The Civil War between Pompey and Julius Caesar in 49 BC marks the end of the Republic period and the beginning of autocracy in Rome. From 78 to 28 BC there were destructive forces undermining the Republic. There was rule of force, ambitious generals, unscrupulous politicians, anarchy on the streets, and client armies. This, along with a Senate desperate to preserve its privileges and illegal or unconstitutional acts by politicians and generals, destroyed the rule of law and any respect that remained for the republic institutions.
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**Focus:** Through an investigation of the archaeological and written sources for the fall of the Roman Republic 78 – 31 BC, students examine the nature of power and authority, significant developments that shaped the historical period and relevant historiographical issues.

**Key Issues:**

- The Chronological and Geographical Context of Rome.
- Political Developments in the Late Republic.
- Wars and Expansion.
- Fall of the Republic.

1) The chronological and geographical context of Rome in the Mediterranean and the Near East, key powers in the region, and the nature of contact with other societies.

**Geographical Context**

- The city of Rome began as a small village in Italy; initially ruled by kings.
- The Roman Republic was established in 509 BC.
- Rome was situated on the western coast of the Italian peninsula. It expanded along the river Tiber.
- The Apennines mountain range runs down the length of Italy.
- Land west of the mountains are well-watered and fertile.
- Rome’s central location would be a factor in its eventual drive towards and empire.
- By the end of the 4th century BC Rome had gained control of most of the area along Italy’s western coast.
- Greek influence had been significant in southern Italy and on the island of Sicily.
- Rome fought 3 wars with its main rival Carthage (named the Punic Wars). Rome’s destruction of Carthage made it the master of the western Mediterranean.
- By the end of the 1st century BC, Rome had established provinces in Greece.

**Chronological Context**

- 753 BC: The legendary founding of Rome by Romulus and Remus.
- 509 BC: The end of the monarchy. Throughout the 5th century the ‘Conflict of Orders’ is gradually settled (a conflict between Patricians and Plebeians).
- 390 BC: A Gallic invasion sees the sacking of Rome.
- By 265 BC: Rome completes its occupation of the Italian Peninsula.
- 264 – 241 BC: First Punic War against Carthage.
- 238 BC: Rome conquers Sardinia.
- 149 – 146 BC: Third Punic War.
- 133 BC: Tribune Tiberius Gracchus assassinated by landowners.
- 88 – 64 BC: The first, second, and third Mithridatic War in the Asia Minor region.
- 73 BC: The Spartacist slave revolt; eventually crushed by Crassus and Pompey.
- 70 BC: Pompey and Crassus serve as co-consuls.
- 50s BC: Caesar conquers Gaul.
- 53 BC: Rome defeated at Carrhae by Parthia. Crassus is killed.
- 55/54 BC: Caesar invades Britain.
- 49 – 45 BC: Civil War in Rome. Caesar is triumphant.
- 44 BC: Assassination of Caesar.
30s BC: Rivalry between Octavian and Antony results in a civil war. Antony’s relationship with Cleopatra tarnishes his reputation. In 31 BC, Antony is defeated at the Battle of Actium. He and Cleopatra commit suicide in 30 BC. Octavian (from 27 BC is known as Augustus) is triumphant. Within a decade Augustus has cemented his control of Rome and the empire.

2) Political developments of the late Republic, including:

2.1) Legacy of Sulla
- Sulla’s career had a lasting impact on the political developments of the late Republic.
- His impact is evident through the climate of discord he created.
- In 88 BC, a civil war between Marius and Sulla was fought; it ended in 82 BC with Sulla victorious.
- “He did what no Roman in history had ever done; he marched on Rome and took military possession of the city” – Balson.
- Sulla introduced proscriptions. He set up a precedent for this activity.
- “He seems to have been the first to have made such a formal list of those whom he condemned to death, to offer prizes to assassins and rewards to informers.” – Appian.
- “Sulla published a list of eighty men to be condemned. Public opinion was horrified, but after a single day’s interval, he published a list containing 220 more names, and the next day a third list with the same number of names on it …” – Plutarch.
- Sulla had the Tribal Assembly vote to give him powers of dictator (82 BC) for the purpose of restoring the Republic. He achieved the dictatorship through military force and violence.
- Sulla gave up the dictatorship in 79 BC and retired from public life. In 78 BC he died.

Reforms of Sulla
- Sulla introduced changes to the Cursus Honorum.
  - The age requirement for consuls was raised from 36 to 42.
  - The number of praetors was increased from 6 to 8, and the age requirement was raised from 33 to 39.
  - The number of aediles was reduced from 4 to 2.
  - The number of quaestors was increased from 8 to 20 and the age requirement was raised from 27 to 30.
- He made a determined attempt to re-establish prestige and power of the Senate. He enrolled 300 new Senators, drawing them from varying groups including wealthier equites. He returned to the Senate their right of vetoing legislation emanating from the assembly.
- He tried to weaken the office of the tribunate. By reducing the powers of the tribunate, he is thus increasing the authority of the Senate.
- Despite the fact that Sulla introduced reforms, he was unable to achieve his objective of restoring the Roman State of past times where the optimates held all the power and Senatorial authority was not challenged.
- “Sulla achieved little besides adding to the sum of human misery. His system aggrieved the equites, the urban populace, the dispossessed peasants, and the new citizens and
made no provision for veterans in the future. Social discontents continued, as the Senate remained indifferent to the distress of the poor.” – P.A. Brunt.

- “The failure of the Roman Republic was caused very largely by the reluctance of the Romans to change their methods of government and their political institutions … conservatism may degenerate into mere obstinacy and frequently obstinacy can only be cured by bloodshed.” – E.T. Salmon.

- His reforms caused great discord amongst the *populares* and plebeians, who demanded the sacred right of the tribunes be restored.

- There was bitter resentment between the patricians, the equites, and the people and the next 50 years was marked by attempts of powerful individuals and senatorial factions to gain predominance in the state.

- Sulla’s reforms failed to deal with problems of governing an ever-expanding empire which resulted in the rise of powerful generals.

- All of his reforms focused on his objective of returning the senate back to the *optimate* wonderland it once was. Hence, his removing of power from the tribunes (by removing their veto and their right to propose laws), preventing young men from holding magistracies.

- David Taylor argued that Sulla’s legacy “…undermined the fact that legalised violence was now a part of Roman life, and for the next fifty years, it was never far beneath the surface.”

2.2) Pompey: significance of military and political career

- Gnaeus Pompey Magnus (Pompey the Great) was born in 106 BC into a wealthy equestrian family. His father was the first in the family to establish themselves among the Roman elite. Pompey was thus a ‘novus homo’.

- During the civil war between Marius and Sulla, Pompey allied himself with the latter, to his great advantage.

- Yet, he was an opportunist and switched allegiance to whoever was of benefit. From Sulla, to Lepidus, to the Senate, to Crassus, to the *Populares*, to Senate. He exploited his political marriages, to Sulla’s daughter and Caesar’s daughter.

- In 83 BC, Pompey raised his own client army to aid Sulla. Sulla gave him the special command to end the Marian resistance in Sicily and Africa.

- “Pompey first came to prominence when he lent his support and that of his privately raised army to Sulla during the latter’s march on Rome in 83 – 82 BC. Pompey was then twenty-three years of age, too young to yet hold magisterial office and therefore unqualified to hold military command.” – Shotter.

- “[Pompey] brought Sulla a sizeable army … his earlier association with Cinna was overlooked and at first Sulla held him in the highest esteem. He was sent to recover Sicily and Africa, and early in 79 was allowed – contrary to all precedent for he was not even a senator – to enter Rome in a triumph …” – Balsdon.

- Pompey was granted *propraetorian imperium* in order to command such a force under Sulla. Upon stepping onto Sulla’s side, he broke his fides (friendship, trust, alliance).

- Pompey at the time was 23 and held no privatus (no official position).

- He raised a private army from his clientele and he joined Sulla with the status of Legatus.

- Not only was Pompey far below the requisite age, but he also had never held any public office.
Sulla was so impressed with Pompey, that on one occasion he hailed him as ‘imperator’, despite the fact that Pompey was not entitled to be addressed in such a manner.

Pompey and Aemilia, Sulla’s step daughter, married.

Pompey was given the nickname ‘Sulla’s butcher’ or ‘butcher boy’ for his ruthlessness with the Marians.

Pompey receiving propraetorian imperium against Lepidus and proconsular imperium against the rebel Sertorius in Spain in 77 BC was irregular. He was far too young and inexperienced for these honours and privileges.

On his return to Rome, Pompey was elected consul (70 BC). This was exceptional as he was not old enough and had not been a senator. In effect, he had been elected as he was incredibly popular with the people. His military career to date had been spectacular, securing Spain, Sicily, and parts of North Africa for Rome – thereby increasing the Republic’s glory and wealth.

Within 12 years of its settlement, the Sullan constitution was destroyed and Sulla’s attempts to pass laws restraining ambitious generals came to nothing. Pompey showed how a popular general could bypass both the law and a divided Senate to further political ambitions.

The residual and ongoing tension between the optimates and populares permeated Roman society and politics. Pompey was torn between the support of the people and his desire for power through the optimates.

The Revolt of Lepidus

In 77 when he was proconsul, Lepidus raised an Army and prepared to march on Rome with his legate, Brutus.

The Senate passed the senatus consultum ultimum, declaring him a public enemy.

Plutarch states that events “seemed to call for Pompey” who quickly decided which side to support. “He attached himself to the cause of the nobility” (Plutarch) and the senate reluctantly granted him propraetorian imperium once again to help Lutatius Catulus.

Catulus defeated Lepidus who fled to Sardinia where he died soon after.

Brutus, besieged at Mutina by Pompey, surrendered to him but was killed. Led by M. Perpena, many of Lepidus’ supporters escaped to Spain, where they joined Sertorius. Pompey now saw an opportunity to enhance his glory: He delayed disbanding his army - despite Catulus’ orders - in hopes of persuading the senate to send him to Spain to help Q. Metellus against Sertorius. When the two consuls for that year showed reluctance to face Sertorius they played in Pompey's hands. The senate had no choice but to grant yet another illegal command to Pompey in time with proconsular imperium.

"An essential part of his [Sulla’s] defeat was played by young Pompey, who was again called to raise and command an army, though he held no official position" - P.A. Brunt.

"As Lepidus continued his march on Rome… a battle was fought, and Lepidus retreated. Only at this late stage was he declared a hostis, a further proof of the Senate's conciliatory mood and perhaps of its reluctance to resort to the devices that had been so abused in the previous decade.” – Seager.

"Now that the rising was safely subdued Catulus ordered Pompey to disband his troops, but Pompey refused. The object of his contumacy was limited and specific. He was not threatening civil war to make himself dictator, he merely wanted to be sent to Spain,
where for two years Metellus Pius had been making little headway against Sertorius.”
– Seager.

The Revolt of Q. Sertorius

- Sertorius was a *populares* who had fought with Marians against Sulla. He was chosen as a governor of Hither Spain during the civil war, and when he arrived in his province found the Spanish tribesman bitterly resentful of Roman administration there. Sertorius ‘set himself to win them over by entering into personal dealings with the chiefs and by reducing the taxes imposed on the people’.
- Proconsular imperium was given to Pompey.
- “At the end of 77 BCE the Senate felt obliged to strengthen its confrontation with Sertorius by sending out substantial reinforcements under a general only twenty-nine years of age. This was Pompey, who already enjoyed a considerable reputation…. according to the rules he was far too young, the dictator [Sulla] had felt reluctantly obliged to grant him a triumph…. At first he achieved no result. But finally, Sertorius was murdered at a banquet by his own undistinguished lieutenant, whom Pompey then defeated without difficulty and put to death.” – Grant.
- “To invest in a young man who was not even a senator with proconsular imperium was a disastrous blow to Sulla’s intentions…” – Scullard.

