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The Provinces of the Roman Empire, Book 8, Theodor Mommsen, Ares Publishers, Incorporated, 1974, , . .

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The Provinces of the Roman Empire: From Caesar to Diocletian, Volume 2 From Caesar to Diocletian, Theodore Mommsen, William Purdie Dickson, Francis Haverfield, 1886, History, 384 pages. .

Spain under the Roman empire , Edmund Spenser Bouchier, 1914, , 200 pages. .

Roman imperial civilisation , Harold Mattingly, 1957, , 312 pages. .

Caesar: Politician and Statesman , Matthias Gelzer, 1968, Biography & Autobiography, 359 pages. In 1912 a young scholar published a slim volume investigating the social structure of the late Roman

Republic, which was in due course to transform the study of Roman history

The Message of Greek Art , Harry Huntington Powers, 1913, Art, Classical, 336 pages. .

The History of Rome (German: Römische Geschichte) is a multi-volume history of ancient Rome written by Theodor Mommsen (1817–1903). Originally published by Reimer & Hirzel, Leipzig, as three volumes during 1854-1856, the work dealt with the Roman Republic. A subsequent book was issued which concerned the provinces of the Roman Empire. Recently published was a further book on the Empire, reconstructed from lecture notes. The initial three volumes won widespread acclaim upon publication; indeed, "The Roman History made Mommsen famous in a day." [1] Still read and qualifiedly cited, it is the prolific Mommsen's most well-known work. The work was specifically cited when Mommsen was awarded the Nobel Prize. [2]

Writing the History followed Mommsen's earlier achievements in the study of ancient Rome. He had not himself designed to write a history, but the opportunity presented itself in 1850 while at the University of Leipzig where Mommsen was a thirty-two-year-old special Professor of Law. "Invited to give a public lecture while at Leipzig, I delivered an address on the Gracchi. Reimer and Hirzel, the publishers, were present, and two days later they asked me to write a Roman History for their series." [3] Having been dismissed from the University for revolutionary activities, Mommsen would accept the publishing proposal "partly for my livelihood, and partly because the work greatly appeals to me." [4]

The publishers specified that the work focus on events and circumstances, and avoid discussing the scholarly process. While they certainly wanted a well-respected academic work to fit their acclaimed series on history, Karl Reimer and Solomon Hirzel were also seeking one with literary merit that would be accessible and appeal to the educated public. As a scholar Mommsen was an active party in recent advances made in ancient Roman studies. Yet Mommsen also had some experience as a journalist. He might well manage to become a popular academic author. [5] "It is high time for such a work", Mommsen wrote to an associate in Roman studies, "it is more than ever necessary to present to a wider audience the results of our researches." [6] [7]

Originally the History was conceived as a five volume work, spanning Roman history from its inception to the emperor Diocletian (284-305). The first three volumes, which covered the origin of Rome through the fall of the Republic, ending with the reforms of Julius Caesar, were published in 1854, 1855, and 1856, as the Römische Geschichte. [8]

These three volumes did indeed become popular, very popular. "Their success was immediate." Here "a professional scholar" presented his readers with a prose that was of "such vigor and life, such grasp of detail combined with such vision, such self-confident mastery of a vast field of learning." Especially in Mommsen's third volume, as the narrative told of how the political crisis in the Roman Republic came to its final climax, "he wrote with a fire of imagination and emotion almost unknown in a professional history. Here was scientific learning with the stylistic vigor of a novel." [9]

A planned fourth volume covering Roman history under the Empire was delayed pending Mommsen's completion of a then 15-volume work on Roman inscriptions, which required his services as researcher, writer, and editor, occupying Mommsen for many years. After repeated delays the projected fourth volume was eventually abandoned, or at least not completed; an early manuscript may have been lost in a fire. [12]

In 1885, however, Mommsen had ready another work on ancient Rome, later translated into English as The Provinces of the Roman Empire. In Germany it was published as the fifth volume of his Römische Geschichte. [13] In thirteen chapters it describes the different imperial provinces, each as a stand-alone subject. Here there was no running narration of major Roman political events, often dramatic, as was the case in Mommsen's popular chronological telling of his earlier volumes.

