. The rise of the senatorial oligarchy above the plebeian and aristocratic representatives, the division of this oligarchy into factions, and the exclusion of outsiders from these factions were significant. Also, the startling growth of wealth which demanded commensurate political strength, and the rise of a landholding class which exploited slave labor to work the latifundia

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[31]Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 7.

[32]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, pp. 13-15.

given in the ager publicus by a partial Senate, created the novi homines who sought political power. The heavy influx of aliens from the aftermath of war, the creation of a landless class which lost out to the economics of high taxes and cheap corn, and the disappearance of the farmer-soldier from the century rolls did much to swell the already burgeoning proletarii and the populare classes.[33]

These changes inevitably produced a new atmosphere which had to exert a strong influence on politics. The instinctive Roman passion for order and regulation, for the established patterns of the mores maiorum, disappeared with the demise of the strongly motivated yeoman of the old Republic. This changed atmosphere bred an unstable mob in Rome, generally lowered the respect of Romans for the Senate and public order; but, worst of all, it gave rise to the use of the tribunate and demagoguery by those who could exite the mob to irresponsible political activity. The pressure from these forces resulted in ever increasing exclusiveness of the senatorial order, which instinctively looked to its own self-preservation. The consequence of this was that the Senate failed to see the emerging power of the equites looming on the political horizon. The snobbishness of the Senate served to merge the new forces, equites and proles, into an unreasoning opposition. It also made the wealthy plebeians willing to support demagogic action to suit their own purposes.[34]

These conditions provided the environment in which the hundred years of civil strife from the Gracchi to Caesar could develop from

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[33]Sallust, Jugurtha, XXXIX-XLII.

[34]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, pp. 14-17.

germ to full blown epidemic. This period, particularly the Gracchan decades prior to Caius Marius entry into politics, shows the polarization of Rome into two opposing political philosophies. On one hand the populist forces saw social legislation under popular control as the Republic's course. Equally firmly, the nobles believed the salvation of the state rested in the experienced, conservative hands of the Senate. Neither group sensed their unyielding and inflexible positions actually sounded the death knell of the Republic, if ever so faintly.

The advent of Tiberius Gracchus brought a new political concept to Rome. This was the use of the power of the comitia tributa to "enforce" popular will on the Senate, regardless of the senatorial will. This concept, in conjunction with the subsequent murder of Tiberius by his opponents, reveals the first resort to extralegal force or to political violence in the name of the Republic. These acts signaled the end of the sanctions on which the strength of the constitution had rested. Gone now was the moral restraint of the old days and in its place came the use of naked power ploys, engineered more often than not in terms of self-interest. Significantly, this new sign of political power rose in the person of the tribune who could use the strength and emotions of the assembly and the implied threat of the proletarian mob.[35] Rarely has recourse to the uneducated, emotional instinct of the mob produced viable political progress: it did not do so in Rome.

The mill of the assemblies ground on and the next champion to rise to notoriety was Tiberius' brother, Caius Gracchus, a more

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[35]Ibid., p. 18.

perceptive but no less adamant believer in the exercise of popular power. His burning ambition drove him to avenge his brother and to weaken further the inherent power of the Senate. The equites were disjoined from harmonious relations with the Senate by legislation which Caius Gracchus introduced for that special purpose. This legislation would join six hundred equites to the body of the Senate according to Livy, however, Plutarch said a number equal to the Senate (three hundred) only was planned by Gracchus.[36] Regardless of the numbers involved, the equites and the proletarii were welded into a powerful weapon which Caius Gracchus pointed at the heart of the Senate.

Equites and senators faced each other in open rivalry, the first group willing to buy the electorate and the other forced to defend its position by any means. Demagogues agitated to impressive lengths and the power of the Senate was weakened so that never again would it exercise the leadership it had displayed during the period of republican expansion.[37] Caius' violent end at the hands of the nobles, even though his slave wielded the blade, reveals the depth to which Roman politics had fallen by 121.[38]

The revolution moved forward in long surges, crisis swelled to

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[36]Livy, Summaries, translated by Alfred C. Schlesinger (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1967), LX and note 1 (p. 71).

[37]Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, pp. 63-65.

[38]Sallust, Jugurtha, XLII, 1-5, renders a strong indictment of the nobles. Sallust says "the nobles then abused their victory to gratify their passions; they put many men out of the way by the sword or by banishment, and thus rendered themselves for the future rather dreaded than powerful." He comments that "it is this spirit which has commonly ruined great nations, . . . "

periods of extreme tension followed by a time of euphoria during which normalcy seemed to return, then crisis shattered the calm again with a subsequent ebb of emotion, worn away by violence. By two generations after the Gracchi an extreme change had come over the nature of Roman politics. The ascendency of the Senate had been broken. Worse still, election riots were commonplace and the spilling of blood was tolerated as a way to solve political problems.[39] No changes appeared in the constitution. Still, the government no longer functioned as it had in the past; the levelling influence of the Senate was eroded by the pressures of populism.

Some historians have expressed the nature of this struggle in terms of conflict between a "party" of senatorial (aristocratic) character as opposed to those who espoused democratic beliefs. Closer to the truth, however, is the observation that Rome was torn by the clashing and rending of tightly knit power groups whose make-up often crossed "party" lines, and whose objectives were as often less than honorable by the ancient norm. Sallust likens these times to tyranny, "For to rule one's country or subjects by force, although you have the power to correct abuses, and do correct them, is nevertheless tyrannical; especially since all attempts at change foreshadow bloodshed, exile and other horrors of war."[40]

Opposing the Senate were amorphous groups gathered about

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[39]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, p. 21.

[40]Sallust, Jugurtha, III, 2; IV, 7. Somewhat in the order of Cato, Sallust places much of the fault for the political situation to the loss of the old virtues. He says, "But in these degenerate days, on the contrary, who is there that does not vie with his ancestors in riches and extravagance rather than in uprightness and diligence?"

demagogues who were "popular leaders" and also found their strength in the ties of *familia*, *clientela*, and *amicitia*. These leaders were often of noble origin. Within these groups there was no party line, no planned program or organization, no continuum of loyalty; only the dominance of personal ambition showed through. There was really no struggle of the Senate on one hand and the people on the other. Rather, there was a continual contest between individuals who were the focal points of diverse factions. Generally the lines were drawn between those who styled themselves *optimates*, or the best people, and those who operated from the powerbase of the tribunate and the *comitia tributa*, or the *populares*.

This was the political environment into which Caius Marius was born and in which he developed a military position through which he was placed on the pathway for an aspiring politician. Marius was fortunate that he could make use of his military talents in this way, since he was born into a Roman social category for which the army was the only possible avenue to a political career.

CHAPTER III

THE RISE OF A ROMAN HERO

Caius Marius was born under inauspicious circumstances at Cereatae (presently known as Casamare, or "home of Marius"), in the prefecture of Arpinum, some sixty miles from Rome, c. 155.[1] Two critical factors affecting his later career derive from the conditions under which Marius was born. First, his social status was such that his rise in politics was of consequence necessarily slow. It was not until his thirty-eighth year that he was able to secure his first significant elective office, the tribunate.[2] Further, he was beyond the normal age for those who sought political office for the first time and probably resented this fact.

A second factor was the nature of his birthplace. Arpinum had been enfranchised as recently as c. 188. The organization of the comitia centuria provided that the four tribes of the city of Rome

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[1] Phillip A. Kildahl, Caius Marius (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968) p. 26, concedes the exact date of Marius' birth is questionable and recognizes some authorities place his birth at 157. He indicates Marius' age at his election to the tribunate to be thirty six; Theodore Mommsen, The History of Rome, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 452, agrees with the preceding and records Marius' birth as 155.

[2] Plutarch, Marius in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), IV, 1; note 3, p. 469. This credits Marius with his thirty-eighth year at his election to the tribunate in 119. On this basis Marius was probably born in 157. However, the date of 155 and the age of thirty-eight are used in this thesis.

(all new citizens coming to Rome were assigned to these tribes) could each cast a single vote. Thus a municipium such as Arpinum had little effect, if any, in the voting, since its voice was submerged in the tribal concensus.[3] The deliberate weakening of the rural municipal vote may explain in great part Marius' continued opposition to the senatorial party. The slowness to enfranchise the Italians, as well as the restriction on their vote, provide a justification for Marius' open partiality toward the allies, even to the extent of arbitrarily (and unconstitutionally) granting to two Italian cohortes enfranchisement in return for their bravery on the Raudine plain during the Cimbric Wars.[4]

Marius actually had two careers which almost appear to be separate from one another. The first, as an officer in the military service, apparently began with his appointment in 134 to a minor post on the staff of Scipio Aemilianus. Plutarch credits Marius with the "protection" of Aemilianus. This relationship probably stemmed from the fact the Marii were enrolled as members of the Cornelian ward in an urban tribe after enfranchisement in 188.[5] His other career began in the field of Roman civil politics with his election to the tribunate in 119. Again, Plutarch indicates the patronage of established senatorial families. This time Caecilius Metellus, of the powerful

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[3]M. Cary, A History of Rome (London: Macmillan and Co., 1965), p. 303; Kildahl, Marius, p. 26.

[4]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 3; Mommsen, History of Rome, III, p. 462.

[5]Plutarch, Marius, III, 2, places Marius under the command of Scipio in Numantia; Kildahl, Marius, p. 27, attributes membership in the Cornelian ward to the Marii. This places this family in the "protection" of Aemelianus.

Metelli gave Marius his first advancement in elective public service. Badian comments that the Metelli were always on the look-out for new talent to add to their coterie.[6]

There has been considerable doubt concerning the true nature of Marius' family background. The reasonably well established association of the Marii with influential senatorial families, such as the Cornelii, the Metelli, and the Herennii,[7] shows that he probably came from influential and prosperous municipal family stock, sufficiently well placed to gain even the personal recognition of P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus, the Destroyer of Carthage.[8]

The Marii enjoyed the advantages of a propitious marriage into the family of the Gratidii, who in turn were similarly connected with the Tullii, the family of Cicero. These fortunate alliances should do much to dispel any doubt the Marian family was other than well placed in the Roman society of the mid-second century. Until recently it has been usual for Caius Marius to be categorized as springing from a poor family. Mommsen, for example, says Marius was "the son of a poor day laboror" probably drawn from Plutarch who characterizes the parents of

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[6]Plutarch, Marius, IV, 2; E. Badian, Foreign Clientelae (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 195, credits the Metelli with supporting Scaurus, Sulla, Pompey as well as P. Rutilus Rufus and T. Didius of the novi homines. He sees the Metelli cultivating Marius prior to 109 for his military ability and his wealth.

[7]Kildahl, Marius, p. 27, attributes clientage in the relationship of the Marii with the Cornelii, the Metelli, and the Herennii, apparently based on comment found in Plutarch; Plutarch, Marius, III, 2; IV, 1; V, 4, support the contention regarding the patronage of these three families for the Marii.

[8]Plutarch, Marius, III, 3.

Marius as "altogether obscure."[9] Regardless of these earlier views, the association of the Marii under the patronage of the Cornelii Scipiones and the equally prestigious Metelli should indicate a family of substance, one worthy of such a status of clientela.

Through these connections one can understand why Marius' education would have been that of the typical Roman of his station, and we may assume he was taught the traditional subject matter.[10] This contention is supported by the fact Marius, in his later career, displayed the ability to plan and execute both complex engineering projects and brilliant military campaigns in the face of adversity.

Family ties with the Scipios may be seen in Marius' appointment at the age of twenty-one to a commission in the army under Scipio Aemilianus, c. 134.[11] Without military experience Marius could never have risen in politics. For young Romans of obscure origin there were rigid requirements for high political office. For example, they had to enlist and serve ten years in the army to demonstrate military aptitude before thinking of a political career.

Whether a man aspired to the consulship or to high military rank, there was only one avenue open to him — military duty. Marius' military prowess must have been exemplary for his is the only case mentioned specifically in the sources of a man from a politically unknown gens being elevated to the military tribunate for his military

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[9]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 452; Plutarch, Marius, III, 1.

[10]Kildahl, Marius, p. 30.

[11]Ibid.; Plutarch, Marius, III, 2.

reputation alone.[12]

Regardless of Marius' imposing record, he obtained his political offices only with considerable difficulty. Sometimes socially distinguished equites were allowed to become candidates after serving only five years in the army. Later, the scion of illustrious families were permitted to ignore military service altogether and enter directly into politics. Marius was not affected by these reliefs to the rigid cursus honorum, and was it not that the professional officer class became an accepted avenue for entry into politics, it is doubtful that Marius could have succeeded in politics at all.[13] It is possible this apparent slighting of Marius' abilities was a primary factor which caused Marius to turn early in his career towards animosity for the optimates who controlled the pathway an aspiring young politician must tread.

Marius chose the military tribunate for his springboard into the strife of Roman politics.[14] This fact may reveal a sense of political acumen in Marius, for this position allowed him to be absent from Rome during periods of political friction in the city. Specifically, the military tribunate of 123-122 allowed him to avoid completely any entanglement with the developing controversy surrounding Caius Gracchus. Marius was absent in the Balearic Islands under the command of Q. Caecilius Metellus. The task of the military tribune was such that he

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[12]Sallust, The War With Jugurtha, translated by J. C. Rolfe (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 19650, LXIII, 5-6; Kildahl, Marius, p. 32.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXIII, 5.

was not required to make early committment to any political philosophy which might later prove damaging.

During his year under the command of Caecilius Metellus Marius won laurels for his bravery. Earlier, during the campaign in Numantia under Aemilianus, Marius had heard that commander prophesy Marius was destined for leadership in Rome. These two circumstances probably were influential in causing him to seek a career in politics, for immediately on his return from his duty in the Balearic Islands he sought the quaestorship.[15] The aedileship was no longer considered necessary to the cursus honorum, therefore Marius' victory in the contest for the position as quaestor set him on his way in Roman politics. His success may have been due to the undesirability of the position for many because it was concerned primarily with military finance. However, it may have been simply that the college of quaestors was large and a good number were selected. Nonetheless, the military was again Marius' key to open the door of politics.

Recent biographers have begun to pay more attention to the abilities Marius possessed in the field of finance. By the year 122 Marius had proven his executive ability as an army officer and he had entrenched himself in politics. One is almost forced to suspect that financial motives urged Marius into the campaign for the quaestorship.[16] This office was conveniently designed for a man who was eager to increase his wealth. In a recent biography of Marius, Phillip

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[15]Kildahl, Marius, p. 33; G. P. Baker, Sulla the Fortunate: the Great Dictator (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1967), p. 88, astutely cautions against losing sight of the fact that Marius sat next to Scipio, perhaps as important as the prophesy.

[16]Kildahl, Marius, p. 34.