Spartacus’s Rebellion

- During 73 BCE, Spartacus led a slave uprising in Italy, while Pompey was still in Spain.
- This uprising gained momentum after numerous early successes where the Rebels were able to get a hold of weapons.
- “In 73 a slave revolt in Italy, led by Spartacus, attained such proportions that by 71 ten legions were needed to suppress it.”- P.A. Brunt.
- “The revolt in Italy itself of…Spartacus…came as the culmination of years of unrest between gangs of slaves; he caused considerable disruption in Italy and defeated the consuls of 72 who had been sent against him. … [Crassus] fared better, defeating and killing Spartacus, though not before the senate and people, in something of a panic, had voted that Crassus should share his command with Pompey, … To Crassus’ annoyance, Pompey claimed half of the glory, even though his contribution in reality had been little more than to mop up a few remnants after Spartacus’ defeat.” – Shotter.
- When both consuls were defeated, M. Licinius Crassus, thepraetor of 73, was given proconsular imperium and propraetorian, so he could take care of the war.
- Approximately 6000 of Spartacus’ supporters were crucified along Appian Way. In 71 Pompey arrived and despite Crassus doing all the work, Pompey was given most of the credit.
- “On his return from Spain in 71 Pompey had snatched from him [Crassus] some of the credit for the defeat of Spartacus, because he had rounded up and killed five thousand followers of Spartacus who escaped at the time of Spartacus’ defeat. …..” – Balsdon.
- “Then came the final confrontation with Crassus, in which Spartacus was killed… Five thousand fugitives from the battle who were trying to escape northwards fell in with the returning Pompey and were annihilated, an incident which prompted Pompey to write to the Senate….” – Seager.
“[Pompey claimed] that while Crassus had certainly defeated the gladiators in a pitched battle, he himself had finished the war off utterly and entirely” – Plutarch.

2.3) Significance of the consulship of Pompey and Crassus in 70 BC

The Consulship

- The joint consulship of Pompey and Crassus in 70 BC was a key moment in the history of the Roman Republic.
- After defeating the Spartacus slave revolt in 73 BC, Pompey and Crassus demanded triumphs and to stand for the consulship in 70 BC. Legally, they could not do both. The Senate was terrified of the armies and attempted to turn them against each other. They praised Pompey as a hero but did not acknowledge the work of Crassus.
- Crassus and Pompey responded to the Senate’s moves by seeking the support of the populares.
- Although both Pompey and Crassus had been lieutenants of Sulla, once consuls they sought to destroy what was left of the constitution. Reasons for this:
  - Sulla’s laws seemed almost tailor-made to keep Pompey out of office (because of his age).
  - Crassus’s business dealings brought him ever closer to the equestrian order which Sulla had managed to keep out of court affairs.
- “However, the expected denouement was not to be; instead, these two rivals decided to form a temporary political amicitia, pooling their wealth, their armies and their clientage in a bid for the consulship of 70 with a programme which involved undoing much of what was left of Sulla’s constitutional arrangements….Crassus and Pompey found little difficulty in securing acquiescence to their requirements…..” – David Shotter.
- Most significant point: destroyed what was left of Sulla’s constitution.

Small Bio on Crassus

- “…well ordered life as any roman” – Plutarch (Lives of Crassus).
- Remembered for: Wealth (richest man), role in the first Triumvirate, and defeat at the Battle of Carrhae in 53 BC.
- Wealth evidence (ownership of silver mines, involvement of slave trade and involvement in buying / selling property from Sulla’s proscription lists).
- 115 BC: Born, son to Publius Licinius Crassus (father was consul in 97 BC and censor in 89 BC).
- 87 BC: Crassus’ father and 2 brothers died during Maian siege of Rome.
- 84 BC: Cinna briefly in control of Rome so Crassus fled to Spain.
- 83 BC: After death of Cinna, Crassus returned to Italy via Africa, raised 2 legions and fought for Sulla.
- 70s BC: Pursued public career by pressing variety of lawsuits (knew Pompey was a better general).
73 BC: Crassus had to deal with the crisis of Spartacus revolt. 6000 slaves crucified and bodies displayed on Capua road. Employed the policy of decimation → to punish the group of soldiers, every tenth man in line would be executed.

71 BC: 5000 slaves managed to escape. Crassus sought the Senate's help and the Senate turned to Pompey, returning from victories in Spain. Pompey successfully quelled the remnants of the slave rebellion. (Pompey boasted that Crassus won the battle, but Pompey won the war).

Both generals stood outside Rome with their armies, demanding a triumph. Pompey got 2nd Triumph and Crassus granted an Ovation.

Reforms

Sulla’s legislation had broken the powers of the tribune in its attempt to restore Senatorial power. Under Pompey and Crassus, a consular law restored to the tribunate all the powers that it had enjoyed before Sulla’s time in power. In this, Pompey and Crassus were completing the process begun in 75 BC with the Lex Aurelia. The restored powers of the tribunes include their right to initiate laws and their possession of veto.

The implications of this were that Pompey and Crassus won popular support and it enabled Pompey and later Caesar to use the Tribunate to enhance their own military/political careers.

Sulla had removed the office of censor. Instead of acting with responsibility, many senators abused their positions. Pompey revived the position of censor, which saw the removal of 64 senators and the introduction of new ones.

Lex Aurelia overturned the changes that Sulla had brought to the court system. Under Sulla, only Senators could be members of the courts. Now three classes were to man the courts: senators, equites and a group called ‘tribuni aerarii’ (financial civil servants) who were close to the equites. This now meant that any senator brought before the courts would not be able to use his Senate connections with court members to evade justice.

The implication of this is that it made for a fairer law court that was not dominated by the senate alone. It now opened up the jury to the middle classes, thus preventing the domination of the elites.

“Their programme of legislation went a long way to restoring the pre-Sullan status quo: the powers of the tribunate were restored in full.....” – David Shotter.

“Pompey and Crassus were elected consuls for 70, with a programme of popular reform, the removal of the last shackles which Sulla had imposed on the Tribunate, and the recasting of the criminal courts, whose senatorial jurors had in the previous ten years covered themselves with everything but distinction.” – Balsdon.

2.4) Role and significance of Cicero

Background

Born 3rd of January 106 BC in Arpinum 110km south east of Rome.

Marcus Tullius Cicero was from an equestrian family and aimed to become a great orator from an early age.

He was highly educated and earned his reputation as a lawyer.
Role and Significance

- Cicero wrote many legal/political speeches, but it is his letters which are most useful historically; they tell events during 1st century BC not only from year to year, but day to day.
- In 70 BC Cicero had prosecuted Verres, governor of Sicily, for extortion. It was a famous trial in which Verres was found guilty despite his connections and status. Cicero had given the Senate courts a choice to either condemn Verres or condemn themselves. He gained a great reputation as a result of this court case.
- The mass of evidence that Cicero collected against Verres was so damning that Verres fled to Massilia in southern Gaul.

The Catiline Conspiracy:

- One of Cicero’s opponents in 64 BC (for the consulship of 63 BC) was Lucius Sergius Catilina (Catiline). Catiline was of a noble family and charming; he was also reckless, deeply in debt, and with a questionable reputation. He had previously been on trial for extortion in 65 BC.
- Catiline was defeated in the consular election in 65 BC and 64 BC. He stood for the consulship in 62 BC and lost again. This prompted him to organise a conspiracy and attempt to seize power by violent means.
- Cicero was famous for putting down the supposed conspiracy of Catiline who was said to have conspired for the consulship, and after an unsuccessful attempt, plotted uprisings in Rome and Italy.
- Cicero was warned of the conspiracy and took military precautions when foiling the conspirators. Catiline was accused of planning the murder of Cicero and fomenting a general revolution of the discontented masses. He was also accused of planning to march an army on Rome. Cicero’s forewarning allowed for the conspirators to be arrested and put to death.
- Caesar had argued for life imprisonment, but the conspirators were executed without trial; unusual for Roman citizens. Catiline was killed in battle.
- At the time, Cicero’s actions in the execution of the traitors were legal. However, two years later, Caesar’s supporter Clodius passed a law making such actions illegal. Cicero was banished for this illegality as Roman laws could be applied retroactively.

The Significance of the Catiline Conspiracy

- 1. Cicero attempted to present his role in the affair with heroic considerations. He argued Rome was in danger, the conspirators would wreak violent havoc, thus, Rome needed a figure like Cicero who was courageous enough to protect the senate and the people.
- 2. Not everyone supported Cicero’s actions. Julius Caesar spoke up against the executions; arguing that Roman citizens had a right to a trial and an appeal to the assembly.
The Events of the Catiline Conspiracy

- Catiline was defeated in the consular election of 64 BC. Cicero and Antonius were elected consuls for the year 63.

- Catiline sent his supporter Manlius, to the north of Italy to organise a military force which would march on Rome at an appointed time.

- Catiline stayed in Rome to organise the takeover of strategic points in the city, the murder of the consuls, and create general mayhem.

- Catiline’s army would march on Rome from the north and once in Rome, his opponents would be massacred.

- Cicero persuaded the senate to pass a *senatus consultum ultimum*. This emergency measure gave Cicero power to carry out whatever measure he deemed necessary to protect Rome. Catiline continued to sit in the senate.

- Cicero presented a series of speeches in which he condemned that Catiline intended to take over the state and warned what was coming would be worse than the violence of the Marius-Sulla conflict.

- Catiline’s denials were shouted down and he left to join Manlius after there had been an unsuccessful attempt on Cicero’s life. Letters from other conspirators were discovered and arrests were made. Popular opinion turned strongly against the conspirators and Cicero was becoming the hero of the day.

- The senate debated what to do with the conspirators. A few, including Julius Caesar, sought imprisonment but others, like Cato, sought the death penalty. Plutarch tells us that Cicero supervised the executions personally.

- The conspirators, including Catiline’s ally Lentulus, were executed. Many of Catiline’s supporters deserted him. Catiline and his remaining forces took a stand against the senate army, led by Antonius, which was sent north. The rebel forces were all killed.

Significance of Cicero’s Career

- Was keen supporter of Pompey until his death; spoke in favour of lex Manilia and looked after Pompey’s interests while he was in the east.
- Supported Pompey up to and during Civil War but reconciled with Caesar after.
- Attacked Caesar’s ‘illegal acts’ during his consulship in 59.
- Refused to join FT, although asked multiple times by Caesar.
- Was exiled for putting Catalinarian conspirators to death without trial but was recalled by Pompey.
- Made various speeches against Antony after death of Caesar (Philippics), which Antony sought revenge for by proscribing him (murder).
- Cicero was staunch supporter of Republic; in the end, his efforts to restore it cost him his life when he was murdered in 43 BC on orders of Antony.
- Cicero refused to join the First Triumvirate coalition in 60, and regarded it as an infamous and disgraceful alliance “and uniformly odious to all sorts and classes and ages of men...” He also refused when offered a second time.
- “They [the triumvirs] hold all the strings and they want everyone to know it.” (Cicero)
- Cicero needed the support of a powerful politician and so supported Pompey for most of his career. He spoke in favour of Pompey gaining the *Lex Manilia*, a law that allowed
Pompey the army against Mithridates even though Cicero was inching towards the optimates.

- One of Cicero’s main motivations was his desperate desire to preserve the Republic.

