

# Politics of the Late Republic

Guide for A Level OCR Classical Civilisation:  
Component Group 3: Beliefs and Ideas

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# Teacher's Introduction

The aim of this guide is to develop the knowledge and skills required to answer questions for OCR's Classical Civilisation A Level examination: Component Group 3 Beliefs and Ideas: **Politics of the Late Republic** H408/33.

The guide has three sections:

- Section A: introduces relevant key knowledge for the topic in specification order
- Section B: introduces Cicero as orator: *In Verrem I* and Cicero as correspondent: *Selected Letters*
- Section C: introduces the exam and gives advice

<b>Section A</b>
The background of the late Republic
Cato and the politics of the <i>optimates</i>
Caesar as <i>popularis</i> and <i>dictator</i>
Cicero and the <i>res publica</i>
<b>Section B</b>
Cicero as orator: <i>In Verrem I</i>
Cicero as correspondent: <i>Selected Letters</i>
to Pompey, <i>Fam.</i> 5.7
to Atticus, <i>Att.</i> 2.18
to Curio, <i>Fam.</i> 2.4
to Caelius, <i>Fam.</i> 2.11
to Atticus, <i>Att.</i> 8.8
to Atticus, <i>Att.</i> 9.4
to Caesar, <i>Att.</i> 9.11a
to Atticus, <i>Att.</i> 13.40
to Atticus, <i>Att.</i> 14.4
to Trebonius, <i>Fam.</i> 10.28
to Plancus, <i>Fam.</i> 10.6

## Learners are advised to use the guide as follows:

This guide has taken as its own guide the OCR specification. It is designed to be read in a straight line, as it were, from beginning to end, but it also sets out to examine the events of the first century BC from the perspective of each of three character types, each representing a different set of 'beliefs and ideas', in turn: the man of principle (Marcus Porcius Cato); the opportunist (Caius Julius Caesar); the pragmatist (Marcus Tullius Cicero).

Certain events of the period involved two or more of these three men; learners will find, therefore, that in the course of the guide these are covered twice or even three times. This is quite deliberate: it is designed to obviate the necessity for students reading about, say, Cicero, to flip back (mid-sentence!) to refresh their memories of, for example, the SCU debate, just because it has already been described under Cato. The author has also linked such (nearly) duplicate treatments with cross references, because often (perhaps after having finished the chapter on Cicero) the comparison of a single event from the differing points of view of two or more of the 'players' is instructive.

As far as the 'Activities' are concerned, use of these is, obviously, at learners' discretion. Some are slight, requiring no more than a few minutes' reflection; others provide opportunities to examine an issue or event more deeply, in discussion with peers or as fully fledged examination essay practice. Some of these, too, are 'repeats': an old question might be asked in a new context, with the invitation to compare the revised answer with 'one I made earlier'. Thus the complexity of history and personality might be explored with profit. Additionally, there are information and tip boxes to further support learning.

The OCR A Level examination seeks to reward analysis, interpretation and evaluation of material (assessment objective 2) as well as 'merely' assessment objective 1 (knowledge and understanding). While it is true that more knowledge does not necessarily lead to more insightful analysis, it has to be said that more insightful analysis, more subtle interpretation and, put simply, better understanding, will be achieved by those learners who have mastered more knowledge. To this end, the following appendices have been included in the guide:

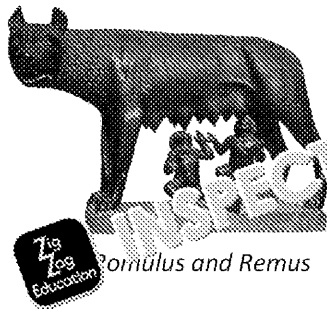
- Appendix 1: The Catilinarian conspiracy (page 48)
- Appendix 2: Cicero in Cilicia (page 50)

Candidates for the examination are unlikely to be tested closely on the finer points of either of these two topics, and in a wide-ranging essay it is unlikely that candidates will have time to address them in detail. However, rarely has a learner encountered a reference to Catiline (and Cicero's dealings with him) without wanting to find out more; rarely has a learner encountered the seemingly inexorable approach of civil war without asking 'Where on earth was Cicero at this crucial moment?'

February 2023

## Section A: Context

### Background of the late Republic



Romulus and Remus

At the end of the Trojan War, the Trojan survivors in the Trojan band led by Aeneas (the son of the Trojan king Priamus) came to Italy. After an odyssey, Aeneas came to Italy where he established the city of Alba Longa (the city of the Ascanians), expanded the power of the city, and eventually, Romulus and Remus founded the city of Rome for the foundation of the Roman Republic.



Horatius at the Bridge (1856, sixteenth century)

Under Romulus and his descendants, Rome continued as a monarchy until the reign of Tarquin the Proud, seventh and last king of Rome. In 509 BC, the unpopular Tarquin and the Roman Republic were founded. From that time forth, firmly – fierce kingship. Republic was a system of equality and freedom of citizens under the senate of consul, and there were two. The first consuls were Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus and Lucius Junius Brutus.

In 100 BC, Caius Julius **Caesar** was born. Marcus Tullius **Cicero** was by then six years old. Cato the Younger would be born in 95 BC. The story of the politics of the late Republic, and the individuals, and others, played in the evolution of Rome from Republic to Empire, was a story of power and ambition.

#### Activity

The story of Aeneas is retold by Virgil in the *Aeneid*. See Book 1 (lines 257–396). Aeneas will found the Roman race, to whom he grants 'power without end' (*imperium sine fine*). The history of Rome from its foundation (*ab Urbe condita*), Livy tells the same story at the beginning of his history.

Compare these accounts of the earliest origins of Rome: where do the poet and the historian differ? Which gives the most compelling account?

#### Activity

Find out more about Lucius Junius Brutus: how is he connected to the politics of the late Republic?

#### Activity

Julius Caesar claimed that he could trace his ancestry back to Aeneas, and, through him, to the Trojan War. To what extent do politicians today rely on their 'backstories'? How much do you think they should?

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## The res publica (Roman Republic) in 100 bc

In the first century BC, Roman society was, as it had been since the creation of the republic, a hierarchy. This hierarchy was a complicated blend of both social and political classes.

At the top were the **nobiles**. A family could count itself among the **nobiles** according to two criteria:

- any man who could trace his ancestry back to membership of the first senate in 509 BC, was by definition a member of the **patrician** social class, and was a **nobilis**. Other families were not patrician, they were **plebeian**;
- if a plebeian joined the political class as a magistrate, and achieved the office of consul, he became an **homo** ('new man'); thereafter his family would be ranked among the **nobiles**. In 100 BC, Cicero (63 BC) was one of the **novi homines**.

Therefore, all patricians, whether members of the senate or not, were **nobiles** (but not all **nobiles** were patricians (some were, or were descended from *novi homines*)).

While English terms like 'upper class', 'nobility' and 'aristocracy' are also sometimes used to describe the **nobiles**, it should be noted that neither of the above criteria include any reference to wealth. Unusually, but it was possible for **nobiles** to be (relatively) poor patricians, like Julius Caesar's father-in-law, Marcus Licinius Crassus.

Commentators will also sometimes refer to the 'senatorial class': members of the senate, whether patrician or plebeian; it is sometimes unclear whether this includes patricians who are not members of the senate.

### Activity

Create a mind map or graphic illustration of the social and political classes active in the first century BC. Do the same for our own society in the present day. Are the same values at play? Is our society more complicated in the first century?

### *equites*

In the second century BC, a class of rich plebeians had emerged, businessmen and landowners, who were not necessarily interested in pursuing senatorial careers at Rome. These were the **equites** ('knights'); they take their title from the traditional name of the plebeian cavalry. In the first century, **equites** were plebeians who owned property to the value of 50,000 sesterces. Some were super-rich. Cicero began life as an *eques*.

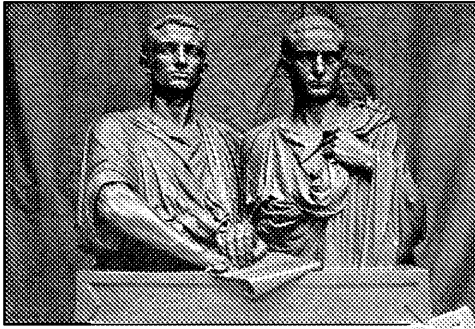
Such families were numerous, and with their money were able to wield significant influence without membership of the senate.

### Optimates and *populares*

Another key term often associated with the Roman senate is the English word 'optimates'. The **optimates** were those traditionalist senators who trusted in the wisdom of their ancestors ('as our ancestors did things') and were sceptical of change. They believed in the tradition of the republic, under the control of a strong senate, and are thus characterised by Cicero and other commentators. Notable optimates included Cato the Younger. However, by the first century, the **optimates** were going unchallenged in the senate.

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The Gracchi brothers

he lost support among his popular base when he proposed the extension of rights to those who were jealous of the land, and massive opposition now drove Gaius to suicide. However, the faction of **populares**, had been established.

### Tip

Try to avoid the temptation to think of *optimates* and *populares* (optimates and popular parties in the modern sense). Politicians did not 'join' or 'leave' these 'parties'. Rather, they represented opposite ends of a spectrum of attitude: an individual could be more or less optimistic about the issue to hand, and alignments among and between factions would often shift over time.

### Activity

Find out more about the Gracchi brothers. How fair is it to call them the first 'socialists'? What is the difference between the terms 'socialism' and 'populism' as used in politics today?

### Sulla's constitutional reforms

In the aftermath of the Roman Social War, the *optimates* (and patrician) Lucius Cornelius Sulla emerged victorious, having defeated his *popularis* rival Gaius Marius. The senate appointed Sulla dictator *in absentia* with no time limit, and with the specific remit of re-establishing the constitution.

Sulla reformed the rules for politicians setting out to become political officials ('magistrates'). These rules are known as the ***cursus honorum*** (politicians' career path); it had been originally formalised at Rome by the *lex Villia Annalis* in 180 BC.

Lucius Sulla

Prior to Sulla's reforms, a young man starting on a political career was expected to hold some military position; Sulla's *lex Cornelia de magistratibus* made it a rule instead that the first office of the *cursus*, the quaestorship, a candidate must be at least 32 years of age.

All magistrates had *potestas* ('power'); they would sit in special 'currule' chairs and wear a *praetexta* (toga with a purple band). *praetors* and above had *imperium* ('supremacy'); they were entitled to be accompanied by a bodyguard of lictors, carrying the symbolic fasces.

The regular magistracies, which opened the way to membership of the senate, were:

- 20 **quaestors** (increased from 6 by Sulla), who were financial and administrative officials; candidates must be at least 30 years of age.
- 4 **aediles** (an essential step, but usual), who were each accompanied by a lictor; they supervised public works, water, festivals, etc.; candidates must be at least 36 years of age.
- 8 **praetors** (increased from 6 by Sulla), who were each accompanied by 6 lictors; they presided over the courts; candidates must be at least 39 years of age.
- 2 **consuls**, who were each accompanied by 12 lictors, commanded the army and the senate and implemented new legislation; candidates must be at least 42 years of age.

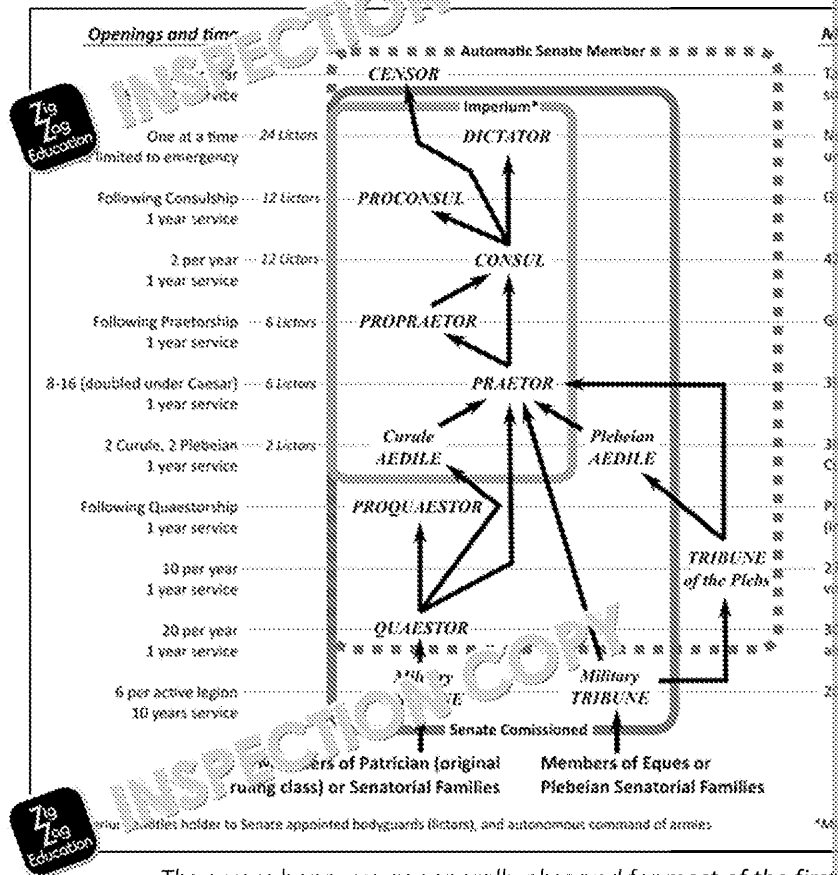
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Such was the *cursus honorum*, and any aspiring young politician was expected to climb the ladder, in the conventional way.

Outside the *cursus honorum* were several other positions, the most important of which were:

- 10 **tribunes**, who could veto legislation proposed by the senate. Sulla in his first year of office vetoed the position of tribune was open only to members of the plebeian class.
- 2 **censors**, elected for 18 months (every five years) who controlled the list of senators.
- 1 **dictator**, elected for six months, in times of crisis.



The cursus honorum as generally observed for most of the first century BC.

Rome had continued to acquire **provinces** through its expansion since the annexation of Sicily in 264 BC. Provinces required administration and government. In the year immediately after the consulship, a politician would maintain his *imperium* (as 'propraetor' or 'proconsul') with the help of a newly elected quaestor, in one of the provinces. Gaius Verres in 73 BC; Cicero served as quaestor in Sicily in 75 BC, and as proconsul in Cilicia in 71 BC.

### Activity

Look closely at the *cursus honorum*, as reconstituted by Sulla. Which social or political class did you favour? How? And why?

### How to get started?

It was not just age that was a barrier to young men in a hurry to climb to the heights of power. Money, too, played a part. Whether patrician or plebeian, in order to enter the senate, candidates had to be wealthy. It is thought that the equestrian Cicero's marriage to Pompeia was one of the reasons for his success, at least for him: he 'married up' so that he could afford to begin with his campaign for the quaestorship of 75 BC. He won the election and served in Sicily.

### Activity

How important is money to a prospective politician today? How much, and why?

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## Elections

Elections were run according to a system of assemblies: the **Tribal Assembly** and

Every Roman citizen was a member of one of the 35 **tribes**; for the election of tribunes voted in their tribes, at a tribal assembly. The majority vote within a tribe bore one vote. To win an election, the candidate had to gain a simple majority,

Each of the tribes was also divided into 10 **centuries**, with 99 centuries for each of five tribes. There were also 23 military centuries. A century in this political sense could have been of different sizes, some were much bigger than others.

For the election of magistracies with *imperium* (i.e. praetors, consuls, censors and aediles) voters met in a centuriate assembly. The majority vote within a century bore one vote. To win an election, the candidate had to gain a simple majority.

The richest property owners, who voted first, controlled a large proportion of the vote and a candidate who had campaigned successfully among the richest centuries rarely needed votes from the less wealthy centuries to win the simple majority required to carry a law. The poorest citizens were rarely necessary, and, therefore, generally of no importance.

### Activity

To win election as praetor, a Roman politician would have had to persuade the voters to vote for him. Compare this to what a modern politician must do to win an election. What is the most difficult task? See Quintus Cicero's *commentariolum petitionis* for his advice to his brother.

[zzed.uk/12047-quintus-cicero](http://www.zigzag-education.co.uk/zzed.uk/12047-quintus-cicero)

## Patronage and *amicitia*

Roman society worked on a basis more of favour than of cash: men helped each other.

A rich and influential (and therefore, powerful) man would act as a **patron** to his clients of the lower social classes. A patron would help his clients with custom and preferment in the law, in the army, in the public entourage and by voting for him in elections. This mechanism operated vertically across the social classes.

A similar convention operated horizontally across society, between peers. This relationship was called *amicitia* ('alliance'). *amicitia* could be dissolved, to be replaced with *inamicitia* ('hostility').

So it can be seen that personal relationships, with one's patrons, with one's clients, would have been crucial to a successful career in politics – especially if a man was not born into an aristocratic family (Cicero).

### Activity

Is there any relationship in modern politics equivalent to the Roman concept of *amicitia*? What are the advantages and drawbacks of such relationships?

