

The rise and fall of julius caesar



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This paper will explain that having absolute control or power over another human-being or, in Caesar's case an entire nation is a major responsibility. Caesar had the authority and was convinced that his way was the only way in the end it only produced negative results. Caesar was known in Roman History as the first dictator who was declared as dictator for life with no limits on how long he could remain ruler. Also how Caesar became popular with the lower and middle class and how he was killed by plotters who didn't want to lose their financial gain or political power.

Gaius Julius Caesar was born in Rome, Italy on July 12th or 13th in the year 100 BC. Young, Caesar lived through one of the most horrifying decades in the history the city of Rome. The city was assaulted twice and captured by Roman armies, first in 87 BC by the leaders of the populares. The second attack was carried out by Marius' enemy of Sulla, leader of the optimates.

The patricians were small in numbers and their status was no longer a political advantage. Caesar and his family belonged to one of the original aristocracy; they were neither rich nor influential. Caesar was influenced by his mother and with her blessings he sought out notoriety for his family's name. Caesar became the man of the household after his father's death at the age of sixteen. Caesar sought out election to the public office so that he could obtain distinction for himself and his family, in 86 with the help of his Uncle Marius Caesar was appointed Flamen Dialis. In 78 B. C. Caesar traveled to Rhodes to study rhetoric's and returned in 73 B. C. On his journey his was captured by pirates and he convinced them to raise his ransom after all he was an original aristocracy and that increased his prestige. A naval force overcame his captors and they were later crucified.

After his wife's death, Caesar met and fell in love with Pompeia, a relative of Caesar's then friend, Pompey. Pompey later married Caesar's daughter Julia in 59 BC. Caesar's own attachment to Pompey and Pompey's marriage to Julia ended when she died in 54 BC. The marriage to Pompeia ended in 62 BC. Caesar divorced his wife because of the allegation that she had been implicated in the offense of Publius Clodius, who was awaiting trial for breaking into Caesar's house the previous December. He was disguised as a woman at the festival of the Bona Dea, which no man is allowed to attend.

Caesar had secured for five years the governorship of three provinces. The provinces were Cisalpine Gaul, Transalpine Gaul, and Illyricum. He left Rome and remained in Gaul until his invasion of Italy. He continued north of the Alps each summer and left his armies there in garrison each winter while he came south to conduct the civil administration of Cisalpine Gaul and Illyricum and to keep in contact with Rome. Caesar became determined to conquer and make a province of the whole of Gaul. After his defeat of the Belgic tribes in the north and the submission of the maritime tribes on the Atlantic seaboard, he believed that the task had all but been accomplished.

The optimates in control of the senate now awake to the immense increase in Caesar's personal power, wealth, and prestige, kept Pompey in Italy, allowing him to govern his Spanish provinces by deputies. The next year Spain made Caesar there governor. When he finally returned to Rome he joined forces with Pompey and Crassus. With a successful year running Spain Caesar was elected as Consul through political alliance through Pompey and Crassus. They were called the first Triumvirate. Crassus wanted a revision on the contract for collecting taxes in the province of Asia. Pompey wanted

ratification on eastern settlement and land for his discharged troops. Where Caesar wanted to gain command of a big military. At a disorderly public gathering the agrarian bill was passed authorizing Pompey's veterans to purchase land in January 59 BC. A fellow consul Calpurnius Bibulus was thrown from the platform and his consular Insignia was broken.

Knowing that they were superstitious Bibulus tried everything to stop Caesar and his followers from passing anymore laws, but he was only able to postpone them by saying that the stormy skies wouldn't allow it. Caesar had disregarded Bibulus behavior and allowed the legislative program of the triumvirate to be carried out. With the results of his action Caesar and his friends faced better attacks. The political opponents continued to say that the legislation was unconstitutional as well as invaded. Caesar returned to Rome for a short time in 47 BC before leaving to travel to Africa to crush his opponents. Caesar became increasingly interested in public affairs, and tried to gain the favor of the people. In 65 BC, he was elected to the office of aedile and organized public games. Caesar returned Marius trophies to their former place of honor in the capitol, thus lying claim to leaders of the Populares. Caesar won favor because he spent much money to provide recreation for the people, although he went into great debt doing so.