### 2.5) First Triumvirate: aims, roles, and responsibilities of Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus

**Background Information**

- At the end of 60’s BC the optimates seemed to be in the ascent.
- Cicero received enormous prestige; called *parens patriae* “father of the country” by Cato.
- Caesar’s wife was name Pompeia — Link to *Bona Dea* scandal (Cicero’s case).
- Clodius above offender — thus hated Cicero.
- Caesar divorced wife due to the need to form an alliance with Clodius.
- Three major people loomed in the political arena: Pompey, Crassus and Caesar.
- A political alliance (amicitia) [amicitia] between 3 powerful Romans, designed to pool their clients and gain their wants and desires. (Pompey, Crassus and Caesar).
- Each had their own agenda: Caesar wants consulship, Pompey wants land grants and ratification of eastern settlement and Crassus wants pre-eminence, a tax rebate for equestrian farmers, and to increase dignitas. — they all needed each other to achieve, they needed Crassus’ money, Pompey’s troops and Caesar’s popularity.
- They still saw one another as rivals despite this situation.

**Background on Caesar**

- 100 BC — born into a patrician family. Family was optimates but Caesar would become a populares. Aunt Julia was married to the populares leader Sulla.
- 84 BC — Caesar’s father died, broke off engagement to plebeian Cossutia. Married instead Cornelia, daughter of Cinna (Cinna had been consul 4 times and was an opponent to Sulla). Sulla ordered Caesar to divorce wife, but Caesar said no. Sulla ordered Caesar’s execution but was met with resistance from Vestal Virgins and aristocratic friends.
- “Have your way and take him; only to bear in mind the man you are so eager to save will one day deal the death blow to the cause of the aristocracy, which you have joined with me in upholding; for in this Caesar there is more than one Marius.” (Suetonius Life of Julius Caesar)
- 77 BC — Unsuccessfully brought prosecution against former Governor of Macedonia. Caesar gained fame in this case for his oratory.
- 75 BC — Left for Rhodes and was captured by pirates until a ransom was paid.
- 73 BC — Took up priesthood; joining the college of 15 pontifex was a great honour.
- “He was not yet a senator and though it was not unknown for young priests to be co-opted before they entered the senate, his selection as Cotta’s replacement suggest that he had influence…” (Stroud 2007)
- 71 BC — became a military tribune.
- 69 BC — became quaestor and gained immediate entry into the Senate. Served under praetor Vetus in Spain.
The First Triumvirate

- Caesar saw the opportunity the First Triumvirate presented; first had to reconcile Pompey and Crassus.
- The First Triumvirate was unofficial, informal and non-legal alliance between Pompey, Caesar and Crassus. All three men had aims that the Senate would not allow them to achieve.

Reasons and Aims for Joining the First Triumvirate

| Caesar          | • Caesar wanted a triumph after his proprietorship in Spain and he also wanted to stand for consul in 59 BCE. He asked to stand for consulship in absentia. This was refused. Caesar surprised the Optimates when he chose to stand for consulship rather than receiving a triumph.  
                   | • Caesar wanted to be given a province that would give him scope for military gloria. |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Crassus         | • He realised money alone could not give him power. Joining the triumvirate would bring him a pre-eminence he could not achieve by himself.  
                   | • Crassus wanted rebates for the equestrian tax farmers that he had financed in expectation that there would be a steady income tax flow from the east. The Mithridatic War lowered tax yields. |
| Pompey          | • Following his return from the East, Pompey disbanded his army, but this did not satisfy the optimates.  
                   | • Pompey wanted a land bill so he could provide land to his veterans, but due to the Senate’s refusal, he was unable to fulfil this promise.  
                   | • Pompey wanted his campaigns and settlements in the east to be completely ratified |

Results

- **Caesar**: provinces of Cisalpine Gaul, Illyricum and Transalpine Gaul for five years.
- Caesar also passed Lex Campania ➔ harsher land bill which divided last public land in Italy into 20,000 allotments for urban poor. Strongly opposed by Senate/conservatives.
- **Crassus**: one-third rebate for equestrian tax farmers.
- **Pompey**: agrarian bill for his veterans ➔ however, was achieved through threat of force from Pompey, as neither Senate/tribunes would pass the bill.
2.6) Activities and breakdown of the First Triumvirate

Activities

- After consulship of 59 Caesar went to his provinces; proceeded to wage Gallic campaigns from 58-50. During this time, the First Triumvirate came under pressure; Caesar appointed Clodius as tribune, who used gang warfare to discredit Pompey; Pompey used Milo to retaliate against Clodius. Also, tensions rose between Pompey and Crassus; short-term goals had been achieved, regarded each other with contempt.

- Caesar called Conference of Luca in 56 → renewal of triumvirate. It was in the best interests of each triumvir to maintain their coalition. This led to the 2nd joint consulship of Pompey and Crassus in 55. Gains for triumvirs:
  - Caesar: extension of command in Gaul for further five years.
  - Crassus: province of Syria; military campaign in 55/53.
  - Pompey: provinces in Spain.

- “Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar’s actions were illegal, and everyone knew it.” – Cowell.

- Pompey and Crassus gained consulship through bribery/violence.

Breakdown

- Death of Pompey’s wife Julia (Caesar’s daughter) meant that Pompey was no longer bound to Caesar; Caesar attempted to maintain coalition (e.g. through offering great-niece Octavia to Pompey); Pompey rebuffed his efforts and began shifting his position to optimates, although still maintained coalition with Caesar for time being.

- “The loss of Julia... decisively weakened the link between Pompey and Caesar” – Shotter.

- In middle of 53, news reached Rome that Romans had been defeated by Parthians and Crassus had been killed. Crassus’ death made split of coalition more likely.

- Pompey became sole consul in 52 and passed variety of laws which worried Caesar:
  - Law against public violence.
  - Law stipulating a five-year interval between urban magistracies and provincial commands.
  - Law demanding all candidates must appear in person at election which made Caesar suspicious of Pompey’s motives. Caesar planned to stand in absentia to avoid prosecution; Caesar was allowed to be exempt from this law by Pompey.

- In 52 Pompey remained halfway between Caesar/optimates, although he was moving more towards optimates. Caesar’s enemies wished to bring him to Rome and prosecute him; Pompey would have to pick a side, and when war came in 49 he sided with Senate.
### Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year BCE</th>
<th>Events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59 BCE</td>
<td>- The consulship of Caesar and Bilbus</td>
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<tr>
<td>58 BCE</td>
<td>- Caesar leaves for his proconsulship in Gaul</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Clodius becomes a key player in politics. He employs gangs of thugs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- to consolidate his position as tribune of the plebs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Piso and Gabinius are consuls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Cicero is driven out of Rome</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Cato is set up as governor of Cyprus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Pompey uses Milo to lead his own ‘gang’ of thugs</td>
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<tr>
<td>57 BCE</td>
<td>- Cicero is allowed to return to Rome</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Pompey is appointed Grain Commissioner</td>
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<td>- Strains appear within the Triumvirate</td>
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<tr>
<td>56 BCE</td>
<td>- The Conference at Luca</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Late elections for 55 BCE - Pompey and Crassus stand</td>
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<tr>
<td>55 BCE</td>
<td>- Joint consulship of Pompey and Crassus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pompey’s proconsular command in Spain</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Crassus’ proconsular command in Syria</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Caesar’s proconsular command in Gaul is extended for a further five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54 BCE</td>
<td>- Death of Julia (she is Pompey’s wife and Caesar’s daughter)</td>
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<tr>
<td>53 BCE</td>
<td>- No consul for the first half of the year</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Crassus is killed at the Battle of Carrhae</td>
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<tr>
<td>52 BCE</td>
<td>- Murder of Clodius</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Pompey is Sole Consul</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Milo is tried, convicted and exiled for the murder of Clodius</td>
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<tr>
<td>51 BCE</td>
<td>- Marcellus demands for Caesar’s command in Gaul to cease</td>
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<tr>
<td>50 BCE</td>
<td>- Curio vetoes the demand that Caesar should be forced to leave Gaul</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>early</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Pompey is openly supporting the Optimates</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Curio leaves Rome to join Caesar</td>
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<tr>
<td>49 BCE</td>
<td>- Cassius and Antony are working for Caesar, while the optimates refuse to compromise</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Following threats to their safety, Antony and Cassius flee Rome and join Caesar</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Pompey takes command of troops in Italy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Caesar crosses the Rubicon and Starts the Civil War</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The First Triumvirate Under Pressure

The Conference at Luca in 56 BC

- Pompey and Crassus had always been hostile to one another, and once their immediate objectives had been achieved, their hostility became more pronounced.
- Clodius held a campaign against Pompey – believed to have been backed by Crassus – and many of the *optimates* were pleased to witness Pompey’s discomfort.
- The constant public humiliation which Pompey was subjected to, led to Pompey using Milo’s rival gang to retaliate.
- The gang warfare/urban violence between Clodius and Milo during the period, highlighted the conflict that existed between Crassus and Pompey.
- An increase in Clodius’ violence towards Pompey, led to Pompey supporting a bill which recalled Cicero from exile.
- Pompey did not want to agitate Caesar by supporting this bill, so in 57 BC, Pompey sent a tribune to gain Caesar’s approval – Caesar’s approval was only given grudgingly.
- During 57 BC, the movement for Cicero’s recall from exile gained momentum, and Clodius, now out of office, used urban violence to unsuccessfully stop the bill.
- The bill was passed, and Cicero returned to Rome, and was met with applause.
- Cicero further undermined the triumvirate by speaking in favour of Pompey’s appointment to a special command of ‘Curator of the Grain Supply’. This special command would not have pleased Caesar nor Crassus, because it served as good propaganda for Pompey.
2.7) Political Crises: role of the Senate, use of the army for political purposes, urban violence

Role of the Senate

- Senate was the body which advised magistrates. Different roles:
  - Dealt with foreign relations.
  - Prepared legislation.
  - Administered finances.
  - Supervised state religion.

- By 1st century BC, Senate was virtual government of Rome:
  - Had influence/control over assemblies and magistrates.
  - Could not make laws but issued decrees (senatus consulta).
  - Senate gave special commands to generals; however, could not stop a general using the army to further his ambitions. Once military situation was settled, Senate was powerless to stop generals demanding more power and using their armies as a threat.
  - This inability to control generals/armies allowed circumstances to develop which helped bring about the fall of the Republic.

- Problems of the Senate (in general):
  - Did not provide strong leadership.
  - Was corrupt/inefficient.
  - Only interested in its own power/prestige.
  - Unable to cope with strong generals.
  - Breakdown of law/order on streets.
  - Foreign policy was weak.

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Point and Explanation

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Evidence</th>
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</table>

### EXTRAORDINARY COMMANDS

**Pompey:** Pompey’s commands under the Lex Gabinia and the Lex Manilia showed how the tribune’s powers could be abused. This undermined the authority of the Senate and enabled for political stability to be dismantled through the aggravation of Senators and the breakdown of Republican laws.

The senate’s passing of Pompey’s extraordinary commands where he was granted great power without moving through the cursus honorum “in consequence hastened the downfall of the republic” (Scullard), because they set precedents for Caesar and Octavian who gained triumphs and positions of power, and later abused such positions. “[proved] fatal to the senate” – Scullard.

**Caesar:** Caesar was given extraordinary commands when he was in Gaul, this is evident through the length of his command (10 years).

“constant exercise of power gave Caesar a love of it.” – Suetonius.

**Octavian:** Octavian marched on Rome and he was elected as consul suffectus with his cousin.

“[Cicero] persuaded the Senate…that Octavian could be used as long as they needed his help, and that the young man should be made a senator and propraetor.” – Scullard.