Kildahl estimates, using well documented references, that Marius had amassed a fortune the equivalent of one million dollars by the time he was twenty-eight years of age.[17] The affluence of Marius' later life supports the idea of an early financial success.

The family estates at Arpinum cannot account for the wealth Marius had accumulated, although they may have provided his initial capital. A reasonable explanation for his wealth comes from Marius' exposure to the opportunity to compete for the mineral rights, or even producing mines, in Spain after the end of the Numantine campaign. This successful operation gave Rome the undisputed control of Spain. Its mineral wealth was probably part of the booty of war. For a period of ten years, from 133 to 124, Marius had the capability to exploit his interests in Spain as his military duties in this period were confined largely to Spain and its environs.[18]

Marius thus became regarded as an energetic and ambitious equite, the class then most hated and feared by the Metelli and the optimates in general. A tenuous alliance had existed between these classes until the time of the Gracchi. This reapprochement of the equites and optimates sundered through the seduction of the equites by Caius Gracchus, who offered seats in the Senate in return for their

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p. 35, measures Marius' success as a financier and exploiter of colonial wealth by the fact a whole mountain range, the Sierra Morena (Mons Marianus), still bears his name; that an ore of gold and copper was named the Massa Mariana by the Romans; and that a copper coin in later days was called the Aes Mariana.

support.[19] Regardless of Marius' affluence and social position, he had secured commissions from the Metelli to serve in the Balearic Islands against the pirate threat. This assignment may have been given in view of the patronage due the Marii or, even more plausible, because the optimates were trying to conciliate the equestrian order.

Immediately after his election as quaestor in 122, Marius received a commission to the staff of Scipio Aemilianus in Transalpine Gaul. In this period the work of developing the basis for what later became thriving centers of commerce, such as Narbo Martius, was accomplished. Marius, with his own huge capital resources may have been instrumental in preparing this exploitation. At any rate, he was thereafter graciously received by the powerful and wealthy equestrian families in Rome.[20] This action by the military in Gaul should not seem extraordinary, as the equites were gradually taking control of Roman economic affairs and military campaigns were assuming the aspects of economic exploitation more than just the conquest of land

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[19]Livy, Summaries, Fragments and Obsequens, translated by Alfred C. Schlesinger (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1967), LX, indicates Caius Gracchus sponsored a law as a means of seducing the equites from harmony with the Senate; this law to join six hundred equites to the body of the Senate; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 351, says the equites and the nobility joined against demagogues such as Tiberius Gracchus but there was such a natural gulf between them that Caius Bracchus, more adroit than his brother, could enlarge it; Badian, Clientelae, p. 195, indicates Caius Gracchus raised the negotiatores (equites) to a "political eminence not inferior to their economic power."

[20]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 419-421, believed the senatorial class intended to scuttle colonization in Gaul as it had the project in Carthage during the Gracchan period but, the "Roman merchantile class, which was able to compete with Massilia in the Gallo-Britanic traffic at Narbo alone, protected that settlement from the assaults of the optimates"; Kildahl, Marius, p. 36.

and people. These equite successes mark the beginning of the cleavage which developed between Marius and the old nobility.

Marius still had sufficient influence with the Metelli to receive the support of L. Caecilius Metellus Dalmiticus in the election for the tribunate, c. 120.[21] Why this support was given by a member of the old nobility to an obvious publicanus is not understandable, except if there was a policy for the optimates to cooperate deliberately in political matters with the equites. This policy was probably motivated by economic changes in the situation of the old senatorial aristocracy. This appears plausible as the temporary collapse in the solidarity of the old governing class seems to have come about the end of the second century BC.[22] Sallust attributed this change in the fortunes of the old aristocrats to the "new morality" which grew after the end of the Punic Wars. Greed rose by the side of power and affairs of state were conducted by the few in whose hands were the treasury and the public offices. The patrician element in the Senate lost power to the novi nobiles whose power and wealth grew as the Roman yeoman fast disappeared. Mommsen believed the government of the period of the "restoration," the post-Gracchi years, was under the family-policy(factions) just as it had been in the worst of the patriciate. For example, four sons and two

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[21] Plutarch, Marius, IV, 1.

[22] Cary, History of Rome, p. 242; Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 1-6, records a collapse in the harmony of the people with the Senate when the peace after the Punic Wars gave an "abundance of everything mortals prize most highly." He further indicates the affairs at home and in the field were managed according to the will of a few men and also that greed arose by the side of power until it brought about conflict within the nobles themselves.

nephews of Quintus Metellus rose to the consulship within fifteen years, and of these all but one received triumphs. The passage of the lex Hortensia, c. 287 is looked to by Abbott as the starting point for the government by the new nobilitas. This law alone so restricted the power of the Senate as a body that it was forced to break into factions which could control the magistracies and insure the passage of favorable legislation.[23]

The senatorial factions may have fought with each other, but, if the Senate was threatened as an institution the nobles quickly resolved their differences. However, if the factions were not under direct or implied threat from the equites or the commoners, the optimates were content to form alliances of convenience with the "opposition." A single family such as the Metelli could (and did) base its power on coalition with equestrian elements which were just beginning to exhibit signs of affluence. These alignments were made more necessary when the laws of the Gracchi gave the equites extensive control of the courts, particularly in cases pertaining to provincial extortion.[24] Marius may have benefitted from Metelli patronage but it was the close association he enjoyed with the equites which was the key to his political attitudes after his election to the tribunate.[25]

Marius' tribunate of 120-119 was disastrous for him. He supported legislation to democratize the voting procedures, thus curbing the

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[23]Sallust, Jugurtha, XLI, 1-10; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 378; Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, p. 53.

[24]Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, p. 97.

[25]Dickinson, Death of a Republic, p. 19. Kildahl, Marius, p. 38.

influence of the optimates. This effort quickly gained for him the enmity of the nobles, including the Metelli, his former patrons. With an apparent reversal of attitude, he proposed a curb on the distribution of subsidized grain. This alienated the proletarii and publicani, who profited from such state activities.[26] Marius was undoubtedly influenced by his rural background which gave him an inherent dislike for the use of imported grain at the expense of municipia such as Arpinum.[27] In Plutarch's view, Marius won himself "an equal place in the esteem of both parties as a man who favored neither at the expense of the general good."[28] More likely, he succeeded only in alienating both groups. Bad as this beginning might have been, it was not an end for his political career but only an indication of faulty political training and a failure to understand the maneuvering of political factions.

Though Marius subsequently profited from popular discontent as an aid to his political campaigns, he managed for years to avoid the label of "democratic"; however, at the same time, he was unable to secure even grudging recognition from the optimates. Perhaps his motivation in the corn fiasco was merely loyalty to Arpinum which, like many Italian municipia, suffered from the importation of corn from the provinces. Or, it may have been an attempt to re-establish ties with the Metelli, who had abandoned him because of his voting gambit. Significantly, he was unsuccessful for the Metelli appear to

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[26]Plutarch, Marius, IV, 4.

[27]Baker, Sulla, p. 89.

[28]Plutarch, Marius, IV, 4.

have remained implacable enemies thereafter. Badian views Marius' tribunate as a clumsy political effort which neither placated the Metelli nor won over the people.[29]

Marius was defeated in his campaign for the curule aedileship in 118, and only compounded his folly when he immediately sought the plebeian aedileship in the same election. He was rebuffed again -- an unprecedented double loss in Roman politics.[30] Marius seemed to be at the nadir of his career. Either he had overestimated his political strength, or he had much to learn about Roman politics. Either argument is sound, but the latter appears more plausible in view of his later political career. Using the next two years to buy the support of the electorate, he returned to public office as a praetor in 115.[31] This may be regarded as a minor political miracle, for few Romans had gained the praetorship without first serving in one of the aedileships. This is even more impressive when one remembers Marius' earlier loss of two offices in the same election.

This peculiar political strength invoked the ire of the opposition who could only suspect Marius was guilty of bribery in connection with the election.[32] Brought to trial by his opponents, Marius was able to secure a tie vote in the court action and consequently was granted

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[29]E. Badian, "From the Gracchi to Sulla," Historia, XI, 1962, p. 216.

[30]Plutarch, Marius, V, 2; Kildahl, Marius, p. 40, charges Marius with rejection twice in the same day and being forced to "retire" from politics as a result for about two years to plan a method to erase the memory of this stunning defeat.

[31]Plutarch, Marius, V, 2-3.

[32]Ibid., V, 3.

exoneration from the charge. The tie vote occurred because part of the court believed that a witness for the accusors was in fact Marius' patron, thus not able to appear against Marius.[33] Marius' exoneration for his malfeasance in the campaign rendered the power of the Metelli ineffective in the courts as well as in the elections. This was still another Marian barb to torment his former patrons.

The one year as praetor passed without untoward incident; in fact it appeared Marius had learned a political lesson, for he seemed to placate deliberately the optimates. It was not normal for a novus homo such as Marius to rise above the praetorship. Marius seemed ready now to strive for social acceptance by the aristocracy. That he deliberately dropped his feud with the Senate may be inferred from his receipt of the propraetorship for Further Spain in 114.[34]

A new phase of Marius' career seemed to begin after his return from Further Spain. Before his propraetorship Marius had striven for political and economic gain, but now he was in a position to relax and enjoy a fortunate retirement. Marius chose to make use of the prestige of his recent assignment to secure the hand of a Julii in marriage.[35]

Marius remained relatively inactive politically for two years after his return from Spain. In 110 he was wealthy, eminently

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[33]Ibid., V, 5.

[34]Ibid., VI, 1; Badian, Historia, p. 216, makes the point that Marius did not suffer during his praetorship as did his colleague P. Decius, who "got into further trouble," but was allowed to proceed to a proconsulate in Spain. Badian thus implies that Marius made an overt attempt to avoid trouble with the optimates after his close brush with failure in the bribery trial.

[35]Plutarch, Marius, VI, 2.

successful, and had held the second highest office in the Republic. He was a shrewd businessman and a cunning investor; he seemed destined to concern himself with making money in the Roman economy. He travelled in the highest social circles — his marriage had seen to that. He was active, but without any apparent purpose. His political career seemed at an end — the Roman norm legislated against a novus homo reaching the consulship. Yet his marriage into the higher class had apparently rekindled his political ambition.[36]

The situation in 110 was conducive to Marius' re-entry to Roman politics. Constant friction between optimates and populare had flared into open hostility during the decade prior to 110.[37] Social conflict served to increase the frustration and fears of the population. The need for a leader was made to order for an opportunist, and Marius seized it to his advantage. The people remembered Marius as having sided with them against the optimates by fostering a voting law during his tribunate in 119.

A full scale war was forming in Africa and this caused Marius to renew his associations with the populares as a potential source of support. At the same time he depended on his marriage to provide sufficient prestige to secure a commission from his old patrons, the

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[36]Baker, Sulla, p. 90.

[37]Tenney Frank, Roman Imperialism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 262-263; Kildahl, Marius, p. 38, states that the period from 140 to 120 was one of economic depression and the poverty in Rome caused the political parties to show concern for the populace because they could vote. The period lent itself to gangsterism and ideological warfare which in turn allowed the stronger family groups to increase their power. Wealth became a key to political power and the populace was coerced by the wealthy and the nobles for political ends.

Metelli, in the forces being formed for Africa.[38] This war had certain economic overtones and the equites were in a position to influence decisions in Marius' favor.[39] It is reasonable that these factors, in addition to Marius' demonstrated military capability, were responsible for his selection by Quintus Caecilius Metellus as a legate in his army.[40] That Marius was covertly seeking to gain the consulship by these devices was speculative, but it does appear he harbored such aspirations. At least he was willing to tempt fate in this regard.[41]

The road which Rome followed to the Jugurthine War shows, with clear perspective, the depth of the division between the optimates and the populares. Jugurtha, the adopted son of Masinissa and co-heir to the throne of Numidia, had murdered the other heirs in his thrust for the crown. Though his victims were under the protection of Rome, Jugurtha was reassured by the demonstrated cupidity of certain Roman factions which openly supported him. However, the scheming Jugurtha had miscalculated.[42] This situation brought the Republic to the point of dilemma -- could Jugurtha's machinations be ignored or did Roman prestige and honor demand recrimination? The debate roused heated passions and divided Rome into opposing camps. The optimates were

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[38]Dio Cassius, Roman History, translated by Earnest Cary (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1961), XXVI, 89, 2.

[39]Velleius Paterculus, Compendium of History of Rome, translated by John Selby Watson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1894), I, xi.

[40]Plutarch, Marius, VII, 1.

[41]Ibid., VII, 1-4.

[42]Florus, Epitome of Roman History, translated by John Selby Watson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1894), III, i, 5.

strongly against intervention and the populares were equally committed to action against Jugurtha and his Roman supporters. It became the lot of the Senate to suggest a policy of amelioration. The people had heretofore suspected the optimates of collusion with Jugurtha; the Senate's action only increased the suspicion of a sellout. The people of Rome thus committed her to an expensive and bloody war in Africa.[43]

Roman misfortune in Africa stemmed primarily from the almost uncanny ability of Jugurtha to use money and its promise to bring men to his service. Sallust records the wily African was able to bargain with Aulus Postumius Albinus, acting in place of the consul, his brother Spurius Albinus, and induce the Roman commander to move to a pretended retreat for hope of an "agreement." Jugurtha destroyed the Roman camp, under cover of night but only after clever emmissaries of the king had worked upon the Roman army "day and night, bribing the centurions and commanders of cavalry squadrons either to desert or to abandon their posts at a given signal."[44] Jugurtha's ability to force this commander and his army to "pass under the yoke" created the situation which found Metellus in command of the forces in Africa in 109, with the responsibility to destroy Jugurtha after so many others had failed.

Fate thus found Marius in Africa in 109 as a legate (sub-commander) to a personal enemy who would one day swear to oppose him. Marius' demonstrated military capability, his close connection with equites, and his great wealth undoubtedly were responsible for his

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[43]Henry Smith Williams, The Historians History of the World, Vol. V (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), p. 384.

[44]Sallust, Jugurtha, XXXVII, 3, 9-10.

selection by Metellus — a choice Metellus regretted when Marius later turned on him.[45]

From the outset Marius was a pillar of efficiency and decorum. His sights were levelled on the consulship and he did everything possible to appear more qualified than his commander.[46] Tireless in his efforts to enhance his own reputation with the soldiers; he worked diligently to create an impression of invincibility and incorruptability. In turn, the soldiers broadcast this message in their letters to Rome.[47] Meanwhile, Metellus suffered from Jugurtha's ability to avoid constantly a final test in battle. The consul's capability was never questioned, but his failure was in the one prerequisite to successful command — that of good fortune. He had defeated Jugurtha twice, yet he was no nearer final victory than when he arrived in Africa.[48]

Marius, the astute militarist, sensed the answer. Only new character and efficiency could solve the army's dilemma. Marius believed implicitly he alone was capable of reorganizing the Roman forces to secure such improvements. Metellus' army had been recruited under an archaic system that provided men but not necessarily good

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[45]Kildahl, Marius, p. 49, views Marius and Metellus as being in a relationship of convenience. Marius was seeking to capitalize on the war to improve his position. Metellus accepted Marius because of his wealth, his equestrian influence, but primarily for his military ability. He says, "He (Marius) would serve as a legate or subcommander under a personal enemy, a man sworn to oppose him, a man who had been persuaded only by political considerations to appoint him."

