



**The Legislation of the Late Republic: some Neglected Evidence in the  
Historiography of the Fall of the Roman Republic**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>TITLE PAGE</b>	<b>I</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS</b>	<b>II</b>
<b>ABSTRACT</b>	<b>III</b>
<b>DECLARATION</b>	<b>IV</b>
<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>	<b>V</b>
<b>ABBREVIATIONS</b>	<b>VI</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>79 – 71: THE GHOSTS OF CIVIL WAR</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>70: ANNUS MIRABILIS</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>69 – 66: THE TRIBUNES</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>65 – 60: THE FACTIONS</b>	<b>80</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PRIMARY SOURCES</b>	<b>121</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SECONDARY SOURCES</b>	<b>124</b>

## ABSTRACT

The fall of the Roman Republic has attracted the attention of historians for the last two thousand years. It has been analyzed in many different ways and from many points of view in order to explain the causes of the destruction of a political system that had functioned reasonably well for centuries. This thesis looks primarily at Roman legislation (legislated and proposed laws as well as the edicts of the Senate) in the period between 79 and 60 BC. It tries to point out that these laws reveal the general historical and social context of the late Republic much better than the usual historiographic emphasis on the big conflicts of the big men. This thesis searches for the explanation of the causes and the consequences of individual laws, and attempts to determine the function and operation of the laws in the general context of the fall of the Republic. Emphasis is laid upon the joint attempts of Rome's lawgivers to achieve reform of the system, regardless of their political affiliations or ideology. This thesis also looks at the success and failure of these laws in dealing with individual problems such as violence, electoral corruption, the judicial system and so on. Attention is paid to the important role and complex interests of the Roman 'people' in the process of legislation and in individual laws. This thesis explores the connection between the weakening of the traditional mores of the Roman Republic in the late Republic and the destruction of law and order in society, which ultimately, in spite of the efforts of reforming legislators, led to the end of the Republic.

This work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text.

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## List of Abbreviations

- ANRW* – Aufstieg und Niedergang der Römischen Welt  
*CAH* – Cambridge Ancient History  
*CIL* – Corpus Inscriptionum Latinorum  
*CSCA* – Californian Studies in Classical Antiquity  
*RE* – Pauly-Wissowa Real-encyclopaedie der classischen  
Altertumswissenschaft  
*TAPA* – Transactions of the American Philological Association