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UNCOMPROMISING ATTITUDES OF THE OPTIMATES
The First Triumvirate: by refusing to meet the demands of Pompey, Caesar and Crassus, the Senate drove them together. “By uncompromising refusal to meet the demands of Pompey, Caesar and Crassus the Senate naturally drove them into each other’s arms” – Scullard. “It precipitated the slide to civil war and the end of the old republic.” – Shotter.

The Civil War of 49-45 BC: the Optimate’s inflexibility ‘forced’ Caesar to march on Rome. “It was the small Optimate clique...that forced the issue” – Scullard. “Caesar...made several attempts to compromise” – Scullard.

OCTAVIAN AND THE SENATE

Under Cicero’s proposal, Octavian was given an extraordinary command. Following this, Octavian asked for a Consulship, however he was only offered a praetorship, giving him the power to march on Rome and extort the Senate. “To entrust unusual powers to ambitious men... hastened the downfall of the republic.” – Scullard. “Thinking that Antony could be easily handled, and that Octavian could be dispensed with, the Senate foolishly slighted the 'boy'. ...Octavian reacted sharply: he refused to co-operate....and, since he controlled eight legions, he demanded the consulship” – Scullard.

This ultimately led to the formation of the Second Triumvirate which resulted in a Civil War. “A formal magistracy legally appointed which could dominate the Senate and state” – Scullard. “In place of the dictator Caesar, there were now three dictators, although the title was carefully avoided...To advertise their rule and the effective death of the Republic, they all three had coins issued bearing their portraits.”– Scullard.

Use of Army

- During 1st century BC, Rome had interdependence between army and political power.
- Generals such as Pompey, Caesar, Antony and Octavian showed that political power came from control of successful armies.
- Veterans became important (e.g. in terms of their loyalty) in passing legislation through Assembly.
- Senate was threatened/intimidated by armies and did not refuse demands of generals.
- Generals were able to amass great wealth from their foreign wars, and garnered themselves great prestige and popularity, and a large client base from their victories.
- Pompey: Convinced’ Sulla to give him the proconsular imperium command against Quintus Sertorius after dealing with the revolt of Lepidus.
- “It was soon apparent that this encouragement of Pompey represented a serious error of judgement...he was instructed by Catulus to disband his army; Pompey’s response was that he should be sent to Spain with an extraordinary proconsular imperium... The senate conceded: thus Pompey, despite still not having senatorial status, now enjoyed the standing of an ex-consul...” – Shotter.
- Caesar: marched on Rome and became dictator.
“He was making his army into something which he controlled as though it were his own body; these native tribes were not the main point; he was merely using his campaigns against them as a form of training... with the final aim of creating a force of his own....” – Plutarch.

Octavian: He marched on Rome after being offered a praetorship to get a consul suffectus.

“...he demanded the consulship. Refusing to be fobbed off with the effort of a praetorship he marched on Rome.” – Scullard.

Urban Violence

General characteristic of this time period was urban violence in form of riots/civil unrest. Problem was so bad that elections could not be held in 53-52. Law/order was breaking down, and Senate could not stop it.

Clodius passed 4 new laws under his tribuneship. The most devastating law was collegia which had been suppressed 6 years earlier, was legalised, and this last measure led to the organization of gangs and thugs under the guise of political clubs.

Example:

Tribune Clodius arranged gangs to terrorise enemies of triumvirs of FT.

Pompey arranged his own rival gang, led by tribune Milo. Milo’s gang murdered Clodius.

When Bibulus burst into the Forum while Caesar was still speaking, fighting and disorder broke out. Bibulus’ insignia of office, the fasces, were smashed and Cato was heckled and evicted.

Widespread rioting in Rome in this period.

THE CATILINE CONSPIRACY

Catiline believed his only way to achieve gloria was by overthrowing the government.

“open war was now his only resource” – Sallust.

Catiline fled to Rome and took command of a group of Sullan veteran and other malcontents in Etruria. Though there was no actual violence, the threat of it gave Cicero great power and later got him exiled.

“decided to kill the entire senate and as many other citizens as possible.....” – Plutarch.

CAESAR AND BIBULUS

Caesar’s attempt to pass a Land Bill was vetoed by Bibulus. Caesar called on Pompey and Crassus to show support for the bill, however Pompey’s veterans turned to violence to threaten the Senate.

“intimidating anyone who tried to object” – Suetonius.

CLODIUS AND MILO

They caused unease and aided into the descent of Civil War.

Clodius’ attacks on Pompey drove him closer to the Optimates and made him recall Cicero and employ Milo.

The violence in Rome was of such a scale that it was impossible to hold a consular election

The senate made Pompey sole-consul.
“When on 18 January 52, there was another clash between the gangs of Milo and Publius Clodius, Clodius was beaten to death….” – Bringmann.
“lack of authority to maintain order …violence and bloodshed became the rule” – Brunt.

OCTAVIAN AND THE SENATE

- Octavian marched on Rome for a consulship.
- He then had the second triumvirate and later became the sole ruler of Rome.
- “foolishly slighted the boy” – Scullard.
- “the Republic was again at the mercy of the men who commanded the loyalty of the legions” – Scullard.

2.8) Role of *optimates*, *populares*

- The term ‘optimates’ and ‘populares’ refer to the social status of each group, these terms refer to the manner in which the leading political figures during the late republic tried to gain and hold political power.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>OPTIMATES</strong></th>
<th><strong>POPULARES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The optimate were essentially conservative in their outlook. Their aim was to maintain the traditional republican values which prevailed for centuries.</td>
<td>The populares sought to break traditional republican values. They were motivated to bring social change and achieve personal power.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The late republic was a period where political power was concentrated in the hands of the conservative.</td>
<td>To gain power, they use people, and to do this they have to appeal to the wider populace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They had control on the most important magistracies, and they decided military and governor appointments.</td>
<td>Sought to break the optimates’ influence on the main levers of power in the state such as Consulship and provincial governor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Their purpose was to maintain this privileged status quo and prevent power from being siphoned off onto the equestrian class.</td>
<td>They courted popular opinion and encouraged the people to act through the prime concern, claiming that it was their own concern.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opposed the influence of the tribunes who operated through the people’s assemblies.</td>
<td>They worked through the people’s assemblies and often used the office of the tribune to push their arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They opposed the growing power and influence of individual military commanders, though they were willing to use them if the situation dictated.</td>
<td>They attempted to organise support from the equites and the plebeians.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- “The relationship of the Optimates and Populares was violent, as shown in the civil war between the two” – Plutarch.
“The Optimates proved to be both corrupt and incompetent in their regimes” – Bringmann.

2.9) Caesar and Pompey: political competition and responsibility for outbreak of the Civil War 49 – 45 BC

- “They both wanted to be kings.” (Cicero)
  - The Senate hoped that powerful generals could be controlled by political competition; believing each would be willing to act for Senate if it advanced them politically.
  - This political competition between Pompey/Caesar as well as breakdown of the First Triumvirate and actions of Senate led to civil war.
  - Caesar was concerned about his command in Gaul; he wanted consulship for 48 and then be given five-year command.
  - In 52, law (by Pompey in his sole consulship) said that five years had to elapse between magistracy and provincial commands, and that all candidates must appear in person at elections.
  - This affected Caesar as he wanted to be immediately re-elected without returning to Rome; otherwise he would be prosecuted for illegal actions during consulship of 59.
  - Caesar attempted to compromise with Senate in December 50, offering to give up Transalpine Gaul and lay down his command if Pompey did.
  - The consuls rejected his offer and declared him a public enemy.
  - In January 49, Caesar crossed Rubicon and started Civil War.

Caesar:
- Caesar was legally responsible, as crossing the Rubicon was a treasonable act.
- In 59 had committed illegal acts. Demand for an extension of his pro-consulship was an effort to evade impeachment for these acts; if he stood trial, would be condemned.
- Caesar’s agent Clodius brought about unrest through urban violence and attacked Pompey.
- Caesar felt Civil War was not of his making; forced to choose between self-defence and political extinction.
- Caesar believed he was defending his dignitas and rights of tribunes. Also felt he was liberating Rome from a faction.
- “They brought it on themselves. They would have condemned me regardless of all my victories, had I not appealed to my army for help.” (Caesar)

Pompey:
- Pompey had held many irregular or unconstitutional positions in the past but now blocked Caesar’s similar demands; was acting hypocritically.
- Compromising with Caesar would have meant accepting him as an equal; Pompey may not have been prepared to do this.
- Allowed himself to be turned against Caesar by Senate, who persuaded him not to reconcile with Caesar.
- Pompey felt he was essential to Roman Republic, and that his dignitas was enhanced by being called to save the state.

Senate:
- Optimates were determined to destroy Caesar for his actions in 59.
- Caesar was forced into the position he was in during 50-49 by optimate senators; however, senators misjudged his strength/support.
- Senate persuaded Pompey to reject Caesar’s attempts at reconciliation.
- Senate feared Caesar and tried to limit his power by stopping him becoming consul and not extending his command in Gaul.
- Other steps that led to the outbreak of civil war:
  - 54 BC: Death of Julia.
  - 53 BC: Death of Crassus at Carrhae.
  - 52 BC: Death of Clodius.
  - 52 BC: Pompey’s Sole Consulship.
  - 51 BC: Consulship of Marcellus.
  - 50 BC: Tribuneship of Curio.

How Caesar and Pompey Became Enemies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAESAR</th>
<th>POMPEY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After success in Gaul he wanted further extension of his command</td>
<td>He was jealous of Caesar’s success.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denial of this left two choices: return to Rome as a private citizen or march on Rome.</td>
<td>He brought Cicero out of exile.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attempts to renew his friendship with Pompey were ignored.</td>
<td>He did not protect Caesar’s interests against the optimates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>As a result, Caesar crossed the Rubicon and entered Italy with his army.</td>
<td>He would not openly accept or reject Caesar’s plans.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Senate appealed to Pompey to save Rome.</td>
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- Edwin Judge offers an explanation for the causes of the Civil War:
  - Julius Caesar was legally in the wrong and had been outwitted in the struggle for legal advantage; having been blocked in his attempt to overlap his Gallic command with the second consulship.
  - Caesar attempted to have his replacement blocked by using veto of the tribunes, who included his supporters Mark Antony and Lucius Cassius. In return the Senate declared senatus consultum ultimum, which negated the veto and the tribunes fled. Caesar then crossed the Rubicon, claiming he was defending the tribunes and their rights.
  - Pompey then left Italy and in doing so attempted to show that Caesar was the invader and thus at fault.
- Other historian argue that it was the Senate’s responsibility to give way to Caesar. Max Cary and Matthias Gelzer claim that the optimates forced Caesar into a corner and knew that they would be bringing on war as a result.
- Honour or dignitas was always Caesar’s first consideration and he himself stated in the Civil War that it was dearer than life itself. It was the indignity of returning to Rome to face prosecution that he feared the most.

Responsibility for the Civil War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAESAR</th>
<th>POMPEY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dignitas too strong to allow humiliation of trial as a private citizen.</td>
<td>Idea of saving Rome suited him in the end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Committed illegalities as consul. Allowed all Rome to fall into chaos before taking action.

Experienced troops put him in a better position to wage war than Pompey. Thought he could raise a large and loyal army.

Represented by Clodius, who attacked Pompey and helped to breakdown the law and order. Content to have Caesar as consul pass laws which made the Senate bitter for revenge.

Marched on Rome. Expected Caesar to abide by the law whilst he received exemption.

Ambitious and did not want career to end after the conquest of Gaul. Would not openly declare support or opposition to Caesar.

Opposed to the *optimates* in the Senate. Made indications that he was a supporter of the Senate.

Tried negotiation and compromise with Pompey, even after crossing the Rubicon. Took the task of saving the Republic seriously, though this also suited his ambition and *dignitas*.