[46]Williams, Historians History, p. 390.

[47]Plutarch, Marius, VII, 4.

[48]Velleius Paterculus, Compendium, II, xi.

soldiers. Politically appointed officers were not always motivated to efficient command though they were often courageous. These were the ideas from which Marius conceived the military system which carried him to almost unprecedented military heights in Rome — an army of professional soldiers commanded by professional officers. The restored aristocracy came to an end when the comitial machine developed the power to make generals. Caius Marius did not realize it at the time but his cure for Roman ills in Africa were also the seeds for the downfall of the Republic.[49]

Marius capitalized on two errors by Metellus, the first involved unusual punishment, such as flogging or live-burial, given by the consul to stragglers. Marius, by his example of justice tempered with mercy, was able to bring his commander's conduct pointedly to the attention of his soldiery. Marius deliberately precipitated the second mistake by publicly accusing a Metelli "guest-friend" of treachery, thus forcing the consul to order the execution of a client who was later shown to be innocent.[50] The breech between Marius and his sponsor thus grew wider as Marius' popularity reached new heights within the legions by his demonstrated consistency in training and in disciplining his own men.

Reconciliation of the two became impossible. Metellus' example served to crystalize Marius' belief that the Roman army was in dire

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[49]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 462, takes a strong position concerning the military reorganization of Caius Marius. He says, "The new eagle which Caius Marius bestowed on the legions proclaimed the near advent of the Emperors." He holds that the allegiance of soldier to commander above state is the root of the Republic's final difficulty.

[50]Kildahl, Marius, p. 59; Plutarch, Marius, VIII, 2.

need of reform. Though the Metelli had provided twelve censors and consuls who had enjoyed triumphs in an equal number of years,[51] Marius no longer stood in awe of the vaunted family. He had successfully defied the family a second time without recrimination. Perhaps Marius sensed this was the time for bold action. Possibly his agents informed him the situation in Rome was propitious. At any rate, Marius announced his intention to seek the consulship and requested furlough for that purpose.

Metellus used every device to dissuade Marius and agreed only reluctantly, some twelve days before the election, to allow the trip. The extent of Marius' plans for this political effort can be seen in the fact that he could reach Rome in only seven days, a journey that must have required extremely close coordination by his agents.[52] These preparations must have been made very carefully and secretly, for even Cicero was impressed by the event.[53] The success of Marius' scheming and his agents' planning was evident in his victory at the polls in 108. The combined support of the equestrians and commoners gave him the highest office in the state.[54]

Perhaps he was only flushed with victory, maybe Marius was honestly unfamiliar with senatorial protocol, or possibly it was with deliberate intent; but, regardless of the cause, in his first speech

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[51]Velleius Paterculus, Compendium, II, xi.

[52]Plutarch, Marius, VIII, 4.

[53]Cicero, De Divinations, translated by William Armistead Falconer (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1954), I, xlvii.

[54]Cicero, De Officiis, translated by Walter Miller (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), III, xx, 79.

as a consul Marius made an intemperate attack on the optimates. Though his support had come from sources other than the optimates, this abuse of consular privilege to vilify the nobles was an error which cost him any possible future assistance from this class.[55] Henceforth, though he never authored a true movement for reform, Marius was indelibly marked as a proletarian standard bearer.[56]

The animosity deriving from this insult probably caused the Senate to refuse Marius the African command, choosing rather to retain Metellus. Instead, Marius was prorogued as proconsul for Africa, since the lex Sempronia forbade tribunician veto of senatorial allocations for consular provinces. Even Marius could not doubt he had been rebuked for his intemperate speech.

Marius, undismayed by the action of the Senate and realizing that people were the ultimate power (the touch of the demagogue), secured a fast plebiscite to override Metellus' appointment and to gain for himself a firm authority in Roman affairs in Africa.[57] It seems reasonable this plebiscite was taken by the equites and the proletarii with full understanding of its nature. They were aware the powers of the Senate had suffered yet another dimunition. Now the optimates found the greatest possible threat to their position on their own doorstep — a man of ambition, a novus homo with ideas, the courage to implement them and the authority to enforce them. Marius, though late in life,[58] had

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[55]Plutarch, Marius, IX, 4.

[56]Mommsen, History of Rome, v III, p. 462.

[57]Frank, Roman Imperialism, p. 265.

[58]Plutarch, Marius, IX, 1.

finally become a power in the affairs of the Republic. Marius was a force to be reckoned with.

The fact that Marius would deliberately seek military service at his age and station indicated ambition; his use of the influence of the populares, even if covertly, suggests this. Certainly, his marriage into an optimate family provided the connection he needed to gain the help of some nobles to expedite his ambition. His flight from the army of Metellus to seek the consulship on such short notice revealed confidence bred in the knowledge that well-prepared plans existed for just such a project. Absence from strife-torn Rome on military duty, to return at a time of his choosing, could only serve Marius' ambition. A successful command, leading to honors for combat against Rome's bitter enemy, Jugurtha of Numidia, could only be a rung in the ladder to his desire for recognition as the princeps civitatus.[59]

The authority given to Marius by the plebiscite and his assignment to Numidia as first consul is seen by Sallust as a turning point in Marius' career. Before his election he had been hostile to the nobles, but as soon as the people voted him the province of Numidia he attacked the aristocracy "persistently and boldly, assailing now the individuals and now the entire party." He boasted he had wrested the consulship from the optimates and made other remarks "calculated to glorify himself and exasperate the nobles."[60]

Though Marius lost no opportunity to harrass the senatorial

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[59]Badian, Clientelae, p. 203.

[60]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXIV, 1-2.

class, he was too much the professional officer to lose sight of his primary responsibility. All this while he gave his first attention to preparation for the war. He asked to reinforce the legions in Africa, he summoned auxiliaries from foreign nations, he called out the bravest men from Latium and from the allies, and he persuaded veterans to join him though they had served their time. The Senate, although it was hostile to him, did not oppose any of his measures. The senatorial class believed the commons were not favorably inclined toward the hardship of military service. They calculated Marius would fail simply because the proletarii would fall short of his requirements.[61] Marius was undaunted. He proceeded to reform the Roman army with the confidence of a man who knew his destiny.

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[61] Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEW ROMAN ARMY

Marius made a greater impression on the course of Roman Republican history by his reforms of the army than by any of his other actions. Mommsen measured the effect of Marius' actions by saying:

> They now had the standing army, the soldier-class, the bodyguard; as in the civil constitution, so also in the military, all the pillars of the future monarchy were already in existence: the monarch alone was wanting. When the twelve eagles circled round the Palatine hill, they ushered in the reign of the Kings; the new eagle which Caius Marius bestowed on the legions proclaimed the near advent of the Emperors.[1]

Mommsen does, however, relieve Marius of direct blame as a pretender. He suggests Marius' part in the ending of the "restored aristocracy" was merely to place the sword near the crown on the political horizon.[2]

The Roman system for recruiting had not changed greatly since the days of the monarchy and the Servian Reorganization of the army.[3] When faced with war, the Republic summoned its citizens of property into five classes of the _comitia centuriata_ and subjected all except the poorest of its citizens (the _capite censi_ who had less than 2

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[1]Theodor Mommsen, _The History of Rome_, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 452.

[2]Ibid., pp. 412-413.

[3]Sallust, _The War With Jugurtha_, translated by J. C. Rolfe (_Loeb Classical Library_, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1965), LXXXVI, 1-4.

acres in land or 10,000 asses) to conscription for military service.[4] By the time of the Jugurthine War, the minimal financial level acceptable for recruitment into the army had been reduced to 4,000 asses. Even so, there were multitudes who had fallen below this level and were thus exempt by law from serving the state in time of war.

The Roman soldier was expected to supply his own equipment and to return home at the end of the campaign with no other payment than the appreciation of the Republic. Over the years the farmer-soldier had been subjected to one war after another. He participated in campaigns which now lasted longer than usual, that is, longer than from spring planting until fall harvest. He was ruined economically by enforced absence from his land at critical times. As a result, he had become either scrubbed from the rolls of the comitia centuriata or very poorly motivated when required to serve in foreign campaigns.[5]

Marius sensed the major weakness in the army stemmed from its recruiting system. Therefore, it was logical for him to change this device as his first priority when he assumed command. He paid serious attention to training, to tactics, to structure and to improving weaponry, but the recruiting system was his primary area of concern.

The Roman army which Metellus commanded in Africa during the Jugurthine War was little changed in structure from that of the early Republic. True, the Romans had developed a reputation for learning

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[4]Frank Frost Abbott, The History and Description of Roman Political Institutions (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1911), p. 21.

[5]Guglielmo Ferrero, The Greatness and Decline of Rome, translated by Alfred E. Zimmern (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), pp. 42-43, 64.

quickly from their enemies. They knew that innovation in matters of force at arms was vital to their continued success; yet, the legions of the Metelli were essentially of the same design as that employed by their ancient predecessors.

Originally, the Roman army was similar in nature to the Greek and Etruscan, employing the phalanx formation with the soldiers armed with long rigid spears (hasta) and heavy shields. But this structure proved itself too inflexible for mountain fighting. Thus, during the fourth century the Romans accepted the manipular formation from the Samnites. The legion, which originally had a strength of about 6,000 in the early Republic, was reduced to about 4,200 by the time of the 2nd Punic War. It was further divided into one hundred and twenty units, or manipuli (roughly a platoon). Each manipulus was under the command of a single officer. In battle array the manipulus was separated from adjacent manipuli by a small interval to provide the flexibility denied by the phalanx. This also provided the capability of engagement by maniple as a single command, if need be. Later the maniple was enlarged so that only sixty maniples comprised a legion. Normally the legion deployed in three lines of maniples with a twenty maniple front.[6]

Strangely for such a warlike state, the development of Roman military organization was not widely or specifically documented. This may have been deliberately and wisely done to avoid publicity which

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[6]Edwards, Appendix A in Caesar, The Gallic War, translated by H. J. Edwards (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1952), pp. 595-600.

would have given undue advantage to Rome's enemies.[7]

However, during the late fourth century sharp distinctions between the orders began to break down as a result of protracted warfare and economic difficulties. This resulted in having all men with an income over four thousand asses, a bare subsistence level, included for conscription on the rolls of the comitia centuriata. Coincidentally, the state also began to furnish some of the equipment as a consequence.[8] Perhaps for this reason most of the weapons of the legion had become standardized by the time of Marius. The long spear of the phalanx (the hasta) had been replaced, at least in the first two lines, by the shorter hurling javelin, or pilum. The heavy slashing sword was discarded in favor of the short thrusting sword, the gladius. The astute Romans learned quickly that it did not take very much energy to fight with the thrusting sword, as opposed to the longer slashing sword. They built their tactics around this fact.[9]

Roman battle tactics were disciplined, stereotyped, and almost automatically developed by the well trained soldier in the engagement.

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[7]Phillip A. Kildahl, Caius Marius (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 66.

[8]Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, pp. 53, 74-79; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 457; Sallust, Jugurtha, LXI, 1-10, implies that the destruction of Carthage, presumably in the Third Punic War, is the dividing point between harmonious and immoderate civil relations between the Senate and the people of Rome. Logically, any breakdown in social classes takes place over long periods of time. Abbott stresses the effect of the Hortensian law (c. 287) in reducing the power of the patricians, and the importance of the first recorded legislative act of the comitia tributa with plebeian participation (c. 357). these factors tend to reveal a growing strength of the lower order by the fourth century.

[9]Edwards, Appendix A, pp. 596-597; Cyril E. Robinson, A History of the Roman Republic (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1932), pp. 269, note 1, 270; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 459.

Typically, the offensive contact began with the advance of the velites, lightly armed skirmishers, who screened the movement of the more heavily armed infantry. The Roman shock troops, its vaunted infantry, were armed with a heavy shield, carried one or two javelins and a thrusting sword, protected shoulders and chest with leather or metal coverings, and were made to appear taller by fixing a plume on the helmet. Once contact was made with the opposing force, the Roman infantry engaged in combat by deploying itself in three successive lines of troops, each with its own tactical purpose.[10]

The first line of troops to be committed was the hastati, so named for the hasta they once carried. This line normally moved forward in six ranks and engaged the enemy first by the cast of the pilum, followed by the close, vicious action with the gladius. The following ranks of hastati shouted encouragement, hurled their javelins, and took the place of the leading ranks as they fell. The second line, named the principes, although they were no longer first into battle, replaced the hastati as they were tired or defeated in battle. This line attacked and fought in much the same manner as the hastati. The third and final line of the legion was designated the triarii and it consisted of the veteran legionnaires who entered the fray after the principes had tired or failed to carry the battle. The lines of troops moved forward and to the right, step by step, as they were committed, in such a manner that the leading echelons could disengage, pass backward through the

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[10]Robinson, Roman Republic, pp. 269-270; Edwards, Appendix A, pp. 598, 604.

following ranks and, hopefully, reform in the rear.[11] These tactics reveal a strong reason for the Romans to avoid fighting defensively in the open, unless forced to do so. They preferred instead to engage from a prepared, fortified position to avoid the consequences of the extreme confusion engendered from the intricacies of the three line tactics.

The cavalry of the legion supported its infantry by harrassing the enemy from positions on the flanks adjacent to the legion. It also scouted the approach to combat and performed the pursuit of a routed foe. In addition, the enemy had to deal with slingers armed with leather bands to hurl fist-sized stones into their ranks. There were also archers who fired arrows at random into the massed foe. The use of supporting troops, though considered as a part of the legion, was never fully exploited by Roman commanders. The use of cavalry to augment the infantry as an entity in its own right would wait for many years after Caius Marius. It was indeed the infantry which gave the Roman legions their vaunted and well deserved superiority.[12]

Caius Marius, as a legate under the command of Quintus Caecilius Metellus, commanded an army which was very similar in design to its earlier predecessors. Certainly it gained its recruits by conscription

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[11] Robinson, Roman Republic, pp. 269-270; Edwards, Appendix A, pp. 598, 604; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 457-459.

