

The second triumvirate

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The Second Triumvirate 43BC-36BC MAIN POINTS: 1. Octavian attempts to secure his inheritance 2. Octavian's Temporary Collaboration with the republicans 3. Octavian's first consulship 4. Octavian and Anthony join forces 5. Creation of the Second Triumvirate 6. Formation of a body to run the state 7. Beat the liberators 8. Then, divided the empire, Anthony the West and Octavian the East 9. However, tensions quickly arising Octavian attempts to secure his inheritance * Octavian was in Macedonia at the time of Caesar's assassination and did not learn of his inheritance till his return to Rome. * Despite his parents' opposition, Octavian decided to agree to the inheritance and also took the name Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. * He now had two aims: * Avenge his father's death * Prove worthy of such a father and even surpass his achievements. * As he moved through Italy to Rome, Caesar's friends and legions welcomed the young man. * Octavian did not expect the hostile reception from his father's best friend, Marc Antony. This was shown in two ways: * Antony attempted to block his adoption * Refused to hand over Caesar's money * Octavian was obliged to honour Caesar's will and borrowed and sold his property to ensure he could pay 75 denarii to each person as instructed by Caesar. This won him great popularity. * He followed this up with games at his own expense. During these games a comet was seen and the common people believed that this according to Octavian's memoirs ' signified the soul of Caesar being received into the divinities of the immortal gods.' His name was now connected to Caesar and added to his prestige. Octavian's Temporary Collaboration with the republicans The political situation in Rome at this time was extremely unstable * Antony threatened the state due to his attack of Decimus Brutus at Mutina, and

Cicero urged active support of Brutus. * The senate had NO legions in Italy * But Octavian at his own expense and with Caesar's veterans had collected a number of legions. In fact, two of Antony's legions in Macedonia had gone over to Octavian. * Cicero who had indicated a lack of trust for Octavian when original returned to Rome now praised him. * He urged the senate to give Octavian propraetorian powers in order to assist the two consul Hiritius and Pansa against Antony. * Cicero attempts to use Octavian to keep the traditions of the republic, even overlooking Octavian's illegal actions. * Brutus was upset by Cicero's actions even though they were in the interests of the republic. As Octavian would later comment in his Res Gestae, he announced that the imperium he would get by Cicero would change his life, as he was to never give it up till his death. * The senate ordered Antony to give up the Cisalpine Gaul, when he refused the consuls and Octavian marched against him. Antony was soundly defeated and fled to Transalpine Gaul. Both consuls were killed which left Octavian as sole commander. Octavian's first consulship * The senate and Cicero had made a huge mistake! * They were free of the immediate threat of Antony, whom they declared a public enemy; they now attempted to discard Octavian. * They awarded Decimus Brutus a triumph and appointed him commander of the forces against Antony. * Plus, they gave supreme command of the eastern provinces to M. Brutus and Crassus, Caesar's murderers. * Antony's position had been strengthened by the support of Lepidus, the commander from Spain and Gaul. * Realising that if he supported the republicans he would not be able to gain revenge for his father's death, he refused to surrender his legions. * He wanted to be consul. An outrageous claim, as he was only 20!

Thus Cicero vigorously argued against him. * The senate and Cicero continued to refuse Octavian's demand. So he sent 400 troops to demand the consulship. * He then marched on Rome, seized the treasury in order to pay his troops and made arrangements for consular elections. * When these were held with him along with his cousin Quintus Pedius, they revoked the decree outlawing Antony, legalised Octavian's adoption, condemned Caesar's assassins in a court. Octavian and Anthony join forces * Octavian in a difficult position in 44. Anthony in Gaul gathering a huge amount of legions. The liberators in the east securing 20 legions. * Thus, Octavian is the weakest player on the field. * He therefore, put out some feelers with Anthony and the men met and patched up their differences. * They met in Anthony's province and they enjoyed a two-day meeting. * They decided to join forces and secure the alliances of the Caesarean faction. * Second Triumvirate normally formed on 27th of November 43BC. * 'Board of Three for the Organization of the State with Consular Power' Triumviri Rei Publicae Constituendae Consulari Potestate * This effectively gave them basically dictatorial power over the state and they received these special powers for 5 years. * The only legally binding Triumvirate in the republic and they would rule and dominate Roman politics for the next decade. * Elections not held, the triumvirs simply nominated magistrates 5 years in advance. * The Second Triumvirate got off to a bloody start. They needed money, they had promised their troops money for their loyalty. The triumvirs therefore needed money and land. * Proscriptions! Such measures had not been seen since Sulla. The list of the proscribed would be placed in a public space, normally the Forum, and then it was free for all in killing these people. They could kill

anyone: friends, family, poor, rich could kill the prescribed and be rewarded for doing so. The property of these people were confiscated and given to the prescribers. * Sulla at least had a vast amount of enemies and his proscriptions intended to secure his power. * However, the triumvirs of 43BC could not claim the same situation. Most of their enemies had fled to the east and thus their proscriptions were mainly based around securing property to pay their troops. * Appian writing in the second century AD, " Marcus Lepidus, Marcus Antonius, and Octavius Caesar, chosen by the people to set in order and regulate the republic, do declare that, had not perfidious traitors begged for mercy and when they obtained it become the enemies of their benefactors and conspired against them, neither would Gaius Caesar have been slain by those whom he saved by his clemency after capturing them in war, whom he admitted to his friendship and upon whom he heaped offices, honours, and gifts; nor should we have been compelled to use this wide-spread severity against those who have insulted us and declared us public enemies. Now, seeing that the malice of those who have conspired against us and by whose hands Gaius Caesar suffered, cannot be mollified by kindness, we prefer to anticipate our enemies rather than suffer at their hands. Let no one who sees what both Caesar and ourselves have suffered consider our action unjust, cruel, or immoderate. " * " So be it then! Let no one harbour any one of those whose names are hereto appended, or conceal them, or send them away, or be corrupted by their money. Whoever shall be detected in saving, or aiding, or conniving with them we will put on the list of the proscribed without allowing any excuse or pardon. Let those who kill the proscribed bring us their heads and receive the following