### The Course of the Civil War

- **Civil War** took place when Caesar led his men across the Rubicon “Let the die be cast”.
- Various reasons to explain Caesar’s willingness to take action: desire to protect tribunes, protect and enhance his dignitas, fear of prosecution back in Rome (*optimates* leaders made it clear they were out to get him), long term goal to make himself king and that he may have been in financial trouble → Unintentional fault of Caesar?
- **49 BC**: crossed the Rubicon with less than 50,000 men. Pompey on the other hand had the entire resources of the empire at his disposal.
- Caesar’s troops had the advantage of being ready for battle and seasoned veterans.
- Caesar sent Curio to Africa to deal with Pompey’s allies (P Attius Varus and King Juba I) and two legions destroyed.
- Caesar’s forces soon took Sicily and Sardinia; no grain shortages in Rome.
- **48 BC**: Caesar crossed the Adriatic with 7 legions and attempted to besiege Pompey at Petra.
- Pompey and Caesar met at Pharsalus (P had 34-40,000 troops while Caesar had about 22,000).
- Decisive victory for Caesar → Caesar lost 1,200 men; Pompey 6,000 and 24,000 were captured.
- Pompey escaped to Egypt but was murdered (beheading) by Ptolemy XIII to gain the favour of Caesar to whom he owed money.
- Caesar was outraged by the death (whole “no one kills him but me” mentality) and demanded a proper Roman burial → In Egypt Caesar became involved in dynastic politics.
- **47 BC**: Caesar was besieged in Alexandria by a large Egyptian force → saved by reinforcements led by Mithridates of Pergamum.
- Battle ensued “Battle of the Nile” and Ptolemy XIII was killed.
- Caesar led his forces out of Egypt through Syria and stored against Pharnaces son of Mithridates VI.
- Battle of Zela → Victory and the words “veni vidi vici”.
- Caesar almost beaten in Africa due to Pompey’s allies led by Labienus.
- Cato committed suicide battle of Thapsus → Caesar’s soldiers became undisciplined and butchered any enemy they found.

**Timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>49 BC</td>
<td>Dashed to the east coast but did not catch Pompey who crossed the Adriatic. Caesar turned back to Rome and controlled all Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 BC</td>
<td>Curio defeated by pro-Pompey forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49 BC</td>
<td>Caesar defeats pro-Pompey forces L. Africanus and M Petreius in Spain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 BC</td>
<td>Pompey reached Brundisium and crossed the Adriatic, Caesar followed, and the Armies met at Dyrrachium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48 BC</td>
<td>Caesar defeats Pompey at Battle of Pharsalus despite heavily outnumbered. Pompey flees to Egypt and is murdered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48/47 BC</td>
<td>Caesar besieged in Alexandria and becomes involved in Egyptian politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47 BC</td>
<td>Victorious battle of the Nile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
47 BC  From Egypt Caesar fought his way through Syria to Asia Minor where he defeated Pharnaces at Zela

47 BC  Caesar won a hard victory at Battle of Thapsus (Veni vidi vici)

45 BC  Caesar gains final victory at Battle of Munda

MARCH 45BC  Caesar is now master of the Roman World

2.10) Significance of Caesar’s dictatorship
- Caesar held dictatorship four times:
  1. 49 → for 11 days, when he ended debt problem in Rome.
  2. 48 → for one year. Pacified the east, relieved the rent crisis in Rome and pardoned his captured enemies.
  3. 46 → for 10 years. During this time he enacted number of reforms.
  4. 44 → made dictator for life (perpetual dictatorship).
- He also pardoned his captured enemies, showing the ‘clemency of Caesar’ E.g. towards Brutus and Cassius (and they showed him thanks by taking part in his assassination).
- “Caesar made distributions in excess of all his promises.” (Appian)
- Political reforms:
  - Put new members in the Senate, mostly people loyal to himself.
  - He changed the administrative rules so that a proprietor could rule a province for one year and a proconsul for two.
  - He divided the juries between senators and equites.
  - He banned illegal clubs and organizations.
  - He gave Latin status to much of Gaul, Spain and Sicily.
  - He rebuilt much of Rome.
  - He established twenty colonies for 100,000 citizens.
  - He drew up a charter of how Italy should be governed.
  - Economic reforms:
    - Cut the number of people on the corn dole.
    - He attacked unemployment by undertaking public work schemes, and by making it compulsory for 1/3 to be free farmers, not slaves.
    - He drastically cut provincial taxation.
    - Encouraged Italian agriculture.
    - Spent extravagantly on games and festivals. “He put on various shows.” (Appian)
    - Raised soldiers pay from 120 denarii to 224 denarii.
- Social reforms:
  - Laws against luxury
  - Introduced the new Julien Calendar.
- Things that were never finished:
  - Drain the Pontine marshes around Rome to get rid of malaria.
  - Attack the Dacians.
  - Invade Parthia.
Despite the statesmanlike nature of many of Caesar’s reforms, there was increasing anxiety about his autocratic position and a renewal of animosity amongst the *optimates* about his power. This inevitably led to his assassination.

“He took other honours which as a mere mortal he should have refused.” (Suetonius)

### JULIUS CAESAR’S POWERS

- 44BC granted right to appoint half Rome’s officials annually
- 49 BC and 48BC briefly held dictatorial power. In 46 BC he was made dictator for 10 years and in 45 BC for life
- He was consul from 48 BC and sole consul in 45BC
- Had the inviolability - sacrosanctity - of a tribune of the plebs but it’s highly unlikely that he had full tribunician authority
- From 46BC, at first for three years and then for life, he was given the powers of a sensor under his position as praefectus morum
- In 48BC he was granted the power to make war and peace without having to consult the senate

### JULIUS CAESAR’S HONOURS

- His statue was placed amongst those of kings and a temple was built to his clemency
- Caesar used the title Imperator from 49 BC till after he celebrated his triumph in 46 BC for his victories in Gaul and against other enemies. He took the title again after the Battle Of Munda in 45 BC
- The name of the month Quirinus was renamed July in his honour
- He was honoured with the title Pater Patriae (Father of the country)
- Since 63 BC he had been Pontifex Maximus and was soon allowed entry to all patrician priestly corporations
- Caesar was allowed to sit between the consuls in the senate even when not a consul

### 3) Wars and expansion, including:

#### 3.1) Pompey’s extraordinary commands and the Eastern Settlement

**Background**

- Pompey first came to prominence when he raised three legions in support of Sulla in 83 BC.
- He shared the consulship with Crassus in 70 BC and became one of three triumvirs in 60 BC.
- When Caesar crossed the Rubicon in 49 BC, Pompey was head of the Optimates forces that faced Caesar to ‘defend’ the Republic.
Pompey’s rise in his career was the result of his enormous success with a series of extraordinary commands; these cemented his reputation as a gifted military commander, helped build a large and loyal clientele, and catapulted him to popularity.

83 – 78 BC:

- At 23 (83 BC), Pompey raised a private army.
- Extreme youth, three legions raised on his own initiative.
- Given pro-praetorian imperium commands.
- Was illegal – qualifying magistracy never held – against the constitution and Cursus Honorum.
- He fought against the Marians, for Sulla.
- Sulla was impressed and so he called Pompey ‘magnus’ – meaning Great and was awarded a triumph (although Sulla was reluctant to this).

Pompey’s Extraordinary Commands

Victory Over Lepidus and Sertorius

77 – 72 BC

- Lepidus, a proconsul in Gaul, was against Sulla’s new constitution so he raised troops and prepared to march on Rome.
- The Roman Senate passed the Senatus Consultum Ultimum, which declared Lepidus a public enemy.
- Plutarch states that events “seemed to call for Pompey”, when the Senate gave Pompey pro-Praetorian Imperium to fight Lepidus. Catulus, the other Roman Consul, kills Lepidus.
- Pompey defeated Lepidus’ forces in northern Italy led by M Lunius Brutus. Brutus surrendered but Pompey executed him. Lepidus was defeated in Etruria, fled to Sardinia where he soon died. Proconsul, Catulus, ordered Pompey to disband his army and Pompey refused, demanding to be sent to Spain to help put down Sertorius’ revolt. The Senate gave in to the demand
- Pompey saw an opportunity to enhance his gloria. He delayed disbanding his army and persuading the senate to send him to Spain to fight Sertorius.
- The Senate had no choice but to grant another ‘illegal’ command to Pompey, proconsular imperium, as the two consuls for 77 BC were reluctant to face Sertorius.
- Pompey arrived in Spain in 76 to help Metellus, but lost two major battles (the Lauro 76, and Sucro River 75).
- Pompey convinces the Senate for 2 more legions, which allows him to maintain pressure on Sertorius.
- Sertorius is killed by his own lieutenant, Perpena, as he had become envious and “foolishly resentful of his authority” (Henessy).
- Perpena was defeated and executed by Pompey in 71 BC, and this brought the war to an end.
- Pompey’s treatment of Sertorius’ Spanish allies was fair and humane, and he granted Roman citizenship to those who had supported him.
- Pompey was given credit for the victory; barely any to Metellus.
- It is doubtful whether without Sertorius’ murder he would have been successful.
- His favourable reputation in Spain was due more to his diplomatic and organisational skill, as well as his liberal attitude to the Spaniards.

73 – 71 BC:
A serious gladiator and slave uprising in Italy occurred. This was led by the Thracian Gladiator Spartacus. Pompey was still in Spain.

Rome believed that this was an important threat; the 2 consuls in 73 were defeated.

Crassus, who had taken over in 73 BC, defeated Spartacus’ divided forces. He had 6000 rebels crucified along the Appian way.

Pompey was called upon to help on his way back from Spain in 71 BC.

Although Crassus had done all the work, Pompey managed to ‘gain his share’, by preventing 5000 fugitives from escaping to the north.

Pompey wrote to the senate “that while Crassus had certainly defeated the gladiators in a pitched battle, he himself had finished the war off “utterly and entirely” ” (Plutarch).

Both men wanted to be elected consul in 71 BC. Crassus was eligible but Pompey was 7 years too young.

The Senate ignored the Sullan constitution and allowed Pompey to stand for election. They granted him a “dispensation from the provisions of the revised lex Annalis of Sulla… exempting him from the usual age provision of 42 and experience of office…” (Bradley).

Crassus had to settle for the lesser honour of an ovation while Pompey was awarded his second triumph. Increasing jealousy.

After the 70 BC Consulship

Pompey immediately gained from his restoration of the powers of the tribunate.

- He declined to take a proconsular command in a province.
- 67 BC a Tribune, Gabinius give him the lex gabinia.
- Gave him Imperium infinitum (complete command) over the entire Mediterranean and for fifty miles inland, for three years, to conquer the pirates.
- Made Pompey the most powerful man in Rome.
- Was given 270 warships and a 100,000-man army.
- In three months, he had achieved his objective and the assembly acclaimed him a hero.

Pompey in the Mithridatic War and the Eastern settlement

Pompey was dealing with the pirates, and Lucullus was campaigning against Mithridates, king of Pontus. He had some success, but progress was slow.

Lucullus’ men resented him as they were not able to plunder, the equites objected to his fair tax arrangements in the east and the Roman people wanted the war to end.

The Senate was angry with Lucullus because he had invaded Armenia without its permission.

Thus, Pompey thought it best to head east after dealing with the pirates.

A tribune for 66 BC, Gaius Manilus introduced Lex Manilia to transfer Bithynia and Cilicia (Asia minor) to Pompey’s command, and even Cicero supported this law.

Pompey thus arguably had the greatest concentration of military power that has ever been put into the hands of one man in the Republic’s entire history.