[12] Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 457, indicates the "burgess-cavalry" practically ceased from service in the field, even before the time of Marius. It acted only as a sort of "guard of honor" in the Jugurthine War.

and in accordance with long established custom.[13] Its source of manpower was the five classes of the old centuriate organization. The proletarii, or capite censi, were below the requisite economic status for the fifth class, hence they were exempt by law from serving in the army. On occasion, it had been necessary in the past during extreme emergencies for the state to include the poorest of Roman citizens, even slaves, to insure the requisite force. For example, in 123 Caius Cracchus found it necessary to provide equipment at public cost and to reduce the minimum requirement so that more of the poor would be eligible for service in the army.[14]

Nonetheless, the Roman system remained little changed and property was the primary qualification for conscription. Thus, the forces in Africa contained many men of substance whose service was obviously less than enthusiastic.[15] Such were the soldiers who caused headaches for the commanders; their interests were more at home than in any campaign in a foreign land.

Marius had observed these men closely in his own units and knew full well that it was almost impossible to train or motivate them adequately for extended field campaigning in foreign service. He sensed that the conscript, whose first interest centered on his farm and family in Italy, would never follow his commander with the faith and espirit of the professional soldier: one who would gamble his life

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[13]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXVI, 1-2; Plutarch, Marius in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), IX, 1.

[14]Ferrero, Decline of Rome, pp. 50, 60.

[15]Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 268.

in return for booty and settlement in a colony at the end of his service. Marius knew the basic weakness which lay at the heart of the Roman army was caused almost entirely by the ancient recruiting system.[16] The paradox inherent in the system became even more obvious as it was shown the comitia centuriata drew most heavily upon the same men who had the most to contribute to Roman civil life and economy. Conversely, the system touched only lightly the segment of Roman society which gave the least to the economy and culture of the state — the capite censi. Thus it was to the system of recruitment for the legions that Marius gave his first and his foremost attention.

Marius needed assurance he would have the sort of army in Africa which would allow him to keep his promise that he would bring Jugurtha to heel where his predecessors had failed so miserably.[17] To provide this army he opened enlistments to volunteers regardless of their property status. Marius simply abandoned any economic requirements for the soldier. No doubt Marius was fully aware that his actions were unconstitutional and morally wrong. Cicero, commenting on this matter, says:

> 'But stay,' someone will object, 'when the prize is very great, there is excuse for doing wrong.'[18]

Marius was given the province of Numidia after his election to the consulship. This award, the result of coercion and the plebiscite of the commoners, infuriated the Metelli and the noble factions.

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[16] Ferrero, Decline of Rome, pp. 73-74.

[17] Plutarch, Marius, VII, 4-5; IX, 1-2.

[18] Cicero, De Officilis, translated by Walter Miller (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), XX, 79.

Sallust records that Quintus Caecilius Metellus, as he received this word, "was more affected by this news than was right or becoming, neither refraining from tears nor bridling his tongue." Sallust further reports that the Senate did not venture to oppose Marius' plans because it believed the commons were not at all inclined to military service, thus Marius would either lose his resources for the war or the devotion of the people. Sallust indicates Marius deliberately aspired to power by his act of recruiting the capite censi, for, as he says, "to one who aspires to power the poorest man is the most helpful, since he has no regard for his property, having none, and considers anything honorable for which he receives pay."[19] Certainly when it became apparent Marius could raise his legions from the proletarii the senatorial factions became aware of the true threat of this reform.

The government had previously on occasion come close to using a voluntary system. Marius only closed the loop when he accepted those below the fifth economic class.[20] There was indeed opposition to Marius' action in military recruitment but it is doubtful that many were seriously apprehensive about this crucial deviation from Republican tradition at the outset. The war with Jugurtha had not gone well and most Romans welcomed any action which promised relief from an odious war. When it became obvious loyalty to the commander replaced loyalty to the Republic, the sincere Roman had cause to rue Marius' military reforms.

The success of this new system is abundantly proven in the

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[19]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXII, 2; LXXXIV, 3-4; LXXXVI, 3.

[20]Tenney Frank, Roman Imperialism (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 269.

fact that the state rarely ever had to fall back on conscription of men with property after this reform. Now Rome could go to war with confidence that it had an army of men who had chosen the military as a way of life and who would voluntarily follow a leader through long campaigns away from home. No longer would human frailties such as nostalgia be strong factors in the morale of the legions.

Having broken with tradition in recruitment of his army, Marius felt secure also to adapt weaponry and structure to satisfy the needs of a "new" army. Heretofore, the legions had been encumbered with awkward and bulky baggage trains to carry force _impedimenta_ and siege equipment. Marius improved the mobility of the legion by reducing the personal equipment allowed to the legionnaire and issuing him a _furca_, or forked stick, to which he attached his gear so that it could be carried on his shoulder during the march.[21] Marius' troops were scorned as "Marius' mules" and derisive comment was engendered by this innovation. Still, as was true of so many Marian military inventions, this device was adopted by other commanders when they understood its value to a legion in the field.[22]

Marius was dissatisfied with the effectiveness of Roman weaponry, thus he investigated both individual and supporting weapons to seek improvements. Formerly, the javelin, so crucial to the attack of the _hastati_, had been fashioned with extremely narrow and needle sharp heads which would either bend or break on contact and be rendered useless. To insure this was so, Marius had the _pilum_ made with wooden

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[21] Robinson, _Roman Republic_, p. 271.

[22] Kildahl, _Marius_, pp. 76-77.

pegs to fasten the head to the shaft, to replace the metal rivets formerly used. In this case the head would fly off or twist on the wooden pegs and be made unusable.[23]

At about this same time Marius seems to have caused the short, heavy sword to be further shortened to make it even more effective as a thrusting weapon. This reduced further the space required between legionnaires and increased the numbers committed at a certain point.[24] This may well be Marius' most important contribution to Roman warfare as it gave the Roman a tremendous advantage over his barbarian opponent whose longer sword demanded about four yards of front to permit the slashing action his sword required. Conversely, the Roman used only one yard on his front to effect the thrusting motion used with the gladius.[25] Sword tactics were further improved by adopting the techniques and training methods of the gladiators whose very name was closely associated with the short sword.[26]

Slingers and archers continued to be an integral part of Marius' army, though neither he nor any other commander of the day asked much of the weapons or the men who used them. The bow was neither accurate nor effective against armored men and the slingers were not used except in the fashion of harrassers. Marius included these weapons in his new army probably more for their nuisance value than as a military threat. This astute commander was content to depend on the foot

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[23]Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 270.

[24]Kildahl, Marius, p. 102.

[25]Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 230.

[26]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 457-458.

soldier and his sharp sword to carry the fight directly into the enemy line.[27]

Reformation of the recruiting system, streamlining the transport system and improving the javelin are undoubtedly inventions which Marius' nimble mind conceived. These reforms reveal an insight into the man as well as the commander. Marius must have been undaunted by age-old tradition. He must have had both the courage and the initiative to attack conservative tradition. His innovations displayed the workings of an inventive, practical and resourceful mind. This was precisely the type of mentality which — in combination with an aggressive personality — represented the greatest threat to the old, established optimates.[28] Though the aristocracy probably did not sense the true outcome which would spring from the Marian reformation of the army, they must certainly have begun to realize its ramifications more so every day Marius' power increased after his new army went into action.

Few records exist concerning organizational improvement and developmental change in the Roman legions but logic supports the possibility that Marius innovative military mind must have dwelt in this area also. Just a few years after his death such a new organization existed, and its precepts seem to have been in line with Marian thought.[29] Only thirty years later Caesar wrote in The Gallic Wars of the use of the cohort which had replaced the maniple as the basic

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[27]Kildahl, Marius, p. 77.

[28]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 458-460.

[29]Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 270.

tactical unit. Kildahl speculates that the legion written about by Caesar, who refers often to the cohort and very little to the maniple, included maniples which had been divided into two bodies called centuries or ordines. Based on the small amount of time elapsed from the Marian reorganization of the army and Caesar's expedition into Gaul, Kildahl postulates that the cohort, maniple and ordo have their roots in Marius' military reforms.[30]

At this time Caesar's legions apparently consisted of ten cohorts authorized for each legion. Each cohort was divided into three maniples of two centuries (ordines) each. It appears that Caesar's legions each had 3,600 men, thus the lowest unit would have sixty legionnaires and its own centurion. Again, Kildahl credits Caesar with referring to such an established organization in his Commentaries.[31] It is logical to conclude that much of the development reflected in Caesar's legions would have occurred before he became their commander. Marius consistently demonstrated an inventive and innovative mind, closely in tune with needed improvements demanded by the military situation of his day. Though the record is not clear, it is reasonable to credit Marius with a great share in the changes of the legion, as it appeared in Caesarian days in contrast to the legion of the early Jugurthine war period.[32]

In all his endeavors Marius never conceded the possibility of defeat in the field, and always accepted victory as the natural state

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[30]Kildahl, Marius, pp. 78-79; Edwards, Appendix A, pp. 596-597.

[31]Kildahl, Marius, p. 79.

[32]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 456-460.

of things. It was with this frame of mind that Marius, after his election to the consulship in 107, returned to Africa with a considerably larger contingent than he had been authorized.[33] He brought to Africa "new soldiers" who were indoctrinated with the spirit of his new army, to intermix with and raise the morale of the legions he accepted from Metelli. This situation provided Marius with an excellent opportunity and ample time to evaluate the performance of both conscript and volunteer. He found the latter more suitable to the demands of the army. Particularly for offensive campaigns beyond the confines of Italy. The infusion of this new energy could only turn the action in Africa toward a better conclusion.

Marius entered Africa with his new troops just as an angry and bitter Metellus departed covertly for Rome, wishing thereby to avoid a meeting with Marius. Quintus Caecilius Metellus chose to give a subordinate the task of transferring the command to Marius. The fact that Metellus decided to slight Marius deliberately in this manner is indicative of the strong feeling against Marius on his part, and that of the optimates also.[34] The military figure has always been prone to seek the pomp and the ceremony of such affairs as the receipt of a new command. For Metellus to have deliberately avoided such a prestigious affair reveals strong animosity and deliberate intent. The irritation of the Senate, thus all optimates as well, with the new

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[33]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXVI, 4-5, implies that Marius, through his recruitment of the capite censi, was able to secure more volunteers than the state had authorized. Also, there is an implication that Marius may have done this deliberately to secure the broadcast base possible for later use.

[34]Ibid.; Plutarch, Marius, X, 2.

consul, and their prejudice for one of their own, is amply displayed by the award of an impressive Roman welcome for Metellus on his return to Rome.[35] This ceremony had overtones of a political demonstration against Marius and the populares, and was probably given as much to spite Marius as to honor Metellus.

The intent of the optimates was made crystal clear; their anti-Marian attitude was fully demonstrated by awarding Metellus the title of "Numidicus."[36] The award of a battle honor for a war not yet won was an immediate slap at Marius and a denial to him of such an honor if he won the war. Senatorial vindictiveness prevailed for Marius was never to be given an honorary campaign title for any of his victories.

Marius quickly put his men to the test. He required his legions to attack many places at once, thereby rapidly providing the experience his men needed and, at the same time, keeping his enemies off balance. When his force was ready he attacked and captured Capsa though it was a considerable distance into the desert. By carrying water in cattle skin containers and driving cattle with his columns, Marius was able to place his forces before Capsa and to secure its capitulation. Marius' genius is shown in his ability to march his army across five hundred miles of Numidian desert to capture Jugurtha's treasure base and powerful fortress in Mauretania. Marius revealed in this campaign that the successful commander has an extra ability the normal officer does not have — luck. Just as he might have given up in despair of ever forcing Jugurtha's fortress, a hidden entry was discovered and the

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[35]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXVIII, 1-2.

[36]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXXXVI, 3-5; LXXXVIII, 2; Kildahl, Marius, p. 82.

stronghold was taken by surprise.

Marius' tactics were to capture and destroy the Numidian, for it was sheer folly to wear his army out in march and counter-march chasing an elusive wraith across the desert. Rather than seeking battle, Marius designed a series of ambushes and was finally able to trap Jugurtha and his ally, Bocchus, into a decisive battle in the desert. Marius had caused his legions to appear as if a demoralized unit in disorder on the march, a fact the Africans did not realize until they committed their forces to certain destruction. This decisive battle in the open desert ended the actual fighting. What remained to be done was anti-climatic. Bocchus of Mauretania was convinced resistance was futile and decided to negotiate. Sulla, the spokesman for the Romans was eventually able to convince Bocchus that his best interests lay in conciliating Rome by aiding in the capture of Jugurtha.

In the same election that had carried Marius to the consulship, a young Roman named Sulla was elected to the post of quaestor. Lucius Cornelius Sulla was of noble but impoverished parentage and had a distinct taste for politics which Marius could never develop. At first the relationship between Marius and Sulla was harmonious and Marius entrusted the young quaestor with the recruitment and training of a cavalry detachment. Sulla was both ambitious and intelligent. The relationship with Marius provided him the opportunity to satisfy both his thirst for fame and his desire for position in the state.

Sulla was as politically polished as Marius was rough. In fact, Sulla robbed Marius as neatly of a complete success in Africa as Marius

had deliberately deprived Metellus of his.[37] Sulla was able to capture Jugurtha by his cleverness and natural talent for deviousness. He caused the scene of his triumph over the African to be engraved on his ring, a constant reminder to Marius of Sulla's accomplishment. A breech developed between these two: one which never healed and eventually caused Rome to be torn asunder by factionalism centered on these two adversaries.

Marius required about two and one half years in Africa to complete the task he had promised to the Romans, the return to Rome of its avowed enemy, Jugurtha. Though the African was not delivered to Rome until c. 104, Marius' authority had been extended as consul in 106 and he was re-elected in absentia during 105. This was a display of the raw power the equites and populares now held in the political arena of Rome. Above all, it was an indication of the confidence the commoners held for Marius. The nobility could no longer afford to ignore the potential threat which the brash commander now represented for them.

Marius returned to Rome early in 104, with him was Jugurtha, now a captive in heavy fetters. The tides of fortune had turned. Now Marius held as high a prestige in Rome as one could hope for. Jugurtha was no longer the arrogant royal visitor who had shamed the city by openly stating that the purchaser who offered the right price could claim the city. Instead he had fallen and was an example of pity and scorn, not the target of bitter resentment. Safely between the hero and the captive was Sulla. He was now noticed, his reputation was on the mend, and he was busily maneuvering his grasp for power in the

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[37]Plutarch, Marius, X, 2.

politics of Rome.

Marius received the triumph he so richly deserved but Metellus so bitterly resented. Jugurtha was paraded through Rome as a public spectacle, then put to death for his crimes against the Republic. The state had almost found itself acting in the nature of a personal vendetta to avenge Jugurtha's insults against its honor. The war's end brought relief to Rome which showered its gratitude on Marius for his part in ending the trouble Jugurtha had caused the city. Marius was raised to heights of adulation by the crowd and his name sounded throughout the city. Though he was the recipient of the city's gratitude, Marius remained the focal point of the optimate's animosity. They steadfastly refused to honor Marius as they had acknowledged Metellus.

