



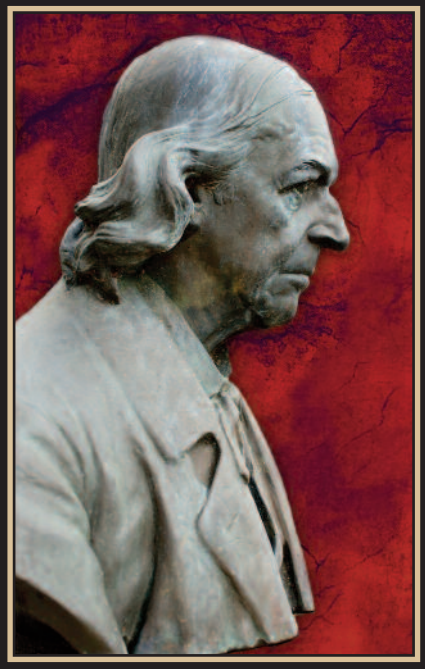
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The HISTORY of ROME V
The Establishment of the Military Monarchy ★



Table of Contents & Maps



The History of Rome, Book Five, brings to a conclusion this grandest of historical narratives. It begins with the death of Sulla and ends with the accession to power of the greatest and most fascinating Roman of them all, Gaius Julius Caesar. As was shown in earlier volumes, the rapid expansion of Rome after the war with Hannibal, its ongoing century-long foreign and civil conflicts, its reliance on mass slavery, a subversive Hellenic culture, and the consequent economic, racial, and social transformations, worked to disrupt first the ancient Latin order in Rome and its environs, and subsequently, the social order of all Italy itself. By the time of Caesar, there were few of the original Latins remaining in Rome beyond the small number of the wealthiest, a fact which did not escape the notice of prominent Romans in the following years, among whom were Augustus, the historian

Tacitus, and the poet Juvenal. Julius Caesar was the first statesman to recognize the implications of this demographic and social upheaval. There were few actual Latin inhabitants of Rome in Caesar's army apart from some of the officers. Most of his infantry were Celts from Northern Italy (Cisalpine Gaul), while his cavalry consisted of German and Gallic mercenaries. With barely 50,000 soldiers, that he trained himself, Julius Caesar conquered the ferocious Gauls and Germans, and brought to heel an area larger than the states of Texas and Oklahoma combined.

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The cover image is a depiction of the newly rebuilt Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill as it would have appeared viewed from a villa on the Palatine Hill around 44 B.C. The original temple, which was dedicated in 509 B.C., burned down in 83 B.C. Its replacement was dedicated in 69 B.C. The portrait bust of Theodor Mommsen in the insert above is by Karl Pracht in Garding, Germany, Mommsen's native city.

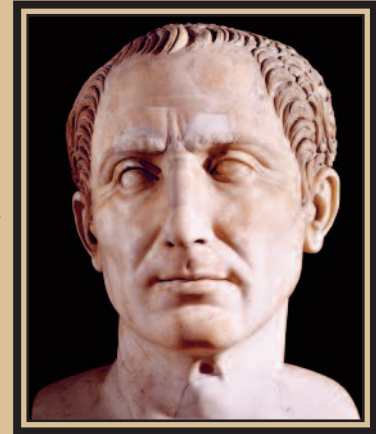
*B*ook Five begins with the aristocrat Sulla's premature and unexpected death. Now leaderless, the ascendent Optimates (the aristocratic faction) suddenly found themselves on the defensive by a newly reinvigorated party of senatorial democrats, the Populares. Debt had never been greater than in 63 B.C. because the previous decades of war had led to an era of economic downturn across the Italian countryside. Numerous plebeian farmers lost their farms and were forced to move to the city, where they swelled the numbers of the urban rabble. Sulla's veterans were in bad economic straits as well. Desiring to regain their fortunes, they were prepared to march to war under the banner of the "next" Sulla. Thus, many of the plebs, including Sulla's veterans and the urban rabble, eagerly flocked to a democrat senator named Catiline and supported him in the hope of social reform and debt relief. Eventually, the political struggle broke out into violent street battles, and Catiline himself was driven from Rome by Cicero. A significant battle between the senate's forces and those of the Catilinarians followed in which as many as three thousand of the anti-senatorial faction were killed...to the last man. Caesar, who was in Spain during this period, and who had been sympathetic to the Populares, was rumored to have supported Catiline.

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*B*oth senatorial parties now lacked competent leadership. They no longer had a Marius or Sulla with military experience, nor a Gracchus with popular charisma, to call upon. While the aristocratic faction's power simply withered as a result of their cluelessness and paralysis, the democrats turned to the young, promising general, Pompey, fresh from his successful campaign in Spain. Pompey initially allied himself with the Populares, to their relief. He was promptly (and illegally) given pro-consular powers along with control over an immense budget, a large fleet, and an army with which to defeat the scourge of Mediterranean piracy. He succeeded brilliantly, returned to Italy, and disbanded his army amidst universal acclaim. Political instability soon returned, though, as social unrest had become the disagreeable norm. And with the rise of the incomparable Julius Caesar and his Gallic victories, the common people finally found the leader they were waiting for...and it wasn't Pompey.