In 1992, a reconstruction of Mommsen's missing "fourth volume" on the Empire was issued. [14] Its

sources were lesson notes taken by two related students, Sebastian Hensel (father) and Paul Hensel (son), of lectures delivered by Prof. Mommsen during 1882-1886 regarding his courses on imperial Roman History, given at the University of Berlin. These student notes were 'discovered' in 1980 at a used bookshop in Nuremberg by Alexander Demandt, then edited by Barbara Demandt and Alexander Demandt; the resulting German text was published in 1992.[15] The Hensel family was distinguished, the son becoming a philosophy professor, the father writing a family history (1879) with regard to his mother's brother the composer Felix Mendelssohn, and the paternal grandfather being a Prussian court painter.[16]

The contemporary English translations were the work of Dr. William Purdie Dickson, a divinity professor at the University of Glasgow. The first three German volumes (which contained five 'books') were published during 1862 to 1866 by R. Bentley & Son, London.[17] Over several decades Prof. Dickson prepared further English editions of this translation, keeping pace with Mommsen's revisions in German.[18] All told, close to a hundred editions and reprints of the English translation have been published.[19][20]

In 1958 selections from the final two 'books' of the three-volume History were prepared by Dero A. Saunders and John H. Collins for a shorter English version.[21] The content was chosen to highlight Mommsen's telling of the social-political struggles over several generations leading to the fall of the Republic.[22] Provided with new annotations and a revised translation, the book presents an abridgment revealing the historical chronology. With rigor Mommsen is shown narrating the grave political drama and illuminating its implications; the book closes with his lengthy description of the new order of government adumbrated by Julius Caesar.[23]

With exceptions, Mommsen in his *Römische Geschichte* (1854–1856) narrates a straight chronology of historic events and circumstances. Often strongly worded, he carefully describes the political acts taken by the protagonists, demonstrates the immediate results, draws implications for the future, while shedding light on the evolving society that surround them. The chronology of the contents of his five 'books' (in his first three volumes) are in brief:

The broad strokes of Mommsen's long, sometimes intense narrative of the Roman Republic were summarized at the 1902 award of the Nobel Prize in a speech given by the secretary of the Swedish Academy.[26] At the beginning, the strength of Rome derived from the health of its families, e.g., a Roman's obedience to the state was associated with obedience of son to father.[27] From here Mommsen skillfully unrolls the huge canvas of Rome's long development from rural town to world capital. An early source of stability and effectiveness was the stubbornly preserved constitution; e.g., the reformed Senate composed of patricians and plebians generally handled public affairs of the city-state in an honorable manner.[28]

Yet the great expansion of Rome and the consequent transformations worked to subvert the ancient order. Gradually, older institutions grew incapable of effectively meeting new and challenging circumstances, of performing the required civic tasks.[29] The purported sovereignty of the *comitia* (people's assembly) became only a fiction, which might be exploited by demagogues for their own purposes.[30] In the Senate, the old aristocratic oligarchy began to become corrupted by the enormous wealth derived from military conquest and its aftermath;[31] it no longer served well its functional purpose, it failed to meet new demands placed on Rome, and its members would selfishly seek to preserve inherited prerogatives against legitimate challenge and transition.[32] A frequently un-patriotic capitalism abused its power in politics and by irresponsible speculation. The free peasantry[33] became squeezed by the competing demands of powerful interests; accordingly its numbers began to dwindle, which eventually led to a restructuring of Army recruitment, and later resulted in disastrous consequences for the entire commonwealth.[34]

Moreover the annual change of consuls (the two Roman chief executives) began to adversely impact the consistent management of its armed forces, and to weaken their effectiveness, especially in the era following the Punic Wars. Eventually it led to the prolongation of military commands in the field; hence, Roman army generals became increasingly independent, and they led soldiers personally loyal to them.[35] These military leaders began to acquire the ability to rule better than

the ineffective civil institutions. In short, the civil power's political capabilities were not commensurate with the actual needs of the Roman state. As Rome's strength and reach increased, the political situation developed in which an absolute command structure imposed by military leaders at the top might, in the long run, in many cases be more successful and cause less chaos and hardship to the citizenry than the corrupt and incompetent rule by the oligarchy of quarreling old families who de facto controlled the government.[36] Such was his purpose when the conservative Optimate, the noble and Roman general Sulla (138-78), seized state power by military force; yet he sought without permanent success to restore the Senate nobility to its former power.[37]

Political instability soon returned, social unrest being the disagreeable norm. The conservative renovation of the Republic's institutions was abandoned and taken apart. Eventually the decisive civil war victory of the incomparable Julius Caesar (100-44), followed by his executive mastery and public-minded reforms, appeared as the necessary and welcome step forward toward resolution of the sorry and bloody debacle at Rome. This, in the dramatic narrative of Theodore Mommsen.[38][39][40]