The Jugurthine war at an end, Marius celebrated his victory in Rome in the spring of 104 with a huge triumph and the adoration of the tumultuous crowd.[38] No Roman doubted that Marius was the man of the hour. All of Rome celebrated its vengeance on the African who had insulted Roman honor and degraded it in the eyes of the world. Jugurtha's early successes in bribing Roman officials had convinced him the city had its price. He not only had murdered his brothers but savagely massacred the Italiotes of Cirta as well. Called to account by the Senate, more from the pressure of the popular demand for action than any magisterial inspiration, Jugurtha was able to escape any retribution through the bribing of officials such as Caius Baebius, the tribune. When the pressure of the populace finally brought Rome

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[38]Henry Smith Williams, The Historians History of the World, Vol. V (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), pp. 391-392; Sallust, Jugurtha, XIV, 3-4; Plutarch, Marius, XII, 2-4.

to censure Jugurtha and to initiate the raising of troops against him, the African departed Rome publicly proclaiming: "A city for sale and doomed to speedy destruction if it finds a purchaser."[39] Thus it was primarily to avenge its sullied honor that Rome had gone to war with Jugurtha.

Regardless of Roman joy and happiness in the defeat of the African and the redemption of their honor, there was serious concern for the storm brewing in Transalpina. Almost coincidentally with the victory in Africa, Rome received word of the defeat of generals Quintus Caepio and Gnaeus Manlius and the Roman legions in Gaul. Though Jugurtha was gone, Rome could not afford to relax for she faced an even greater threat from the Germanic peoples of the north. Even Sallust concedes that the Romans feared the Gauls and fought against them for life not glory.[40] These tribes: the Cimbri, the Teutones, and the Celtic Tigurini, restlessly wandered in Gaul but, nonetheless, constantly on the verge of assaulting the pleasant lands of Italy and the Republic itself.

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[39]Sallust, Jugurtha, XXI, 1; XXVII, 1-3; XXIV, 2; XXXV, 6; Additional concerning the hatred of the Roman populace for Jugurtha is drawn from Lucius Annaeus Florus, Epitome of History (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1947), I, XXXVI, 17-18, and Livy, Summaries, translated by Alfred C. Schlesinger (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1967), LXV.

[40]Sallust, Jugurtha, CXIV, 1-4, says "The Romans of that time and even down to our own day believed that all else was easy for their valor, but that with the Gauls they fought for life and not for glory"; Plutarch, Marius, XI, 9, hints that the Roman armies by their feeble and ineffective resistance were actually responsible for drawing the barbarians toward Rome.

CHAPTER V

THE WAR IN THE NORTH

It was fortunate for Rome that Marius' attention was diverted by events occurring in the north. The incursions of the barbarians insured that domestic politics and internal civil strife must wait until the external threat was ended. If these troubles had not happened there might have been a political explosion of some sort in 105 - 104.[1]

In fact, so imminent was the danger that the Senate made no protest when Marius was elected consul in 104. They even suffered patiently through three successive elections of Marius, from 104 to 102, though this was contrary to all Roman political tradition.[2] Fate had intervened to provide an outlet for the military machine which Marius now securely in control of. Fortunately, Marius was the "essential man" and his services had been chosen by Rome as the only answer the state could offer for the barbarian question.

Marius had never demonstrated a high degree of political ability

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[1] Charles Oman, Seven Roman Statesmen of the Later Republic (London: Edward Arnold & Co., 1941), p. 95, indicates Marius returned to Rome with the state at his mercy, for " . . . the Senate was cowed and the people would have been ready to grant him anything he asked." Oman postulates Marius provided for the first time " . . . the sword and shield for Roman democracy" which " . . . no longer had to depend on the stones and staves of riotous mobs." Oman speculates Marius may have become an interim ruler of Rome if trouble had not occurred in the north.

[2] M. Rostovtzeff, Rome, translated by J. D. Duff (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 106.

in the years since his first state position as a tribune. It was probably fortunate for Marius also that the Republic faced a threat in the north. This danger possibly dimmed the indications of political weaknesses which Marius displayed from time to time. For example, Marius entered the Senate in his triumphal robes, an act prohibited both by law and by custom. Marius may have been carried away by the fervor of the crowd, possibly he was unaware of the proprieties of the Senate, nonetheless, this impropriety served to increase the outrage of the Senate. Even though the blunder was excused as simple rashness, it focused the hatred of the optimates, and Marius was marked for life.

Before any immediate repercussion could follow his rash act, its magnitude was softened in the noise from the marching feet of a horde of barbarians who threatened Rome's very existence. Marius was called again by the people to take the helm and to guide the state through the threat of hostilities with the Cimbri and their allies.[3]

Even before his final departure from Africa, Marius was aware of the gravity of Rome's situation. For at least a decade, Germanic tribes had been relentlessly moving southward, gradually increasing pressure on the Republic until counter measures became absolutely necessary. In particular, the Cimbri and the Teutones posed a severe threat. As early as c. 113 the Romans and their allies, the Taurisci, had run afoul of these tribes in the Drave River valley in present day Yugoslavia, where an army under G. Papirius Carbo was

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[3]Plutarch, Marius in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), IX, 1-3.

overwhelmed.[4] This experience lessened the awe in which the tribes had held the Roman legions and they continued, therefore, to move somewhat leisurely to the west and south. By c. 109 they occupied the valley of the Rhone River in southern Gaul. Again, a Roman army was dispatched to divert this human stream from Italy. This force, commanded by M. Junius Silanus, suffered the excruciating fate of its predecessor.[5]

The Tigurini, a Celtic tribe inhabiting the mountain fastnesses of the Alps to the north of Italy, joined the Cimbri and the Teutones in the Rhone valley during the year 108.[6] Now Rome was thoroughly convinced that these tribes represented a knife at her jugular and she reacted with the typical Roman approach toward such a threat — she sent still another army. In this case, the consul for 107, L. Cassius Longinus, foolishly allowed his smug Roman confidence to blind him to barbarian machinations. He and much of his army were killed in a Tigurini trap at Tolosa, the area of present-day Toulouse. To make matters much worse, the surviving officer, C. Popillas Laenas, surrendered the legionary baggage and secured the release of the sur-

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[4]Theodor Mommsen, The History of Rome, v. III, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), pp. 433-434; Plutarch, Marius, XVI, 5; Frank Frost Abbott, The History and Description of Roman Political Institutions (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1911, p. 99.

[5]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 435; Plutarch, Marius, XVI, 5; Livy, Summaries, translated by Alfred C. Schlesinger (Loeb Classical Libary, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1967), LXV; Lucius Annaeus Florus, Epitome of History (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1947), I, xxxviii, 1-3.

[6]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 435; Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, p. 99.

vivors by having them pass under the yoke;[7] a tremendously significant loss of prestige and honor for the proud Republic.

Rome had tasted nothing but disgrace and defeat to this point in her running conflict with the northern tribesmen. Even though the barbarians inspired a great fear in the Roman populace; Plutarch likens the tribesmen to a force of fire against which few could stand, unless they fell as prey or booty;[8] she chose to react with characteristic tenacity, thus she recruited still another army to move against the barbarians, hopefully to stem the flow and deny it entry to Italy. The consul for 106, an experienced officer named Q. Servillius Caepio, moved northward with a strong force and enjoyed success against the Germans in the skirmishes of that year. Caepio's forces were able to capture huge quantities of gold and silver, so desperately needed by the Roman treasury to defray the tremendous cost of these campaigns. While this booty was being transported to Massilia it disappeared and was never found. Rumors grew that Caepio had somehow embezzled the loot and, though never proven, these charges left a stigma on his name

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[7]Plutarch, Marius, IX, 1-9, suggests the defeats of the Roman armies were "inglorious" and therefore the barbarians determined not to settle until they had destroyed Rome and ravaged Italy; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 435-436; Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, p. 99; Napoleon III, Julius Caesar, v. I (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1868), pp. 252-253; Henry Smith Williams, The Historians History of the World, Vol. V (New York: The Outlook Company, 1905), pp. 292-293, indicates Rome lost such prestige by the defeat of Longinus and the disgraceful treaty, by which the survivors withdrew under the yoke, that the Roman position in Gaul was shaken to the extent that peaceful communities, for example Tolosa, revolted and took their garrisons prisoner.

[8]Plutarch, Marius, XI, 9.

and later helped to cost him his estate.[9]

Pressure continued to grow from the activity of the tribes. Rome found it necessary again to send still another army to slow the tide. This army, under Gnaeus Mallius Maximus, the consul for 105,[10] joined Caepio's army in Gaul and the command was shared by order of the Senate between the two officers. Unfortunately, they failed to cooperate because of mutual distrust and Caepio's extreme jealousy. For this reason the Roman forces in Gaul operated separately rather than as a combined force which had sufficient strength to defeat the Germans.[11] At Arausio, presently known as Orange, in southern Gaul,

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[9]Guglielmo Ferrero, The Greatness and Decline of Rome, translated by Alfred E. Zimmern (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), p. 75; Florus, Epitome, I, xxxviii, 4-6, verifies defeats of Silanus, Caepio, and Manlius; Dio Cassius, Roman History, translated by Earnest Cary (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1961), XXVII, 90-91, indicates much treasure was accumulated by plundering the temples of the Gauls. Much of this wealth, including coinage, was taken by the Gauls from the temple of Delphi. However, no treasure of consequence reached Rome but "the soldiers themselves took most of it, for which a number were called to account."

[10]Phillip A. Kildahl, Caius Marius (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 101, indicates Caepio, consul in 105, served with distinction in Spain and was granted a triumph for this. He was prorogued in 105 and Gnaeus Mallius Maximus was elected consul and given Gaul as his consular province, thus the command in Gaul was to be a joint command; Dio Cassius, Roman History, XXVII, 91, 1-3, indicates Mallius was the senior by such phrases as " . . . Mallius had sent for Servius . . . " or " . . . the Cimbri made overtures to Mallius, as consul . . ." He supports the idea that Caepio was prorogued. There is no doubt from this source that Caepio was extremely jealous of Mallius.

[11]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 436-439; Livy, Summaries, LXVII, states Caepio's property was confiscated, presumably for the defeat at Arausio and possibly for the loss of the treasure at Tolosa. He became the first to suffer such punishment since Tarquinus Superbus; Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 267; Dio Cassius, Roman History, XXVII, 91, says the two officers were at loggerheads. Caepio is charged with interfering in negotiations between Mallius and the Cimbris, thereby causing the battle at Arausio.

the Cimbri and the Teutones attacked first the force of Caepio and later that of Mallius. This horrible defeat (the worst since Cannae) visited on the legions a humiliation from which they would not recover until Marius showed the way. The annhilation of Rome's latest offensive thrust against the barbarians almost completely destroyed Roman pride and prestige as well.

Rome was rocked to its very foundations by news of the defeat at Arausio. Despair replaced the remaining vestiges of Roman confidence, if much was left after the defeats of Carbo, Silanius, and Longinus.[12] To the Romans the struggle appeared lost. Every army sent to Gaul had been ruthlessly destroyed. Now at last the fertile plains of Italy and the approaches to them lay open to the Cimbri and their allies.

There seem to be parallels between the Roman experience in Africa against Jugurtha and Rome's efforts in the north with the Cimbri and the Teutones. Roman legions in both campaigns appeared to be plagued by the greed and jealousy of their commanders. The enemy seemed to gain strength as the Romans suffered defeat after defeat in Gaul, just as he had in the case of the war against Jugurtha. In Gaul, as in Africa, the deeds of Caius Marius would be the deciding element in favor of victory. Rome had reason to take heart in the year 104, however. Marius, the victor over Jugurtha, had returned as a hero and became the new consul at the demand of a seriously frightened populace.

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[12] Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 437-438; Robinson, Roman Republic, p. 263; G. P. Baker, Sulla the Fortunate: the Great Dictator (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1967), p. 116, says the aftermath of Arausio was a fear so great the name Caepio became a byword.

It was his destiny to succeed where so many others failed. Caius Marius had the intelligence, the military acumen, and above all, the tenacity to be a winner. There was no doubt the people knew he was the man to save the Republic.[13]

It is axiomatic that good fortune is often worth the equivalent of a strong division to the commander. Even Marius might never have been able to turn the tide and solve Rome's dilemma in the north if the Cimbri had not wandered capriciously to the west and the Teutones, just as aimlessly, had not simply drifted about Gaul after Arausio.[14] This reprieve gave Rome a breathing spell and provided Marius the time he needed to prepare for the inevitable assault from the unpredictable barbarians. Not until the year 102 did the Cimbri and the Teutones unite and point themselves toward Rome. But, by this time Marius was prepared and ready to cope with the threat.

Earlier, at the time of his first consulship, Marius had left P. Rutilus Rufus in Italy to continue the military reforms which Marius himself had designed. Rutilus recruited a new army and supervised its training in sword drill under the discerning eyes of professional gladiators.[15] Possibly in 107 when he built his new army after being assigned the consular province of Numidia or perhaps in 104, when he returned from Africa as the victor over Jugurtha, Marius

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[13]Plutarch, Marius, XII, 1-5; Florus, Epitome, I, xxxvii, 5; Napoleon III, Julius Caesar, v. I, p. 252; Velleius Paterculus, Compendium of the History of Rome, translated by John Selby Watson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1894), II, XII, 4-5.

[14]Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 1-3.

[15]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 459-461; Kildahl, Marius, p. 102.

again shortened the gladius to improve its effectiveness. This modification also permitted more Roman troops to be in action at any point in the line. Capable authorities have indicated that this single innovation was as important to the development of Roman military technology as the invention of the breechloading rifle was for modern warfare.[16]

Marius' army in Africa had been a mixed force. Volunteers shared duties with veterans from Metellus' forces who had been recruited in the ancient manner through the Comitia Centuriata. Thus Marius had the opportunity for close range observation of the performance from both conscript and volunteer soldiers. He was fully aware of the more efficient and soldierly performance of the volunteer who fought for reward, not patriotism. Marius was completely dissatisfied with the potential of the combined force. For these reasons Marius wanted an army composed entirely of volunteers for the forthcoming struggle in Gaul. He undoubtedly reasoned that these soldiers would serve cheerfully, campaign effectively, and give him their undivided loyalty. Such an army waited for him in Italy. It had been recruited and trained by Rutilius. Marius did not need to take his African veterans to Gaul. He simply accepted the command of any army which was eager to fight for Marius and for Rome.[17] There were those, mostly from the old aristocracy, who thought Marius probably wished the first more than the latter.

Romans must have seen the day Marius accepted his new command as

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[16]Kildahl, Marius, pp. 102-103.