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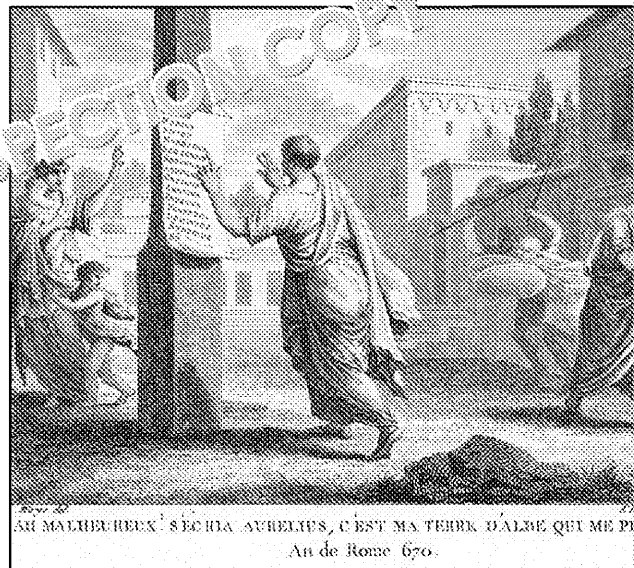
## More on Sulla: not just a political reformer

In order to achieve the reforms described on pages 4–5, among Sulla's first acts were the proscriptions of his enemies and their associates: according to Plutarch,

Sulla now busied himself with slaughter, and murders without number or limit. He killed to gratify private hatreds, although they had no relations with Sulla, but he killed to gratify his adherents. At last one of the younger men, C. Metellus, made bold to say what end there was to be of these evils, and how far he would proceed before they should cease ... Be that as it may, Sulla at once proscribed eighty persons, without coming to a trial, and in spite of the general indignation. After a single day's interval, he proscribed others, and then on the following day, as many more. A list of the persons proscribed was posted in a public place, and those who were on the list might be killed by anyone who chose to do so. If anyone escaped his memory, he would proscribe at a future time. He also proscribed anyone who saved a proscribed person, making death the punishment for such humanity, with or without parents, but offering any one who slew a proscribed person two talents as a reward, even though a slave should slay his master, or a son his father. And what seemed to be the worst he took away all civil rights from the sons and grandsons of those who had been proscribed, and the property of all.

Plutarch

It is true that Sulla did give up his dictatorship in 79 BC, but from the moment of his departure, the great fears of all Romans, and especially the optimate faction, was that there might be a 'Sulla'. The office of dictatorship, or at least the memory of Sulla's dictatorship, was feared as much as fear and hatred as was the memory of Tarquinius Superbus' monarchy, and the



*Sulla's proscriptions*

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<sup>1</sup> Plutarch's *Lives* with an English translation by Bernadotte Perrin (Harvard University Press; London perseus.tufts.edu)

## Cato and the Politics of the Optimates

The OCR course sees the politics of the late Republic as a battle between principle and pragmatism; the story through the study of three key individuals: Cato, the man of principle; Cicero, the pragmatist; and Caesar, the man of power. We have to thank Cicero for the enormous volume of (not always reliable) material available to scholars of the period. Indeed, it has been said that we know more about any other period of pre-modern history, anywhere in the world, than we do about the late Roman Republic.

### The man of principle: Marcus Porcius Cato and the politics of the optimates

By the end of the first century BC, Cato the Younger will be seen to have played a key role in the politics of the late Republic; his actions stem directly from his character, which in turn owed to his family.

#### Cato and the Optimates

Our Cato, Marcus Porcius Cato the Younger, born in 95 BC, was the great-grandson of Cato the Elder (consul 195 BC; censor in 184 BC), a Roman plebeian in the Sabine tradition, a farmer, who moved into politics when he served as quaestor in 204 BC. He achieved his character is perhaps most famously displayed in Livy's account of a political debate established in 215 BC as part of the war effort against Hannibal, stated that women should wear an ounce of gold; could wear only monochrome clothing; and were forbidden from entering the city, except for public or religious events. After the end of the Punic War, a repeal of the law was debated, and Cato the Elder opposed the motion:

If each of us, citizens, had determined to assert his rights and dignity as a husband and father, we should have less trouble with the sex as a whole; as it is, our liberty, our property, our violence, even here in the Forum is crushed and trodden underfoot, and because we are individually under control, we dread them collectively. For my part, I thought it was a fiction that on a certain island all the men were destroyed, root and branch, by a pestilence; no class is there not the greatest danger if you permit the women to meet in meetings and gatherings.

Our ancestors permitted no woman to conduct even personal business without the licence of her father or the control of fathers, brothers, husbands; they wished them to be subject to them now as they were then in public affairs, yes, and to visit the Forum and our assemblies.

If they wish to be free, what will they not attempt? Review all the laws with which we have licenced and made them subject to their husbands; even with all these bonds you will find them free. What of this? If you suffer them to seize these bonds one by one and wrench them from you, placed on a parity with their husbands, do you think that you will be able to endure? If they begin to be your equals, they will be your superiors...

Livy, *Ab Urbe Condita*

Cato was defeated in the debate, and the law was repealed.

#### Activity

Can you think of any modern politicians or statesmen who have built all or part of their reputation on the reputation of their ancestors? Or must politicians in the modern world all be 'self-made men'? Arguments for and against the idea of political 'dynasties'?

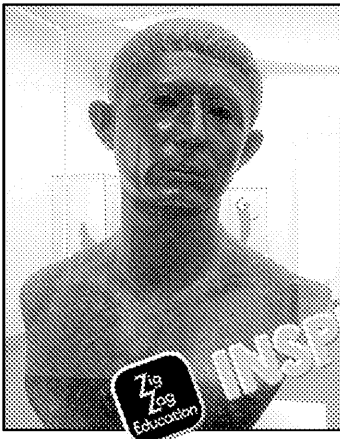
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<sup>2</sup> perseus.tufts.edu

## Cato and philosophy



Marcus Porcius Cato the Younger

Marcus Porcius Cato the Younger, then, was of (optimistic) stock. His personality in maturity, and his background a study of the philosophy of Stoicism.

Zeno's Stoic philosophy grew out of Aristotle's, with Aristotle that the aim of life for all humans is *eudaimonia*. But Zeno then states that this is chosen for its own sake, which is an end in itself, rather than as a means towards this end. This is the virtue. But in order for human beings to be happy, certain goods are required, e.g. 'noble birth, numerous children, numerous children, a good old age; health, beauty, strength, stature, fitness for reputation, honour, good luck, virtue'.

So Aristotle accepted different senses of the word 'good'; but Zeno thought that everything else is a matter of indifference (though some 'indifferents' may be preferred). To achieve virtue, one must proceed rationally, not allowing oneself to be distracted by matters of indifference: displaying anger, for example, might indeed make sense if one has been treated unfairly. But recognising that what was perceived to have been a matter of indifference will eradicate the need for the passion (anger), and the further pursuit of virtue.

So, achieving (or losing) anything that is really only a preferred (or dispreferred) good (or harm) – and it is ideas like these that we might see underpinning Cato's philosophy. For example, Plutarch's anecdote about Cato providing his son and wife Marcia to illustrate Cato's devotion to reason, and his rejection of such 'indifferents' as a paragraph above. In his political life, too, Cato is evidence of a similar strength of character. Each son of the Cato family (Cato the Elder had entered politics, and served as a military tribune in 107 BC), found a natural political home among the conservatives, the new, radical group, in the senate, after he was elected quaestor in 65 BC.

### Activity

Find out more about Stoicism's rival philosophical school in ancient Rome, Epicureanism. How do they think about virtue and how to achieve it? What did the Epicureans agree with the Stoics, and what divided them?

### Activity

Do you think a strong philosophical (or religious) belief system would benefit some forms of politics, or hinder them? Is your answer different depending on whether you're in ancient Rome, 1st century BC, or the modern world; Europe, or elsewhere?

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## Cato and politics

As was traditional in his family, Cato served in the army; he was military tribune in 68 BC. On his return to Rome, he was quaestor in 65 BC, and stood in 63 BC for election to the post of praetor (62 BC). As a traditional, conservative product of the factors discussed on pages 8–9, Cato used the tribunate as a platform for the improvement of the lot of the plebs, especially since the tribunate, removed by Sulla, had been restored by Pompey and Crassus in 70 BC.

### The tribunate in the 60s BC

- Only a plebeian could be elected tribune.
- Ten tribunes were elected each year at the Assembly of the Plebs (*concilium plebis*).

Tribunes were elected by the people in the People's Assembly, with the aim of protecting the plebs from actions perceived to be against plebeian interests, and so had the ability to veto the wishes of the senate; tribunes presided over the People's Assembly, which had the right to propose laws.

### Tribunician powers

- The tribunes enjoyed *sacrosanctitas*: personal and legal inviolability.
- Tribunes had the right of veto on the action of any magistrate acting against the plebs.
- and the right to propose laws (to the *concilium plebis*, whose decision passed as law).

Tribunes' growing importance was reflected in Sulla's attempt to emasculate the office.

- They could propose to the people only legislation sanctioned by senate.
- They were restricted in the right of veto, and
- barred from future political office.

These restrictions were subsequently removed: the ban on holding future political office was removed by Pompey and Crassus in 75 BC; the restrictions on proposing laws and on the right of veto imposed by Sulla were removed by Pompey and Crassus in 70 BC.

In the 60s BC, *populares* senators used 'tame' tribunes to pass measures through the plebs, securing support of senate.

### Activity

Think about the importance of the tribunes: what would be the benefits and drawbacks? From the point of view of other politicians, what sort of relationship would you see between tribunes and the senate and why? How would you go about it?

## Cato and Catiline

In 64 BC, a hot-headed young senator had been thwarted in his attempt to achieve the optimates backed Marcus Tullius Cicero against the populist Lucius Sergius Catilina. Catiline made some very worrying (to the optimates) election promises regarding the writing off of debts and redistribution of land to the plebs. On his electoral defeat, Catiline was alleged to have conspired with some of his followers to overthrow the senate (page 28 and Appendix 1, pages 48–49). Catiline was defeated in battle, and his followers were arrested. The populist Julius Caesar argued for their imprisonment for life; Cicero took the more traditional, and by default optimate side, arguing passionately for their execution. The novelist Robert Harris has called the speech delivered by Cicero on this occasion 'one of the greatest ever delivered'.<sup>3</sup> Cicero, the consul, sided with Cato and five Roman citizens were summarily executed. Cicero oversaw the deed.

### Activity

Catiline has become a character appearing in popular literature since Virgil's *Aeneid* (Book 8, lines 1–100), where he is depicted as a figure from the gates of Dis, the punishment for wickedness, and you Catiline, how terrible is the sight of the Furies; and the good, at a distance, Cato handing out the rewards of the gods.

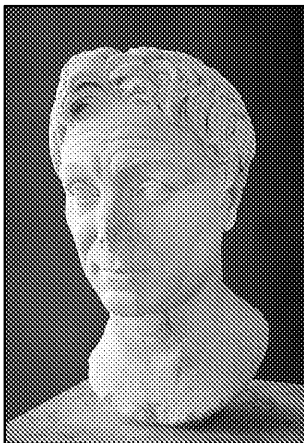
Find out more about what he is actually known to have done. Do you think he is a villain? What is the phenomenon of history being written by the winners?

<sup>3</sup> Today BBC R4 17 October 2009

Cato's family background; his education in Stoicism, which lent itself so easily to Roman *mos maiorum*, touchstone of the optimate faction; and his belief in the traditionalism of the Republic; finally, the fact that Cato was such an eloquent orator; all of these became a sort of unofficial 'leader' of the optimates.

If it is about anything, politics is about people: various political positions and the often defined in relation to each other. The optimates and populist factions were modern sense; rather, to be an optimate (or populist) was to have a certain attitude person. And with ever-changing circumstances providing an infinite number of variables it is sometimes more helpful to consider politicians in relation to each other, rather than clearly defined 'labels'. A politician is only more (or less) traditional (or progressive) than his peer. Cato's position, and its consequences for his career, and for the Republic, in comparison with the relative positions of other 'players'.

## Cato and Pompey



Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus

Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus had served with military glory and gained the consulship of 70 BC at the age of 36, without office on the *cursus honorum*. This in itself was enough for the traditionalist Cato. In office with Crassus, the populist tribunician powers removed by Sulla, which would have

However, in 67 BC the *lex Gabinia*, and in 66 BC the *lex Manilia*, gave Pompey massive, unprecedented military powers, quite contrary to the Mediterranean of pirates in 67 BC, and to defeat the East from 66 BC). It became clear that these measures were the manipulation of the tribunes, in a way that Cato

And Pompey went further in the East than he had before, creating a huge number of new Roman provinces along the Second and Third Coast of Asia Minor (modern Turkey): Pontus, Syria. Next, he created client kingdoms, in which Pompey devised the kingdoms pay tribute to Rome, which Rome's tax income was increased by 70%.

### Stretch and Challenge

For more information on Pompey's achievements in the East, and their political implications, see Pamela Bradley, *Ancient Rome: using evidence* (Edward Arnold, 1990), 318–320.

While Cato might have regarded such achievements as 'preferable', he recognised 'indifferents' – none of this had been sanctioned in the proper way by the senate. When Pompey returned to Rome, seeking ratifications of his *acta* (deeds) in the East, and a general pardon for his veteran troops, Cato led the opposition (furthermore, he refused Pompey permission to stand for consulship, also instrumental in forcing Pompey to choose between a triumph in Rome and standing for consulship (Pompey chose the triumph). Cato's stance encouraged Pompey to look for support elsewhere, and he found it with Julius Caesar and Marcus Licinius Crassus... and the first triumvirate was born.

After the collapse of the first triumvirate, Cato was obliged to support Pompey, as he was in the Civil War. In 46 BC, after the last battles of the Civil War at Pharsalus, Cato refused to rob Caesar of the chance of a glorious defeat over him, or, worse, to offer him a pardon. Cato's Stoic education was a factor in this decision.

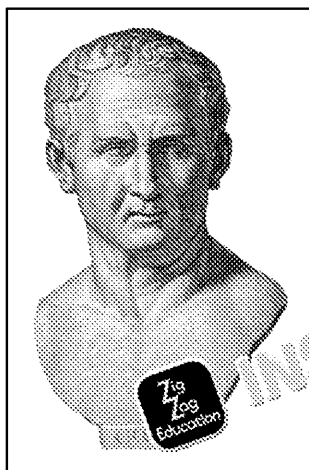
### Activity

Show how it was precisely Cato's devotion to the *mos maiorum* that incited the struggle. Could (and should) Cato have seen the consequences of his position? What could he have done about it?

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## Cato and Cicero



Marcus Tullius Cicero

As we have seen, during Cicero's year as consul, Cato took the strongest possible stand against the Catilinarian conspirators that they be executed according to the traditional punishment.

Also in 63 BC, Cato opposed Cicero on the prosecution of Licinius Murena for electoral corruption. Cato was pro-defending. Murena was acquitted.

Cato may not have been inclined to ally himself with the increasingly powerful triumvirate, and against the Clodius Pulcher – we shall never know: as well as engaging cleverly bounced Cato himself into an extraordinary

When Cicero claimed that during his time as governor he had the right to a triumph after his defeat of some Parthians.

When Cicero had marched to Tarsus, almost simultaneously the Parthians had retreated with little fighting, and Cicero, as commander-in-chief, did receive the acclamation of his army. But it is clear that his military prowess never really rose to triumph standards as by the time any possible triumph in Cicero's honour could have been mounted,

### Activity

For all his love of traditional Roman values, how well do you think Cato managed

## Cato and Caesar



Caius Julius Caesar

While he will no doubt have been aware of the up-and-downs (pages 14–22), Cato first encountered him as a professional 'debater', concerning the proper treatment of the five years of this occasion, the latter's point of view won the day, and Cato was unpopular with the populists, and one who Cicero, thanks to the populist tribune of 58 BC, Clodius Pulcher, even for Cato, who ended up in Cyprus for a year, against Clodius.

Caesar was ready to stand for election to the consulship the following year, during which he would have to campaign in Rome. His military service in Gaul, where he had by now won the consulship. The rules of political campaigning would not allow a

city to celebrate a triumph in the same year as he was meant to be canvassing for the senate, Cato and the optimates refused to allow Caesar to run his election campaign. This was not in line with the *mos maiorum*. Cato hoped that Caesar would choose a triumph (as Pompey had done), and thus forgo the possibility of winning the consulship (and the perceived importance of a military triumph). But he was wrong: Caesar chose a triumph, and to run for consul. Alongside the optimates' favoured candidate, Marcus

In Caesar's year as consul (59 BC), he seems to have been able to push through legislation that had ignored most of the traditional political and religious checks and balances which the past blocked legislation unwelcome to the people. Caesar's most significant legislation was the law that Pompey's veterans were to receive the land he had promised them on his return from Mithridates (see page 11). Caesar's measures were popular with the people, but Cato, who at one point was manhandled from the senate house to silence his objections.

The next year, Caesar returned to Gaul, where he continued far beyond the remit of his mandate. Cato never falters in his attempts to have him recalled to trial for his 'illegal acts'.

<sup>4</sup> For the SCU, see page 27

**Activity**

What are some of the 'checks and balances' in place in modern legislatures? Is it a 'system'? Can you think of any recent occasions when laws have been passed into normal channels? Is this always a bad idea?

**Cato and Clodius**

Publius Clodius Pulcher was a populist and a member of one of the most illustrious and influential aristocratic families in Rome, who, for various reasons (mostly to do with his mercenary and disruptive personality), and with the help of richer and more influential populists, such as Caesar and Crassus, managed to accomplish various subversive feats, one of the most audacious being to game the system so that he could have himself elected tribune. This involved the help of the *pontifex maximus* at the time (none other than Julius Caesar), who had the power to recategorise Clodius as a plebeian through adoption, and thus eligible for election as tribune. The election was in Caesar's year as consul (59 BC); Clodius was tribune in 58 BC.