In 62 BC, Caesar became praetor, the office next in rank to consul. Catiline, a dissatisfied Roman politician, plotted a revolt. In breaking up this plot, leading aristocrats sought to disgrace the entire group of popular leaders, including Caesar, but they failed to hurt his political prospects. In 60 BC, Caesar allied himself with Marcus Licinius Crassus and Gnaeus Pompey in the First Triumvirate, an alliance that held considerable power in Rome. Crassus

was a man of enormous wealth and political ambition. In 49 BC, Caesar had himself appointed dictator and consul after he defeated Pompey's troops in many battles. From the time that he had first faced battle and discovered his own military genius, Caesar was evidently fascinated and obsessed by military and imperial problems. He gave them an absolute priority over the more delicate, but no less the fundamental task of revising the Roman constitution. He met Pompey's army in Greece where, at Pharsalus in 48 BC, he defeated Pompey's forces but Pompey escaped to Egypt.

Caesar followed him later to find out that Pompey had been murdered. Within sixty days, Caesar became master of Italy. It took him nearly five years to complete the conquest of Pompey and his followers. As an orator, Caesar ranked second only to Cicero, the great Roman statesman and philosopher. Caesar is also famous as a writer. His Commentaries on the Gallic War describe his conquests in Gaul. The clear direct style of his work makes it a model of historical writing.

Caesar used wisely the power he had won, and made many important reforms. He tried to control dishonest practices in the Roman and provincial governments. He improved the calendar, cleaning up confusion that had existed for hundreds of years. Caesar gave poor people in Rome an outlet to improve their way of living by establishing colonies, notably at Carthage and Corinth. Caesar had proved he was capable of governing Rome and its vast possessions. Yet, many of Caesar's actions offended Roman pride. Caesar treated the Senate as a mere advisory council, and the senators resented this disrespect. He also offended many Romans by assuming the office of dictator. He returned in 78 BC when Sulla died and began his political career

as prosecuting advocate. By training, Caesar was a politician rather than a soldier, but he knew he needed military victories to gain greater fame.

Caesar gained military force and a loyal army from a campaign to conquer Gaul in 58 BC. It soon became clear that he was a military genius. Caesar had now become undisputed master of the Roman world. He pardoned the followers of Pompey. The people honored Caesar for his leadership and triumphs by granting him the powers of dictator for 10 years. Later, he was made dictator for life. In 49 BC, the conservatives ordered Caesar to give up his army. Caesar did not surrender his army to leave them defenseless, but instead did the opposite.

Caesar used his army to invade Britain twice in 55 and 54 BC. He won this battle to lead to the conquering of Gaul, which included present day France, and Belgium, as well as parts of Holland, Germany, and Switzerland in 50 BC. Caesar then led his army of 5000 soldiers across the Rubicon, a stream that separated his provinces from Italy. This caused the start of the Roman Civil War. He conquered all territories east to the Rhine River, drove the Germans out of Gaul, and then crossed the Rhine to show the great might of Rome. He won this war to make Cleopatra ruler of Egypt.

After his victory, Cleopatra was driven away from the throne. While this was going on Caesar invaded Alexandria. Caesar had gone to Alexandria in pursuit of Pompey, who was Caesar's rival to become the next ruler of Rome. While looking for Pompey Caesar met and fell in love with Cleopatra. Caesar helped her regain power by defeating her enemies. Caesar asked her to return to Rome with him to pursue their love and she did. She gave birth to a

little boy named Caesarion claiming that it was for Caesar. While she was giving birth Caesar was off claiming another victory. He then defeated Pharnaces II, King of Pontus. Caesar had a saying Veni, Vidi, Vici meaning I came, I saw, I conquered.

Caesar, being unaware of a plot to murder him, took his seat in the senate chair. As the meeting progressed, Caesar was handed a petition by one of the conspirators. As expected, he declined granting the petition, thus making crowds gather around him to urge him to agree upon it. With further reluctance the first blow was struck to Caesar's neck. Soon all the conspirators were striking him with their swords. In all, twenty-three swords penetrated Caesar's skin, but only one was fatal. Caesar's last words, as he looked upon his conspirators, are translated into, "" And you too, Brutus?" . At that moment of recognition, Caesar fell to his death.

The body of Julius Caesar lay for some time undisturbed where it had fallen. Of the slaves whom Caesar gathered over time, only three remained. They gathered around his body and examined the wounds. After the examination the slaves decided to carry the body home. They had found a nearby chair to place Caesar's body on to carry him home to Calpurnia. After a provocative funeral oration by Marc Antony, Caesar's body was burned by the mob in the forum.

At the games in his honor the following July, a comet appeared. It was regarded as evidence of his godhead and he was formally renamed as " divus Julius," or divine Julius. Octavius, whose name became Caesar

Octavianus after his adoption by Caesar's will, solved, by his creation of the Roman principate, the constitutional problem that Caesar failed to solve.