[17]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 456-460; Kildahl, Marius, p. 103; Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 1-6; Napoleon III, Julius Caesar, v. I, p. 253.

an auspicious event. The soldiers probably sensed the excitement of serving under a great and fortunate commander. The populus must have viewed the heroic officer as their savior from the barbarian threat. Still, Marius could not have avoided realizing the burden he carried. He could, as had his predecessors, meet with disaster if he miscalculated. His men and the Roman throng regarded him as invincible, but fortune and the crowd are often fickle followers. Then too, Marius was not a favorite of the aristocratic class, which still smarted as a group from his insults to Metellus and to the Senate. Would factions of this class thwart him just when he was riding the crest of his popularity?

Regardless of the animosity and ill will of the senatorial class, for the next five years the people faithfully re-elected Marius to the consulship and he repaid them with a resounding victory over the barbarians. Marius moved against the Germans with the complete love and faith of his legions and the fervent prayers of a devoted populus.[18]

Marius and his forces entered southern Gaul in early 104. Time was on the Roman side. Each day the inevitable confrontation with the barbarians was delayed served only to improve Marius' position as a commander. During the next two years he kept a watchful eye on the enemy and established the principles upon which were founded the later reputation of the Roman army: discipline, industry, military

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[18]Plutarch, Marius XIV, 2-3; Velleius Paterculus, Compendium, II, xii; Florus, Epitome, I, xxxvii; Dio Cassius, Roman History, XXVII, 1-2.

prowess, and engineering skill.[19]

The two year interlude preceding the fateful clashes with the intruders gave Marius the time to complete extensive civil projects and to perfect his military reforms. Marius must have had many men skilled in civil engineering, for his legions completed roads, retaining walls, bridges, irrigations systems, harbors and aquaducts as part of their training during the sojourn in Gaul. It is reasonable that these facilities were built with an eye to the commercial benefits derived from expanded market areas. Marius' earlier experience as a publicani, an exploiter of Spanish mineral wealth, and as an investor gave him the eye for such evaluation of military projects.[20] These projects undoubtedly profited the equites and perhaps were even instigated by them. This is a reasonable speculation, for Marius shared both sympathy and a common background with the equites. Evidence of this relationship may be deduced from the construction of a complete harbor facility, known as the fossa Mariana, at Massilia.[21] These works apparently had a permanance which belied their use for

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[19]Plutarch, Marius, XV, 1-3; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 443-445; Abbott, Roman Political Institutions, p. 100; Edwards, Appendix A in Caesar, The Gallic War, translated by H. J. Edwards (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1952).

[20]Kildahl, Marius, pp. 104, 106-107; Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 8, indicates Marius had his men build a great canal because "the men had nothing else to do." This canal provided easier access to the river mouth and to unloading facilities for the ships. The ancient and less modern writers seem to have failed to grasp an understanding of Marius' economic activities. More modern biographers stress his endeavors as a publicanus, as an exploiter of mineral wealth, and as a commercial investor. This thesis chooses to speculate on Marius' commercial link with the trader class and to postulate that his port program at Massilia was for commercial development as much as for military logistics.

[21]Plutarch, Marius, XV, 1-3; Kildahl, Marius, pp. 106-107.

limited military purposes, in fact, Marius' name is still displayed on maps to identify channel-work in the Rhone estuary.

Marius made significant alterations in the format of the Roman army during this interim — changes so fundamental that the influence of the optimates, who had heretofore almost controlled the nature of Roman militarism, was depreciated almost completely in the field of military direction.[22] Marius made the army and its commanders almost totally dependent on the services of the centurion. These officers of the maneuver elements of the cohortes were charged with greater responsibility and now worked more closely with their superiors. Marius deliberately let it be known to all through his studied partiality and support of the centurions that these new types of Roman officers had his blessing and were extensions of his personal authority. From this time the combat responsibilities and direct influence on the troops by the military tribunes and politically appointed legati waned, and they were relegated to staff and planning duties.[23] Now the professional centurion became the most effective combat officers of the army. There was thus less use for the scion of aristocracy in the new professional army.

Marius completed the process of making the cohort the tactical unit to replace the maniple, which had proven too small. The maniple remained in the legion, each of its cohorts having three maniples of two centuries or ordines. He standardized weapons and armament and replaced a variety of items with uniform equipment furnished by the

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[22] Edwards, Appendix A; Ferrero, Decline of Rome, pp. 73-77; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 456-461; Kildahl, Marius, p. 105.

[23] Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 456-461.

state. Each soldier carried the short sword and at least one javelin. The three lines of attack, later used by Caesar as part of his tactics, were stabilized and accepted as a tactical strategem by the army of Caius Marius.[24] Marius welded the concepts of efficient equipment, volunteer soldiers, sound tactical organization, and a professional officer corps into the best infantry units the world had seen by that day.

Marius understood so completely his function as a commander that he instinctively sensed the emotional needs of his army as fully as he knew its physical needs. Morale and identification, a "sense" of belonging, are counterpart to discipline and effectiveness in a military unit. Marius introduced the eagle as the official insignia of the legion to provide unit identification and personal pride to the individual legionnaire.[25] The eagle was mounted to a standard carried by the primapilus, or his delegate known as the aquilifer, and preceded the legion on the march or into battle. Each of the legions was given a special name so its veterans could have a specific identification in memory of their service. Designations such as Victrix (victory), Augusta (Imperial), or Ferrata (Iron Legion) were the source of as much pride to the Roman veteran as a division designation for today's soldier. These legions gave each cohort (roughly equivalent to a modern battalion) the right to its own signum, or official standard. These were usually bronze replicas of animals fastened to a standard carried by an honored soldier.

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[24]Edwards, Appendix A.

[25]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 459-460.

Marius' diligent activity bore fruit. In 102 his scouts reported from their reconaissance in Gaul that the barbarians appeared to be making preparations for a move into Italy. The tedium, frustration, and rancor from two years of patient preparation gave Marius and Rome a fighting force which, by all the augury at Marius' command, was destined to defeat the barbarians and save Rome where the others had failed ignominiously. Martha, Marius Syrian oracle, may well have been used by the shrewd consul for his own purposes for, she often foretold of Roman victories when good news was otherwise lacking.[26] Nonetheless, Marius had in fact forged a fighting machine from the Roman proletarii — an army which would restore Rome's sagging prestige in the field.

Fortunately for Marius, and for Rome, the barbarians split into three columns to allow them to invade Italy by separate routes. This strategem was obviously designed to force a corresponding split of the defensive forces as well. The Teutones with their newly acquired allies, the Ambrones, aimed for Liguria and Etruria via the Maritime Alps in the northwest. The Cimbri chose to drive southward through the present Brenner Pass to the Po valley. The Tigurini would invade Italy from the Julian Alps. This barbarian strategem allowed Marius to consider three distinct threats and to evaluate each separately. In this manner Marius was able carefully to select the most favorable

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[26]Plutarch, Marius, XVII, 1-6.

course of action.[27]

Marius chose to face the Teutones and Ambrones first, since he believed them the greatest threat. They might, if they broke through into Italy, influence the Ligurians who were suspected of disloyalty, gain the open assistance of the slaves on the great latifundia established in Etruria, and destroy Roman colonies or commercial facilities if they rampaged through southern Gaul. Marius chose, therefore, to keep his command in southeastern Gaul, for he deemed it imperative that the barbarians be denied entry into Liguria. Cisalpina was densely inhabited by loyal Italians who were less inclined to assist a foreign invader. Marius therefore elected to have Catalus engage the Cimbri, throw his own force against the Teutones and the Ambrones, and to gamble that the Tigurini could be safely avoided until either of the greater threats was obviated.[28]

Marius' multi-faceted genius and his disciplined, motivated legions provided him the fundamental equipment needed for a very successful campaign. By the year 101 he had decisively defeated the last of the German threats to Rome and blunted for some time to come the barbarian arrow seemingly always pointed to the heartland of Italy

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[27]Plutarch, Marius, XV, 4-5, does not give consideration to the Tigurini as a separate threat. Florus, Epitome, I, xxxviii, 7, refers specifically to three detachments and III, iii, 1, relates the routes by which the Germans assaulted Italy in three bodies; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, makes reference to only two thrusts against Italy, but he puts the Tigurini in the eastern Alps after the defeat of the Cimbri; Williams, Historians History, p. 385, indicates the Tigurini were not in the engagement against Marius and Catalus.

[28]Kildahl, Marius, pp. 107-108.

and the Republic.[29] The various skirmishes and the several battles are certainly of historic interest, but only the last engagement with the Cimbri at Campi Raudi in 101 is of significant concern to this paper.

At about the same time as Marius' defeat of the Teutones and Ambrones at Aquae Sextiae, word came that the forces of Catalus had been severely beaten by the Cimbri on the Adige River. Worse still, the plains north of the Po River were now in Cimbri hands. Fortunately, the unpredictable Cimbri did not press their advantage, but chose instead to luxuriate in new found comfort through the winter. Marius seized the advantage and moved his forces to the Raudine plain by the way of the capital, where he refused a triumph until he had fully subdued the barbarians.[30] Thus, in the spring of 101 the Romans, 50,000 strong under the command of the consul Marius and the proconsul Catalus, crossed the Po to march against the Cimbri who had moved to the headwaters for easier crossing on the road to Rome.[31]

Marius' final victory at Campi Raudi was marred by the intransigence of Catalus and his legate, Sulla, who had been in command at the center of the Roman thrust against the Cimbri. These officers sought full recognition for Catalus as the "victor" at Campi Raudi in view of the extremely heavy fighting endured by Catalus' legions. This move

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[29] Ferrero, Decline of Rome, pp. 76-77; Plutarch, Marius, XXVII, 5-6; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 449.

[30] Livy, Summaries, LXVIII; Plutarch, Marius, XXIV, 1-2; Florus, Epitome, I, xxxviii, 13-15.

[31] Livy, Summaries, LXVII, indicates 140,000 barbarians killed at Campi Raudi and 60,000 captured there. Even allowing for panegyric exageration the size of the engagement was impressive; Plutarch, Marius; XXIV, 1-2; XXV, 4-5, credits Marius with 32,000 troops and Catalus with 20,000.

may have been dictated by the necessity for the optimates to secure a measure of glory to offset the opprobrium their class had suffered for earlier defeats as well as for that of Catalus at the Adige.[32] Marius would pass a share, but not all, of the victory to his colleague; Catalus refused to accept a half-loaf and insisted to his death that the full credit belonged to him. Though Marius insisted Rome honor Catalus as well as himself, perhaps to appease the optimates or possibly because Catalus was a co-commander, it is significant that Marius returned to Rome from the wars in 101 with two more avowed enemies in the ranks of the senatorial class. It is also important that Marius had been forced to accept Catalus as a compromise candidate for consul in 102 as a concession to the aristocracy. Further, Marius was facing a return to civil life. He probably feared the necessity of facing the public in order to gain approval of legislation to make good his promises of rewards for his veterans.[33]

The senate might question Marius' intentions, the old aristocracy could derogate his honor, but there was no doubt in the minds of his soldiers about his place in their hearts. The soldiers of the legions went so far as to compare Marius to Dionysus, the mythical Greek God who had carried civilization to India, and the patron of male fertility, wine and drama. Flattery often produces heady aromas and Marius was susceptible. He reacted to this adulation by playing the part, thus apparently the first Roman to claim a family connection with a deity; a practice which proliferated later in the last century of the

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[32]Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 7; XXVII, 4-6; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 450-451.

[33]Plutarch, Marius, XXVII, 5-6; XXVIII, 1-5.

Republic.[34]

The honor pressed on Marius for his deliverance of the Republic from the barbarian threat was almost unprecedented in Roman history to this time. This extreme adulation might well have been responsible for a marked change in Marius' personality. To all this the Senate added a declaration which made him the "third founder" of Rome after Romulus and Camillus.[35] Mommsen records the multitudes looking to Marius as "a third Romulus and a second Camillus."[36]

It became more than a mere mortal could bear. Marius insisted that he drink from a sacred cup dedicated to Dionysus and his Spartan simplicity gave way to progressively more ostentatious behavior. His signet ring was now of gold rather than iron, two great houses were built to satisfy his new and sumptuous life-style, and special devices were emblazoned on his shield to advertise his exploits.[37]

Marius' victories had been made possible by the common people and these victories were thus defeats of the aristocratic government as well as of the Cimbri and Teutones. The restored oligarchy, established on the downfall of Caius Gracchus twenty years earlier,

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[34]Oman, Seven Roman Statesmen, pp. 97-99; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 455-456; Kildahl, Marius, p. 124.

[35]Livy, Summaries, LXVII, indicates even the "leading men" who hated Marius now admitted he had preserved the state. Much of the recognition given by the senatorial class may be attributed to political awareness on the part of the optimates." Plutarch, Marius, XXVII, 5; Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 455.

[36]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 455.

[37]Kildahl, Marius, p. 125.

had been endured and cursed; still no avenging force had risen to restore the program the Gracchi had begun. It seemed that Rome expected more than being able to cultivate its fields without fear or to trade beyond the Alps in safety. Rome sensed that the business of the Gracchi was unfinished and many asked if the rough farmer from Arpinum was the one who would complete the building the Gracchi had started.[38] Marius entered civil life in 101 with the question unanswered.

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[38] Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 450-451.

CHAPTER VI

THE EAGLE FALLS

When Caius Marius returned to Rome after the battle at Campi Raudi he carried more than the weight of his armor. Pressing on his mind were the problems of peace which followed so closely on the heels of the worries of war. Marius had promised his volunteers a suitable reward in return for their duty as soldiers in his legions. This included more than simply their pay and a share of the wartime booty; Marius had pledged that these new soldiers would also receive land for settlement at the end of their service. This pledge was significant to the future of the state.[1]

The yeoman of the Republic had previously furnished the bulk of the troops for the Roman army. He saw his military service as nothing but a burden to be undertaken for the common good. But, it was otherwise for the enlisted proletarian. Not only was he dependent solely on his pay while in the army, but, lacking social security beyond the simplest dole, he would be reluctant to leave military service unless his civil status was provided for. Marius did not

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[1]Theodor Mommsen, The History of Rome, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), p. 461. Sallust, The War With Jugurtha, translated by J. C. Rolfe (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1965), LXXXVI, 4, sets the idea that Marius deliberately sought power in the state by his comment ". . . to one who aspires to power the poorest man is the most helpful, since he has no regard for property, having none, and considers anything honorable for which he receives pay."

realize it at the time but the abolition of the census qualification and the promise of land in return for service laid the foundations of the personally recruited professional army so characteristic of the late Republic.[2]

The volunteer, a concept totally new in Roman military recruitment, after this point looked to the commander to insure that these promises were kept, rather than to depend on the state, which was remote to the soldier. Thus, Marius' veterans became little more than a pressure group which demanded from him its due after peace returned to Rome. Caius Marius was also aware of the demands of the equites, who looked to improvement of their economic position because of the Roman successes in war. Indicative of Marius' awareness of this clamor from the members of his own class was the construction of the fossa Mariana. This commercial and maritime complex at the mouth of the Rhone River was intended to extend Roman trade into Gaul when peace came. It was a prototype of the public works projects which the Romans would thereafter leave in the wake of conquest.[3] The fossa Mariana may be regarded as a trade for the support of the equites who seemed to foster wars of conquest for the interests of commercial and economic growth.