Clodius used his office to repay slights and favours he had accrued along the way; part useful to certain others was to have Cato, by now famous for his rigorous integrity, removed from office. This was done in a period of time.

Using his tribunician power, Clodius proposed that Cato be granted a special *conscriptio* for the year 57 BC. Although Cato remained naturally opposed to the creation of a new office, contrary to the traditional *mos maiorum* (as he had been in the case of Pompey's earlier by the *lex Gabinia* and *lex Manilia*), his disciplined adherence to the law meant he accepted the role Quaestor Propraetore in Cyprus. Thus another voice of integrity was added to that of Cicero, who had been conveniently exiled, again by Clodius as tribune (without trial of the Catilinarian conspirators). This was the end of the triumvirate nicely.

**Activity**

Create a mind map to show what these characters had in common, and what family background, magistracies held, (in)amicitiae, patronage, etc. Which was the most influential? What way?

As can be seen, political activity in Rome involved the constant interaction of certain characters, some might have been more or less influential at any given moment. But while the alliances can sometimes be surprising, Cato's position, as a man of principle, possibly even as a traditionalist, and a man of integrity, he can always be found on the side of the right. He has always been, and ought to continue to be done. He is anti-corruption, and considers to be corrupt. As has been seen, he held this position even to the extent of not wanting to live under Caesar's regime. The question we are always left asking is to what extent?

**Activity**

How far is it possible in politics to remain true to one's principles?

**Activity**

At what point does principle become a hindrance?

**Activity**

How surprised are you that Cato was never consul? Justify your answer.

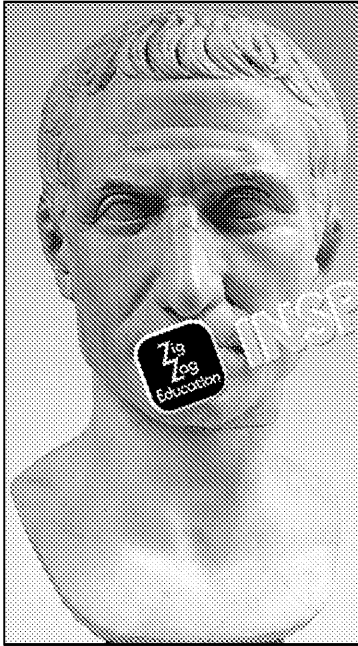
**Activity**

Draw up a timeline, including all the magistracies held by each of the characters. This will help fix in your mind when and why each related to the others as he did.

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## Caesar as *popularis* and *dictator*



Caius Julius Caesar

Caius Julius Caesar remains one of the most famous Romans. While his early life, military achievements, and relationship with Cleopatra are all extremely interesting and worth studying, the focus of this course is on his political manoeuvring at Rome, and his ultimate fate by assassination on the 15th of March, 44 BC.

In his 20s, a young officer, Caesar served as *magister equitum* and *praetor* at Rome as quaestor (69 BC). He did not until 63 BC, the year of Cicero's consulship, make a real impression. In this year, he became *pontifex maximus*, a position held for life; furthermore, he began more openly to support the populist faction in the senate.

### The Rullan Land Bill

Early in 63 BC, the populist tribune Rullus proposed a bill that would provide land for veteran troops returning from the wars. Ten land commissioners would be required, including, among others, Caesar. Caesar, of course, supported the bill, as such support demonstrated his alignment with the popularis (popularity of) Pompey the Great; but also for the fact that he was the commissioner responsible for distributing land to Pompey; surely, eventually at least, Cicero, in an effort to defend the absent Pompey's interests, defeated the bill, thus saving him from the humiliation of having to apply to Caesar for the land he wanted – but at the same time, no land to become available. It seems that Pompey was unable to see past the obvious fact that he was deeply frustrated, and it would not be long before Caesar would offer 'land in return for support in his own bid for the consulship of 59 BC'.

### The Rabirius Trial

Later in 63 BC, Caesar presided over the trial of an old senator, Rabirius, on the charge of treason. It seems that, for the powers of the SCU, he had been involved (back in 100 BC) in the trial of a tribune, no longer a senator, and, therefore, sacrosanct under the law. Cicero, as one might expect, defended the right of a senator to rise above the law in extreme circumstances. The trial was a proxy for a debate about the importance of tribunes and the legitimacy (or otherwise) of 'special commands' in general – i.e. the career of Pompey. Pompey's 'extracurricular' from his first, unconstitutional, consulship at the age of 36 (in 70 BC) to his command of the Mediterranean pirates (granted by the *lex Gabinia* in 67 BC); to his command of the East (the *lex Manilia*, 66 BC), from which the triumphant general would, very soon, be on his way to the praetor Metellus had the trial abandoned for reasons that remain obscure, Caesar was seen as a champion of the people, and a serious challenger to Pompey for the affectio

### The SCU debate

After Cicero's successful exposure of Catiline's conspiracy against him (see page 28), Caesar encountered Cato across the floor of the senate house. Five conspirators had been executed under emergency provisions of the SCU. The consul, Cicero, had held a debate on what was the appropriate penalty, while the populist Caesar, who had sided with the traditionalist, optimate Cato proposed the death penalty. Cicero sided against Caesar, in line with his own relative positions in the Rabirius trial. This action indeed executed without mercy. This action roused the populist faction fiercely against Cicero (see pages 29–31); Caesar, meanwhile, found himself – or lost himself – much on the populist side of history'.

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## The Bona Dea Trial



Clodius at the Bona Dea festival with Caesar's wife, Pompeia (*Hans Kels, 1537*)

The next year, 62 BC, saw a scandal at the Bona Dea festival (see page 13) was accused of sacrilege. Clodius disguised himself as a woman at the festival of the Good Goddess, a women-only ceremony. He was the now praetor and still *pontifex maximus*. He was alleged to have seduced or raped women.

Caesar was called as a witness for the festival. He gave an alibi, thus humiliating him; Caesar was not admitting any guilt on her part: 'Caesar's suspicion'. Thus no one could accuse Clodius. He could remain on good terms with the optimates. He too, would find this relationship useful. It helped him formally become a plebeian. In 58 BC, he was able to take revenge on Clodius by having the optimate Cato removed from his governorship (see page 13).

### Activity

Taking into account Caesar's position on each of the issues mentioned so far (the SCU debate and the Bona Dea trial), to what extent do you think that Caesar was a reformer? What principle(s), if any, underpinned his approach? How far would you have supported him?

## Pompey and the optimates

Although Pompey was now the pre-eminent man in Rome, he wanted (because of his position in the senate in order to gain land for his veterans and to have his eastern *acta* ratified ('Pompey's eastern *acta*'). By disbanding his army, he had defused the senate that he had no intention of overthrowing the government; but the senate was suspicious of him, and some were even openly hostile.

From the time he returned to Rome, Pompey was continually frustrated by Metellus.

- Pompey alienated **Metellus Celer** because he had divorced his wife, Metella. Metella had been 'living a very loose life' while Pompey was away in the east. This caused political repercussions for Pompey, as Metellus was the consul designate for 61 BC.
- Pompey hoped to remarry into the family of **Cato**, thus more closely aligning himself with the optimates, but Cato refused Pompey's offer of marriage to one of his nieces because he thought that it was 'a form of bribery and the whole scheme an attempt to undermine the constitution'. Pompey's motives.
- **Lucullus**, whose command against Mithridates had been removed in favour of Pompey, was frustrated to take a more active role in politics now that Pompey was back in Rome and he was attacking Pompey's eastern *acta*: he persuaded the senate to scrutinise and reject Pompey's eastern settlement, which Pompey had hoped would be ratified by the senate.

## Crassus

Marcus Licinius Crassus (consul with Pompey in 70 BC) was also frustrated by the optimates in 61 BC. He had become the spokesman for the equestrian tax farmers who had contracted to collect the taxes from the province of Asia. This group of businessmen had not anticipated the economic disruption to Asia due to the Mithridatic War, and realised that far from making their usual huge profit, they would barely recover the costs. Instead of recovering their losses, they requested the senate, through Crassus, to grant them a reduction in taxes.

Crassus may have had financial interests in the matter, or he may have been attempting to increase his political influence. Whatever his motives, the request was outrageous. The optimates refused to consider any concessions. Supported by Cato, Metellus spoke firmly against it; by mid 61 BC, to Crassus' annoyance, the question of the Asia tax was closed.

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## Caesar

Caesar, who had been in Spain as a *propraetor* during 61 BC, hoped to return to Rome for the consulship of 59 BC. Since he would be unable both to celebrate his triumph (outside the city walls with his army) and appear in Rome to hand in his nomination, he wrote to the senate requesting that he be allowed to stand for election *in absentia*.

Cato and the optimates refused his request, hoping to force him to abandon his ambition. They believed that Caesar would never give up the honour of a triumph — but that is what he arrived in Rome in time to enter his nomination.

### Activity

What do you think of Pompey, Caesar and Crassus, if anything? What common interests likely to form a sound basis for working together? If you were to go about building such an alliance? What benefits and/or drawbacks of an agreement on each other's behalf might you foresee?

## The First Triumvirate

In spite of Cicero's best efforts during his year as consul (63 BC) to achieve some sort of 'harmony of the orders' (*concordia ordinum*), it seemed that relations between *populares* and optimates were strained to breaking point.

It made perfect sense for the thwarted populists Pompey, Crassus and Caesar to turn to each other for support in the face of the optimate opposition of Cato, Metellus and Lucullus. With Pompey's popularity and Crassus' wealth, Caesar could campaign for the consulship of 59 BC; in return he could then spend his year legislating on the *plebs*, as well as his own. And so emerged the informal grouping known to us as the First Triumvirate.



Pompey and Crassus

This evolution is discussed by Plutarch and Appian:

The war against Mithridates had increased Pompey's reputation and made him the war he had made promises to various kings, rulers and cities: he now asked what he had done. Most of the senators, however, were jealous of Pompey and opposition to him came from Lucullus, the man who held the command against Mithridates. Lucullus reckoned that the victory over Mithridates was his and not Pompey's, the king in such a weak state. Crassus took Lucullus' side over this.

Now when Caesar came back from his province and prepared to seek the consulship, Crassus and Pompey were once more at odds with each other. He then did not wish to ask the aid of the other, nor did he have any hope of success if neither of them tried to reconcile them by persistently reminding them that their mutual ruin would come. Such men as Cicero, Catulus, and Cato, men whose influence would be nothing if only unite their friends and adherents, and with one might and one purpose directed their persuasion, were persuaded, and won them both to his support, and constituted an irresistible force, with which he overthrew the senate and the people, not by making one through the other, but by making himself greatest of all through them.

Plutarch

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<sup>5</sup> [zzed.uk/12047-plutarch-crassus](https://www.bbc.com/news/health-12047-plutarch-crassus)

Pompey, who had acquired great glory and power by his Mithridatic war, was a man of numerous concessions that he had granted to kings, princes, and cities. Many senators, out of envy, made opposition, and especially Lucullus, who had held the command against Mithridates and who considered that the victory was his, since he had left the king in a state of dependence on Pompey. Crassus cooperated with Lucullus in this matter. Pompey was indignant at this and promised under oath to support him for the consulship. The latter thereupon renewed his relations with Pompey. Thus these three most powerful men of the state cooperated together. This coalition the Roman writer Varro treated in a comedy, entitled *Tricaranus* (the three).

Appian

### Caesar's first consulship (59 BC)

Julius Caesar was elected consul, although the optimates faction hoped to have Crassus as his fellow consul. He was elected with the optimates Marcus Calpurnius Bibulus.

Caesar was determined to pass Rullus' agrarian proposal, opposed and defeated in the assembly and in the senate there was some disturbance: Cato was briefly removed for his opposition. When Crassus and Pompey were called in, Pompey even threatening force; he called his veterans to arms. The law would be passed, and Caesar's *lex Campania* now promised Campanian land to his veterans.

Cicero refused a job as one of the 10 land commissioners, though now that the time had come to use force, he began to behave more cautiously.

Caesar now became more popular than ever with the plebeians and equites, and his measures were followed; but he often ignored the traditional political and religious checks and balances. He saw these, and not necessarily wrongly, as technical measures designed mostly to obstruct legislation unwelcome to them. This did not go unnoticed, and the triumvirate's actions were seen to the extent that Cato and the optimates threatened to rescind all Caesar's legislation.

Cicero, too, was unhappy. One of his letters to Atticus, from the summer of 59 BC, says:

I have received several of your letters, in which I could see how you were craving for a change, and how you were down on all sides. We cannot object any more to the loss of our freedom, but we still have to endure the evils, which are lesser ones. That is how things are; everyone groans and sighs.

Naturally enough, in the face of continued opposition, the triumvirate began to take more drastic measures. At the end of the year, Pompey had married Julia, Caesar's daughter.

### Caesar's consulship (59 BC)

- Caesar's use of force and his failure to pay any attention to his colleagues' objections made his measures technically illegal. His opponents now had a legal basis for demanding his removal from office as soon as he became a private citizen. This made it impossible for him to exercise the imperium of either a consul or a proconsul in the future.
- Caesar's *lex Campania* created more resentment than any other aspect of his policy.
- For Pompey, a man used to glory, the triumvirate's loss of popularity with the people was humiliating. He was extremely vulnerable to public opinion.
- Cracks in the coalition were obvious from the beginning. The aims of Pompey and Crassus were different, and once they had been achieved it became difficult to hide their enmity, especially after Caesar's return to Italy.

As part of his legislation in 59 BC, Caesar's *lex Vatinia* decreed that in 58 BC he would be allowed to cross the Alpine Gaul (with the use of four legions), thus ensuring his return to Rome. Cato and the optimates for any allegedly 'illegal acts' of 59 BC. On conclusion of his mission, he was to leave Rome.

<sup>6</sup> [zzed.uk/12047-appian-civil-wars](http://www.ozed.uk/12047-appian-civil-wars)

## Activity

How important is it for a politician to observe, and to be seen to observe, the 'traditions' of the constitution? Can you think of any modern politicians who have seemed to ignore technicalities, and yet who have succeeded?

### Clodius' tribunate (58 BC)

With the help of Caesar as *pontifex maximus*, Clodius had got himself adopted as a plebeian, making him eligible for a tribunate, which he was elected to immediately, in January 58 BC, announced that he would make lawful again the right of association in *collegia*; the second denied 'fire and sword' to citizens to deal with enemies. Clodius clearly had his sights set on Cicero.

Cicero was powerless to stop the bill from passing: since he had made his excuses for not coming (see **Att. 2.18**), the latter saw no reason to come to his aid. In fact, as far as Caesar was concerned, Cicero's anti-triumviral voice (surely the point of Caesar's offers in 60 BC) was not welcome. Pompey, too, declined to come to Cicero's aid – after all, Cicero had sided with Pompey in 63 BC, and had failed to lend his support to the ratification of his eastern *acta*, though Caesar's consulship of 59 BC for satisfaction in these matters.

The consuls of 58 BC were Piso, Caesar's father-in-law, and Gabinius, his long-standing ally. After Caesar's departure to Gaul, Rome was still very much under populist control.

### Clodius' tribunate (58 BC)

- Clodius' corn dole won over the urban masses, and his legislation to reinstate the right of association to build up a gang of ruffians with which to terrorise his opponents when he was in Rome. In a few years there was constant gang warfare in the streets of Rome.
- The question of Cicero's exile revealed Caesar's cynicism and Pompey's weakness.
- Cato, who had always been a vocal opponent of exceptional commands, was now being forced to accept, in his own name, to lead the Roman annexation of Cyprus. This commission would fund Clodius' corn dole, and, therefore, could be said to be a political move to opt out of the tribunate, arch-populist.

### The three-headed monster: setbacks and solutions

The years 58 BC to 56 BC were a period during which the triumvirate began to come together. The arrangement had had its successes:

- Pompey's arrangements in the East had now been ratified, and he at last had the support of the veterans, thanks to Caesar's Campanian land law;
- Crassus had gained the 33% rebate on tax collection costs which he had promised;
- Caesar had achieved his consulship, and now held five-year *imperium* in Gaul.

But soon other matters began to conspire to drive the three apart in various ways:

- Reports of Caesar's military success in Gaul throughout 58–57 BC created jealousy in Pompey.
- Pompey supported Cicero's recall from exile. In August 57 BC, on his return to Rome, he supported Pompey in his bid to take command of the grain supply, which was inspired by jealousy in Crassus.
- In January 56 BC, Ptolemy XIII (Auletes), King of Egypt, was turned out by his brother. Pompey wanted Pompey to go to Egypt on his behalf – but there was competition for the job to be given to him; Clodius and his followers supported Pompey.
- In a legal defence speech (*pro Sestio*, February 56 BC), Cicero hinted darkly that he was threatened not from without, but within; more explicitly, he called into question the Campanian land law of 59 BC, thus distancing himself and those aligned with Pompey from Caesar.

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## The conference at Luca, 56 BC (see also page 31)

At the beginning of 56 BC, Caesar was in Cisalpine Gaul; in April he invited Crassus and Pompey to meet him there, for the 'Conference at Luca'. Here, the mutual commitment of the triumvirate was reaffirmed, and (in the manner, perhaps, of kings) the three carved up the future between them. It was decided that:

- Pompey and Crassus would be consuls next year (55 BC),
- thereafter to be given five-year commands in Spain and Syria respectively (with Pompey to govern Syria *in absentia* from Rome);
- Caesar would get another five years in Gaul to finish there what he'd started.