Mommsen's penultimate chapter provides an outline of the 'nation building' program begun by Caesar following his victory. Institutions were reformed, the many regions ruled by Rome became more unified in design, as if prepared for a future Empire which would endure for centuries; this, during Caesar's last five and a half years alive. His work at statecraft included the following: the slow pacification of party strife, nonetheless with republican opposition latent and episodically expressed; his assumption of the title Imperator (refusing the crown, yet continuing since 49 as dictator), with reversion of the Senate to an advisory council, and the popular comitia as a compliant legislature, although law might be made by his edicts alone; his assumption of authority over tax and treasury, over provincial governors, and over the capital; supreme jurisdiction (trial and appellate) over the continuing republican legal system, with the judex being selected among senators or equites, yet criminal courts remained corrupted by factional infighting; supreme command over the decayed Roman army, which was reorganized and which remained under civilian control; reform of government finance, of budgeting re income and expense, and of corn distribution; cultivation of civil peace in Rome by control of criminal "clubs", by new city police, and by public building projects.[41] Impossible problems: widespread slavery, disappearance of family farms, extravagance and immorality of the wealthy, dire poverty, speculation, debt; Caesar's reforms: favoring families, against absentees, restricting luxuries, debt relief (but not cancellation as demanded by populares), personal bankruptcy for unpayable debt replacing enslavement by creditors, usury laws, road building, distribution of public agricultural lands in a moderated Gracchan fashion, and new municipal law. Mommsen writes, "[W]e may well conclude that Caesar with his reforms came as near to the measure of what was possible as it was given to a statesman and a Roman to come." [42]

Regarding the Roman provinces, former misrule and financial plundering is described, committed by Roman government agents and Roman merchants; Caesar's reforms replaced the quasi-independent Roman governors with those selected by the Imperator and closely supervised, with reduction in taxes; provincial oppression by private concerns was found more difficult to arrest. Abatement of the prior popular notion of the provinces as "country estates" to be worked or exploited for Rome's benefit. Favors granted Jews; Latin colonies continue. Cultural joining of Latins and Hellenes; "Italy was converted from the mistress of subject peoples into the mother of the renovated Italo-Hellenic nation." Census of the Mediterranean population under Rome taken; popular religion left free of additional state norms. Continuing development of the Praetor's Edict, and plans for a codification of law. Roman coinage, weights and measures reformed; creation of the Julian Calendar. "The rapidity and self-precision with which the plan was executed prove that it had been long meditated thoroughly and all its parts settled in detail", Mommsen comments. "[T]his was probably the meaning of the words which were heard to fall from him--that he had 'lived enough'." [43][44]

Mommsen's expertise in Roman studies was acknowledged by his peers as being both wide and deep, e.g., his direction of the ancient Latin inscriptions project,[45] his work on ancient dialects of Italy,[46] the journal he began devoted to Roman coinage,[47] his multivolume Staatsrecht on the

long history of constitutional law at Rome,[48][49] his volumes on Roman criminal law, the *Strafrecht*.^[50] His bibliography lists 1500 works.^{[51][52]}

The Provinces of the Roman Empire (1885, 1886) contains thirteen chapters, namely: Northern Italy, Spain, Gaul, Germany, Britain, the Danube, Greece, Asia Minor, the Euphrates and Parthia, Syria and the Nabataeans, Judaea, Egypt, and the Africa provinces. Generally, each chapter describes the economic geography of a region and its people, before addressing its Imperial regime. Regarding the North, military administration is often stressed; while for the East, the culture and history.

A quarter of the way into his short "Introduction" to the *Provinces* Mommsen comments on the decline of Rome, the capital city: "The Roman state of this epoch resembles a mighty tree, the main stem of which, in the course of its decay, is surrounded by vigorous offshoots pushing their way upward."^[53] These shoots being the provinces he here describes.

This rescued work contains a great wealth of material, in which one follows in the footsteps of a master historian. Yet, perhaps because of its nature as reconstructed student lecture notes, it more often lacks the fine points of literary composition and style, and of course the narrative drive of the original three volumes.^[55] Nonetheless it is well to remember that the students involved here in taking the lecture notes were themselves quite accomplished people, and one listener and recorder was already a mature father.^[56]

Several writers have remarked on Mommsen's ability to interpret personality and character.^{[57][58]} The following highlights are drawn from Mommsen's renderings of figures of ancient Rome, namely: Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, the Gracchi brothers, Marius, Drusus, Sulla, Pompey, Cato, Caesar, and Cicero.