rewards: to a free man 25, 000 Attic drachmas per head; to a slave his freedom and 10, 000 Attic drachmas and his master's right of citizenship. Informers shall receive the same rewards. In order that they may remain unknown the names of those who receive the rewards shall not be inscribed in our registers." Such was the language of the proscription of the triumvirate as nearly as it can be rendered from Latin into Greek. " * The men they proscribed was shocking. Appian states, ' Lepidus was the first to begin the work of proscription, and his brother Paulus was the first on the list of the proscribed. Antony came next, and the second name on the list was that of his uncle, Lucius Caesar. These two men had been the first to vote Lepidus and Antony public enemies.' * Octavian then had to agree to Cicero being placed on the list. Anthony and Cicero had an oratory dispute in late 44. But Cicero had introduced Octavian and legitimised his ascension to power. Cicero had become an inimicus, a personal enemy of Anthony. And Anthony wanted him dead. * ' Cicero, who had held supreme power after Caesar's death, as much as a public speaker could, was proscribed, together with his son, his brother, and his brother's son and all his household, his faction, and his friends.' Appian * Cicero attempted to flee via a small boat, however, he got motion sickness and was forced back to shore. He was then set upon by a gang. These men were led by Gaius Popillius Laenas who Cicero had defended in court and had secured his acquittal. * He attempted to flee but the death squad got him before he could leave, Cicero stretched out his neck and he was decapitated. It was supposedly a messy killing because Laenas was not an experienced executioner. * CICERO DEAD 7 DECEMBER 43BC. * Anthony rejoiced when he received the hands and head

of Cicero. He nailed them to the speaking platform in the forum. Ironically the place where Cicero had made so many of his famous speeches. * Caesar was declared a deity (god) and this had the added advantage for Octavian because he was therefore, a son of god - ' Divi Filius'. Which only added to his authority. * Armies were now paid and the triumvirs could go to the east and wage war against the liberators. Anthony and Octavian would go and fight while Lepidus would remain in Rome. * The Caesarean forces vs. the Republican fought in the double Battle of Philippi in September 42BC. * Octavian was ill and stayed mainly in his tent. * Thus, it was Anthony that mainly orchestrated the defeat of the Republican forces. * Cassius and Brutus both committed suicide in the wake of the defeat at Philippi. * This left the triumvirate in sole control of Rome but this power would bring its only problem. * Lepidus was gradually side lined and was assigned control of Africa. * Anthony moved to the east where he met Cleopatra and began his long affair with her in which they had three children including male twins. * Octavian took control of the West, where he faced great problems: * He needed to take care of 45 legions, a huge amount! * He needed to therefore settle nearly 150, 000 veterans in lands around the empire. * In settling these lands, Octavian had to create these double colonies throughout the empire (an established colony that has a veteran colony grafted to it). He thus had to confiscate land from the established colony to give space to the veterans. * Lucius Antonius (Marcus Antonius' brother) and Fulvia (Marcus Antonius' wife) begin to undermine Octavian in what is often referred to as the Perusine War, 42-41BC. * To what degree was Marc Anthony involved in this war? This is unclear and even if he knew about this undermining of

Octavian is in dispute. * Lucius and Fulvia raised a force against Octavian in Italy. Octavian then sieged the town of Persuia and eventually the two were staved out of the town. * Anthony is drawn west and it looks like civil war will break out. * However, fortunately tense discussions between the two men led to a peaceful result and the ' Pact of Brundisium' was signed between Anthony and Octavian. * The relationship between the two men was then further secured with a marital alliance between Antony and Octavian's sister, Octavia. * For the following 4 years, Anthony spent much time in the east. Spending time in the capital Alexandria and with his lover Cleopatra. He then waged war against the Parthians. An old enemy of Rome that Crassus had fought against in the 50s and that Caesar had intended to fight against before his death. * Anthony fought without any great success and he would continue this war up until 36BC. * In the west, Octavian is not overly popular. His settlement of the veterans and the proscriptions had outraged many people in Italy. * Sextus Pompeius the youngest son of Pompey the Great, caused trouble for Octavian by sieging Sicily through his naval power. He was supported by survivors of the Republican forces from the battle of Philippi and other enemies of Octavian. * War between Octavian and Sextus played out through 38-37BC. Octavian was not doing well in this campaign. So Octavian met with Anthony at Tarentum, sometimes known as the ' Pact of Tarentum' 37BC, they renewed the Triumvirate and they swapped certain military resources. Sextus was threatening the grain supply in Rome and Octavian needed to secure this supply because nothing would get the mob in Rome more angry at the current governance of the state than not getting fed. * He then got Lepidus to attack Sextus from Africa and with the support

of his right hand man Marcus Agrippa (a friend and a very able general) Octavian was victorious. * They defeated Sextus in 36BC, he fled eastwards where he was captured by Marcus Antonius and executed in 35. * 36BC, Octavian had restored order in the west. However, Lepidus who had been side lined for the last 5 years found himself in control of 25 legions in Sicily. He then had a rush of blood and attempted to challenge Octavian for the west. * His troops responded by defecting in mass to Octavian. Lepidus was left alone and humiliated. As a result he was stripped of his triumvirate powers but surprisingly not executed. He was instead placed in house arrest in a small coastal town south of Rome where he lived out his days until his death in 12BC. * At the end of 36, with Lepidus out of the picture we have Anthony in the East and Octavian in the West and there must be a showdown for sole power.