

JULIUS CAESAR AND HIS TIMES

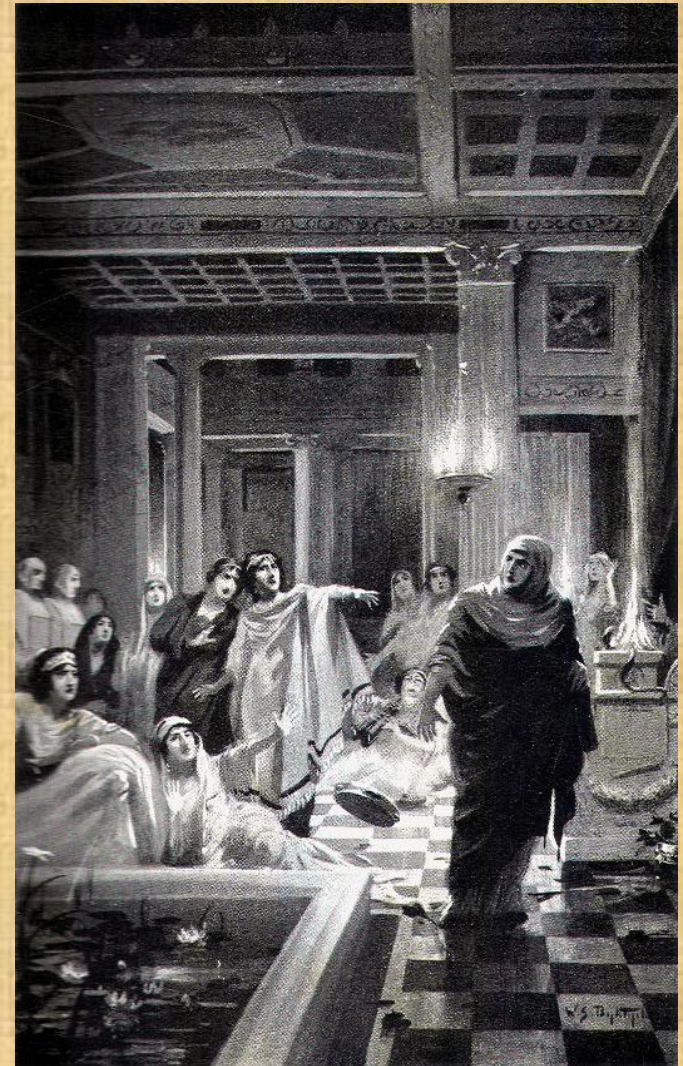
Unit 3 – The First Triumvirate



CLAH7002

The Bona Dea Scandal

- Early December 62 CE - festival in honour of the Bona Dea.
- Publius Clodius Pulcher infiltrated the event dressed “in drag”.
- Caesar divorces his wife Pompeia.
 - Not only Caesar, but Caesar’s wife must be above suspicion – **Plutarch *Caesar* 10.9.**
- Cicero and aggressive prosecution of Clodius.



“Development” of the Triumvirate

The “First Triumvirate”

- ▣ Attacks on Pompey's position - Q. Metellus Nepos (62 BC).
- ▣ Crassus proving surety for the debts of Caesar (61 BC).
- ▣ Caesar gains backing of Pompey and Crassus in the consular elections of 60 BC.

“At about the same time he took to wife Calpurnia, daughter of Lucius Piso, who was to succeed him in the consulship, and affianced his own daughter Julia to Gnaeus Pompeius, breaking a previous engagement with Servilius Caepio, although the latter had shortly before rendered him conspicuous service in his contest with Bibulus.” – *Suet. Div. Jul. 21.*

The Benefits

- Aim to ratify Pompey's settlements in the East and to get land for his veterans.
- Remittance of some of the money for *publicani* (Asia Minor) – supporters of Crassus.
- Crassus – commission for land distribution?
- Crassus and Pompey back Caesar for the consulship of 59 BC.

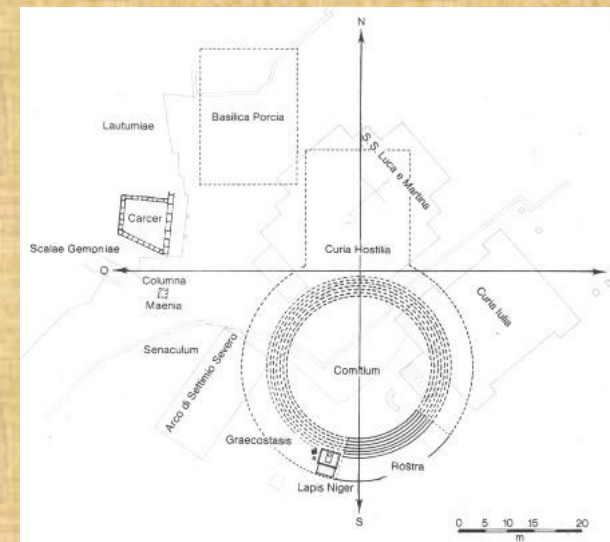
“For it was not, as most men supposed, the quarrel between Caesar and Pompey that brought on the civil wars, but rather their friendship, since they worked together for the overthrow of the aristocracy in the first place, and then, when this had been achieved, they argued with one another.” – **Plut. Caesar 13.3-5.**



The Consulship of Caesar (59 BC)

- Motion to have records of senate and assemblies published.
- Bill for distribution of land – both soldiers and civilians – no confiscations or appropriations – a commission of 20 men.
- Bill initially brought before the senate – then before the people.

“After that he communicated nothing further to the senate during his year of office, but brought directly before the people whatever he desired... Bibulus, however, would not yield, but having gained the support of three tribunes, hindered the enactment of the law. Finally, when no other excuse for delay was any longer left him, he proclaimed a sacred period for all the remaining days of the year alike... when he appeared above and attempted to speak in opposition to Caesar he was thrust down the steps, his fasces were broken to pieces, and the tribunes as well as others received blows and wounds. - **Dio Cassius 38.4.1, 6.1-3.**



- Traditionally *obnuntiatio* – a declaration that unfavourable omens had been spotted – should be announced personally before the start of the assembly in question.
 - No clear precedent.
- Belief that one's policies were in accordance with the gods (and necessarily that your opponents were not).
- Influence of Greek philosophical thought – e.g. cynicism, epicureanism, etc.

“As for Caesar's colleague, Bibulus, since he availed nothing by obstructing Caesar's laws, but often ran the risk with Cato of being killed in the forum, he shut himself up at home for the remainder of his term of office. Pompey, however, immediately after his marriage, filled the forum with armed men and helped the people to enact Caesar's laws...” – **Plutarch *Caesar* 14.9-10.**

“From that time on Caesar managed all the affairs of state alone and after his own pleasure; so that sundry witty fellows, pretending by way of jest to sign and seal testamentary documents, wrote "Done in the consulship of Julius and Caesar," instead of "Bibulus and Caesar," writing down the same man twice, by name and by surname.” – **Suetonius *Divus Julius* 20.2.**