And one other thing: the triumvirs sent a message to Cicero 'reminding him' to keep out of politics – as he had promised to do if he were successfully returned from exile. Cicero complied, dispatching a strange document (his 'palinode', lost to us, perhaps merely a letter to Pompey), committing the triumvirate. As he wrote in a letter to his friend Atticus, 'farewell to straight led on, abandoned,... now it is time I should look after myself, since they won't let

But although the three had reaffirmed their relationship to their mutual satisfaction

In 54 BC, Julia, Caesar's daughter (and Pompey's wife), died: thus a significant bond broken; furthermore, the next year (53 BC) Crassus was killed at Carrhae on his march to the East: the three-legged stool suddenly seemed much less stable.

## Meanwhile, at Rome...

At Rome, the consuls for 54 BC, Domitius Ahenobarbus and A. Clodius Pulcher, followed by money to declare certain candidates elected for 53 BC, whatever the actual result occurred in the other election campaign; there was a fear of a Sullan-style dictatorship. 53 BC opened without consuls and all candidates for the office on trial for bribery.

Consuls were eventually elected in July (Domitius Calvinus and Valerius Rufus); then the election of 52 BC. Thanks to further disruption from Clodius (standing this time) year 52 BC again opened without consuls.

Cicero remained impotent, writing to Curio:

Indeed, letter writing was invented so that we might inform those absent if they know, or that we ourselves should know. This type of letter you would not expect. In regards to your home affairs, you have writers and messengers. As for my own, anything new....

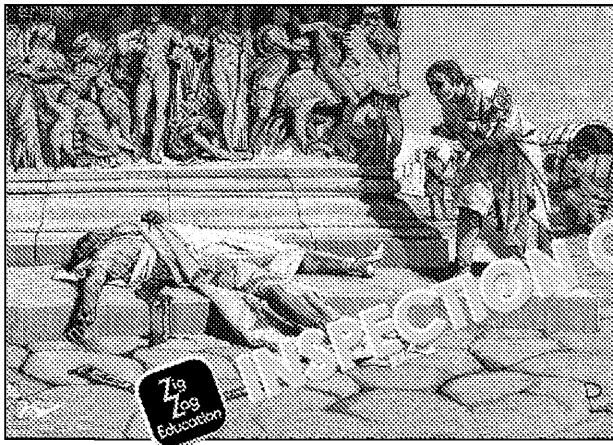
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## Activity

In 56 BC, the triumvirate reasserted their commitment to working together. What problems did they create? Was the conference a mistake?



## The death of Clodius



Murder on the via Appia (Francesco Bertolini c.1909)

In January 52 BC, Clodius was a candidate for the consulship. When their followers clashed, Clodius fled into a nearby inn; Milo had a crowd carry Clodius' body home, where it was burnt on a pyre of furniture. The pyre caught fire and was destroyed.

The mob called for Pompey even to be declared dictator to restore order to Rome; the Senate demanded elections, but a *collegia* made these impossible. The *Senatus Consultum Ultimum* was passed.

Clodius declared 'sole consul', avoiding at least the title of dictator, although his six-month consulship suggested that he was *de facto* exactly that (see page 32).

### Conflicting interests in late 50s BC

- **Optimates**  
The optimates wanted Caesar to return early from his command in Gaul to legislate during his consulship (59 BC).
- **Pompey**  
Pompey wanted to maintain the balance between Caesar and the optimates that Caesar would not become his equal.
- **Caesar**  
Caesar wanted his command in Gaul extended until he could stand (*in absentia*) for his second consulship in 48 BC. He planned to return to Rome as consul, or elected from prosecution leave for Gaul again as proconsul in 49 BC, as he had done in 58 BC.

As a gesture of solidarity with the optimates, who still had Caesar in their sights, Pompey stood for all election in 49 BC, but he then met with Caesar and sponsored the '10 tribunes', which would make Caesar an exception – he stood *in absentia* for his second consulship (in 49 BC), thus saving him from prosecution.

In an effort to confront the issue of corrupt governorship of the provinces, Pompey required a five-year period between consulship and proconsulship (governorship). Suitable candidates, he appointed Cicero governor of Cilicia for 51 BC. (It is argued that Cicero's voice from Rome materially affected political developments over the next, crucial years, though thought so.)

Finally, Pompey granted himself a further five years' command in Spain, thereby leaving Caesar – but at the same time displaying disturbingly autocratic tendencies...

### Activity

How far are your impressions of the character of Pompey altered or affirmed by the late 50s BC?

### Activity

What indicators, if any, do you detect of a possible Roman civil war in the near future? Who do you think is – or will be – to blame?

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## The turn of the screw...

In 50 BC, the consuls were optimates Servius Sulpicius Rufus and Marcus Claudius Marcellus. Caesar's request for an extension to his command in Gaul, and when Marcellus' veto was vetoed, it was decreed that his position would be formally discussed the next year.

Caesar was now in the impossible situation (as he saw it) of having to choose between returning to Rome without his army to stand trial and certain conviction; or returning with his army, precipitating civil war.

But in 50 BC, Curio (whose debts had been cleared by Caesar) was a tribune; he vetoed Caesar's proposals, and Pompey made a proposal of his (or Caesar's) own: that Pompey should remain in Spain. Although this proposal was passed in the senate, the hardest-line optimates, ready to stop at nothing to bring down Caesar, were only the smallest of minorities, and it certainly looks as if

- Caesar didn't want war – as shown by Curio's proposal;
- Pompey didn't want war – he has hesitated about Caesar's recall;
- (most of) the senate didn't want war – 370 have voted in favour of bilateral negotiations.

### Activity

What indications, if any, do you detect of a possible Roman civil war in the near future, or will be – to blame? Have you changed your opinions since the last time you thought about it? If so, why? If not, why not?

## The Civil War

In January 49 BC, the SCU was passed again, this time naming Julius Caesar *hostis*. Caesar brought his army across the Rubicon (*alea iacta est*, 'the die is cast'); Pompey fled to Greece.

Caesar's progress through Italy was swift; Domitius Ahenobarbus made it to Corfinium, and Pompey failed to come to his aid. Domitius was easily defeated, who thus demonstrated that he was far from planning the feared proscriptions of 48 BC (unfairly?) criticised by Pompey's dishonourable failure to support Domitius; he was left with no one to follow' (*ego vero quem fugiam habeo, quem sequar non habeo*).

### Activity

How fair is Cicero's assessment of Pompey's strategy, as outlined in **Att. 8.8**?

Caesar saw that the support of Cicero, the ex-consul who in former times had been a powerful ally (see page 26), would be of immense value: he wanted Cicero to represent him as the defender of the Republic. Caesar therefore sent envoys to Cicero, promising that he would never be asked to return to Rome. But when Cicero and Caesar met in person, at Formiae in the spring of 49 BC, Cicero refused to return to Rome as Caesar's placeman; he did, however, write to Atticus about his inner conflict (**Att. 9.4**).

A week later, Cicero wrote to Caesar (**Att. 9.10**), suggesting that there was fault on both sides, acknowledging that both sides were, to some extent, in the right.

Cicero eventually supported Pompey, as the lesser of two evils, to Greece, but failed at Pharsalus (September 48 BC), when Pompey was overwhelmingly defeated and forced to flee.

### Activity

Enjoy this video clip about the Battle of Pharsalus from Battlestack on YouTube: [zzed.uk/12047-battle-pharsalus](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzed.uk/12047-battle-pharsalus)

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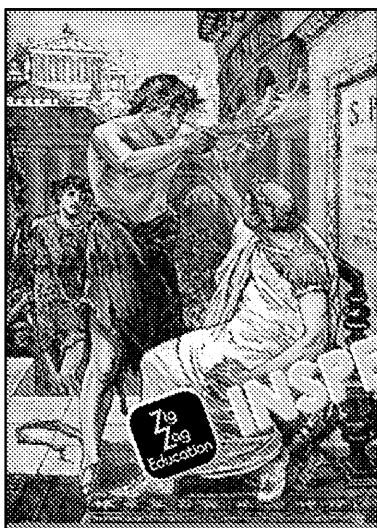
## Caesar as dictator

Scholars differ as to whether Caesar was thinking of restoring the old constitution unwillingly, he saw monarchy of one sort or another as the only solution. Either Rome again for Spain, finally to defeat the last remnants of Pompeian resistance

Caesar entered Rome again early in October 45 BC, in a triumph that caused bitter name, it had been won in battle against Roman citizens.

Caesar proceeded to decide the magistracies for years in advance, in preparation Rome; he enlarged the senate in not its ranks those traditionally thought of (ex-slaves), centurions, etc. The dramatic event serves to illustrate the content regarded traditional form of government: on the last day of December, 45 BC, or dead. Caesar promptly appointed a successor, for a single afternoon, until the first day of January. Cicero joked that in the consulship of Caninius, nobody had vigilance was such that throughout his whole term of office he never slept, etc.

But Cicero kept his silence in the senate: he did not dare, or think it worthwhile, extravagant honours pressed upon Caesar by a senate largely composed of his of his supporters did that).



Antony offers a crown to Caesar  
(John Clark Ridpath, 1894)

In 44 BC, Caesar was appointed *dictator perpetuo* – an offence to republicans, since the essence of dictatorship was its brevity, purely in time of crisis; his portrait on the coinage at the time the image of a living Roman had done so before. Three times he emphatically refused – but the crowd was so obvious that if the crowd had cheered, Caesar would have accepted. Cicero said later that Antony's action here made

Why might Antony have been called the real

There was pressure on Marcus Junius Brutus to assassinate the seventh and last King of Rome. Brutus the Tyrannicide was generally applauded in the army. The tyrant was, in blood or friendship, to the army's credit. Brutus was joined by Cassius and



The Murder of Caesar (Karl Theodor von Piloty, 1865)

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## Cicero and the *res publica*

In the first century BC, high political offices (magistracies) in Rome, though technically achieved by election, were almost exclusively controlled by a group of wealthy aristocratic families that had held them for many generations (see page 3). Cicero, born in 106 BC into a rich (but not super-rich) equestrian family at Arpinum, about 100 km outside Rome, was going to have to work hard to find acceptance, let alone success, among the senatorial class.

However, he was ambitious. At a young age he adopted Achilles' motto as his own, 'Alas, to what must I resort?'. Lacking the advantages of a senatorial ancestry, there were essentially only two paths open to him. One was a military career, since military success was thought to result from exceptional personal qualities and could lead to popularity and, therefore, political opportunity. Cicero, however, was no soldier. He hated war, and served in the army only very briefly as a young man.



The young Cicero (Vincenzo da Brescia Foppa, c.1464)

Instead, Cicero chose a career in jurisprudence, rhetoric and law. As he was ready, he began taking on cases. This could lead to political success: a lawyer would gain a great deal of popularity; first, by giving speeches; second, he could be involved in high-profile cases; finally, he could build up a network of *amicitia* (friendships) in an age when political success was based on these loose, but powerful, ties.

In one of his earliest cases (80 BC), Cicero clashed, albeit indirectly, with a favourite of Sulla's. This episode precipitated his departure from Rome.

After the aftermath of the trial, 'to further his education'. On the death of the dictator, Cicero's episode reminds us that the forum, where trials were heard in public, was also a place of political activity. The Verres trial in 70 BC would underscore this truth even more emphatically.

### Activity

Watch the BBC *Timewatch* episode 'Murder in Rome', a dramatisation of the trial of Cluentia. Visit [zzed.uk/12047-murder-in-rome](http://www.bbc.com/1/programmes/zzed.uk/12047-murder-in-rome)

How does Cicero use this trial to make political – as opposed to legal – points?

Cicero proved to be an excellent orator and lawyer, and a shrewd politician. He held the principal Roman magistracies (quaestor, aedile, praetor, consul) on his first attempt, at the minimum age at which he was legally allowed to stand, and at the top of each post he was elected a member of the senate, the first in his family to achieve such a position, and as a *homo* ('new man') – a label that spoke of proud achievement; but also, perhaps, of snobbish optimism.

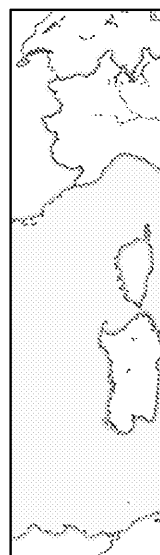
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## Cicero's political apprenticeship (75–69 BC)

Cicero's status as *novus homo* was more than a mere label – it was integral to his political outlook. As an equestrian from outside the city who had joined the political elite as quaestor in 75 BC, Cicero was in an excellent position to understand the potential for political trouble as the increasingly wealthy and, therefore, influential equestrian class felt increasingly disenfranchised from the decision-makers in the senate. Not only did the equestrians need a spokesman, but the bonds between the social orders needed to be strengthened. Cicero saw himself as the man for the job: this was the way in which he could make his name and, at the same time, serve his nation, as his traditional Roman values required that he should.



Cicero's first magistracy, a quaestorship which he served in 75 BC in Sicily, was formative, and ultimately useful to him: not only was he able easily to build a mutually respectful relationship with his fellow equestrians in Sicily; having behaved throughout his time there with impeccable moral rectitude, he was the natural choice for the Sicilians when in 70 BC they came looking for a champion to their corrupt propraetor of 73–70 BC (for the importance of Cicero's speech *In Verrem* see page 10).

Before then, though, in 74 BC Cicero returned to Rome from his quaestorship in Sicily. He was well for himself, but he was shocked to learn that he had hardly been missed. He realised that 'the people have eyes', and he resolved to be seen in the forum every day. Cicero never again missed the forum.

Cicero, as ex-quaestor, was now a fully fledged senator, though a junior one; as a tribune, he could stand for the tribunate, but he perhaps judged that this office was antagonistic to his interests. Instead, he decided to campaign to be aedile in 69 BC. He was duly elected, but 70 BC was a bad year for aediles.

In 70 BC, the new consuls were the massively successful young general, Gn. Pompey (Pompey the Great), who had been elected to restore the tribunate, degraded by Sulla; and M. Licinius Crassus, who had been elected to restore the tribunate, degraded by Sulla. Both Pompey and Crassus could be classed as optimates – see page 3).

The new populist consuls had censor elected, to purge the senate of Sulla's placemen. The censor had the power to remove the powers of the tribunes (see page 11).

By the end of 70 BC, in the wake of the trial of Verres (see pages 38–41) the *lex Aelia* (which stipulated that now only one third of a jury in corruption trials could be made up of senators; equites and tribunes would supply the other two thirds of the jury). Thus, the constitution was close to Cicero's ideal – the tribunate had been restored; the equites had a powerful and influential voice; and at least some of the corruption of the aristocrats had been removed.

From his success against Verres, Cicero was able to build up his popularity in Sicily. He was well: during his aedileship (69 BC), grateful Sicilians made sure that such a case was brought to Rome that the cost of living there was kept low, at a time when Mediterranean prices were high. Thus Cicero gained popularity at Rome too.

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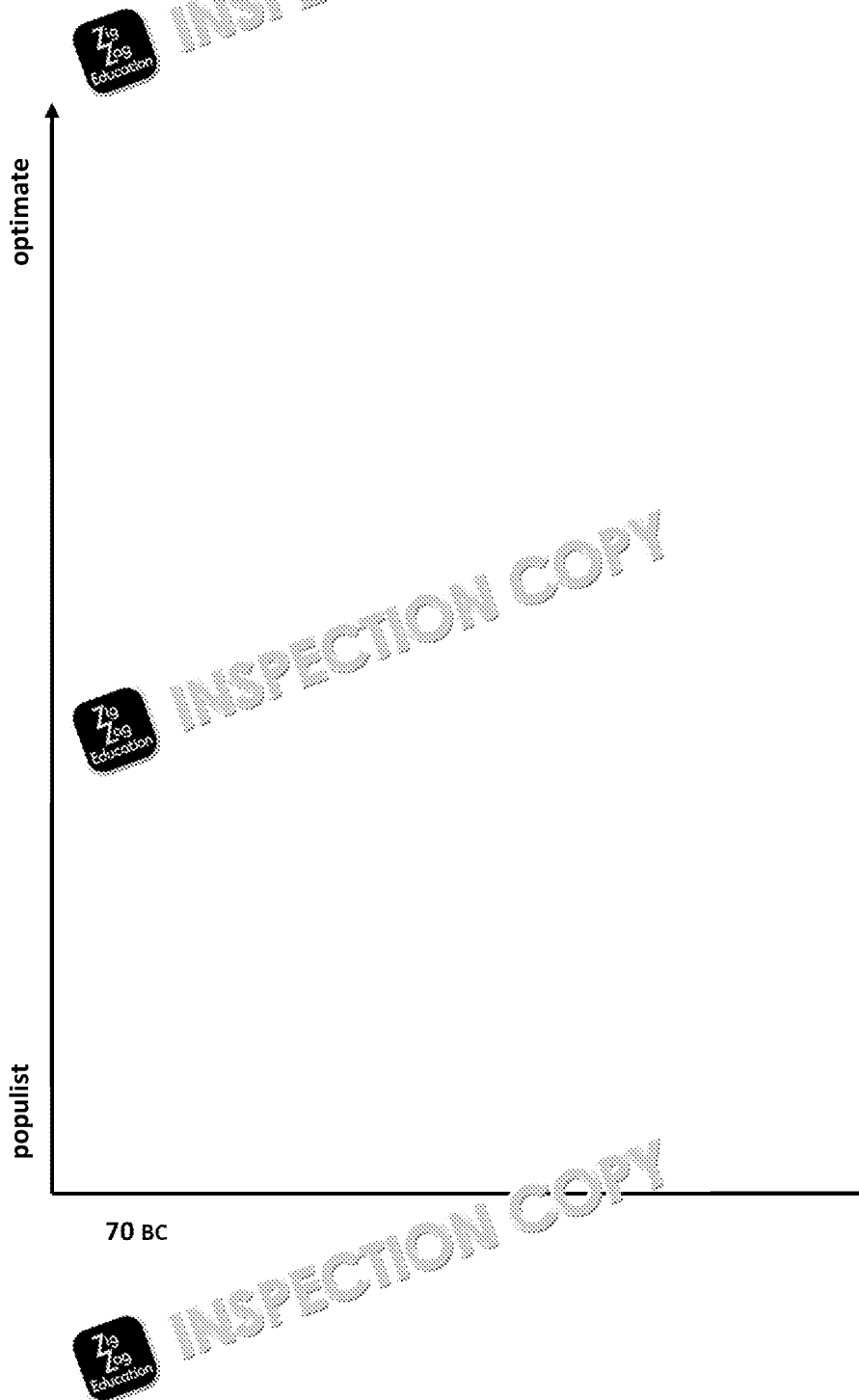


### Activity

'Pompey and Crassus could be classed as *populares*' – on what grounds? Find out about these two individuals. What did they do that made them populists? Did they do anything to align them with the optimate faction? Was Cicero a populist or an optimate?