Pompey had spectacular success; he advanced into Pontus and attacked Mithridates, the king fled to Armenia, but the Armenian king distrusted him so Mithridates was forced to move to the Crimea.

Pompey in the meantime dealt with Tigranes by Making Armenia a Roman ally.

Pompey fought in the Caucasus between the Black Sea and the Caspian Sea and made the various groups here dependent allies of Rome.
He reorganised the area north of Pontus, creating a new province.
In 64 BC he moved into Syria; Mithridates again tried to raise a revolt against Rome but faced his own internal revolt led by his own son Pharnaces.
Mithridates took his own life.
Enormous wealth followed Pompey back to Rome. Provinces now lined the coasts of the Black and Mediterranean Sea, acting as a future buffer against Parthia. Pompey also fostered the development of cities in the east which would make later administration and taxation much easier.

The Benefits of Pompey’s Eastern Settlements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR ROME</th>
<th>FOR THE PROVINCIALS</th>
<th>FOR POMPEY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Added to and consolidated Rome’s empire and sphere of influence.</td>
<td>• East received peace/security for the future.</td>
<td>• Pompey increased his overseas client base, which he would need for support in case of civil war.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Added 480 million sesterces in war spoils to the war treasury.</td>
<td>• Pompey became a patron for the provincials in their dealings with Rome.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Raised Rome’s annual revenue from tribute by 70%.</td>
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3.2) Caesar’s military activities in Gaul, Germany, and Britain

Intro

Caesar took his proconsular duties in 58 BC and would not step foot back in Rome again until 49 BC, following the outbreak of Civil War.
Caesar was granted control of the provinces of Gallia Cisalpina, Illyricum and Transalpine Gaul.
Cisalpine Gaul was close enough to Rome for Caesar to keep a close watch on political developments there, and having two Gallic provinces made it easier for Caesar to keep the rest of Gaul.
Since 121 BC Rome had a friendly relation with the Aedui people from the area west of the Rhine river.
The Aedui had faced a challenge from the Sequani people who invited the Germanic Suevi to aid them against the Aedui. Led by Ariovistus, the Suevi proved victorious, winning a massive victory in 61 BC. Distracted in their own matters, Rome did not come to the aid of the Aedui and accepted Ariovistus as ‘a friend of the Roman people.’
“History will be kind to me for I intend to write it” (Churchill) → Applies to Caesar and his Gallic Wars in which he writes about himself in third person.

Gaul During the Time of Caesar’s Proconsulship
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>ACTIONS</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
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![Map of Gaul and Vicinity, 1st Century B.C.](image-url)
| 58 BC | The Helvetii (modern day Switzerland) were planning to bring into Gaul their entire population of 400 000  
- Caesar stopped them crossing the Rhone river  
- Provoked war with the Helvetii, pursued them and defeated them at the Battle of Bibracte  
- The Suevi leader, Ariovistus, sought to expand his influence in Gaul  
- Caesar was not happy; went on the offensive and attacked his forces at Strasbourg, winning a significant victory |
|---|---|
|  | Caesar won a victory and forced Helvetii to return to and rebuilt their homes  
- The Helvetii accepted an alliance with Rome  
- Caesar tells us that there were 368,000 who had attempted to cross into Gaul. He ordered a census of those who returned: 110,000!  
- Ariovistus was driven back across the Rhine  
- Caesar was now the dominant power in Gaul and many Gallic tribes offered themselves as allies |

“... He commanded the Helvetii, Tulingi and Latobrigii to return to their own borders, whence they had started; and as they had just lost their produce, and had no means at home of sustaining hunger, he required the Allobroges to give a supply of corn. He ordered them to restore with their own hands the towns and villages they burnt”

(Caesar, Gallic wars book 1)

| 57 / 56 BC | Caesar now faced a threat from the Belgae tribes in the North who were seeking to remove the Romans from Gaul  
- One of these tribes, the Remi, had earlier submitted to Rome. **On the pretext of helping the Remi, Caesar went to war against the Belgae**  
- He won another great victory  
- Caesar conquered other tribes, such as the Nervii  
- Tribes from Brittany and Normandy in north and north-west Gaul submitted to Caesar  
- The Veneti broke their alliance with Caesar and attacked his forces  
- Caesar built a fleet and attacked and captured his enemies’ coastal strongholds |
|---|---|
|  | Caesar’s eventual success against the Veneti gave the Romans naval supremacy along the entire Gallic coast  
- The Veneti who had rebelled were treated very harshly (warning)  
- The Aquitani also submitted to Rome following the successful campaign of Publius Crassus (son of dead ex consul Crassus)  
- By the end of 56 BC, nearly all of Gaul under Roman control  
- Caesar was proving himself to be a military genius due to his victories  
- Politically, his stocks in Rome increased greatly |
“Caesar in as understated manner as he can muster, stated: “… And for those achievements, upon receipt of Caesar’s dispatches, a fifteen days thanksgiving was decreed, an honour that had previously fallen to no man””

(Caesar, Gallic Wars, Book 2)

| 56 / 55 BC | • The Germanic tribes, the Usipetes and Tencteri crossed the Rhine into Gaul  
• Caesar attacked them and annihilated them, killing women and children as well as the men  
• Later, in 55BC, Caesar crossed the English Channel to Britain to punish the British tribes who had supported his Gallic enemies | • In a dramatic gesture, Caesar built a 280-meter-long and 12-meter-wide bridge across the Rhine and crossed into Germany  
• After a brief raid he returned to Gaul, destroying the bridge in the process  
• Caesar’s first visit to Britain was a token effort and became nothing more than a brief reconnaissance of the south east coastal areas |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 54 BC | • Caesar crossed into Britain once more with a much larger force  
• He headed north, crossed the Thames and forced the submission of the British chieftain, Cassivellaunus. Caesar “straightly charged Cassivellaunus to do no hurt to Mandubracius or the Trinovantes” (allies of romans) | • Caesar had not taken over the south east but claimed the people there were now ‘subject’  
• Much tribute and many captives were sent back to Rome. This caused great excitement in the city  
• This was another great propaganda moment for Caesar |

“…Cassivellaunus was constrained, by numerous defeats he had suffered, by the devastation of his borders, and chiefly by his alarm at the revolt of the states, to send deputies to Caesar and treat for peace…Caesar had determined to winter on the continent…he made requisition of hostages, and determined what tribute Britain should pay yearly to Rome.”

(Caesar, Gallic Wars, Book 5)

| 54 / 53 BC | • During the winter, Caesar faced revolts from the Nervii, Treveri and Eburones led by Ambiorix in Belgian Gaul  
• One and a half legions were destroyed | • Caesar finally stamped out the revolt, but Gaul was now restive and unhappy with Roman control |
A major revolt against Roman rule came in central Gaul, led by Vercingetorix, a noble of the Averni. A Roman setback at Gergovia encouraged the Aedui to desert Rome and for the revolt to spread. For a short time, Caesar faced serious trouble in Gaul. Caesar managed to besiege Vercingetorix in the fortress of Alesia. Vercingetorix’s Gallic allies failed to break the siege and his forces were starved into submission. Caesar’s success at Alesia is considered one of the great military feats of the classical age. In his commentaries, he provides great detail of siege construction works, his tactics and eventual victory. Once Vercingetorix was defeated, any major threat to Roman control of Gaul disappeared.

“Caesar describes in dramatic fashion the later stages of the Battle of Alesia: “The enemy turned to flee; the cavalry met them in fight, and a great slaughter ensured… The Gauls fled from their camp””

(Caesar, Gallic Wars, Book 7)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>52 BC</th>
<th>51 / 50 BC</th>
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- Caesar achieved much in Gaul and his political position was strengthened.
- Circumvolution (built a wall to surround Alesia with traps and ditches and moats and one facing the outside to ward of the reinforcements).
- He now equaled to, if not reached a greater status than Pompey in military terms due to his display of tactical genius and strategy.
- Over 800 Gallican towns captured.
- Caesar’s presence in Gaul for a decade prevented his optimate enemies in the Senate from prosecuting him for his alleged misdeeds when he was consul in 59 BC. The threat of persecution once Caesar returned to Rome as a private citizen became of the key factors that provoked Civil War in 49 BC.

3.3) Significance of Mithridatic and Parthian wars

The First Mithridatic War: 90-85 BC

- Mithridates is the King of Pontus → he was expanding territory, but this was ended by Sulla’s forces.
Mithridates took advantage of Rome, while they were embroiled in the Social War.

The Social War was between Marius and the Optimates and ultimately lead to Sulla’s dictatorship.

The First Mithridatic War was a result of:

- Mithridates removing Nicomedes, the King of Bithynia, and reoccupying Cappadocia.
- As a result of this Rome sent M. Aquilius to restore Nicomedes. This led to Mithridates taking the offensive against Nicomedes and Aquilius and sweeping into Asia Minor soon gaining control.

After Mithridates gained control, he ordered for all Italians in Asia Minor to be massacred, resulting in the death of 150,000 people.

Mithridates then moved to Europe, his agent Aristion leading a revolution against Athens.

Soon Mithridates was in control of all of southern and most of central Greece.

Believing that Mithridates was a threat to their power in the east, Rome sent Sulla and 30,000 men to face them. This led to Rome retaking Athens and Piraeus in 86 BC.

Sulla then faced a Mithridatic force of 90,000, led by Archelaus in Chaeronea. Despite being outnumbered, Sulla won. Then both sides met at Orchomenus, and Roman success ended Mithridates European expeditionary force.

The Second Mithridatic War: 83-82 BC

After peace was achieved by Rome, following the First Mithridatic War, the Treaty of Dardanus was implemented, and Sulla handed over the command of the Roman troops in Asia Minor to L. Licinius Murena.

The cities that remained loyal to Rome were rewarded, but those who supported Mithridates were punished. Losing their freedom, paying heavy taxes, some even had their walls razed to the ground. A fine of 200 Talents was imposed, along with this several of these cities were suffering from attacks from the pirates.

“Thus, when he sailed to Greece in 84, Sulla left debt and despair behind him in Asia” – Scullard.

On the belief that Mithridates was rearming in contravention with the Treaty of Dardanus, Murena invaded Pontus.

Because Murena was given no extra support from Rome (because the civil war was raging), he was defeated.

Following this, Mithridates sent an appeal to Sulla who was quick to disavow Murena’s actions.

The Third Mithridatic War: 75-63 BC

Fearing that Rome would block Mithridates from getting out of the black sea, because they were promised Bithynia by the king following his death, the Third Mithridatic War took place.

Rome’s forces were commanded by Cotta and Lucullus.

- Cotta led naval forces against Mithridates but was defeated.
- This led to Lucullus bearing the brunt of the Roman Campaign.

Lucullus won a significant victory against a major Pontic force at Cabira.
Lucullus did not pursue Mithridates. Instead he reorganised the administrative set-up in Asia Minor.

“.... His debt settlement earned him enduring gratitude among the Asiatic cities, which instituted special festivals in his honour....” – M. Cary.

In 69 BCE, Lucullus moved against Tigranes, being victorious despite him only having 16,000 troops and not receiving permission from the Senate.

In 67 BC, Lucullus’ lieutenant, Triarius, was attacked by Pontic forces led by Mithridates. Roman losses exceeded 7000, but Mithridates was badly wounded during this battle.

Following the passing of Lex Manilla, Pompey replaced Lucullus.

Pompey won a major victory at Nicopolis, where the remaining Pontic forces were slaughtered.

Mithridates escaped, and raised more forces in Crimea, but his regime caused a rebellion, led by his son.