The burden on Marius was increased by the need to insure the continuing allegiance of the assembly, which was the final arbiter for

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[2]E. Badian, Foreign Clientelae (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 197, indicates that Marius', in abolishing the census qualification for military service, must have suspected "the significance of the revolutionary opportunities for personal power thus opened up to the military leader born without hereditary clientelae." He bases this on Sallust (86,3).

[3]Plutarch, Marius, in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), XV, 3; Phillip A. Kildahl, Caius Marius (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 107.

any program Marius introduced. Marius was obviously aware of the demands of the Italian allies. They had supported him faithfully and wanted enfranchisement in return.[4] The populares had given their political support unstintingly to Caius Marius, and they were the key to his military and political successes. The "popular party" thus also had a claim on Marius, for it became his source of power as he demobilized his army.[5] On the other extreme, the old aristocracy and the senatorial factions had regarded Marius as an antagonist since his attempt to "democratize" the voting laws in his first political office. These groups were a constant threat to any civil effort Marius designed, particularly if the allies, the proletarii, or the veterans were the beneficiaries.

It seems axiomatic from the trace of history that many commanders who lead well in the din of battle are often prone to fail miserably when called on to cope with the subtle complexities of peacetime politics. War calls for decisiveness in action, confidence in personal ability, arrogance in approach and most important to the general, the creation of an image — that of a successful and fortunate officer. Politics, on the other hand, is inclined toward leadership attitudes which are often antithetical to those of the successful military commander. Political leadership demands concensus more often than autocratic command, compromise is more to be sought after than giving arbitrary decision, and bold action is often less desirable than sensible vacillation.

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[4]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 468-473.

[5]Ibid., pp. 464-465.

Marius had trouble adjusting to the requirements of the political environment in Rome when he returned to civilian life after the Cimbric War. Plutarch says "In confronting a political crisis or the tumultuous throng, we are told, his ambition made him most timorous, and that undaunted firmness which he showed in battle forsook him when he faced the popular assemblies, so that he was disconcerted by the most ordinary praise or blame.[6]

The symbols of military leadership often become tarnished from the associations demanded of the military hero by the rigors of politics. Loyalty, the hallmark of the military man, often blinds the militarist-turned-politician to the true needs of his constituency; the aspirations of his close followers and confidents seem to be ascendant over those of the public. Marius was exposed to the physical and mental problems of the soldier-politician from the day he accepted his first consulship and the responsibility for the security of the Republic. From that day Marius felt the various pressures of civil leadership, though he was away from Rome much of the time and forced to use agents to represent him in the city.

Marius had several fundamental problems which strongly influenced his political career after 101. The most important matter to be considered was the settlement of his veterans. The proletarian volunteers of Marius' legions were the precursors of the later imperial-style soldier.[7] This legionnaire believed his loyalty was properly to his leader, not the state, and served only for the rewards of a

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[6]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 2.

[7]Badian, Clientelae, p. 197.

successful campaign. He came from non-propertied classes which later would represent the real power in military affairs, now that recruitment no longer was under the auspices of the comitia centuriata.[8] Marius and his successors came to realize that the veterans and their source, the masses, must be placated constantly to insure continuing support for social and political programs. Marius had to provide lands for his veterans to avoid a broken pledge.

A serious concern for Marius was the aspirations of the equites. This group gave Marius the balance of power he needed to overcome the opposition of the optimates. It provided the critical factor to satisfy his ambition for the respected position of a princeps civitatus.[9] Thus Marius was constrained to consider equite demands for both economic and political favor. The equites supported Marius' leadership in return for such political actions as that of C Servilius Glaucia, who restored their control of the courts which Caepio had divorced from the equestrians about 104.[10]

The allies represented a third concern for Marius once peace had returned to the Republic. Their demands were simple, they wanted the franchise. They had probably taken heart in their quest for Roman citizenship when Marius saw fit to give it to "as many as a thousand" men of Camerinum for bravery in the service of Rome.[11] They naturally believed they deserved this consideration also.

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[8]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 461-162.

[9]Badian, Clientelae, p. 203.

[10]Ibid., p. 202.

[11]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 2-5.

Marius knew that the plebians of Rome had not varied their demands since the days of the Gracchi. They wanted a liberal dole. This group became important to Marius for the same reason the enlisted proletarian had. With the demobilization of his army in 101, Marius was forced to the banner of the popular party for the power base he needed to retain his consulship past that year.[12]

Marius was forced to look to the assistance of political agents to serve him in Rome as early as the time of the Jugurthine War. His political problems required almost constant attention after his return from Africa at the end of that war. Marius was only one man and the task was great enough to require more. This became the greatest of Marius' political problems. He desperately needed the services of a competent political agent. Unfortunately, he could not select qualified men for civil affairs with the same ease and confidence he had selected capable military aides.[13] Marius instinctively chose able military assistants, often picking optimates for his subcommanders.

The ability to choose wisely in one's field of expertise does not presuppose the same talent in other areas. This fact was obvious in 105 when Marius entrusted the guidance of his political fortunes to L. Apuleius Saturninus.[14] This Roman was of good praetorian family

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[12]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 464.

[13]Kildahl, Marius, p. 126.

[14]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 466; Kildahl, Marius, p. 107, indicates Marius and Saturninus held a similar antagonism for the optimates, but he also credits Saturninus with traits in common with Sulla, such as ruthlessness, which the tribune did not reveal openly; Saturninus is charged with exploiting "his rapport with Marius."

but had been removed as Quaestor Ostiensis because of inordinate rises in the cost of corn at that port. His reaction to this was to develop a strong animosity for the senatorial class, whom he believed had purposely acted against him. He turned to the populares as a vehicle for his revenge, quickly becoming a leader of this group.[15] It was doubtful that an embittered politician could ever have been the wisest choice for Marius' political deputy.

Saturninus thus acted as Marius' principle political agent after their initial association in 105, apparently at the behest of the consul who desired re-election but was necessarily absent from the city. It was thereafter primarily Saturninus' efforts which were responsible for Marius' election to successive, though unconstitutional, consulships with such ease.[16] Marius indeed welcomed this assistance and Saturninus blithely exploited his relationship to his own ends.

Saturninus' exploitation of Marius for his personal ends may be considered moot by many, but Mommsen, among others, saw Saturninus as "a street-demagogue, capable but recklessly violent, and filled with passion rather than with the aims of a statesman."[17] Marius, according to the same source, should have endeavored to "avail himself of the dangerous help of such associates only in moderation, and to convince all and sundry that they were destined not to rule, but to serve him as the ruler."[18]

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[15]John Dickinson, Death of a Republic (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963), p. 56; Mommsen, History of Rome, p. 466.

[16]Kildahl, Marius, p. 107.

[17]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 472.

[18]Ibid., pp. 472-473.

Saturninus secured legislation during 103 to provide some African land to fulfill Marius' promise to his Jugurthine War veterans. This action, Marius had determined, was vital to any extension of his career. It would serve to attract volunteers to his legions and followers for his political programs as well. This legislation undoubtedly made it easier for Saturninus to secure re-election for Marius in 103 and 102, though the consul could not campaign actively in his own interest.

Unexpectedly, however, opposition did develop in 102 and Marius was required to return briefly to Rome as a result. The lull in operations in Gaul, partly due to Marius' desire to improve the caliber of his legions before seeking a showdown and partly to the vacillation of the Gallic barbarians who wandered aimlessly, gave the optimates an opportunity to reassert a strong political opposition. With some of the fear of the barbarians abating through military inactivity, the senatorial order had been able to do some extensive retrenching in Rome. Marius was forced to action. Not only was his consulship expiring but his colleague had passed away during this term of office. The fact that Marius would leave his army in command of a legate, Manius Aquillius, to come to Rome was an indication of his concern in this election and for the optimate resurgence.[19]

Marius agreed to throw his support to the candidacy of Q. Lutatius Catalus who had been previously rejected three times for the consulship.[20] Catalus, according to Plutarch, was a man who "was

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[19]Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 7-8; Kildahl, Marius, p. 107.

[20]Ibid.

esteemed by the nobility and not disliked by the common people."[21] Marius may have supported Catalus for reasons of a distant relationship through marriage but this seems a tenuous reason under the circumstances. Plutarch implies that Marius' gesture of support for Catalus was an attempt to conciliate the optimates which appears a better reason. Badian astutely comments in this regard that Marius was aiming for a distinguished clientela and raised Catalus to an "unhoped-for consulship" and shared his Cimbric triumph with him, but to no avail. Catalus would not acknowledge indebtedness to the novus homo, and Marius attempted rapprochment with the nobiles foundered on this fact.[22] This compromise did reveal, however, a strong desire on Marius' part to retain the military authority in Gaul in his hands.

Though the senatorial political factions had suffered severely because of optimate failures in the field against the Africans and the barbarians, it was a mistake to scorn them in 102. It was obvious that the aristocratic leadership had been affected by the corruption and incompetency of its recent candidates. Nonetheless, it was still only a partial eclipse of the optimates that had restored populare prestige in Roman politics. This fact becomes obvious in view of the necessity for Marius, though his popularity had eroded only slightly in the long delay in reckoning with the barbarians, to accept Catalus as his colleague in compromise with the optimates.

The conclusion of the Cimbric War placed Marius in a position that was enviable but yet unenvied at the same time. He was regarded as one

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[21] Plutarch, Marius, XIV, 7.

[22] E. Badian, "From the Gracchi to Sulla," Historia, XI, 1962, p. 221.

of Rome's greatest heroes, he was beloved by citizen and legionnaire alike, and he was adored by the Romans in a manner usually reserved for the gods. He seemed destined for such adulation that retirement at this point would have seen him more favorably enshrined in the annals of Rome. Unfortunately, his forthright nature and his personal inclination for the position of leader, in conjunction with a sense of responsibility to his veterans, led to a very different future for Marius. He chose instead to accept the responsibility for initiating political programs to implement his promises to the veterans. This created civil problems which eventually eclipsed his military reputation.[23]

Marius' personal attitude toward civil law and Roman politics is best revealed in a quote attributed to him as the "articifer of the age which followed the Gracchi."[24] Marius had found it expedient for military reasons to provide illegally the franchise to two cohortes of Italian allies after the battle of Campi Raudi.[25] When asked about this civil violation, Marius replied; "Inter arma silent leges," thus indicating that when fighting begins the law is silent.[26]

The political thought of the period had become colored by events and circumstances of Roman life. Marius entered the civil arena at a time when the mores maiorum had been almost surgically incised from Roman politics by the cutting edges of war, inflation, and the influx

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[23]Plutarch, Marius, XXXVIII, 2-5.

[24]Stewart Perowne, Death of the Roman Republic (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968), p. 80.

[25]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 462.

[26]Perowne, Roman Republic, p. 80.

of enervating eastern moralities. The exposure to African intrigue, exemplified by Jugurtha, heightened the struggle of the optimates and equites for control over the judiciary and foreign policy. This friction, combined with the traditional animosity of the optimate and populare, resulted in such tendentiousness that the attitude of the period could well be expressed — "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."

Marius discharged his army from state service and entered essentially on the course established by Caius Gracchus for gaining supremacy in the state by controlling its constitutional magistracies.[27] Without his veterans at his back, Marius found it necessary to look to that amorphous group often called the popular party. Though his allies came from the leaders of this amalgam of proletarian, equestrian, and Italian groups, the victorious general did not possess the means or the temperament for the command of the streets. Marius, rejected throughout his career by the aristocracy, saw his vindication in a struggle between optimate and populare, the latter victoriously carrying his colors. Marius' followers gave the outward appearance of a factio, but this was only a facade for a loose confederation of dissidents and demagogues.

Sallust recounts of Marius starting to build his political organization at least as early as the first open break with Metellus in Africa. Marius solicited support from the legions of Metellus, the equites Romani under Metellus and in the trading class of Africa, the plebeians Romani, and even from Gauda who was a Numidian pretender and

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[27]Mommsen, History of Rome, p. 464.

of the family of Masinissa.[28] Badian shows the plebeians and the equites uniting against the senatorial governmental party under the engineering of Marius' lieutenant, Saturninus, in the trials of Caepio and Mallius for the shame of Arausio. Marius by his relationship with Saturninus received titular leadership of this alliance and added by his own lustre the support of the Italian allies. Though Marius picked up the support of some senatorial and aristocratic families, agrestes, and new citizens, there were few established family names to lend the aura of stability and respect which a faction needed for success in Rome.[29] Significantly, though there was a long list of Marian supporters, the veterans were the decisive element in the mix.[30] Saturninus depended mostly on this group for voting power in the comitia tributa.[31] Marius and his lieutenants, it seems, looked to Roman politics as a bi-polar contest. They did not, apparently, sense the nature of the factional system which gave the optimates so much continuity in power in a state whose system was under attack and due to change drastically.

Marius was one of Rome's wealthiest citizens by c. 100 — so wealthy that Plutarch credits him with spending lavishly to buy the consulship for himself and for his friend, L. Valerius Flaccus, against

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[28]Sallust, Jugurtha, LXIV-LXV.

[29]Badian, Clientelae, pp. 195-203.

[30]Ibid., p. 203.

[31]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 5.

the candidacy of his old enemy Metellus Numidicus.[32] Marius apparently intended to spend a year of authority without the challenge of a hostile colleague, particularly a hostile Metellus. He was successful in this but it proved later to have been a move he should have avoided. As Plutarch records, Marius ". . . obtained as his colleague in the consulship Valerius Flaccus, who was more a servant than a colleague." The consequence was that he came into collision with all the aristocrats.[33]

In the year 100, Marius was consul with a partisan colleague, Glaucia was praetor, and Saturninus tribune. These men actually headed the government, similar in many ways to the later triumvirate.[34]

Now was the time to shape any policy that Marius wished to establish for Rome.[35] He was at the apex of his power, he had a patrician wife and palatial homes, he had agents to do his bidding and the masses of veterans to support them, he was the richest man in Rome and he held almost absolute power. What did he do? He did nothing! He had no plan, and simply allowed his agents to continue to handle the affairs of state, while he suffered the twin pains of

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[32]Plutarch, Marius, XXXVIII, 3-6; Kildahl, Marius, p. 126, makes a strong point of Marius' wealth. He attributes to Marius the status of "one of the wealthiest men, if not the wealthiest, in Rome." Marius is recorded as furnishing bullion to the treasury for coinage from his mines in the vercellae and Spain. He received booty from his campains in excess of a million dollars, he received fortunes from his investments, and he owned armories at Ostia and Puteoli which produced swords and shields for the army. In addition to all this, he was a tax farmer.