### Activity

Draw a graph, the x-axis representing time going forward, the y-axis labelled 'populist' at the bottom and 'optimat' at the top. Plot each of Cicero's political statements or interventions. Create a document as you learn more of what Cicero said in his speeches or wrote in his letters.



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## lex Gabinia and lex Manilia (67–66 BC)

Politically, with his eye on a campaign for the praetorship of 66 BC, Cicero was caught between the optimates and populists: he privately supported the populist tribune that Pompey should be given a special command against the pirates – but in an effort to appease the optimates of the senate, Cicero made no public speech, perhaps risking Pompey's support a call to depose a tribune who opposed Gabinius – thus signalling his tacit support of the command. The bill was duly passed, and Pompey swept the Mediterranean clear of pirates.

When, the next year, the tribune Manilius proposed in 66 BC that Pompey should be given a special command against Mithridates (*lex Manilia*), Cicero (previously for this year) publicly supported the praetorship, he no longer felt the need to hide his support of the populist Pompey's supporters: he was now free to eulogise Pompey, and, not surprisingly, spoke in a way that was carefully calculated to alienate the optimates.

Cicero might be said to have deserted the optimate cause at this point, and to have become the fatal habit of letting the people confer vast extraordinary commands. At the time that the immediate public interest was more important than the creation of precedent, later, in the *Philippics*, when he had no electoral concerns, he severely criticised the precedent set in this way.

In return for his support of Pompey on this issue, Cicero quite confidently expected Pompey (and his clients) when it came to Cicero's own campaign for the consulship of 65 BC.

### Activity

What are the arguments for AND against 'special commands' granted to Pompey as the *lex Gabinia* and the *lex Manilia*? Do they solve problems – or create them?

## concordia ordinum

It was in 66 BC that Cicero for the first time explicitly outlined his vision of the 'concordia ordinum' – that is, unity between the senate, the equestrians, or an alliance of traditional law and order in the face of more radical, populist movements. Although he had much in common with the optimates, he was right to sense the dangers of the senate alienating the equestrian businessmen and the popular politics.

As praetor, Cicero presided over all extortion cases this year. This was a political minefield: his colleagues in the senate could well appear before him, and he could end up convicting them. Indeed, in order to avoid such a conflict of interest in the case of Manilius, who Cicero had supported (*lex Manilia*, see previous heading), Cicero had Manilius' trial postponed, thus losing significant support amongst Manilius' followers, and had to promise to return to Rome when the last came up (although in fact, it never did).

In 65 BC, Crassus proposed the Roman annexation of Egypt, according to an interdict from Alexander X. Crassus stood to gain huge wealth by such a move. Cicero, in his speech, opposed and defeated this populist measure, in the process both thwarting Crassus' ambitions (because, as Crassus' great rival at this point, Pompey always liked to see him defeated) and preserving the status quo.

In 65 BC, too, the populist Lucius Sergius Catilina (better known to us as Catiline) was elected for the consulship of 64 BC. However, he was at the time on trial (for extortion), and was barred from political campaigning or election. He was, therefore, obliged, on completion of his trial, to wait a year later, for the consulship of 63 BC. His main rival in this election would be Cicero.

Cicero was skilled at the campaign trail during the summer of 64 BC, not only as a speaker (in his famous 'invektives' against Catiline), but also in the political arts of, for example, keeping the great train of Pompey's supporters looking optimistic, remembering names, etc. With Pompey fighting Mithridates in the East, Cicero was able to play the role of Pompey's representative in Rome, furthering his popularity – and votes. He was the victim of abuse (as are all political candidates) by any real substance against him was his lack of nobility. This he overcame, and achieved the status of *novus homo* of being elected consul in first place, *suo anno*, without violence or opposition from many optimate nobles, who feared the accession of the Catiline with his populist agenda.

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The second and, therefore, final consul to be elected was Caius Antonius Hybrida – and, therefore, first of the losers – was Catiline – who didn't go away...

### Activity

Consider Cicero's career down to 63 BC. Would you say that, so far, he has been an unwavering principle? Or a cynical opportunist? Be able to give evidence in support of your answer.

### Cicero's year (63 BC)

In 63 BC, Rome seemed ripe for revolution. There was the usual overcrowding and the Mithridatic War. This meant money scarce and probably caused unemployment and discontent.

When would Pompey return? With whom would he ally himself? With whichever was most favourable to himself, of course; so the year became the setting for a duel between the new populists, and the consul Cicero, also on the populist spectrum, to be elected by the Sicilian equestrians, supporter of the *lex Aurelia* and had been elected that year by Pompey's client base (after his strong support of the *lex Manilia*). But Cicero also had the support of the optimates: although they may have had to hold their noses when backing *novus homo* Cicero, that he had saved their reputation in the Verres trial (back in 70 BC), and they had made a worthy 'anyone but Catiline' candidate.

Cicero's challenge was to act as well as speak; to retain the favour of the people, to appease the pockets of the equestrians; and to assert the authority of the optimate-heavy senate against individuals such as Caesar.

Or would Caesar rouse the mob to force through measures that would give him power? Would Pompey under an obligation to him? Caesar (and Crassus) surely didn't want revolution would be enough, perhaps exposing the optimates as no longer 'fit for office'.

The year opened with the Pollia and Lullia, and continued with the Rabirius trial (dominated by the Catiline conspiracy).

### The SCU

The *Senatus Consultum Ultimum* (the Senate's 'Final Decree'), or more properly, *senatus consultum de re publica defendenda* (Decree of the Senate on defending the Republic) is the modern term for the decree passed by the Roman senate during the late Roman Republic in times of emergency. The decree's full text was *ut quod darent operam ne quid detrimenti res publica caperet* ('Let the consuls see to it that they do not let anything happen which would be detrimental to the Republic'). It was first passed during the rise to power of Gaius Gracchus in 121 BC, and subsequently during the Catiline affair of 63 BC, and finally in 49 BC, when Caesar passed it. The SCU effectively replaced the dictatorship by giving the senate more or less control of the state. After the rise of Augustus, there was little need for the senate ever to pass it.

### Constitutional problems with the SCU

The decree did not specify precisely how far-reaching the powers would be for the consuls to override the normal protections and liberties enjoyed by citizens. This came to be used by the consuls as a means to carry out executions without trial. In the case of the conspiracy of Catiline, including the former consul Publius Cornelius Lentulus Sura, the Assembly of Citizens could condemn them to death inside the City of Rome. However, Cicero argued that, given the extraordinary danger of the crisis, the SCU afforded him the authority to do so. Julius Caesar and his followers argued that the SCU could not override the constitution, that it was the duty of the consuls to do their utmost *within the framework of the constitution* to resolve the emergency. This point of law would never be settled, although Cicero's actions were justified (the exile was ordered by one of his political enemies, Publius Clodius Pulcher – see page 29), and, therefore, the matter should probably not be seen as a precedent.

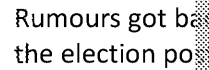
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In private, Catiline spoke wildly of his desperation, and of the consequences of his crime. Fulvia, mistress of Curio, at the time a supporter of Cicerone, was a friend of Terentia.



Catiline faced Cicero, the most powerful spokesman of the state, one with a big head and a strong one with a strong voice. Catiline proposed a hostile, even the

But at this stage Catiline, and he to go ahead. Cicero's cuirass (breastplate) supposedly for his bodyguards was back in 65 BC. Cicero's side...

Cicero even convinced the senate that Catiline posed a greater threat to the Republic; in a battle outside Rome, Catiline died a heroic death (according to the contemporary historian Sallust, he fell far in advance of his men, his wounds to the front, etc.), and five of his remaining fellow conspirators at Rome were rounded up. These were the focus of the 'SCU debate' (see page 14).



Cicero presided over the clash between Caesar and Cato about what was to be done with the five conspirators, ultimately siding with Cato's call for their execution under the provisions of the SCU. While technically defensible under the law, this is immediately controversial, so much so that at the close of Cicero's year, his valedictory (and no doubt self-congratulatory) speech was vetoed by the populist tribune C. Clodius, perhaps aware of Pompey's lik

It is perhaps surprising that Cicero, in his letter of 62 BC (*ad Fam.* 5.7), expressed not support for nor enthusiastically in this matter.

Find out about modern-day 'emergency powers' legislation around the world. In which countries are emergency powers used too often, or not often enough? How compatible with democracy are emergency powers? How much does this matter?

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## Cicero and Clodius (*né* Claudius)

Cicero and Clodius were known to each other from previous brief (and not always friendly) encounters. Cicero had been on trial in 65 BC, Clodius offered to defend him; the prosecutor was Clodius, so he didn't, in the end, face Clodius at the trial). Clodius was among Cicero's supporters in the Catiline conspiracy in 63 BC, so clearly their professional rivalry was just that.

However, in 62 BC, a deeper, and more personal *inimicitia* emerged. This time, Clodius committed the sacrilegious act of having infiltrated the women-only *Festus Dea* festival dress allegedly, to consummate (or to continue a relationship) his relationship with the Pompeia, the wife of the *pontifex maximus* (no one other than Julius Caesar). The act was witnessed by proconsul and Cicero's been observer of legal proceedings, Cicero. On the evening in question, Clodius had been away from Rome, Cicero took it upon himself to bring Clodius on the contrary. Clodius had seen Clodius in Rome that day. Cicero was believed; Clodius was publicly humiliated, and although thanks to Crassus' money, the jury was brought to a verdict, the seeds of revenge were sown.

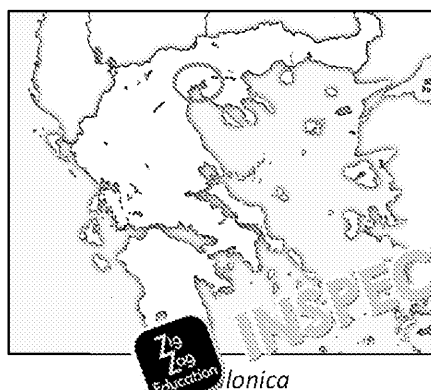
Other fallout from this trial included Caesar's immediate divorce from Pompeia (on suspicion' as he put it), although he remained on good terms with Clodius, who, in the future...

When, in 59 BC, *pontifex maximus* Julius Caesar was consul, it occurred to Clodius (at this stage) that it would be possible technically to change his social status (and to be eligible to run for the tribunate of 58 BC. As tribune, he would be able to pass laws that Clodius found an agreeable accomplice to facilitate a formal adoption into a *paterfamilias* – consul and by now triumvir Caesar – since by 59 BC Cicero had become a *paterfamilias* side: Cicero had by now been speaking out against the three-headed monster (as a tribune with a grudge against Cicero must have presented an intriguing prospect).

## Clodius on top

And so it came to pass that Clodius became a *paterfamilias*, stood for, and was elected tribune that year, he announced two important laws: the first made lawful again the right of appeal, the second denied 'fire and sword' to anyone who had put citizens to death without trial. In the case of the *proscripti*, Clodius offered a pardon to conspirators five years before, in 63 BC. No tribune vetoed Clodius' powerful move. In the meantime, Caesar had returned to Gaul; Crassus had never been one to side with Clodius since his *de lege Alexandrina* stance (see page 26); and even Pompey had lost interest (he refused) to persuade the senate to ratify his Eastern *acta* and provide land for his veterans.

Furthermore, Clodius proclaimed that he was supported by Caesar's forces, and in 58 BC. This was embarrassing to Caesar and Pompey, but Caesar needed Clodius' support (as a veto) against the threatened repeal of all his laws of 59 BC, and Pompey in turn, as an optimates, felt that he needed to continue to side with Caesar.



Cicero was, therefore, forced to leave Rome. Clodius outlawed Cicero by name, and confiscated his property and his country villa looted.

Cicero made for Thessalonica, capital of Macedonia, 100 miles from Italy. He was disheartened.

Back at Rome, Clodius and his *collegia* kept the city in chaos, and he soon fell out with Pompey. Clodius' tribune to propose Cicero's recall to the city. Clodius began to look as if something might be done.

Before the end of 58 BC, there was an attempt by eight of the 10 tribunes to revoke Clodius' laws (and to recall Cicero by name, confiscating his property). This failed (Clodius was still influential). In 57 BC (Lentulus Spinther and Metellus Nepos) seemed sympathetic to Cicero's call.

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### The Significance of Clodius' Tribune (58 BC)

- Clodius' corn dole won over the urban masses, and his legislation to reinstate the *licinia* to build up gangs with which to terrorise his opponents when he was out of Rome. There was constant gang warfare in the streets of Rome.
- The question of Cicero's exile revealed Pompey's hypocrisy.
- Cato, who had always been an outspoken opponent of special commands, was forced to accept one himself (leading the Roman expedition to Cyprus – which failed, and, therefore, could be said to alienate Cato from the champion of the optimates).

On 1<sup>st</sup> January 57 BC, new consul Gaius Spintner passed a vote in the senate in favour of Cicero's recall, but Clodius, still in Rome, effected an uprising in the streets, and Spintner fled.

In the summer of 57 BC, tribunes Milo and Sestius managed at last to contain Clodius. Clodius signalled his wish to recall Cicero; Quintus (Cicero's brother) pledged that Cicero would return. In July, a decree was passed in the senate by 417 votes to 1 (Clodius), directing the magistrates to effect Cicero's recall. A powerful collection of leading men addressed the people, including Cato, who had a record in 63 BC and said that the senate, the *equites* and Italy were all in favour of his recall. Cicero was back in Italy by 5<sup>th</sup> August, and he made a speech of thanks.

### Chaos

Later in September 57 BC, the senate debated the high price of corn. Clodius worked against Cicero on the grounds that it was his return that was responsible for the corn shortage. Stones were thrown at (the now consul) Nepos. Cicero proposed that Pompey should be given yet another special command to deal with the situation.

Cicero was indebted to Pompey (for having helped his recall to Rome), and didn't want to propose to the senate a five-year command, with the risk of appointing a large staff. He stayed at home for fear of a popular uprising under Clodius. The next day, after a long debate, extensive powers for Pompey – a fleet, a province, and the right to override provincial laws – was accepted, albeit reluctantly.

### Activity

The art of the politician: can you think of any more contemporary instances of politicians' second best – whereas in fact, having set up an outrageous second option, they had no other choice but the one they wanted?

In November, Clodius' gangs invaded Cicero's house, and Cicero himself was attacked. There was also an attack on the tribune Milo's house, and the senate was disrupted.

Ptolemy XII ('Auletes'), King of Egypt, had been ejected by his subjects, and was in Rome. He wanted Pompey to go to Egypt on his behalf. Pompey's friends pressed for this. Cicero, in Pompey's debt, but also in others', on this occasion supported Lentulus (as consul in 57 BC, Spintner had been instrumental in Cicero's recall from exile). Cato supported Crassus.

Due to public unrest – Pompey even told Cicero that he was in danger – Pompey decided the business undecided, and in fact Gabinius took over Pompey and now governed Egypt.

In February 56 BC, Sestius (tribune in 57 BC) was charged with using violence in support of his speech in his (successful) *pro Sestio*, restated his political creed: that the state was threatened from abroad and from within; the people, he said, wanted stability, with an *honestas* and *dignitate* of the state. Cicero called for the *lex Campana* – passed in dubious circumstances by Caesar as consul in 59 BC – to be re-examined. Men like Clodius were not true *populi*. Pompey was unrepresentative of the true will of the people. Perhaps Cicero now felt that Pompey's alliance with Clodius and Crassus over the Egyptian question, would now abandon his alliance with the triumvirate and leaving the way clear for Cicero to revive his old policy of *concordia*.

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## The conference at Luca, 56 BC (see also page 19)

But Pompey, meanwhile, was meeting Crassus, Caesar, and a large number of other senators at Luca. The triumvirs' differences (over the grain crisis, Ptolemy, etc.) were papered over; such was their power, it was 'decided' that Pompey and Crassus would be consuls next year (55 BC), thereafter to be awarded five-year commands in Spain and Syria respectively; Caesar would take another five years in Gaul to finish there what he had started.