**The Bosporan Rebellion: 47BC**

- 20 years following the death of his father (Mithridates), Pharnaces maintained cordial relations with Rome, swearing his allegiance to Rome.
- He was granted the Bosporan Kingdom, however due to the Civil War of 49, he tried to annex Colchis and Armenia.
- A Roman Force led by Calvinus fought his forces at Nicopolis but was defeated.
- Despite being embroiled in the Civil War, Caesar fought Pharnaces at the Battle of Zela.
- Pharnaces escaped, but in 47 BC he died either in battle or after capture.

**The Parthian Wars**

- Formed in 250 BC, Parthia gradually extended its control from the Euphrates River to the Indus to the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulf. (War of Expansion).
- This issue involved Pompey in the 60s, Crassus in the 50s, M. Antony in the 30s, and was finally settled by Augustus in 19 BC.
- “.... The Parthians now stood at long intervals from one another and began to shoot their arrows from all sides at once ....For the Parthians shot as they fled....they do this most effectively; and it is a very clever thing to seek safety while still fighting, and to take away the shame of flight” – Plutarch.

**The Conflict Between Rome and Parthia**

66 BC: Phraates, sided with Pompey in the Mithridatic war. Phraates believed this would bring him land, but Pompey reneged and partitioned the lands instead.

56 BC: More trouble between Parthia and Rome → Gabinius offended Orodes II by supporting as a claimant to the throne his rebellious brother. Orodes dealt with threat & Gabinius took no further action.

54-53 BC: Crassus became proconsul of Syria, and took on Parthia hoping to emulate Pompey, but was defeated at Carrhae.
Fearing Surenas, who was head of a Parthian archer force, Orodes had him killed. He took Mesopotamia but did not attempt to attack Syria until 51 BCE, he made no attempt to take advantage of the civil war.

36 BC: Mark Antony invaded Parthia; was a disaster, the Parthians destroyed his supplies and he retreated. Antony lost much of his prestige and suffered heavy military losses.

19 BC: Augustus/Octavian restored Roman pride by sealing a diplomatic deal with Parthia.

4) Fall of the Republic, including:

4.1) Impact of Caesar’s assassination

Impact

- 60 senators, led by Cassius and Decimus Brutus, conspired to assassinate Caesar. They attacked him on the Ides of March (the 15th) and stabbed him 23 times.
- Antony was placed in position of immense power as consul. The political situation was volatile. Antony took control of Rome using Caesar’s centurions. He restored order, reached a compromise with the conspirators and began to ratify Caesar’s legislation.
  - Caesar’s will was read, which named Octavian as his heir. In addition, each Roman received 75 denarii and Caesar’s gardens were made into a public park.
- Public funeral was approved by Senate; Antony’s presentation of Caesar’s blood-soaked toga and will enraged the people, who turned against Senate with aid of Caesarean soldiers.
- Brutus and Cassius fled Rome.
- Antony controlled the disorder/rioting, imposing his authority over the city.
- Conspirators believed that, with death of Caesar, senatorial govt. would automatically resume. In reality, republic was dead → more civil wars occurred, as well was formation of Second Triumvirate.
- The arrival of Gaius Octavianus (Octavian) caused disruption between Antony and the Senate as Octavian publicly challenged Antony for not avenging Caesar’s death and accused Antony of disloyalty and demanded his share of Caesar’s estate (left to him in the will).
- Antony had spent Caesar’s money and he ignored Octavian (as he was only 18 years old).
- Caesar’s veterans divided their loyalty. The troops liked Octavian as he was Caesar’s true heir, and because he wanted to punish the assassins.
- The Senate underestimated people’s affection for Caesar and thus his heir.

4.2) Formation, activities, and breakdown of the Second Triumvirate

Formation

- In 43BC Octavian met with Antony and Lepidus to reconcile their differences and ‘exchange enmity for friendship’. They formed the Second Triumvirate (ST).
They appointed themselves triumvirs for 5 years. The *Truimviri Republicae Constituendae*, the formal document which gave them power equal to the consuls, was passed by the Tribal Assembly. Coins were issued which carried portraits of each of them.

They then distributed the Roman Empire among themselves. Antony had Gaul; Lepidus had Spain, Octavian took Africa, Sardinia and Sicily.

Carried out proscriptions to destroy their enemies and to provide money and land for their troops.

Caesar’s death had shown that clemency did not pay, so the triumvirs eliminated their enemies, including 300 senators, 2000 equites. Meaning the end of senatorial supremacy. The most notable victim of their proscriptions was Cicero.

The triumvirs deified Caesar, appointed Lepidus to the consulship, and Octavian and Antony prepared to face Brutus and Cassius in Macedonia.

**Activities**

**BATTLE OF PHILIPPI:**

- The successful campaign against Brutus and Cassius marked the end of the Senate, and most of its leaders died in battle. Those who escaped fled to join Sextus Pompey (Pompey’s son), and an opponent of Octavian for many years.
- After Philippi, Lepidus was assigned Africa, Octavian went to the Adriatic region and Antony went to the East to settle rewards for his veterans. He made Roman presence felt by exacting tax from client kingdoms. Cleopatra met him in Cilicia; he became infatuated with her and went back to Egypt with her.
- In Italy there was a breakdown of authority. Civil strife and famine occurred in Rome and many Italian towns.
- Antony’s brother Lucius and Antony’s wife Fulvia schemed against Octavian and wrote to Antony, they accused Octavian of trying to control events in Rome and of buying up favours with the legions by settling them with land in Italy. Plutarch believes this was Fulvia’s way of getting Antony away from Cleopatra.
- Lucius fought a lengthy battle with the armies of Octavian and Agrippa across the fortifications at Perusia, Lucius claimed he wanted to bring back the autocratic government which the Triumvirate had dissolved. Octavian eventually wore Lucius down and he came to terms of submission.

**TREATY OF BRUNDISIUM, 40BC:**

- Octavian then took the provinces of Gaul and Spain securing six more legions, which gave him a total of 11.
- Antony became suspicious of Octavian, so he allied himself with Sextus Pompey and ordered him to attack Italy. Octavian (between bouts of illness) and Agrippa maintained Brundsidium against Antony’s troops.
- Octavian and Antony were locked in a ‘cold war’ of hostilities at Brundsidium. It was the efforts of the soldiers and Antony’s mother, together with the death of Fulvia, and the arranged marriage of Octavia to Antony, which saved the triumvirate from dissolving into open civil war. Antony did not confess that he had already married Cleopatra.
- Octavian and Antony came to an agreement and made a new division of the Roman Empire.

**TREATY OF MISENUM:**
• Rome was in famine because traders on the Mediterranean could not get past Pompey’s fleets and neither Antony nor Octavian could break the stalemate.
• They eventually gave in to Pompey’s demands and promised him joint consulship with Octavian in the following year and he was assigned Sicily and Sardinia and Corsica and Achea. The famine was thus relieved.

CONFERENCE AT TARENTUM:
• Antony and Octavian made an exchange of forces to maintain their good relationship and serve each other’s needs.
• E.g. Antony gave Octavian 120 ships and Octavian promised 20,000 Italian legionaries.
• They signed an agreement to maintain the Triumvirate for a further 5 years.

BATTLE AGAINST SEXTUS POMPEY:
• Lepidus and Octavian made preparations to fight Pompey in a naval battle, but an unseasonal storm wrecked many ships.
• Pompey engaged Agrippa’s forces, suffered a setback, and then surprised Octavian’s fleet, nearly decimating it. Octavian barely escaped.
• Pompey challenged Octavian to ‘a win or lose all’ naval battle but Agrippa’s strategy eventually won the day, but Pompey escaped.
• Lepidus was accused of intriguing with Pompey, Octavian attacked his camp and many of Lepidus’ soldiers went over to Octavian. Lepidus was deprived of his command and returned to Rome.

Breakdown
o Technically, the Second Triumvirate ended with the sidelining of Lepidus, but lived on legally for a few years longer. Whilst Antony was in the east, Octavian took measures to please the senatorial and equestrian orders. He was seeking goodwill. “In case a clash with Antonius should come, and no doubt Octavian intended that it should come; he had a right to the whole empire as his father's heir” (Jones A D H Augustus, 1980).

o Antony’s behaviour in the east did much to alienate Roman opinion, an alienation which Octavian’s effective propaganda did much to reinforce.

o Between 35-31 BC, Rome drifted closer to a renewal of Civil War.

REASONS FOR WAR:
• The past century of the Republic’s history had revealed a governmental system that was dysfunctional. Any hope of a return to the halcyon days of senate supremacy was gone. Rome’s destiny lay with the general who had the strongest forces.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OCTAVIAN</th>
<th>ANTONY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Octavian was confident, ambitious, powerful and had a belief in the destiny he believed entitled to himself due to his name.</td>
<td>Mark Antony was a skilled general, had loyal troops and had no intention of bending to the will of Octavian or the senate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Octavian’s position was strengthened by the defeat of Sextus Pompey

Both Antony’s military position and reputation were weakened by his failure against Parthia

Octavian cleverly presented us clash with Antony not as Roman against Roman, but as West versus East, civilised Roman versus Barbarian Egypt. Cleopatra as the enemy (Propaganda war)

Antony’s political involvement with Cleopatra and his apparent romantic infatuation with her made him an easy target for Octavian. He was seen as un-roman and willing to hand over parts of the empire to the Queen. Antony’s treatment of Octavia was both a personal and political affront to Octavian.

4.3) Rivalry and Civil War between Mark Antony and Octavian: role of Cleopatra VII, Battle of Actium

The Civil War

Upon the death of Caesar and the defeat and revenge of Brutus, the Second Triumvirate was created. After their peaceful workings, the document of legal arrangement was to expire in 32 BC and the three (Lepidus, Octavian and Mark Antony) were sent into a state of turmoil.

Tensions began to arise once Octavian uncovered Antony’s will: his undercover affair with Cleopatra and the wavering loyalty towards his wife Octavia. Octavian became enraged by the unloyalty of Antony to both his sister but also to their empire.

Octavian began to revert to leading the Senate and Consuls in 32 BC. Noticing the lead of Octavian, Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus and C. Sosius (both Antony supporters) sought to bring down Octavian.

The War Developing

While outside of Rome, Sosius launched an attack on Octavian’s legal position to the convened Senate.

The precise nature of the attack is unknown however, it is assumed that Antony’s supporters wished to limit the power of Octavian and his army.

What was failed to appreciate was the support of Octavian’s army. They “proceeded to turn the tables on the sitting consuls” (Appian).

“In launching his own attack on Antony, it was clear to the Roman civilians that the Roman world was once again heading towards civil war.” (Appian).

Despite his lack of legal right to rule, Octavian was clear that he was the leader of the West, despite the fact that the challenges opposed by the supporters of Antony. The panic had arisen amongst his supporters where they failed to dispute him. As many as 300 Senators fled to Antony rather than attempt to oppose the front they had against Octavian.

