



Historical Crisis: The Death of Julius Caesar

Chair: William Tran '22

Rapporteur: João Martins '23

Dear delegates,

The great Caesar is dead! An uneasy peace falls over Rome, it is now up to you delegates, either with peace or with war, to determine the future of Rome and who will lead this glorious empire. As wealthy individuals, generals, politicians, and various members of society, we'll converge in a great council unlike the world has ever seen, all with the express purpose of determining what will happen to Rome and it's future. Many opportunities lie ahead, with many potential paths available for delegates.

My name is Will Tran, a senior at CA, and I will be your chair for this committee. I've been actively involved in Model UN since middle school, and am excited to lead us through this momentous day! Your Rapporteur will be João Martins, an 11th-grader at CA who hails from Brazil; João also brings many years of Model UN experience to this committee (despite the pandemic!) and is excited to take part in CAMUN.

Please feel free to email us if you have questions - see you in April!

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Introduction

Rome—the greatest city of the greatest empire of the ancient world. To the average Roman, this civilization is the only civilization in the world, with hordes of dangerous barbarians to the north, water to the west, nothing but desert to the south, and the neighboring and dangerous Parthian Empire to the east. In fact, right before his death, Caesar was planning to invade the Parthian Empire to wipe out this threat.

Rome is a complex empire, filled with various territories and ethnic groups. A strong social hierarchy is ever present, from slaves to the wealthy elite. While social mobility is a mainstay of the empire, equal distribution of power has never been extremely successful, with the plebeians often receiving very little representation and the wealthy controlling most of the government. The vastness of its borders requires Rome to have a massive standing army, and it is through military expeditions that Romans have been able to gain glory and prestige, such as Caesar did when he conquered Gaul.

Roman Republic

The late Roman Republic was a chaotic and ever changing form of government. In 509 BCE, the Roman monarchy was overthrown and replaced by a republic, emboldened by ideas from Athens and other semi-democratic systems. The “constitution” of this republic was a living series of guidelines that were constantly changing due to various crises that plagued the region. The senate held ultimate authority over the republic, but this authority tended to be derived from the individual prestige and authority each senator possessed; as such senators needed to be wealthy popular landowners. Various legislative assemblies also comprised an important aspect of the republic, as they allowed governmental representation for tribes, poor citizens, and ethnic minorities. Magistrates and Consuls were administrators elected by the senate, with each office holding responsibility over a geographic region, task, or high ranking logistical position. Consuls and praetors held military authority, which also tended to include minor civil and judicial authority. Consuls were the highest position available, of which there were two elected each year; they had supreme authority in civil and military issues. There were also various positions such as censors, tribunes, and quaestors, all designed to help assist the republic or representatives of the republics. By Caesar’s time however, this republic had gone through several reorganizations, with the most recent being Sulla’s republic which placed the vast majority of the power in a few wealthy elites.

Who was Caesar? A brief timeline

Caesar was born into a wealthy noble family, but due to a string of misfortunes, with the greatest being Sulla's targeting of followers of Caesar's deceased uncle Marius, Caesar was stripped of his possessions and went on a quasi-self imposed military exile that ended with Sulla's death. Upon Caesar's return to Rome, he slowly worked his way up the Roman political ladder and in 63 BCE, he was elected Pontifex Maximus, or chief priest of the Roman state religion. In 60 BCE, he formed the first triumvirate with Crassus and Pompey, essentially dominating Roman politics with the support of the plebeians. Over the next few years, despite many crises, Caesar slowly amassed power and gained governorship of various territories neighboring Gaul. By 51 BCE, Caesar had essentially conquered all of Gaul and invaded Britain and was welcomed back to Rome as a hero. During this time, Crassus died, and Pompey aligned himself with the senate. He persuaded the senate to order Caesar to step down from his military position, but Caesar refused and instead marched on Rome; thus began Caesar's Civil war.

This civil war was fought between Caesar and Pompey, and resulted in Caesar's victory and Pompey's death. Some of Pompey's supporters were brought back into Caesar's Rome, and upon his victory, Caesar was proclaimed dictator by the people and the senate.