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Subsequently, Pompey, Cicero, and even Cato the Younger were forced over to the aristocratic faction of the Optimates in order to oppose Caesar in the senate. By accepting the aristocratic leadership, Pompey vaulted to the head of a party dedicated to the material interests of Rome's wealthy bankers, merchants, and landed gentry who looked favorably on a dictatorship which protected their interests. Followed by Caesar's conquest of Gaul, the display of his ingenious executive skills, and his advocacy of public-minded reform, Caesar emerged as the necessary and welcomed leader in the movement toward resolution of the sorry and bloody debacle of debt, aristocratic privilege, and civil strife. Civil war became inevitable once Pompey had accepted the leadership of the Optimates. Because the oligarchic faction was determined to resist economic and civil reform, they were cleverly maneuvered by Caesar into open opposition to the will of the people. Pompey initiated the war, but Caesar was too quick for him, and prevailed in the subsequent bloody struggle.



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The victory of Caesar ushered in an incredible series of reforms which were to shape Roman affairs for the next 500 years. Caesar's dictatorship became the model of a military monarchy which guided the Roman Empire until its demise. Sadly, the dictatorship of Caesar represented the end of the 500-year-old Roman Republic, although its demise was necessary and inevitable. To this day, it is the greatest story ever told, and in the hands of Theodor Mommsen it is a masterpiece for the ages.



The marble portrait bust of Julius Caesar in the insert above was created during his lifetime.

BOOK FIVE

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The Establishment of the Military Monarchy

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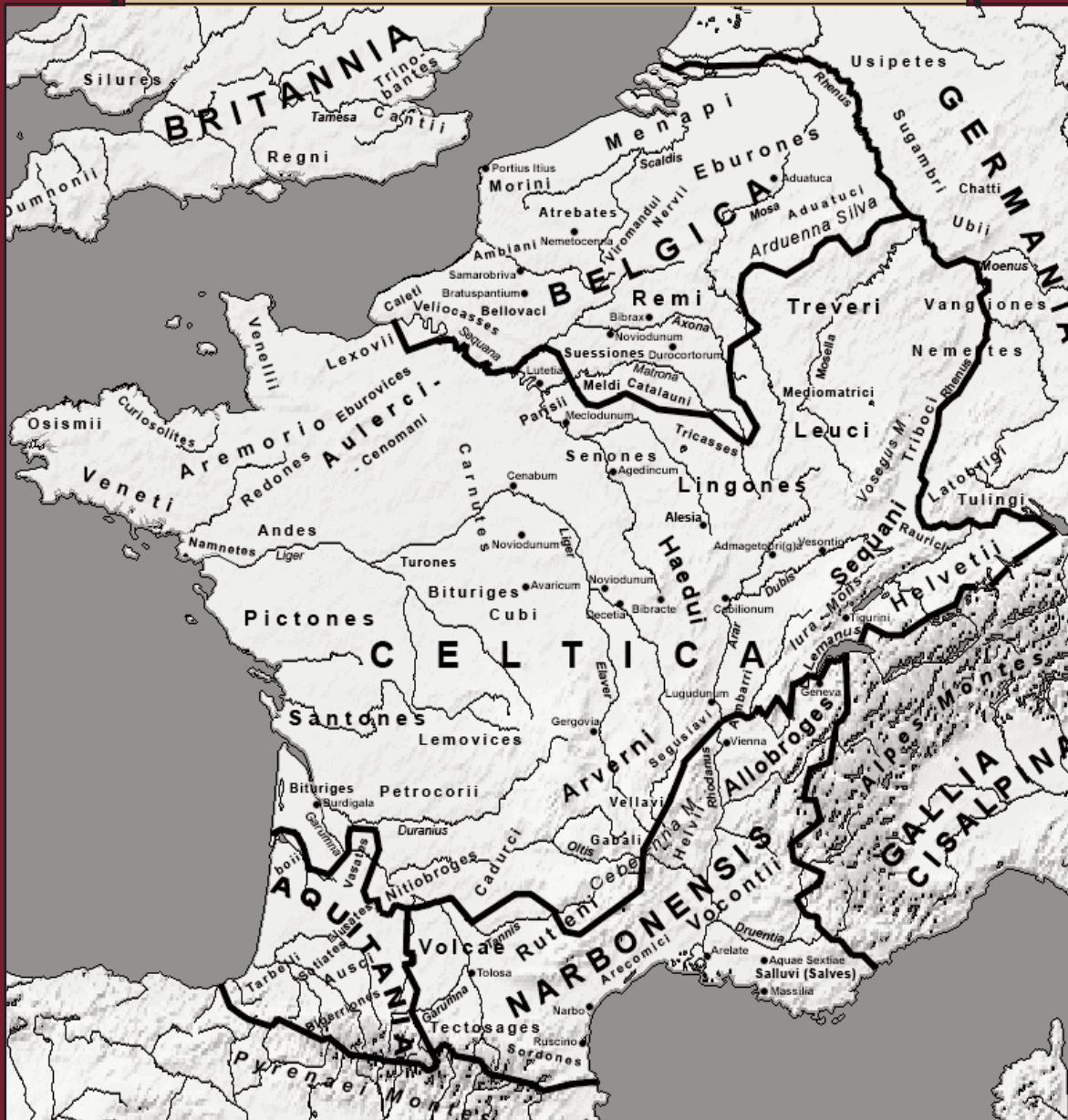
The Establishment of the Military Monarchy