A message was sent to Cicero (who had previously been invited to Luca) reminding him of his pledge to be recalled by Quintus in return for his brother's recall from exile. Cicero took the hint, dispatching a signed document (his 'palinode'), committing himself entirely to the Triumvirate. It is clear that Cicero took this 'bitter pill' with reluctance: it would not be right to say that at this point he 'joined the Triumvirate', although he did drop his public objections, such as those outlined in his *pro Sestio* speech. As noted on page 19, he expressed Atticus in a passage that bears repeating: 'farewell to straight, true, honourable principles abandoned,... now it is time I should look after myself, since they won't look after me'.

Cicero was forced, then, against all his principles, to accept the will of the strong. Caesar for his recall was so deep, his disillusion with the optimates, some of whom he had known, so great, the experience of his exile so traumatic.

### The conference at Luca: Cicero's part

Although Cicero had always regarded his relationship with Pompey in a positive light, Caesar had in the past been cordial, he was fundamentally opposed to the concentration of power in the hands of so few men. He was a stout republican; he was anti-triumvirate.

Therefore, he tried to drive wedges between the triumvirs. He hoped, by doing so, to weaken their power base.

For example, Cicero supported Pompey's cause for a special command to deal with the grain crisis. This was successful, and, as Cicero had hoped, caused a rift between Pompey and Crassus.

Another issue was that of the restitution of Ptolemy to the throne of Egypt. Cicero supported Pompey's plan, leaving Clodius to support Crassus. Crassus, and Cicero hoped that this would be the end of the triumvirate.

In his *pro Sestio* speech, Cicero also attacked Caesar over his 59 BC Campanian campaign (which he claimed was a disaster for his and Pompey's veterans from Gaul and the Mithridates campaigns), but perceived that Caesar summoned Crassus and Pompey to Luca, where the strength of the triumvirate was reinforced.

So in his efforts to destroy the triumvirate, ironically Cicero could be said, by the time of the conference at Luca, in fact to have strengthened it.

### Activity

Outline the causes and consequences of the Conference at Luca. Who were the losers after the conference? Of the winners, who was the most powerful?

### Meanwhile, at Rome...

At Rome, the consuls for 54 BC, Domitius Ahenobarbus and Appius Claudius, followed by the candidates elected for 53 BC, whatever the actual results, were all on trial for bribery. The year 53 BC opened without consuls, and with all candidates for the office on trial for bribery.

Consuls were eventually elected in July (Domitius Calvinus and Valerius Rufus); they were then charged with organizing the elections for 52 BC. Thanks to further disruption from Clodius (standing for praetorship), the year 52 BC again opened without consuls.

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## The death of Clodius and Cicero's defence of Milo (*pro Milone*)

In January 52 BC, Clodius met Titus Annius Milo on the Appian Way. Milo had been a candidate the previous summer for the still vacant consulship. Their followers clashed; Clodius was carried into a nearby inn; Milo had him dragged out and killed. The crowd carried off his house, and burnt it on a pyre of furniture and documents; the building itself caught fire.

- Milo was to Pompey as Clodius was to Caesar (and sometimes Crassus): a favourite
- As tribune in 57 BC (the year after Clodius), Milo had been instrumental in Clodius's death; he was therefore in his debt
- With the death of Clodius, Pompey no longer had need of Milo
- Milo nursed his own ambition: he planned to stand again for election in the consulship of 51 BC, and Pompey sense an increasingly powerful rival at Rome
- Riots in the wake of the death of Clodius meant there had to be a trial
- There could be no doubt that Milo was guilty of the murder of Clodius
- Cicero appeared for the defence, if not in defiance of Pompey, then at least to help him
  - He remembered that Milo had helped return from exile
  - He wanted to reassert himself after his shameful 'palinode'
- Troops positioned (by Pompey) around the forum, ostensibly to quell Clodius's followers, but to help Cicero, and he lost the (unwinnable?) case.

## Pompey's sole consulship

A demonstration called for Pompey to become consul, or even dictator; the legions demanded elections, at the same time making them impossible with their disruption of the SCU, and Pompey was indeed declared sole consul, avoiding at least the title of dictator.

Pompey had at last achieved an alliance with the optimates, although Cicero could not see there likely to be anything approaching the sort of *concordia ordinum* he had dreamed of.

One of Pompey's new laws, designed to weed out corruption in the republican system, required that a consul should depart to his province until five years after his term of office at Rome (this was to prevent overborrowing to spend on elections, with a view to immediate recompense in the provinces, Verres-style). A natural result of this legislation was that for a few years only a few of qualified consuls were needed. Former office-bearers who had refused provinces in the past, and the most senior consuls, were needed. So Cicero found himself dispatched, protesting, to Cilicia (50), from where he wrote ruefully to Caelius (*Fam.* 2.11).

### Activity

How do you think Pompey's sole consulship was regarded by (a) Pompey; (b) Cato; (c) Cicero; (d) Cato; (e) Cicero? Do you think it was a wise appointment or a reckless one? What measure(s) might have been more (or less) wise/foolish?

## The storm gathers

Meanwhile, while the optimates announced their plan to prosecute Caesar as soon as he returned, either for illegal acts as consul in 59 BC, or for treasonable behaviour in Gaul, Caesar was elected from his proconsulship in Gaul to a second consulship in 58 BC (as consul he would have to return to Rome).

In 52 BC, the tribunes passed a bill ('the law of the ten tribunes') allowing Caesar to return to Gaul *in absentia* from Gaul, but soon after the optimates were agreed: Caesar should not return.

Opinion in Rome saw the affair as a struggle between Caesar and Pompey, with Cicero contemplating a situation in which he was at the mercy of the other.

Caesar intended to campaign for election in 49 BC; in preparation for this, the role of the tribunes became important. Although Curio had been considered by Cicero as a promising tribune (see, for example, *ad Att.* 2.18 and *ad Fam.* 2.4), he had also been a friend of Clodius, and lent his support to Caesar.

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Pompey called for Caesar to be recalled from Gaul in the November of 50 BC; Curio argued that Pompey should give up his command in Spain. Most of the senate (though not the Pompeian faction) agreed.

Towards the end of 50 BC, Cicero wrote that he would support Pompey in public, but urged him to peace. In December, Curio, now Caesar's puppet at Rome, proposed in the senate that Caesar should lay down their arms. The motion was carried by 370 to 22. (It is not clear of intention of disarming, but he did thus cleverly expose the minuscule size of Cato's faction.)

Later that month, Cicero, on his way back to Rome from Cilicia, met Pompey raised the issue. Pompey was friendly, but confirmed that he and Caesar were completely alienated; Cicero urged peace, but the war was on.

In January 49 BC, the SCU was passed, officially naming Caesar as *hostis publicus*. Caesar's commands were distributed (Cicero got Capua, in Campania), and on 10<sup>th</sup> January 49 BC, *alea iacta est* ('the die is cast').

### Activity

Construct a timeline demonstrating the 'steps to civil war'.

### Activity

At what point on your timeline did the civil war become inevitable? What measures have been taken to avoid it, and by whom? Whose fault was the outbreak of war?

### Cicero and the civil war

Caesar arrived in central Italy with incredible speed, catching Pompey and the republican side quite by surprise. Domitius Ahenobarbus made a stand against Caesar at Corfinium, but Pompey refused to come to his support, and Domitius was easily defeated. He was spared, by Caesar. This was a great propaganda victory for Caesar and his policy of *clementia*, and he used it to demonstrate that he was far from planning the feared proscriptions.

As can be seen in his letter to Atticus (**Att. 8.8**, 24<sup>th</sup> February 49 BC), Cicero was disgusted by what he saw as Pompey's dishonourable failure to support Domitius. Although he was by now being assiduously courted by Caesar, Cicero wrote that he now had 'someone to flee, but no one to follow'. His hatred of the very idea of civil war caused him to waver considerably, but he did eventually set off for Pompey's camp. However, on hearing that Caesar had blocked the road, he was happy to abandon the journey.

In response to Cicero's tortured letter **Att. 9.4**, his friend Atticus advised Cicero to stay in Brundisium, where Caesar, who would soon be coming to Campania. Cicero, though, felt that he should not stay by now rumoured to have embarked at Brundisium for Greece. He took Atticus's advice, but neither to welcome Caesar, nor to avoid him.

Caesar wanted Cicero's support, and so he wanted to represent himself as the champion of Cicero, especially as a former follower of Pompey, would be of immense value. He sent envoys to Cicero, promising that he would not be asked to fight against Pompey. In the spring of 49 BC, they reached stalemate: Cicero refused to return to Rome (**Att. 9.11a**); in return, Caesar warned Cicero to think very carefully about his next move.

In May, Cicero was told by Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony, a tribune this year, and Caesar's ally) that he must not leave the country, but in June, after the birth of his granddaughter, he did leave for Pompey's camp in Macedonia.

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## Caesar wins

Cicero was not present at the Battle of Pharsalus, in which Pompey was overwhelmingly defeated by Caesar and driven into flight. He complained of ill health and remained at camp. After Pompey's defeat, Cicero, as the senior survivor, was invited to take command of the remaining force; he (probably wisely) declined.

Caesar was offering *clementia* to all who applied to him, and Cicero quarrelled with his brother Quintus when he urged him to apply. However, a letter from Dolabella (Cicero's Caesarian son-in-law) secured with Caesar's permission for him to return to Italy, and in January 48 BC, he did so.

On his arrival in Brundisium, Cicero was dismayed to hear of the murder of Pompey in Egypt, but by December, the republican forces had rallied under Cato. It occurred to Cicero that he could be censured for not joining them.

In May 47 BC, news came that Caesar was stuck in Alexandria, while the republican strength. All ex-Pompeians were on their way to join Cato. Cicero became convinced that the civil war, and that the victorious republicans would proscribe him.

The months dragged on, as Caesar delayed with Cleopatra. There seemed no hope. Cicero worried that the Caesarians at Rome were turning against him. Over the summer, he wrote a letter to Caesar, announcing the latter's return to Italy. Cicero met him at Brundisium. After all, he said, Caesar had the power to change his mind at any time.

Caesar gave Cicero permission to return to Rome, although the city was by now full of his friends and rivals were dead, as were many of the younger generation. Pompey, Milo, Curio and Cato had all perished, the latter as a Stoic martyr, cheating Caesar of *clementia* he could have enjoyed.

Cicero was torn between wishing Caesar to be defeated, and his belief that he himself would be defeated if Caesar won; he maintained that everyone was, indeed had to be, loyal to Caesar. He hoped to reconcile all to the Republic. Cicero's old ideal of *concordia ordinis* was an unexpected bearer, but it is clear that Cicero was expressing a wish, rather than a demand. This period of Cicero's speech *pro Marcello* belongs, part of which was passionate.

Early in January 45 BC, Cicero's daughter Tullia died, and Cicero was devastated. In his writing, especially philosophy, where, over the next few years, he made a massive contribution. Although he considered himself retired from active politics, he remained a close commentator, as shown, for example, in his letter to Atticus of August that year.

### Activity

What elements of the republican constitution of Rome remained in place in 44 BC? What was Rome now a monarchy in all but name?

## Assassination and aftermath

Cicero was not one of the 60+ senators involved in the plot to assassinate Caesar (perhaps too talkative), but he was certainly present on the Ides, and in support. He was the first to see the statue of Pompey (see page 22).

After the assassination, in a letter to Atticus (**Att. 14.4**), Cicero advised the men expressing their grief in Greek (*ἡρωες*) to make it clear that he regards them as on a par with Achilles, to be honoured on the senate: it was of the utmost importance to get an immediate decision. Caesar had been a tyrant, perhaps even a public enemy. Thus his murder could be reclassified as a just act. The assassins would be on the right side of the law. Furthermore, all of the now tyrant's appointments would be nullified. This would go some way to dealing with the legacy of the continued survival at Rome of Marcus Antonius (Mark Antony), the sole survivor of Caesar's funeral, where he spoke much more engagingly than Brutus, the people's enemy.

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The Assassination of Julius Caesar (William Holmes Sullivan)

But the conspirators decided instead to negotiate with Antony. Cicero wanted no opinion of Antony would later be explicitly expressed in his 14 *Philippics*, perhaps

Antony seized the political initiative (along with Caesar's papers and private treasures). Caesar's laws should stand (and thus Antony's own position as consul should continue to face no charges. Cicero at first supported this stance, though he later claimed that he considered the cause to be lost.

Cicero now left Rome for the coast, where he had done in springtime, from where he wrote Atticus. He was gloomy: 'freedom had been restored without a free state,' he said, and was conspicuously pessimistic. Cicero planned to return to Rome in June, and then to Greece. But he was hopelessly undecided about what to do; in the end he stayed in Italy, as it was – making it a dangerous place for republicans like him.

Cicero stayed away from the senate on 1<sup>st</sup> September, as Antony was to propose a law against Caesar, which he felt he could not support; nor was he willing publicly to oppose Caesar. Cicero had avoided his trap, and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> September, Cicero delivered in the senate a speech condemning Antony's actions as unconstitutional, unpopular with the people, and against Caesar.

Antony responded by attempting to isolate Cicero: he blamed him for all the political problems of the last years; he accused him of instigating the murder of Clodius, the quarrel between Clodius and Caesar's assassination.

### Activity

Sketch out a speech in which Antony makes a case against Cicero: how might he blame Cicero for any (or all!) of the political 'mistakes' of the last 20 years?

Cicero's second *Philippic* declared that he has only two wishes, namely that 'at last the People free; that each citizen may prosper according to his deserts towards the People.'

Cicero was on the coast on the Bay of Naples when in November a letter arrived from Octavian begging Cicero's support against Antony. Octavian wrote again and again, begging Cicero to support him. He, Octavian, wanted to act properly through the senate. Cicero set off for Rome, but he would be murdered on the Appian Way, hastened instead to Arpinum, where he was hiding, alarmed by Octavian's Caesarian speeches to the people in Rome. Cicero himself was killed on 9<sup>th</sup> December.

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Cicero now began in earnest to rally the senate against Antony, as seen in such letters to Trebonius, and **Fam. 10.6**, to Plancus; he was himself now, briefly, in all but name consul, Hirtius and Pansa, were basically under his spell; Cicero spoke of 'my com' accurately, called Octavian 'my Caesar'. Masses of correspondence came and went; it was to him, as much as to the senate, that the commanders reported, complaints were worked day and night in the service of the Republic, and saw himself at last as the consul of his youth.

After victory for the republican forces against Antony at the Battle of Mutina, Cicero wrote the 14<sup>th</sup> *Philippic*, triumphs for Hirtius, Pansa and Octavian, not yet knowing that Hirtius was wounded in the battle, and Pansa killed. The death of the two consuls had allowed perhaps more important than anything else was now a power vacuum at Rome, immediately after the age of 20) (Cicero declined and took) the consulship.

Cicero fled from Rome; Octavian marched north, ostensibly against Antony. In fact, the second triumvirate. Proscriptions followed, and Antony made sure that the name *Philippics*, was on the list. Marcus Tullius Cicero was murdered on 7<sup>th</sup> December 43 BC.

His assassins came to the villa, Herennius a centurion, and Popilius a tribune, who was for parricide and defended by Cicero; and they had helpers. After they had broken through the door found closed, Cicero was not to be seen, and the inmates said they knew not where he was. A youth who had been liberally educated by Cicero, and who was a freedman of Cicero's, Philologus by name, told the tribune that the litter was being carried through the streets towards the sea.

The tribune, accordingly, taking a few helpers with him, ran round towards the sea, and the run through the walks, and Cicero, perceiving him, ordered the servants to stop. Then he himself, clasping his chin with his left hand, as was his wont, looked at his head all squalid and unkempt, and his face wasted with anxiety, so that most of the people turned their faces while Herennius was slaying him. For he stretched his neck forth from the litter, then in his sixty-fourth year.

Herennius cut off his head by Antony's command, and his hands — the hands which had written the *Philippics*. For Cicero's most entitled his speeches against Antony *Philippics*, and called *Philippics*. When Cicero's extremities were brought to Rome, it chanced that the election, but when he heard of their arrival and saw them, he cried out, 'Now let them be placed over the ships' beaks on the rocks. Then he ordered the head and hands to be placed over the ships' beaks on the rocks. The Romans shudder; for they thought they saw there, not the face of Cicero, but an image of Plutarch.

Plutarch

### Activity

Watch the death of Cicero according to HBO: [zzed.uk/12047-death-of-cicero](https://www.zzed.uk/12047-death-of-cicero)

### Activity

Compare Cicero's actions against Antony in 43 BC with those against Catiline, 20 BC. Which adversary posed the greater threat to Rome? Against which was Cicero more effective?

### Activity

Consider Cicero's career. Would you say he was a man of unwavering principle or an opportunist? Be able to give evidence in support of your opinion. Compare your thought about the same with that shown on page 27.

### Activity

Consider the fact that nearly all the primary evidence we have for the events of the late Republic is Cicero's. How far would our judgements be altered if we had accounts by (a) Catiline, (b) Antony, (c) Octavian, (d) Brutus, (e) Cassius?

<sup>7</sup> Plutarch's *Lives* with an English Translation by Bernadotte Perrin (Harvard University Press; London 1914). Copied by JK from [perseus.tufts.edu](http://perseus.tufts.edu).