[33]Plutarch, Marius, XXVIII, 3-5.

[34]Badian, Clientelae, p. 203.

[35]Ibid., Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, pp. 467-472.

doubt and indecision. Now he could not decide whether he was for the nobles whom he did not love, or the people whom he almost despised. Marius shuttled between parties and factions, trying to placate each one, but he lost his honor and the respect of his fellow citizens in the bargain.[36]

Saturninus believed himself secure in his authority and Marius gave him no cause to doubt his freedom to operate. He thus proposed to revive the laws of Caius Gracchus to distribute subsidized grain. The cost was reduced from about 6 _asses_ for a _modius_ of grain to the nominal charge of 5/6 of an _as_.[37] This caused an immediate reaction from the _optimates_ who feared anything which might increase the numbers of the Roman _proletarii_. Nonetheless, Saturninus pushed this act through the Tribal Assembly against the wishes of the aristocracy. He also added to their irritation by proposing to grant free holdings for veterans in the upper Po valley. These lands, taken from the original holders, would be distributed to the veterans of the Cimbric Wars.[38] Jugurthine War veterans would be similarly rewarded with acreage in Sicily, Macedonia, and Greece.[39] Thus it grew to seem that Saturninus, not the generals, was re-settling the army.

These proposals to reward the veterans alienated the Senate. As Scipio had seen, the patron of half the empire could be helpless in the Senate if it appears the patron sought _auctoritas_ above that of

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[36]Kildahl, _Marius_, p. 129.

[37]Mommsen, _History of Rome_, v. III, p. 470.

[38]Kildahl, _Marius_, p. 128.

[39]Badian, _Clientelae_, p. 203.

the rest and desired the respect of the princeps vir.[40] Glaucia increased the fever by displeasing the equites in seeking to grant citizenship to the Italians, who then could move against publicani and officials by pressing charges of extortion if they so desired. His plan to double the penalty under the Calpurnian law for restitution of property to the accuser in such actions, simply added more fuel to the fire.[41] The plebs resented this law also since an increase of citizens would dilute their power in the comitia tributa and Roman politics. The optimates traditionally fought such legislation and did so this time also.

Even though some action to pacify the Italians was truly necessary, it appeared the plebs and nobles would defeat the law. Possibly at the behest of Marius, who still harbored strong animosity for Metellus Numidicus, Saturninus added a provision which required each senator to swear support of the new laws or to pay a fine of twenty talents.[42] Metellus refused to take this oath and failed to pay the fine, hence Marius' old enemy was in a position to be forced into exile from the city. Plutarch indicated a strong support for Metellus at the time of his exile, however that worthy noble "would not allow a faction to be raised on his account, and departed from the city, following the dictates of prudence."[43] The interdiction of Metellus from fire, water, and shelter brought the animosities of the

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[40] Ibid., p. 204.

[41] Kildahl, Marius, p. 128.

[42] Ibid.

[43] Plutarch, Marius, XXIX, 5-6.

senatorial factions toward Marius to unprecedented pulsation.

Saturninus went too far. Openly revealing his own objectives, he assumed authority traditionally reserved only for dictators. He ruled without recourse to the Senate, patronized foreigners, discriminated against citizens and accepted the salutations of those who called him "king". Under his leadership government in Rome degenerated into mob rule and there was evidence the optimates and the equites were reconciling against Marius.[44] Marius' deputies established convincing evidence that he was guilty of vacillation, that he did not govern, and that he did not direct those who governed in his place.

The assassination of Caius Memmius, Glaucia's opponent for the consulship for the year 99, was the final act which brought the two Marian agents to their end. This act also revealed Marius' political helplessness to the world. Evidence against Saturninus and Glaucia regarding the murder of Memmius must have been incontrovertible for the Senate immediately placed the onus for action on Marius by declaring the senatus consultum ultimum against Saturninus. The Senate tried to rouse the consul to action, even to the extent of visiting his home to incite him to action, but he only vacillated.[45] It was not until Marius realized that the senatorial factions and the equestrians were combining to give strength to this frustration that Marius deigned to act. Marius belatedly asserted his consular authority by leading some of his soldiers to the forum, forcing the insurgents to take refuge

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[44]G. P. Baker, Sulla the Fortunate: The Great Dictator (New York: Barnes and Noble, Inc., 1967), p. 143; Lucius Annaeus Florus, Epitome of Roman History, translated by John Selby Watson (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1894), II, iv, 1-6.

[45]Plutarch, Marius, XXX, 2-3.

on the Capitol. There they were forced to surrender when the water conduits were closed to them. Marius was unable to keep his guarantee that the dissidents were safe on the "public faith". He watched helplessly as the mob destroyed his lieutenants, who were in their robes of office and under the consul's protection.

Marius emerged from this affair shorn of his influence and prestige. Forgotten now were his great victories and his glorious triumphs. Apprehensive of defeat and further humiliation, he withdrew his name from the candidacy for the office of censor, his ultimate ambition. Thus the most prestigious office in Rome was denied to him. His power was gone, his words meant little, and his support became the kiss of political death. The crowning blow to his dignity was delivered by the Senate, which ignored his protests and voted to recall Metellus Numidicus from exile. The equites had lost confidence in Marius and returned to the influence of the optimates. Thus the Marian machine began to crumble.

Marius, by his own admission, was now regarded as "a sword which rusts in time of peace." With the soldier's tendency to see simple solutions for complex problems, Marius believed his position could be restored only if he could regain the adulation of the crowd. Marius looked to war as the only vehicle by which he could gain his lost prestige. He had vowed to make fitting sacrifices to the mother goddess Cybele, and now seized on this vow as an excuse to absent himself from Rome. To avoid the humiliation of watching the restoration of Metellus to his former position in Rome, Marius went eastward. There he hoped to foment war with Mithridates by working on hostilities which Saturninus had already provoked. Marius the proud hero was re-

duced to paltry, beggarly machinations to restore the honor he had lost through his own political ineptitude. Marius would trigger a war for his country if it could be the means to restore his position in Rome.[46] How far the eagle had fallen in just two short years!

Though Marius lingered for fifteen tortuous years past his zenith, the victory and triumph over the Cimbris, he was quickly put "out to pasture" by his contemporaries as too old and too undependable to serve the state. He saw adulation turn to hatred, public acclaim change into invective, gratitude replaced by ingratitude, and shame grow in place of honor. The causes for this tremendous change in Marius' public stature must be looked for in the errors he committed in the field of politics not in his career as a Roman general.

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[46]Plutarch, Marius, XXXI, 1-3.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

Marius may or may not have had a political philosophy. It is extremely difficult to label him "democrat" simply because he depended on a close association with the populace for his political strength. Marius was not included with those who played the old aristocrat's game — he had offended them much too often for that. Marius did not seem to have been a part of a senatorial faction since his divorce from the Metelli in 107. It is not apparent that his loyalties were consistently with the _equites_, though he classed himself with them. Marius _raison d'etre_ seems best described by Badian, who says:

> The aims of Marius — like those of Pompey after him — were more limited: the saviour of his country wanted to be _princeps civitatis_, accepted by the nobility as an equal and surpassing them in _auctoritas_.[1]

Marius failed to understand the workings of the political system in Rome and the maelstrom of Roman civil life. The astute military hero, the genius who designed the structure which later lifted Caesar to the dictatorship, was actually inadequate when he had to fight his battles in the environment of the assembly and the Senate rather

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[1] E. Badian, _Foreign Clientelae_ (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1958), p. 203.

than at the helm of his legions.[2]

Marius did not establish a political policy that was either definite or consistent. He trusted agents to formulate his programs and he was betrayed. Marius had returned from the wars to a state that was in political ferment. The situation in Rome was complex and demanded the close attention of its leaders.[3] Marius had possessed the imperium consulare continuously since 104. However, due to the military situation, Marius was understandably remote from the political scene. It was necessary that he depend on a political agent and he selected Apulius Saturninus, who had Marius' complete trust at the outset. Saturninus, in turn, had secured the services of Servilius

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[2]Theodor Mommsen, The History of Rome, Vol. III (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1905), pp. 474-479, indicates his opinion of Marius' political ability in referring to the matter of the oath which caused Metellus' banishment; "The consequences of this behavior — stupid beyond parallel — on the part of the celebrated general soon developed themselves." The "behavior" referred to was that of Marius' continued ambiguity in his political attitude; Guglielmo Ferrero, The Greatness and Decline of Rome, translated by Alfred E. Zimmern (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1910), pp. 86-87, records Marius as typical of the blunt militarist who fails the subtleties of politics; Plutarch, Marius in Plutarch's Lives, translated by Bernadotte Perrin (Loeb Classical Library, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1968), XXVIII, 2, apparently did not have a high regard for Marius' political abilities. Among other comments, he said " . . . since he wished to be a compliant man of the people when he was naturally at farthest remove from this." Plutarch also indicated Marius undaunted firmness, so well displayed in battle, forsook him in the popular assemblies.

[3]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 462, said of the period: "It was a sad and troubled time. Men had peace, but they were not glad of having it; the state of things was not now such as it had formerly been after the first mighty onset of the men of the north on Rome, when as soon as the crisis was over, all energies were roused anew . . ." Mommsen believed the times demanded a strong and capable leader in Rome.

Glaucia and these two established Marius' public program for him.[4] As Kildahl points out, not until almost a year after his return from the Cimbric War did Marius realize his lieutenants were marplots.

Marius was no match for demagogues, scheming equites, dissident nobiles, and grasping proles. Though consul for the sixth time in 100, an unprecedented thing in Rome, he was no statesman. His political abilities were certainly limited and it seems he was "used" by those who would prostitute his image to their own designs.[5] Mommsen credits Saturninus' undiminished hatred for the optimates after his expulsion as quaestor and his willingness to "descend into the street and to refute his antagonists with blows instead of words" as the influences which took him beyond Marius' political objectives. Badian infers that Saturninus' proposals went well beyond providing for the veterans and may have deliberately put him in a position where he, Saturninus, was settling the soldiers, not the general.[6]

Strangely, though Marius was no politician, it was he who moulded the course of Roman politics for the balance of his century. Marius built the army upon whose shields the empire would rise. It was this military reorganization which frightened the optimates. At the same time it angered them to see their control of military policy dissipate.

At the time of his sixth consulship Marius probably wished to

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[4]Phillip A. Kildahl, Caius Marius (New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968), p. 126.

[5]Stewart Perowne, Death of the Roman Republic (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1968), p. 80.

[6]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 467; E. Badian, Clientelae, pp. 204-205.

establish himself in a lavish villa and play the part of the "elder statesman." His agents were to perform all the irksome and tedious tasks he did not wish for himself.[7] Perhaps, if he had selected his political agents with more care and solicitude for the welfare of the state, he might have been more successful. Unfortunately, the habit of meticulous attention to detail, so typical of his military campaigns, was no longer his practice. He ignored his responsibilities and his agents failed completely to act in either his best interest or that of the state.[8]

Marius failed in the political arena because of his inability to be as decisive there as he had been in the army. He never positively identified himself with any political philosophy. He chose to stand aloof from politics, hence his followers and his antagonists alike could only assume his position and guess at his orientation. Metellus Numidicus, a sworn enemy left no doubt that he was of the senatorial party. Saturninus and Glaucia were easily identified with the _populares_ and were recognized as anti-aristocratic, in the image of the Gracchi. Marius, however, never really chose to announce his political beliefs.

Caius Marius failed to learn the basic lesson that consistency is as vital to an effective public official as compromise is to the successful politician. From his first office, the tribunate in 119, to his consulship prior to his self-imposed exile in 99, Marius was

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[7]Kildahl, _Marius_, p. 127.

[8]Mommsen, _History of Rome_, v. III, p. 474; Kildahl, _Marius_, p. 126.

inconsistent and, worse still, vacillating in his public program.[9] Significantly, this inconsistency ultimately was directly responsible for the reuniting of the optimate and equite classes against Marius. It was this coalition which sealed his political doom because it removed the factor which had always acted as a "balance of power" for the Marian grouping.[10]

Marius greatest failure was his inability to understand the nature of Roman factional politics. Marius seemed to view Rome's politics in the nature of a "two party" system (the optimates opposed to the populares). This was a situation which did not exist in reality. Rome was governed in this period by a Senate which responded to the proding of various political factions whose power waxed and waned as the fortunes of the patronus prospered or declined. The history of the Metelli reveals the resilience of this faction, particularly by the resurgence of Numidicus coincidental to the fall of Marius from power. This and the other similar factions in Rome show the efficacy of this system which cut across class, economic, and political lines.

The inclusion of a broad spectrum into such political groupings

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[9]During his tenure as a tribune Marius alienated the aristocracy by introducing a law concerning the mode of voting which lessened the power of the nobles; in the same tribunate he opposed the passage of a law to liberalize the distribution of grain and this offended the proletarians. Plutarch believed Marius thus won "an equal place in the esteem of both parties" (Plutarch, Marius, IV, 3.). Marius wobbled around a desire to placate the optimates, shown by his willingness to accept Catalus as a compromise candidate for co-consul. Nonetheless, in his sixth consulship he turned his agents loose with a free hand against the optimates, and then turned on his agents under pressure from the Senate and the equites (Plutarch Marius, XXX.).

[10]Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 473.

gave them vibrancy in leadership and wide option for action. This almost insured political strength in a continuum. Significantly, if a faction failed by reason of the inadequacies of the patronus, there was always the possibility of a new personality who could rise to leadership on his own patrocinium. Marius failed to accept this concept and chose rather to build a machine based on the physical threat of his veterans, the implied threat of the masses, and the economic threat of the equites, all wielded at the direction of radical demagogues. Nonetheless, when the die was cast, Marius found himself too imbued with the old Roman virtues to allow the state to fall — he chose the ruination of his own political ambitions instead.

Marius' political strength faded rapidly when his coalition disintegrated over the issue of Saturninus.[11] Marius' failure to reconcile himself with the Senate and to include the senatorial class in his political plans caused him to accept political assistants with an anti-senatorial bias. His failure to placate the Metelli, to seek the support of their class, and to realize the Senate was still vital in Roman political matters caused Marius to go too far — and to fall just as far.

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[11] Mommsen, History of Rome, v. III, p. 477. In referring to the aftermath of the assassination of Saturninus, Mommsen says "A more pitiful position can hardly be conceived than that occupied by the hero of Aquae and Vercellae after such a disaster — all the more pitiful, because people could not but compare it with the lustre which only a few months before surrounded the same man."

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