

First Triumvirate (60 BC)

- Rome has achieved domination over all the lands and peoples of the Mediterranean and therefore has the responsibility to spread civilization and virtue to all they can reach
- Imperial overreach: not having the capacity to maintain dominion over conquered lands, getting stretched too thin
 - Marian generals only make this problem worse
- The First Triumvirate: the three most powerful and influential men in Rome agree to not oppose the others ambitions or fuel factionalism and avoid another civil war
 - Pompey (Born 106 BC): the most popular man in Rome
 - Crassus (Born 115 BC): The wealthiest man in Rome
 - Julius Caesar (Born 100 BC): The most ambitious man in Rome, militarily and politically
- Pompey marries Julia (daughter of Julius Caesar) in 59 BC
- Jealous of Julius and Pompey, Crassus invade Parthia (East Asia Minor and India) due to their immense wealth and trade networks (silk road)
 - He is defeated and executed in 53 BC, bringing great shame to the Roman empire
 - The conquest of Parthia is now at the top of the list for Roman
- Julius Caesar bribed his way into consulship, then passed anti corruption laws once in office, calling for political transparency in a system that he himself abused
- Gallic Wars (58-50) BC: Under Caesar's new army capable of "storming heaven", the Gauls were brutally subjugated and slaughtered. (1 million dead, 1 million enslaved: about 1% of the world's population at the time)
 - Caesar's army is solely loyal to him. In the eyes of his army he only becomes more respected, wealthy, and ambitious after this conquest. Not so much with the senate and Roman people
- Julia dies in childbirth in 54 BC, Pompey remarries in 52 BC to the daughter of a senator, driving a wedge further between him and Caesar
- While Caesar was in Gaul, Pompey was acquiring more military and political influence, weary of Caesar's ambitions and actions upon returning to Rome
- Caesar is ordered to return to Rome as a citizen without an army in 50 BC
 - In 49 BC, Caesar crosses the Rubicon with his army, officially invading Rome (about 50,000 soldiers) in order to liberate the Roman people from the tyranny of the senate
 - Within a few months, Caesar marches through Italy and occupies Rome
- Caesar declares he will give amnesty to those who surrender, allowing them to keep titles, lands, and their heads

- After his supporters tear down statues of Pompey, Caesar orders that they be put up once more
- 48 BC: Caesar defeats Cicero and Brutus in Greece, offering them clemency
 - Pompey escapes to Egypt and is decapitated upon arrival by Ptolemy XIII
- Upon his arrival, Caesar is seduced by Cleopatra VII, they have a child, and Alexandria is under siege for six months, eventually reinforcement arrives (some from Judea) that break the siege and liberate Alexandria
- Caesar overthrows Ptolemy XIII and places Cleopatra in command of
- Caesar sweeps through Asia Minor quicker than Pompey, reestablishing order and conquering the Pontus kingdom in four days
- Caesar then set his sites on Spain and North Africa, defeating the Numidians, Cato, and Quintus Metellus Scipio so drastically that Cato took his own life soon after his defeat
- Upon his return to Rome, he granted the titles of “overseer of morals” and commander and chief” for the remainder of his life
- Within months of his return to Rome, he sailed for Spain, again winning overwhelming victories. With the empire reunited under his rule, he returns to Rome to celebrate his fifth major victory in just under four years