After Caesar assumed near total control of the government, he established a series of social programs, all designed to benefit the veterans that supported him and the plebeians of the empire. He centralized all of Rome's authority into himself or apparatuses under his control. He stacked the senate with his supporters. He gave himself many names and titles such as *Imperator*, *parens patriae* (father of his country), and *Dictator in perpetuity*. He slowly consolidated the various provinces of Italy into one territory. His reforms angered the elites, who conspired to kill him, and on the ides of march, 44 BCE, Caesar was betrayed and assassinated by at least 60 conspirators, led by Brutus and Cassius.

Immediately afterwards, an uneasy quiet fell across Rome, nobody knew who would lead the empire, and the various senators who killed Caesar managed the day to day affairs of Rome. It would only be a matter of time until a conflict or civil war started, and it is during this "truce" that the committee takes place.

Questions to consider

1. Will Rome return to the Republic?
2. Will Rome remain a newly formed empire, and if so, who will lead it?
3. Will the conspirators be punished for murdering Caesar?

4. What will happen with the plans to invade the Parthian empire?
5. Will chunks of the Empire break away, or will Rome defederalize into a confederacy?
6. As Caesar was Pontifex Maximus, what role will religion play in determining justice for his murder and establishing the future of Rome?

Portfolio powers

1. **Brutus:** Marcus Junius Brutus, usually referred to as Brutus, was a politician, orator, and moderately experienced soldier. He is the most famous of Caesar's assassins. Most of his power derives from his relationship with Caesar.
2. **Gaius Cassius Longinus:** Former general/admiral who opposed Caesar during the civil war, now a praetor who was one of the leaders of the assassination attempt.
3. **Brutus Albinus:** One of the conspirators, yet he historically supported Caesar. He was named heir in the second degree, and was praetor and for the purpose of this committee he will be considered the current governor of Gaul.
4. **Gaius Trebonius:** One of the conspirators, he served as a legate for Caesar for many years, and is now suffect consul.
5. **Cicero:** The man, the myth, the legend, a staunch wealthy republican and famous orator/politician, he historically opposed Caesar but was unaware of the conspiracy.
6. **Mark Antony:** Caesar's second in command, close relative of Caesar and was elected consul with Caesar just before his assassination. For the purpose of this committee he will also be considered the governor of Italy.
7. **Quintus Labeo:** A conspirator who was a jurist and senator and one of the disciples of Servius Rufus.
8. **Lucius Cimber:** Initially a supporter of Caesar, his role was to distract the dictator before he was stabbed. He holds governorship over the provinces of Bithynia and Pontus.
9. **Gaius Octavius:** Caesar's heir who would someday become Caesar Augustus. Currently undergoing military training.

10. **Lepidus:** Pontifex maximus, as well as being an accomplished statesman and general, he was a strong supporter of Caesar.
11. **Cleopatra:** Cleopatra VII Philopator, queen of the Ptolemaic Kingdom of Egypt, she had a son with Caesar, Caesarion (Ptolemy XV Caesar) in a private affair.
12. **Aulus Hirtius:** Politician who was governor of Transalpine Gaul at the time of Caesar's death.
13. **Calpurnia:** Third or fourth wife of Caesar, and married to him when he was assassinated. Her approval holds great sway in the public eye for what should happen to Rome.
14. **Gaius Flaccus:** Roman General, Senator, and former consul, he was a loyal partisan of Caesar and then eventually Octavius.
15. **Sextus Pompey:** Surviving son of Pompey, currently upholding the cause of his father from an independent Sicily.
16. **Quintus Labienus:** Son of an accomplished Roman officer. For the purpose of this committee, he will already be considered to possess connections with the Parthian empire.
17. **Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa:** Famous architect, statesman, and general who at the time of this committee is close friends with Octavian. Around the time of Caesar's death he was elected tribune of the plebs.

Resources for further research

<https://www.britannica.com/place/Roman-Republic>
<https://www.britannica.com/place/Roman-Empire>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roman_Republic#Constitutional_system
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crisis_of_the_Roman_Republic
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marcus_Vipsanius_Agrippa
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7AtQw9dobKE>