## Section B: Literature

Not only do Cicero's speeches and letters form the vast majority of our primary history of the first century BC, they are also valuable as Latin literature of the highest quality. This encourages learners to approach Cicero's prosecution speech against Verres, the governor of Sicily (*In Verrem I*) as a masterclass in Latin oratory; his letters as an insight into the relations between friends and colleagues at a certain level of Roman society, at a time when Cicero himself emerges as a fully rounded and complex character: a close reader can feel that we almost personally know him and the world he inhabits. In Section B, the 10-mark 'stimulus' question will expect candidates to display a close and sensitive understanding of the text. It is important, therefore, to consider these texts not only as the underpinning of the events described and discussed in Section A of this guide, but also as a source that each approach will illuminate the other.

### Cicero as orator: *In Verrem I*

The importance of the development of oratorical skills for a successful political career can be hard to overstate, at least until the ascendance of Pompey and the dominantly military but less than warlike figure such as Cicero, who would have to announce his political life by means other than reports of military victory, success in the law court or a route to the senate. Furthermore, in the case of a member of a wealthy (but not necessarily aristocratic) family, the aspiring politician needed also to consider money matters: if he was to meet the costs of election as quaestor and beyond, a good income would be essential in the early stages of his career. In the first century BC, as today, a successful legal career was required; and in the first century BC, as today, for success at the bar.

As a boy, Cicero had excelled in his youthful education, which had been, in the tradition of the time, a study of literature, and later in philosophy, not only for the moral lessons to be found in the training these provided in the close examination of words and their meaning. Such training was overseen by the visiting Greek tutor Apollonius Molon, developed Cicero's approach to the study of language, 'the art of communication skills'. It was at this very early stage of his life that Cicero met Pomponius Atticus, who was to become his lifelong friend and correspondent.



Demosthenes declaiming by the sea  
(Eugène Delacroix)

After his success in the trial of Cluentia, Cicero's frequent and frequently unflattering criticism of his favourite Chrysogonus, Cicero turned himself to the dictator's attention. He left Rome 'to continue his education' for two years abroad, where he was developing both his 'Attic' (formal, restrained) and 'Asiatic' (more flamboyant, passionate) styles of speech. **Att. 15.1a** 'fiery') styles of speech were about more than mere literary technique: to have been practised by delivering speeches in the open-air, crowd-filled Roman Forum.

Cicero returned to Rome and began his legal career there in 77 BC. He achieved election to quaestor, and his 'big break' came in 70 BC, with his prosecution of Gaius Verres.

#### Activity

Why does a successful legal career depend on more than simply sound knowledge? What does this suggest about the reliability of our primary source material for this period of Roman history?

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## Activity

Why were the best teachers of rhetoric thought to be Greek?

## Background

Gaius Verres (born c.120 BC), a supporter of Sulla, had followed the *cursus honorum* serving as quaestor at the age of 30 in 84 BC. He was appointed by lot to accompany Papirius Carbo to Cisalpine Gaul. But Verres deserted his general, taking with him no care as quaestor, none of which (according to Cicero) ever went any further.

As *legatus* (the military companion or aedile) in 78–77 BC (at the age of 37, just as Cicero served), Verres served Sicily under the oppressive and extortionate governor Dolabella. When Dolabella was prosecuted, most of the evidence against him was supplied by Verres.

Verres was elected praetor for 74 BC, 10 years after his quaestorship, as required by the Lex Villia Annalis, during which time it was said that lawyers' advice was redundant; all he did was sell with Chelidon, Verres' mistress. After a year of selling 'justice' at Rome, Verres was elected governor of Sicily in 73 BC.

Verres spent his time as governor plundering the province in a much more thorough manner than had been possible in a single year. He had time to find out who were the richest men in the province and to find pretexts for fining them heavily or confiscating their property (or taking bribes for not doing so). For Cicero, it became a matter of surprise if there remained any rich man who had escaped.

Due to the problem of the pirates in the Mediterranean, there was at the time a shortage of grain. Verres credited large sums of money to Verres to buy additional supplies in Sicily. Verres used the money to buy grain from farmers and embezzled the money.

He sold exemptions from naval service, military troops and other civic duties, and recovered from captured pirates. He could satisfy his appetite for Greek art and for the property of whomever owned it to add to his own enormous collection. Roman citizens were 'punished like slaves' and crucified.

It should be remembered that almost everything we know about Verres comes from the speech in the corruption court by Cicero.

Due to a suspension of elections due to the Spartacus Revolt, Verres 'served' as praetor in 71 BC. On his return to Rome, the equestrians of Sicily brought charges of extortion. The prosecution lawyer of choice was Cicero, whom they had come to know, trust and respect in the province in 75 BC.

## Activity

Verres never got his day in court. If he had, what do you think might have been the outcome?

## Activity

How far do you agree that Verres was merely a cynic, not a cause, of corruption?

## Cicero takes the case

Cicero, although he was generally to work more as a defence than as a prosecutor, was an exception. He had various reasons for this:

As we have seen, if Cicero was to fulfil his personal ambitions, he had to gain political power through advocacy rather than military command, and it must have been tempting to challenge Hortalus (consul-elect for 69 BC) across the court for the reputational kudos of 'taking down' a personal point of view, Cicero was genuinely appalled by Verres' (at this stage of his career) administration over the provincial Roman citizens he had come to know in 75 BC.

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On a wider political level, Cicero saw the case as a chance to expose in the forum corruption (despite himself being a senator); he was sympathetic towards *equites* excluded by Sulla from the juries in extortion trials, and he saw a high-profile case demonstrate his support for, and possibly aid the progression of, the pending *lex*. In this attitude, we begin to discern the seeds of Cicero's guiding political principle of year 39 *concordia ordinum*, although he did not come to articulate this concept formally.

Note, though, the delicacy of Cicero's position: not only was he a *novus homo* from a world of optimates; furthermore, he was a junior senator prosecuting a (rather than a jury of senators). Cicero therefore painted himself as herald of a new, cleaned-up world that would be finished, but if he failed to win, his political career would receive a major setback.

### The challenge facing Cicero in bringing Verres to justice

- The jury ('judges' in the text of the speech) were all senators, and likely to see Verres as 'one of their own' against the upstart Cicero (merely quaestor in 75 BC).
- Verres' defence lawyer was the great Quintus Hortensius Hortalus, in 70 BC the most powerful man in Rome.
- Hortensius was not just an excellent lawyer; he had just been elected one of the *quintumviri*, therefore, popular and influential.
- Verres had attempted to bribe the jury (Prescribed Literary Sources document 1.1.1).
- During Cicero's preparation for the trial, he was simultaneously campaigning against Verres attempted to bribe the electorate against him. This was a serious disadvantage.
- Cicero had only 110 days to prepare his case if he was to have it heard before the 'Games season' (p. 14, Section 31).
- However, it was necessary to proceed this year, because next year (69 BC)...
  - Verres' lawyer Hortensius would be one consul;
  - Verres' friend Q. Caecilius Metellus would be the other;
  - Verres' friend M. Caecilius Metellus would be praetor and president of the case must be tried.
- Although Cicero was already under time pressure, Verres was determined to make things worse:
  - putting forward C. Calpurnius Niger as 'false prosecutor' – Cicero was forced to withdraw; Niger was the right to take the case against Verres;
  - claiming a diversion in the form of the spurious 'Achaean' case, to be tried in the autumn;
  - enlisting the help of L. Metellus, proprietorial governor of Sicily in 70 BC, who was gathering there;
  - setting 'many traps' for Cicero, 'by land and sea' (p. 3, Section 3).

### The need for speed

Cicero gathered his evidence more quickly than anyone expected despite the efforts of the governor of Sicily. Cicero, accompanied by his cousin, travelled extensively around Sicily, gathering evidence and statements from witnesses that might be used in the trial. He examined public records in all major towns and took the testimony of hundreds of witnesses and his henchmen. In almost all cases, Cicero was enthusiastically received by the people.

Because of the great number of festivals coming up, during which the courts would be closed, Cicero used an unusual strategy in court. The normal procedure in cases of extortion was for the prosecutor to make an introductory speech and then one or more speeches arguing for the defendant's conviction. The defendant would then reply, and then witnesses would be called. After a two-day adjournment, the defence would each give further speeches, and then the jury would vote by secret ballot. Because the trial concluded before the Games season, Cicero couldn't afford to let Hortensius take the case to the jury.

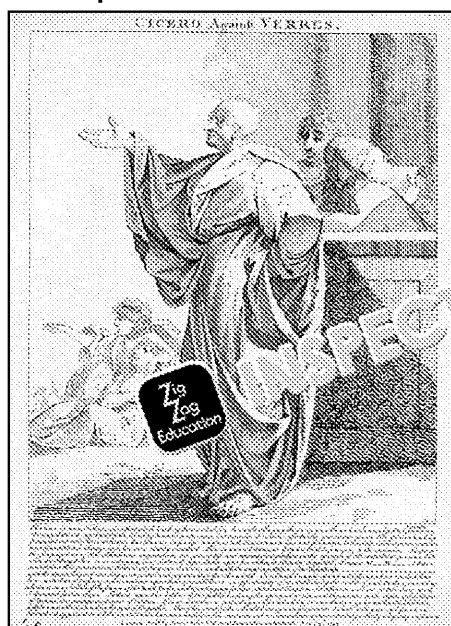
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#### Activity

What aspects of Cicero's character are highlighted by the episode of the trial of Verres?

## Cicero puts the court on trial



Edmund Burke as Cicero against Verres  
(John Boyne, 1787)

In 81 BC, the Sulla had changed the composition of the extortion courts, allowing only senators. This had caused at least allegations of 'judicial sales' where senators were in the dock, or the interests of a senator were threatened. There had also been a scandal of wealthy senators and knights.

In 70 BC, just as Cicero was making his praetorship, praetor Lucius Aurelius Cotta introduced Sulla's restrictions on jury composition, of *equites* and tribunes as a check on over-privileged senators. Cotta's proposals, a third of a jury would be senators, with two thirds being men of *eques* or being tribunes or former tribunes.

Cicero stressed in his speech the public nature of the trial, arguing that not only was Verres on trial but the senate itself was on trial on charges of corruption. The verdict the present senatorial jury handed down on them, and indeed the Republic, to either

Cicero suggested that the surest way to cleanse the system would indeed be to sue the senators themselves. He argued for opening the juries to tribunes and equestrians; but if members of the jury were vulnerable to senatorial monopoly in the courts, perhaps their only hope of avoiding the not yet arrived at a 'guilty' verdict.

While it is not quite true to say that 'Cicero got the composition of juries changed', he certainly made a brilliant argument in favour of the *lex Aurelia*, which was indeed passed. Cicero can take some credit for his part in the reconstitution of juries in the criminal courts.

### Activity

Explain how the trial of Verres was as much a political as a legal matter for Cicero.

## Cicero's rhetorical techniques

In his speech, Cicero deploys his full armoury of rhetorical skill, including not only all

- he presents himself as on the same side as the senate;
- he performs a sensational character assassination of Verres, including (possibly) Verres' thieving and sexual activities in Sicily (note how little evidence Cicero has);
- he gives a vivid and detailed account of the machinations of Verres' side, including the role of his brother-in-law, C. Verres;
- Cicero gives plenty of details of Verres' crimes where he can – but note that there is no detail of Verres' alleged crimes in Sicily (p. 2, Section 2). Cicero gives no real detail of Verres' alleged crimes in Sicily (p. 7, Section 14), although this also has the effect of making further details more credible;
- he teases his audience with the promise of further details when the witnesses are called (Sections 55–56). It might even be the case that he is cleverly turning a lack of evidence into a strength;
- He gives an account of Verres' machinations to obstruct the case;
- Cicero emphasises (exaggerates) the danger posed by Verres to the Republic;
- he refers to personal danger threatened against himself;
- he makes a direct reference to Verres' alleged boasting about his certain victory;
- Cicero addresses the officials of the court (Glabrio, president of the court, p. 13, the 'judges', pp. 13–14, Section 30).

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### Activity

How much of Cicero's speech would be allowed in a modern trial? How much would not be? Why? Might Verres be acquitted were he to be tried today?

## An unconventional procedure

In extortion trials, both prosecution and defence would normally make a series of speeches and witnesses were called. Cicero realised that this would drag out the proceedings and requested that he be allowed to call witnesses immediately, before the speeches. This was an unusual, but not unprecedented, approach, and it was granted by the president of the court, C. Glabrio. Therefore, immediately following his speech, Cicero began calling witnesses, damning as to make the case unanswerable.

This was a devastating blow, and on Hortensius' advice, Verres fled into voluntary exile (he went to Marseille) before the court record was taken.

Of course, Cicero's new friends went on to publish the five further speeches again, as they had to be given had the trial continued.

## The outcome of the trial

- Verres was forced into voluntary exile in Massilia, although as long as he stayed in Italy he avoided the 250% fine imposed upon him by the court.
- The trial brought Cicero to public attention (he had lost some ground here, but regained it in 75 BC).
- The Sicilian equestrians were established as Cicero's loyal client base, which helped him in future elections.
- Cicero publicly aligned himself with the populist reforms of the consuls Crassus and Pompey.
- He established himself on the moral high ground regarding political corruption.
- He displaced Hortensius as Rome's foremost orator/lawyer.
- Under the rules, Cicero now took Verres' rank (41<sup>st</sup> in senatorial rank) in senatorial elections.

## The wider significance of the trial of Verres (70 BC)

The prosecution of the governor of Sicily, Gaius Verres, for the most blatant mismanagement was significant for various reasons:

He had powerful optimate supporters, such as Hortensius, consul-elect and the most powerful man in Rome. He was therefore acquitted, as many before him had been. But since the trial was so corrupt, Cicero put not just Verres on trial, but the whole Roman senate. This was a turning point in Cicero's career as the man selected by the Sicilians to prosecute.

The trial was a turning point in Cicero's career as the man selected by the Sicilians to prosecute was by now a successful lawyer and had Sicilian clients of his own as a result of his quaestorship in Sicily in 75 BC. He was sympathetic to the *equites*, as he came from that class and believed they had some right to be on the extortion juries. However, as he pointed out, 'I am eager to remove your bad reputation — which is as much mine as yours'. He was aware that the state was bound up with its judicial decisions.

The reforms that Sulla had implemented to bring stability to the state had been undermined by his dictatorship, almost all his measures had been altered, replaced or undermined by Pompey, the populist general and consul in 70 BC. One of Sulla's measures that was altered was the increase in the number of quaestors to 20, and with 20 quaestors but only two consuls, the competition for the consulship was intense. This effect was not seen by Sulla, was a significant factor in the demise of the Republic.

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### Activity

Explain how Cicero turned his problems into solutions in the trial of Verres.

### Activity

Consider the relationship between law and politics in our contemporary society. How is it defined, or at least affected, by legal judgments?

## Cicero as correspondent: *Selected Letters*

Cicero's letters represent an enormous corpus of Latin literature: nearly 900 letters collected in 37 books, which also include about 150 replies from his correspondents. Some books have been lost to us. The OCR specification demands the study of 11 of the letters to demonstrate the variety of style and purpose in Cicero's use of the genre. The letters provide insight into Cicero's various personal relationships with his correspondents, as well as (somewhat biased) commentary 'in real time' on the political events at Rome of the time.

Thus, in Section A of this guide, reference to Cicero's letters have been made where they occur. In the study of each letter, time should be taken to study the letter in its historical context.

The 11 letters specified for study are, in chronological order of writing:

### **Fam. 5.7 to Pompey as he returns from the east**

It is clear that Cicero had been hoping for more praise from Pompey than he actually received.

- Pompey seems to have been eager to crush the Catiline army himself and was complete before his return;
- furthermore, as a populist, he will have agreed with Caesar that Cicero's use of the word 'conspirators' was illegal;
- in addition, Cicero hints at a possible alliance between the two in the final line: 'greater man than Africanus was – will find it easy to admit me – one who is not a conspirator'. This is a boastful reference to Cicero's plans for *42 concordia ordinum* in which he would have acted as a mediator between the two camps.

#### Activity

Answer the following questions.

1. What has Pompey been doing in 'the east'? Give as much detail as you can.
2. Explain the Roman convention of *amicitia* and the patron/client relationship.
3. 'I did expect some congratulation for my letter on my achievements...' – why?
4. How far do you agree with Cicero that he deserved 'congratulation'?

### **Att. 2.18 to Julius (on his way to Epirus), from Rome, June/July 59 BC**

Cicero describes the situation in Rome during the consulship of Julius Caesar. The situation was tense. Pompey and Crassus had emerged the previous year and now the effects of the civil war were being felt. The rule of law is being subverted and Cicero is very upset with how Caesar has behaved.

- Note Cicero's reference to Caesar's Campanian Law, which was the single most important law passed by Caesar this year.
- Note also Caesar's two offers of positions for Cicero ('join his staff and act as a mission at state expense'), which he has rejected and retained respectively. Cicero's staff to gain the benefit of his rhetorical skills, and so that they could not be seen as a threat to Cicero, who commanded support among the equites, could provide a veneer of respectability. If Cicero continued to obstruct the will of the emerging triumvirs, Caesar was likely to take action.

#### Activity

Answer the following questions.

1. '... everyone groans over the situation.' What is the 'situation', and why do they groan?
2. How far do you think the senate is responsible for the 'situation'?
3. 'I hold my own position with some dignity... but, considering my past achievements, I should like' – how far do you agree with Cicero that he has shown himself 'dignified'?
4. Why do you think Cicero rejected Caesar's offers? And was he right to do so?