News returned to Octavian that Antony had intended to set up separate Eastern Senates in Alexandria that would govern the east part of the Empire.
- Tensions were enhanced upon Antony’s divorce of Octavia, sister to Octavian, but also the ‘peace gift’ that would align them in power. Denouncing her in the name of Cleopatra caused the xenophobic Octavian to become completely enraged.
- “Octavian knew that the war was coming and began to rally support among the masses.” (Appian).
- By fortunate circumstances, two important supporters had defected to Octavian’s cause and returned to Rome about this time. L. Munatius and M. Titius brought word to Octavian that Antony had within his will incriminating evidence of anti-Roman and pro-Cleopatra stances. Illegally seizing it, Octavian read:
  - Caesarion as Caesar’s biological son and proposed heir.
  - Propped inheritance that would go to his children and none of those around him.
  - The desire to buried with Cleopatra in Alexandra.
- Tensions grew at the uncovering of Antony’s wishes to be buried in a land that was foreign to him and not the place he had grown and established life. Already suspecting Antony of abandoning Rome for Cleopatra, the people saw his rebuttal of Roman cremation tradition and favouring of eternal burial with Cleopatra as proof of him falling under the Queen’s way.
- Octavian seized this opportunity to gain from the people’s sentiment and encourage the rumours that followed. Everything that played in favour for Cleopatra would surely do nothing but favour Octavian.
- His reserved intentions however knew that Antony was to still have some supporters.
- Civil war was the only benefit for Octavian which would never be popular. He however wished to make it easy for Antony supporters to willingly switch sides without seemingly being disloyal.
- Rather than announce war with his rival Antony, Octavian declared war on the hated Queen Cleopatra, the perceived cause of all the trouble. As both sides geared up for the conflict that would seem to be the largest and costliest ever for the Roman state, a remarkable show of public support took place.
- The people of Italy and the western provinces swore on oath of loyalty directly to Octavian, rather than the Roman state. Though this was likely a greatly orchestrated political manoeuvre by Octavian, a now brilliant politician, it had the desired effect of at least giving him the public support he needed to take the nation to war.
- While by no means presenting Octavian with any sort of legal power over the Roman world, it did help to clarify for everyone that not only did Octavian maintain power through the legions, but also through the good will of the Roman people.

The Role of Cleopatra VII

- In this period, Egypt was regarded as the breadbasket of the Ancient World. Their great Queen Cleopatra began her ultimate power plays in order to gain full control of not only Egypt but parts of the renowned Roman Empire.
- Antony had met with Cleopatra of Egypt as early as 41 BC in Tarsus, and while Octavian struggled with his own problems, including Antony’s brother, in Italy, Antony was seemingly satisfied to allow the east to rest in political turmoil. He spent the winter of 41 and 40 BC with Cleopatra in Egypt, where she bore him twin children, and their affair blossomed.
o On the political stage, the situation with Cleopatra was beginning to cast Antony as a sell-out against Roman culture, and Octavian would cease at the opportunity to publicly chastise him. While still married to Octavia, with whom Antony had 2 daughters; Cleopatra bore him another son in 36 BC. The following year, Octavia brought reinforcements from her brother to aid Antony, but he sent her back to Italy in an obvious slight against Octavian, and the shaky peace was beginning to unravel.

o Antony had seemingly begun to take to eastern culture on a grand scale, adorning himself in Egyptian dress, practicing eastern customs while ignoring those of Rome, and doling out great gifts to Cleopatra. Among these gifts was the division of the eastern empire under Cleopatra's children. Each child, Caesarion the son of Caesar included, was placed as regent of various kingdoms effectively making Cleopatra the Queen mother of several Roman territories. By 34 BC, Antony seized Armenia from his former ally Artavasdes and staged a magnificent spectacle in Alexandria to commemorate the event.

o In these "Donations of Alexandria" Antony declared Cleopatra as the Queen of Kings, and Caesarion as King of Kings. In so doing, he sought to undermine Octavian's claim as Caesar's heir by recognizing Caesarion as Caesar's legitimate son. This was seemingly the final straw against Octavian, and the propaganda campaign in Rome against Antony's outrages began in earnest. Antony was portrayed as a pawn of Cleopatra, the foreign Queen who, it was said, sought to become Queen of Rome. Antony had declared himself the human incarnation of Dionysus (Bacchus in Roman mythos), and Cleopatra claimed to be Aphrodite (Venus). This had relevance in Egyptian culture as the two Greek gods were often associated with the gods of nobility Osiris and Isis.

o While initially, these declarations seem to have little impact on Antony's supporters in the east, they did allow Octavian to vilify him in the west. The gifting of client kingdoms to important foreign magistrates was certainly nothing new in Roman culture but placing so much territory within the influence of one royal family certainly was cause for consternation. Antony seemingly married Cleopatra, at least by 32 BC, even before officially divorcing (the mistreated virtuous Roman wife) Octavia in the same year. Unlike Caesar before him, who propped Cleopatra up politically, but refused to acknowledge her in any official capacity under Roman law, (as it was illegal for a Roman to marry a foreigner), Antony plunged headfirst into direct enmity with Octavian. Though Octavian would use political guile to gain support for his cause, the door to the final civil war of the Roman Republic was wide open.

The Battle of Actium

o “When Antony failed to dislodge Octavian's army, he abandoned land operations, and his situation quickly deteriorated: he was short of supplies, desertions increased, and his men became restless. .... His real purpose is not clear: probably he hoped to fight a full-scale action, with the secondary plan of trying to break through to Egypt if this failed. Others believe that he was merely trying to escape from the blockade. However that may be, on 2 September Antony drew up his fleet off Actium in three squadrons...with Cleopatra's behind near the shore...at this point for some reason his centre and left wing began to retire. Antony was thus forced to signal to Cleopatra, who had the war-chest aboard, to escape. He broke off the engagement and managed to join
her with forty ships. As they sailed off to Egypt, the rest of his fleet was captured or surrendered.” – H.H. Scullard.

- The Civil War between Antony and Octavian seemed assured of creating a conflict much bigger than intended. With both sides holding massive armies at their own disposal and Antony having the added support of Egypt and the eastern client kings most importantly, Cleopatra.

- By 31 BC Octavian’s war against his rival, “though characterised as being against the Egyptian Queen” (Appian) had been worked into a stalemate.

- Antony had marched his army into Greece where he planned to oppose Octavian’s advance, and the two considerable forces began to take up position against one another.

- Antony’s fleet was made up of large vessels, though with inexperienced crews and commanders.

- Octavian’s fleet of smaller, more manoeuvrable vessels was under the command of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa, the proven admiral who excelled in the war against Sextus Pompey. While Octavian crossed the Adriatic to confront Antony near Actium in Epirus, Agrippa menaced Antony’s supply lines with the fleet. Octavian wisely refused to give battle with the army, and Antony did likewise at sea. As the summer waned, both armies seemed to settle in for a battle of attrition.

- The stalemate was working in the favour of Octavian. The presence of Cleopatra with the Roman Army of Antony was making the loyalty of his men a considerable challenge. For Antony’s men, facing the son of Caesar, a god, was bad enough, but facing a Roman army while under the influence of an Egyptian Queen seemed an impossible situation.

- Defections from all quarters of Antony’s support, to Caesar’s side, were occurring in massive numbers. Agrippa’s blockade against Antony tightened, and disease swept through Antony’s camp. Common legionaries, commanders and Senators switched sides as the inevitable victory for Octavian seemed only a matter of time. By the time the calendar approached September of 31 BC, only 3 Consular magistrates remained with Antony.

- On September 2, 31 BC Antony desperately attempted a breakout with his fleet to escape the blockade and regroup in Egypt. With his large ships, he sailed out of the gulf of Actium and engaged Agrippa’s prepared navy.

- Though Antony’s under matched forces fought valiantly, they were simply unable to counter Agrippa’s vast superiority. Under the watchful eye of both armies on land, and as the tide turned against Antony, Cleopatra seized an opportunity to flee the battle with her own ships that were held in reserve. As a gap opened in Agrippa’s blockade, she funneled through, and was soon closely followed by Antony’s command ships.

- The commanders of Antony’s land forces, which were supposed to follow him to Asia, promptly surrendered without a fight. Octavian stood as the master of the Roman world, east and west and to commemorate his victory, he founded the city of Nicopolis (City of Victory) on the site.

- All was not over just yet, however. Trouble with Octavian’s veterans forced him to abandon pursuit of his eastern rival, and final victory would be delayed for a year. Octavian also wisely decided to put an end to any chance for Antony to regain strength from eastern kings by marching through the eastern provinces rather than sail directly
to Egypt. Meanwhile, Antony attempted to secure an army in Cyrene from L. Pinarius Scarpus, but Scarpus refused and offered loyalty to Octavian.

- Trapped in Egypt with what remained of his former army, Antony and Cleopatra bided their time awaiting Octavian's arrival. As Octavian marched through Asia, Syria and Judaea establishing his authority, Scarpus sailed to Cyrenaica and moved east towards Egypt to pinch Antony between a two-pronged front.

- As Octavian approached Antony and Cleopatra's defenses in Alexandria, Antony enjoyed one last victory, albeit a minor one, in his heralded career as a general. His men chased off a small contingent of Octavian's cavalry as they scouted their enemy, but this was a short-lived success. As the opposing armies prepared for what seemed to be the final battle after nearly 20 semi continuous years of Civil War, the engagement turned out to be an anticlimactic affair, much like events at Actium a year earlier.

- Antony's cavalry and fleet surrendered to Octavian first and were shortly followed by the infantry, once again without major engagement of any sort. As Antony looked on, during this fateful first day of what would become known as the month of August, he was abandoned by his army and his efforts to become sole ruler of the Roman world were lost to the young man who was virtually unknown just a few short years before.

- Cleopatra fled into a mausoleum, which she had previously constructed as her likely final resting place, with little hope of escaping the inevitable. Antony, knowing the game was finally over, finally accepted his fate and attempted to fall on his sword as Roman tradition often dictated. According to the ancients, however, he was not entirely successful and with an open wound in his belly, was taken to join Cleopatra.

- Here, in events immortalized over a millennium later by Shakespeare, Antony did finally succumb to his wound and supposedly died in his lovers' arms, leaving her completely at the mercy of Octavian. Cleopatra did not however immediately join her lover in death and instead entered into last ditch negotiations with Octavian. Over the period of just over a week, she probably realized that her only fate was to march in Octavian's triumphal parade and her children would never be allowed to maintain any sort of hereditary control of Egypt or other eastern Kingdoms. On August 9, 30 BC, Cleopatra ended her own life and left Egypt to the fate of Octavian's will.

- Within a month Octavian was named Pharaoh, and Egypt became his personal possession. Though administered in similarity to a province, the personal rule of Egypt and the title of Pharaoh would become a permanent right of ascension of each Roman Emperor. While Octavian was now the clear and unequivocal force in the Roman world, there was still some minor unfinished business to take care. Though executions of Antony's supporters were limited, likely to bring 20 years of war to a final closure, an unfortunate few still had to pay with their lives. Among those executed was Caesarion, Cleopatra's oldest son by Caesar, as it was a necessity to avoid any potential hereditary claims or conflict of interest. Cleopatra's other children by Antony were too young to be of much concern, would eventually march in Octavian's triumph and were allowed to live. Antony's oldest son by his wife Fulvia was killed, but his younger son by Fulvia was taken in by his step-mother Octavia and he was seemingly favoured by Octavian's entire family. Years later, however, he would be executed in 2 BC for his scandalous affair with Julia, the daughter of the man who would then be Augustus.

- Backed by the name of Caesar and the loyalty of his adoptive father's troops, Octavian finished what Caesar had started, yet was unable to complete: the final unification of
Rome under a single man. At the age of 33, the Republic was finally ready to succumb to imperial authority. Though there was still some work to be done, opposition simply no longer existed in any meaningful form. Years of civil war, and hundreds of years of social strife had broken the will of resistance. Octavian rose above all, not just for being in the right place at the right time, but by expanding upon the strengths, and learning from the weaknesses of his predecessors, along with playing the political game with an unmatched determination.

“...In the summer of 30 he (Octavian) reached Egypt and occupied Alexandria, which Antony could not defend: his remaining troops had deserted. Hearing a rumour that Cleopatra was dead, Antony stabbed himself but survived long enough to die in her arms. Cleopatra was taken prisoner and when she found she could not retain her kingdom for her children, she too died, at the bite of the asp which the Egyptians believed deified its victim.” – Scullard.