Hannibal Barca (247-183). Of Carthage, not of Rome, in fact a sworn enemy of Rome, as the Roman people became acquainted with him. No Punic writer has left us an account of him, but only his 'enemies' whether Greek or Roman. Mommsen tells us, "the Romans charged him with cruelty, the Carthaginians with covetousness." It is "true that he hated" and knew "how to hate" and that "a general who never fell short of money and stores can hardly have been less than covetous. But though anger and envy and meanness have written his history, they have not been able to mar the pure and noble image which it presents." His father Hamilcar served Carthage as an army general; Hannibal's "youth had been spent in the camp." As a boy on horseback he'd become "a fearless rider at full speed." In his father's army he had performed "his first feats of arms under the paternal eye". In Hispania his father spent years building colonies for Carthage from which to attack Rome; but the son saw his father "fall in battle by his side." Under his brother-in-law Hasdrubal, Hannibal led cavalry with bravery and brilliance; then Hasdrubal was assassinated. By "the voice of his comrades" Hannibal at 29 years took command of the army. "[A]ll agree in this, that he combined in rare perfection discretion and enthusiasm, caution and energy." His "inventive craftiness" made him "fond of taking singular and unexpected routes; ambushes and stratagems of all sorts were familiar to him." He carefully studied the Roman character. "By an unrivalled system of espionage--he had regular spies even in Rome--he kept himself informed of the projects of his enemy." He was often seen in disguise. Yet nothing he did at war "may not be justified under the circumstances, and according to the international law, of the times." "The power which he wielded over men is shown by his incomparable control over an army of various nations and many tongues--an army which never in the worst of times mutinied against him." Following the war Hannibal the statesman served Carthage to reform the city-state's constitution; later as an exile he exercised influence in the eastern Mediterranean. "He was a great man; wherever he went, he riveted the eyes of all."^[59]

Scipio Africanus (235-183). His father a Roman general died at war in Hispania; years earlier his son Publius Cornelius Scipio (later Africanus) had saved his life. As then no one offered to succeed to his father's post, the son offered himself. The people's comitia accepted the son for the father, "all this made a wonderful and indelible impression on the citizens and farmers of Rome." Publius Scipio "himself enthusiastic" about others, accordingly "inspired enthusiasm." The Roman Senate acquiesced to the mere military tribune serving in place of a praetor or consul, i.e., his father. "He

was not one of the few who by their energy and iron will constrain the world to adopt and to move in new paths for centuries, or who at any rate grasp the reins of destiny for years till its wheels roll over them." Though he won battles and conquered nations, and became a prominent statesman at Rome, he was not an Alexander or a Caesar. "Yet a special charm lingers around the form of that graceful hero; it is surrounded, as if with a dazzling halo... in which Scipio with mingled credulity and adroitness always moved." His enthusiasm warmed the heart, but he did not forget the vulgar, nor fail to follow his calculations. "[N]ot naïve enough to share the belief of the multitude in his inspirations... yet in secret thoroughly persuaded that he was a man specially favored of the gods." He would accept merely to be an ordinary king, but yet the Republic's constitution applied even to heroes such as him. "[S]o confident of his own greatness that he knew nothing of envy or of hatred, [he] courteously acknowledged other men's merits, and compassionately forgave other men's faults." After his war-ending victory over Hannibal at Zama, he was called Africanus. He was an excellent army officer, a refined diplomat, an accomplished speaker, combining Hellenic culture with Roman. "He won the hearts of soldiers and of women, of his countrymen and of the Spaniards, of his rivals in the senate and of his greater Carthaginian antagonist. His name was soon on every one's lips, and his was the star which seemed destined to bring victory and peace to his country." Yet his nature seemed to contain "strange mixtures of genuine gold and glittering tinsel." It was said he set "the fashion to the nobility in arrogance, title-hunting, and client-making." In his politics Scipio Africanus "sought support for his personal and almost dynastic opposition to the senate in the multitude." No demagogue, however, he remained content to merely be "the first burgess of Rome".[60]