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**Fam. 2.4 to Curio, from Rome, mid 53 BC**

M. Scribonius Curio, mentioned with approval in **Att. 2.18** on the previous page, is mentioned in a letter from Cicero. Curio was soon to marry Clodius' widow, Fulvia, and join Caesar's army, which he killed in battle. In his *Philippics*, Cicero is rather more abusive of Curio in his relations with Caesar.

**Activity**

Explore the relationship between Cicero and Curio; how does it show a friendship do you think? Give reasons for your answer.

**Fam. 2.11 to Caelius, from Cilicia, 4 April 50 BC**

Cicero is still in Cilicia. He is worried that he will not be able to return to Rome in person. He was Cicero's dominant of events in Rome while he was in Cilicia. Cicero had defeated the pirates in 56 BC. Caelius kept him informed about politics in Rome and saw that Caesar would win any civil war which would break out. Caelius was correct. Caelius has asked Cicero to put on games he plans to put on to help his campaign for the aedileship.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. Explain why Cicero was in Cilicia.
2. 'Cicero carried out his role in Cilicia in an exemplary fashion' – how far do you agree?

**Att. 8.8 to Atticus, from Formiae, 23 February 49 BC**

Cicero expresses his disgust and despair that Pompey has evacuated Rome in the republican general, Domitius Ahenobarbus, has had to surrender to Caesar because he has been abandoned by Pompey.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. 'Suddenly, a letter came from him and his Consuls from Domitius...' Where was Domitius?
2. '... the first of tears flashed from Pompey's eyes...' What did Cicero think of Pompey's reaction? Do you agree?
3. 'Pompey proceeds for Brundisium.' Why?
4. How far do you agree with Cicero's criticisms of Pompey in this letter?

**Att. 9.4 to Atticus, from Formiae, 12 March 49 BC**

Cicero contemplates 'certain questions relating to political behaviour which apply to the demonstration of how, at this point, Cicero literally doesn't know what to do. No one can help him. Atticus (actually, of course, he is asking himself); Atticus remained neutral.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. '... these critical times...' Crisis? What crisis? Explain.
2. Consider Cicero's last question ('If one has done great service...'). Explain his question. 'great service' – or has he?
3. How, by his actions, does Cicero in fact answer the final question?

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**Azt 9.11a to Caesar, from Formiae, 19 March 49 BC**

Caesar has invited Cicero to meet him near Rome. In this letter, Cicero adopts a reconciliation between Caesar and Pompey. He is willing to act as intermediary. 'infringement' of Caesar's 'rights': in 55 BC, Caesar's command in Gaul was extended 54 BC – 49 BC; and in 52 BC, Caesar had been granted permission to stand for the consulship, then, in 50 BC, he was recalled, and denied both these rights. In the letter, Cicero pleads with Pompey.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. Cicero quotes Caesar as having referred to his, Cicero's, 'influence' and 'help'. How might he be of 'help' to Caesar?
2. Do you agree with Cicero's remark that 'the war involved an infringement of the rights of the people'? Give reasons for your answer.
3. '... envious and unfriendly people...' – name them.
4. Cicero writes at that time he 'not only supported your position myself, but urged your aid...' Give a specific example of how and when Cicero did this.
5. Cicero refers to his 'obligation to Pompey' – what makes Cicero think he owes this?
6. After this letter had been written, Cicero met Caesar, and refused to go to him.

**Azt 13.40 to Atticus, from Tusculum, 7/8 August 45 BC**

Cicero writes about Brutus (later the assassin), who has become an opponent of Caesar. He notes that resistance to Caesar is hopeless. The letter also concerns his nephew Quintus, who was a fan of Caesar.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. 'But where is he [Caesar] going to find them [the Optimates]? Unless he has the power of the gods.' Name the first Roman consul.
2. What was the first Roman consul supposed to have done?
3. 'Am I to remain here [in Tusculum] or to Rome?' What did Cicero in fact do? Give reasons.

**Azt 14.4 to Marcus, from Lanuvium, 9/10 April 44 BC**

'The Ides of March [the assassination of Caesar] console us.' Caesar has been murdered. Note the uncertainty displayed by Cicero in this letter. But Cicero is out of Rome. People were waiting to see what would happen. The republicans lacked resources.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. Why was Cicero in Lanuvium in April 44 BC?
2. Who were Matrius and Sextus? What sort of things was Matrius saying, and why?
3. 'Our heroes' – name at least three of them.
4. How far do you agree that 'our heroes achieved all they were able to'?
5. In the months following, how effectively did Cicero himself strive to restore the republic?

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**Fam. 10.28 to Trebonius, from Rome, 2 February 43 BC**

Cicero regrets his absence from the assassination ('that most beautiful feast'), and allowed the situation to develop as it has ('We should have had nothing remaining but Pansa, both of whom are soon to die at Mutina. Cicero also says it was a mistake to kill Antony too, when they had the chance. Note his contempt for Antony, again composing his 14 *Philippics*. Note Cicero's mistaken estimation of Octavian.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. '... this curse of the country was taken out of the way by you...' What did Trebonius inspire Cicero's remark to refer to?
2. '... my spirit...' when had Cicero last been in such fighting mood? How does this relate to the situation?
3. Who was the 'boy Caesar', and how was he able so quickly to conscript the legions from Antony's over to his command?
4. In your opinion, how wise was Cicero in whom he chose to oppose and support?

**Fam. 10.6 to Plancus, from Rome, 20 March 43 BC**

Plancus was one of the great 'fence sitters' of Roman history, a man who always supporting in turn Caesar, Antony, the assassins, Antony again and finally Octavian in time. Here Cicero attempts to win his support for the Republic against Antony ('the first paragraph are Antony's men'), but soon Plancus joins Antony. Shortly after, Cicero and Cicero is proscribed and killed.

**Activity**

Answer the following questions.

1. What do you know about Plancus? Find out more.
2. '... your colleague, a most distinguished man is now being blockaded...' Name the man and explain Cicero's reference to his being 'blockaded'.
3. For what is Lepidus best known?
4. '... separate yourself from disloyal citizens...' – such as?

**Activity**

For **each** of the letters, record responses to the following:

- To whom did Cicero address the letter? Find out more about him.
- On what date was the letter written, and what political or personal events were occurring?
- Where was Cicero when he wrote the letter, and what was he doing there?
- Where it is not immediately obvious, whom or what is Cicero alluding to?
- What impression does the letter give of Cicero's emotional state at the time?
- How would you describe the style of the letter: formal or informal? Why do you think it is written in that style here?
- What was the purpose of the letter – and can you find evidence that the letter failed to do so?

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## Section C: Examination Advice

### The exam

**Time allowed:** 1 hour 45 minutes

**Total marks:** 75

Answer all of Section A and one question from Section B.

#### Section A

Section A of the A Level paper will begin with questions on 'Source A', of Cicero's letters (his speech against Verres).

There will be **two or three marks' worth** of short, low-tariff questions (worth 10 marks). Candidates will be expected to know the finer factual details of the letter; for example, the date, the place addressed, from where Cicero was writing, to whom Cicero is obliquely referring. The Source might also set the context for other short questions related to its content. For example, 'Why would Caelius want panthers?' (2019, with reference to **Fam. 2.11**).

This will be followed by a **'stimulus' question worth 10 marks**, asking candidates to show their understanding of the Source (bringing out, for example, how effectively Cicero expresses his feelings).

There follows a short statement or quotation, designed as the starting point for questions worth:

- **two or three more marks' worth** of short questions
- a **10-mark 'ideas' question** on a single idea; for example, the fairness of the trial
- a **20-mark short essay question**, drawing on ideas introduced in one or other of the short questions; for example, an examination of Cicero's mixed feelings about Caesar's assassination.

For success in the first part of Section A, it is clear that a careful study of each source is required.

The letters might be approached thematically, as in Barr, Cresswell and Thorley's *Letters of Cicero* (pp. 166–181).

Or a chronological approach might profitably be adopted. In this way, the letters are seen not only as literary works, but also as primary historical source material. This is important for the question paper, longer, higher-tariff questions will require candidates to demonstrate a detailed understanding of the events of the period, and much of our evidence comes from Cicero. Candidates must be confident of their chronology. To support this approach, references to the letters have been flagged in Section A of this guide wherever they pertain to events discussed in the timeline.

Questions worth 10 and 20 (and 30) marks are assessed according to **marking grids** (to be found in past paper mark schemes, available in full from OCR at <https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-and-a-level/classical-civilisation-h008>).

For top-level marks (9–10 marks) in the 'stimulus' and 'ideas' questions, responses must show **knowledge and understanding of the provided source/ideas 'through a range of precise material from it'** (AO1); and **'fully and consistently engage with the question, showing analysis and interpretation of the provided source leading to convincing points and developed'**.

In the 20-mark short essay, the AO1 and AO2 are assessed separately, for 10 marks each. For AO1 (knowledge and understanding), examiners are looking for **'very detailed knowledge and understanding of the material studied; the use of a range of well selected, accurate classical sources and appropriate, effective use of their cultural context and position'**.

For 10 AO2 marks (analysis, interpretation and evaluation), examiners require **'a question containing a wide range of relevant points leading to convincing conclusions, supported by perceptive critical analysis, interpretation and evaluation of classical sources, logically structured, with a well-developed, sustained and coherent line of reasoning'**.

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This means that learners should answer the questions as asked, not the question or the questions they think ought to have been asked: learners should read the question and answer to the 10-mark 'stimulus' question, learners should endeavour to refer to the text and quote accurately from the text in support of their opinions. In their responses to the 30-mark question, learners should explicitly link their opinions and explanations to the precise terms used in the question with focus ('engagement').

## Section B

Section B offers a choice of two essay questions worth 30 marks, of which candidates must answer one.

These questions will demand knowledge, understanding, interpretation and analysis of the text, or perhaps the relationships between a number of figures. Examples include: Antony repeated Cicero's political views which were expressed throughout Cicero's letters; the real character of the Optimates, Pompey only used them for his own benefit; to explain to what extent they agree with such statements, and to justify their responses. In their responses, learners should explicitly link their opinions and explanations to the precise terms used in the question with focus ('engagement').

### Modern scholarship and secondary literature

One further criterion is invoked for the 30-mark essay: not only must learners be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of classical sources (the *In Verrem* and selected letters of Cicero), but in their response, they are also required to engage with 'secondary sources, scholars and modern scholarship'.

In this high-tariff response, credit is given to candidates who properly attribute to the secondary sources they rely on for the force of their argument (or, indeed, with which they choose to disagree). Credit can be earned for formulations such as 'Some scholars say...'

For example, in a discussion of how far Cato's political career was helped or hindered by his principles, it may well be pertinent to mention his failure to win the consulship of 64 BC.

- ***Cato strove to live according to Stoic principles, which meant that he would not use bribery that was often used to win elections – so he lost.***  
Certainly a reasonable interpretation of the facts: not without merit.
- ***According to some scholars, Cato failed to be elected because his moral integrity was too high.***  
The candidate hopes that this gesture towards 'scholars' as required by the question is sufficient.
- ***Towards the end of 52 BC, elections were held for the next year's consulship. To Pamela Marin, in Blood in the Forum, his popularity 'did not translate into success'.***  
A sound, relevant and very well attributed reference to secondary scholarship hardly brings much to the argument.
- ***Although 'greatly respected by the people', Cato failed to win the consulship because of his adamant repudiation of electoral practices' (Marin).***

In this version, there is not only an acknowledgement of the fact of Cato's failure, but also of the reasons for it.

Therefore, do not ignore 'suggestions for further reading', wherever you find them. Read the secondary literature; take notes; be ready to quote scholars in support of your argument, or to disagree with them when you disagree!

### Activity

Gather a small library of books or chapters from books covering the 60s BC. Read and digest what their authors have to say about the reasons why (i) the triumvirate emerged, and (ii) the triumvirate collapsed. Which scholar crossed the Rubicon?

In each case, note especially any differences between the scholars' interpretations. Which do you find most (and least) convincing? Say why.

### Final Activity for Discussion Now and Forever, Perhaps as the Subject

Explore and examine the causes of the fall of the Roman republic. Which individuals or groups in Roman society were responsible, and to what extent? Justify your answer. (Good for discussion)

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# Appendix 1: The Catilinarian Conspiracy

## Background

**65 BC** Catiline is technically eligible to be consul in 64 BC, but in 65 BC Clodius is in an earlier magistracy, so he cannot stand for election. Cicero offers him an idea of standing with him for election in 64 BC, but Catiline declines the offer, and is acquitted without Cicero's help, and no doubt thanks to him.

**64 BC** Catiline stands for election against Cicero for consulship in 63 BC. Cicero is offensive to Catiline during the campaign.

## What happens next...

**September 63 BC** The senate consider the ever-watchful Cicero alarmist. Cicero tells Terentia, that an agent of Catiline's, Manlius, is planning an uprising.

**October 63 BC** **20<sup>th</sup>** Crassus and two others show up at Cicero's house with a warning to beware of a massacre. Cicero, with the help of the ladies, escapes the 27<sup>th</sup>/28<sup>th</sup> October. At last the senate passes the SC, and the gladiators are moved out of Rome and dispersed.

**28<sup>th</sup>** Nothing happens at Rome (though Manlius does rise at last, but still attending senate meetings).

**November 63 BC** **1<sup>st</sup>** A coup at Praeneste is repulsed. There is no evidence against Catiline.

**6<sup>th</sup>** According to Fulvia, Catiline goes to Caeca's house to join the conspiracy. He is murdered in the night.

**7<sup>th</sup>** Cicero's house is well guarded (his guards perhaps include Crassus).

**8<sup>th</sup>** Cicero calls a senate meeting. Catiline shows up. Cicero tells Catiline to leave the senate house, and Rome, for Etruria. Plutarch they have 20,000 men. The senate at last decides to declare Catiline's enemies. Antonius (Cicero's fellow consul) leads an army against Catiline.

**December 63 BC** The conspirators at Rome attempt to involve some visiting Gauls, but are immediately caught with letters: documentary evidence at last.

**3<sup>rd</sup>** Cicero summons the senate to the Temple of Concord, where (Vulturius) tells all:

- slaves were to be armed
- Catiline and Manlius were to attack Rome
- fires were to be lit about the City
- leading optimates were to be murdered

The senate votes a vote of thanks to Cicero; five surviving conspirators (Cicero, Statilius, Gabinius, and Caeparius) are arrested (by the clemency of Crassus and Caesar); Cicero is granted a public triumph (awarded to victorious generals), and is hailed by Cato as 'Father of the Country'.

Cicero immediately reports to the people in the forum, and perhaps exaggerates the threat, thus enhancing his own popularity. He turns the crowd against Catiline.

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5<sup>th</sup> The senate debates what to do with the conspirators; Cato designates, Murena and Silanus, propose the 'extreme penalty'.

Caesar, keeping in with the *populares*, urges coolness of the confiscation of all property, confinement in rural towns (prescience) that death without trial is an unwise precedent.

Murena and Silanus are *in* the end. They say that's what the 'extreme penalty' is.

Caesar's pity is out of place: be firm! Death!



Cato carries the day; Caesar, again with his eye on the people, ensure that conspirators' property is not lost to their families.

The prisoners are escorted to the ancient prison beneath the arches are broken by an executioner.

10<sup>th</sup> New tribunes take office, including Nepos.

31<sup>st</sup> Cicero, in spite of having been granted the title *pater patriae*, denied the right by tribune Nepos to address the people's death without trial – already a controversial act, as demonstrated on page 14).

[Nepos' motivation here is unclear: has his paymaster (Pompey) should be put in his place (why?) or is he acting on his own to impress Pompey?]

January 62 BC Catiline, who had fled to the hills, is deserted by many of his supporters in Rome. He meets Antonius in battle at Pistoria. No Catiline is NOT one of the five conspirators executed with the others.



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## Appendix 2: Cicero in Cilicia

Cicero left Rome in the spring of 51 BC, travelled via Athens, and arrived in his province on the last day of July.

In late August news arrived from an allied monarch that the Parthians (who had defeated Crassus in 53 BC) had crossed the Euphrates into Syria near the Cilician border. Cicero marched into Cappadocia and took up a strong defensive position. Hearing that the Parthian army was stationed at Antioch, Cicero sent Marcus Crassus on 5<sup>th</sup> October. Almost simultaneously the Parthians retreated. There may have been a little fighting, and Cicero, as commander-in-chief, received the acclamation of *imperator*, usual in victory, from his army. In December he also successfully besieged the stronghold of Pindenissus – too insignificant to appear on the map (any map!) – and distributed the booty among his troops.



This 'campaign' may have been justified in military terms; certainly it had a political justification: in the new, fluid state of affairs at Rome, Cicero received some of his former *auctoritas*, and a senatorial vote of thanksgiving, followed by a decree. This was indeed decreed the following May.

As 50 BC continued, Cicero was increasingly terrified that Pompey would be kept in the situation there, and that he, Cicero, would be condemned to another year in Cilicia.

Suddenly, Cicero's prayers were answered. A new quaestor arrived, and, coincidentally, was recalled by their king, who feared a revolt. Cicero convinced himself that it was in the hands of the new quaestor, before the arrival of the new governor.

Cicero stayed a day longer away from Rome than was absolutely necessary. (His stay longer was to avoid accusations of corruption, à la Verres.)

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