

App. civ. 1, 34-38

Text Übersetzung:

(Übersetzung Horace White)

[34] [...] It began in this way. Fulvius Flaccus in his consulship first openly excited among the Italians the desire for Roman citizenship, so as to be partners in the hegemony instead of subjects. When he introduced this idea and strenuously persisted in it, the Senate, for that reason, sent him away to take command in a war, in the course of which his consulship expired, but he obtained the tribuneship after that and managed to have the younger Gracchus for a colleague, with whose cooperation he brought forward other measures in favor of the Italians. When they were both killed, as I have previously related, the Italians were still more excited. They could not bear to be considered subjects instead of equals, or to think that Flaccus and Gracchus should suffer such calamities while working for their political advantage.

[35] [...] [Der Volkstribun Drusus will die streitenden Fraktionen versöhnen, indem er Kolonien in Italien gründet, die Reihen der Senatoren mit 300 Rittern auffüllt und dafür den Senatoren die Gerichte zurückgibt, was aber beide Fraktionen ablehnen.]

[36] Thus it came to pass that both the Senate and the knights, although opposed to each other, were united in hating Drusus. Only the plebeians were gratified with the colonies. The Italians, in whose interest chiefly Drusus was devising these plans, were apprehensive about the law providing for the colonies, because they thought that the Roman public domain (which was still undivided and which they were cultivating, some by force and others clandestinely) would be taken away from them, and that in many cases they might even be disturbed in their private holdings. The Etruscans and the Umbrians had the same fears as the Italians, and when they were summoned to the city, as it was thought, by the consuls, ostensibly for the purpose of complaining against the law of Drusus, but actually, as is believed, for the purpose of killing him, they cried down the law publicly and waited for the day of the comitia. Drusus learned of the plot against him and did not go out frequently, but transacted business from day to day in the atrium of his house, which was poorly lighted. One evening as he was sending the crowd away he exclaimed suddenly that he was wounded, and fell down while uttering the words. A shoemaker's knife was found thrust into his hip.

[37] Thus was Drusus also slain while serving as tribune. The knights, in order to make his policy a ground of accusation against their enemies, persuaded the tribune Quintus Varius to bring forward a law to prosecute those who should, either openly or secretly, aid the Italians to acquire citizenship. They hoped to bring all the leaders under malicious indictment, and themselves to sit in judgment on them, and that when their enemies were out of the way they should be more powerful than ever in the government of Rome. When the other tribunes interposed their veto the knights surrounded them with drawn daggers and enacted the measure, whereupon accusers at once brought actions against the most illustrious of the senators. Of these Bestia did not respond, but went into exile voluntarily rather than surrender himself into the hands of his enemies. After him Cotta went before the court, made a brilliant defence of his administration of public affairs, and openly reviled the knights. He, too, departed from the city before the vote of the judges was taken. Mummius, the one who had conquered Greece, was basely ensnared by the knights, who promised to acquit him, but condemned him to banishment. He passed the remainder of his life at Delos.

[38] As this wickedness prevailed more and more against the best citizens, the people were grieved because they were deprived all at once of so many men who had rendered such great services. When the Italians learned of the killing of Drusus and of the reason alleged for banishing the others,

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they considered it no longer bearable that those who were laboring for their political advancement should suffer such outrages, and as they saw no other means of acquiring citizenship they decided to revolt from the Romans altogether, and to make war against them with all their might. They sent envoys to each other secretly, formed a league, and exchanged hostages as a pledge of good faith. The Romans were in ignorance of these facts for a long time, being preoccupied by the judicial proceedings and the seditions in the city. When they heard what was going on they sent men around to the towns, choosing those who were best acquainted with each, to collect information quietly. One of these saw a young man who was being taken as a hostage from the town of Asculum to another town, and informed Servilius, the proconsul in those parts. (It appears that there were proconsuls at that time governing the various parts of Italy; Hadrian revived the custom a long time afterward when he held the supreme power, but it did not long survive him.) Servilius hastened to Asculum and indulged in very menacing language to the people, who were celebrating a festival, and they put him to death, supposing that the plot was discovered. They also killed Fonteius, his legate (for so they call those of the senatorial order who accompany the governors of provinces as assistants). After these were slain none of the other Romans in Asculum were spared. The inhabitants fell upon them, slaughtered them all, and plundered their goods.