Tiberius Gracchus (163-133). His maternal grandfather was Scipio Africanus. His father Tiberius Gracchus Major was twice consul, a powerful man at his death in 150. The young widow Cornelia Africana "a highly cultivated and notable woman" declined marriage to an Egyptian king to raise her children. She was "a highly cultivated and notable woman".[61] Her eldest son Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus "in all his relations and views... belonged to the Scipionic circle" sharing its "refined and thorough culture" which was both Greek and Roman. Tiberius "was of a good and moral disposition, of gentle aspect and quiet bearing, apparently fitted for anything rather than for an agitator of the masses." At that time political reform was widely discussed among aristocrats; yet the senate always avoided it. Tiberius declared for reform. Perhaps he was personally motivated by an incident as questor with the Army on campaign in Hispania: there he had escaped a terrible ordeal because of his elite connections. Reformist ideals of this "young, upright and proud man" were nourished by Hellenic rhetoricians. "[W]hen his intentions became known... there was no want of approving voices, and many a public placard summoned the grandson of Africanus to think of the poor people and the deliverance of Italy." In 134 he became a tribune of the people. "The fearful consequences of the previous misgovernment, the political, military, economic, and moral decay of the burgesses, were just at that time naked and open to the eyes of all. ... So Gracchus immediately after entering on office, proposed the enactment of an agrarian law." The land reform was to benefit small holders, to restore prosperity to the "free farmers" of Italy; it concerned rural state lands de facto long held in the possession of wealthy families both of Rome and of Latin allies. His proposed law seemed to garner senate support, but it was effectively vetoed by another tribune acting on behalf of powerful Roman landowners; twice his bill was vetoed. Tiberius Gracchus then turned to the people's assembly, which deposed the offending tribune and itself passed the land reform law.[62]

"Rome about this period was governed by the senate. Anyone who carried a measure of administration against the majority of the senate made a revolution. It was revolution against the spirit of the constitution, when Gracchus submitted the domain question to the people; and revolution also against... the tribunician veto." Too, the people's assembly was a great tumultuous crowd and unfit to pass legislation. Yet senate governance had become so corrupt that a person who would replace it "might benefit the commonwealth more than he injured it. ¶ But such a bold player Tiberius Gracchus was not. He was a tolerably capable, thoroughly well-meaning, conservative patriot, who simply did not know what he was doing." Angry aristocrats from the senate caught and clubbed to death Gracchus; 300 other reformers died with him. The senate then closed ranks, saying that Tiberius Gracchus "had wished to seize the crown." [63]

Yet the land commission mandated by the reform law of Tiberius was allowed to meet and for

several years managed to substantially increase the number of small farmers who owned their own land. Scipio Aemilianus (184-129), an in-law and adopted grandson of Scipio Africanus and thus cousin to the Gracchi, played an ambiguous rôle. A good soldier, fine orator, trustworthy, and known for steadfast probity, his politics put him in between the aristocracy and the reformers. Against the oligarchy he brought the ballot to criminal proceedings before popular tribunals. Yet he mostly opposed land reforms; "rightly or wrongly, the remedy seemed to him worse than the disease." Eventually on behalf of allied Latin landowners he influenced the termination of the land commission. As a result he, too, was assassinated--probably by a land reformer.[64]

Gaius Marius (157-86). "Son of a poor day-labourer" in an Italian village, Marius was "reared at the plough". He joined the army as soon as he could. Noted for his ability and fine appearance, he served during campaigns in Hispania and by age 23 became an officer. Back home, he planned an army career, but regardless of merit he "could not attain those political offices, which alone led to the higher military posts, without wealth and without connections. The young officer acquired both by fortunate commercial speculations and by his union with a maiden of the ancient patrician clan of the Julii." In 115 he served as praetor and in 107 as consul. In Africa he then led an army; serving under him was Sulla, who captured Jugurtha which ended the war. Again Marius became consul, for an unprecedented four consecutive terms (104-101), during which in Germania he led an army to victory. "[A] brave and upright man, who administered justice impartially", he was "uncorruptable." "[A] skillful organizer... an able general, who kept the soldier under discipline [and] at the same time won his affections... [Marius] looked the enemy boldly in the face and joined issue with him at the proper time." Not a man of "eminent military capacity", he enjoyed "the reputation for such capacity." [66]

"[Marius took a place] of unparalleled honour among the consulars and the triumphators. But he was none the better fitted on that account for the brilliant circle. His voice remained harsh and loud, and his look wild, as if he still saw before him Libyans or Cimbrians, and not well-bred and perfumed colleagues. ... [H]is want of political culture was unpardonable... what was to be thought of a consul who was so ignorant of constitutional etiquette as to appear in triumphal costume in the senate! In other respects too the plebeian character clung to him. He was not merely--according to aristocratic phraseology--a poor man, but, what was worse, frugal, and a declared enemy of all bribery and corruption. After the manner of soldiers he was not nice, but was fond of his cups... he knew not the art of giving feasts, and kept a bad cook. It was likewise awkward that the consular understood nothing but Latin and declined conversation in Greek. ... Thus he remained throughout his life a countryman cast adrift among aristocrats." [67]

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