Maps

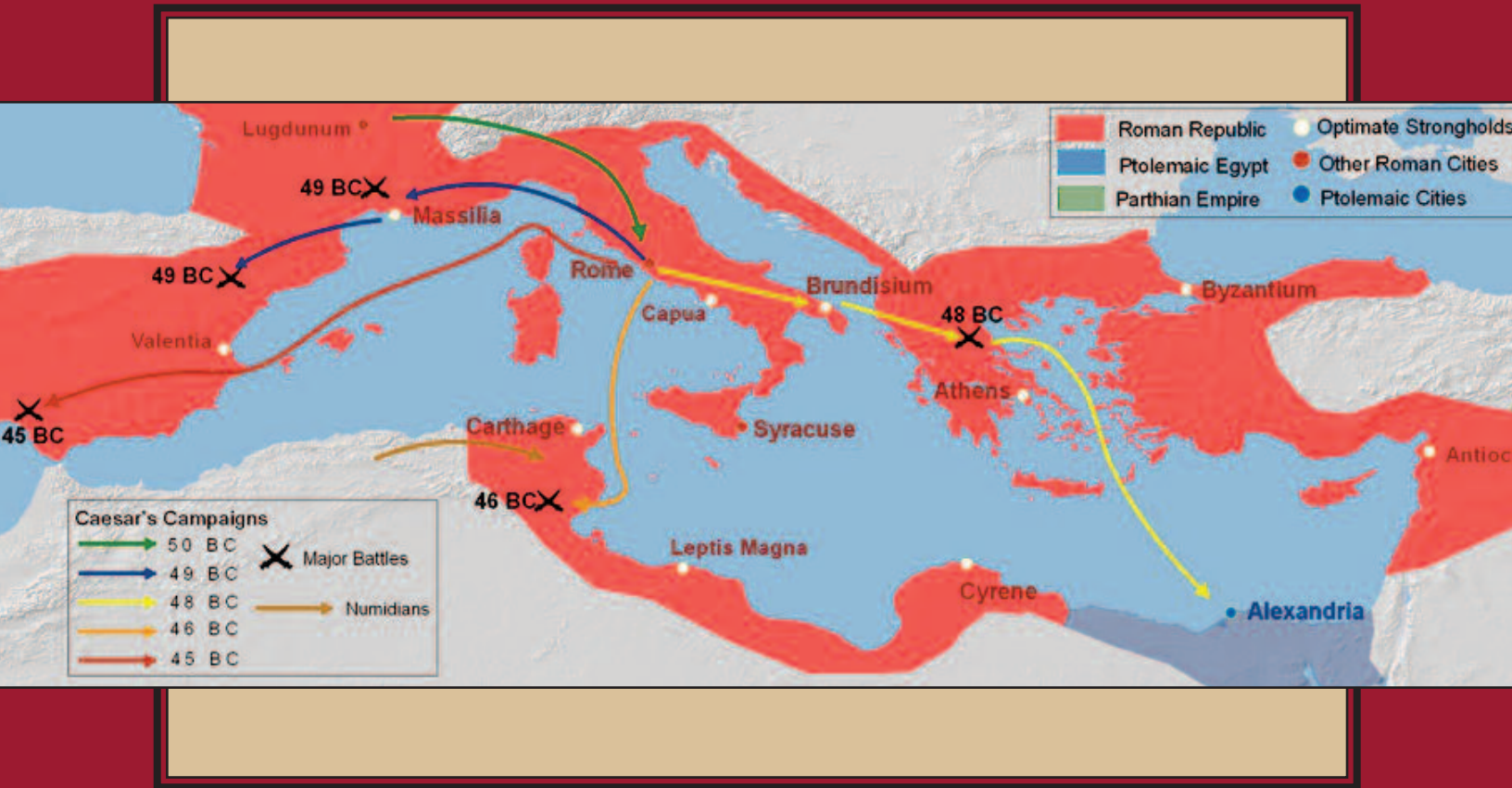
1. The Roman Empire at the death of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C.
2. Gaul showing the names of all the cities and tribes mentioned in *Comentarii de Bello Gallico* by Julius Caesar.
3. Map showing the movements of Caesar and battles fought in the Gallic Wars, 58 – 50 B.C.
4. The Great Roman Civil War, 49 – 45 B.C.











Coin of 78 BC, during
the building of the 2nd
Temple of Jupiter



Gilded bronze
columns from the
Temple of Jupiter
Optimus Maximus.
Ancient Roman doors
from the Curia Julia,
moved in 1660 to
become the main
door of the Basilica of
St. John Lateran
(Rome).



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