

## ENGLISH: *JULIUS CAESAR*

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Caesar's military activities had a profound impact. The immediate effects of Caesar's military activities in Gaul, Germany and Britain were that of the establishment of Roman rule within foreign land. However, Caesar's campaigns had significant ramifications for Caesar's career. Caesar's growing power and wealth, resulting from his victories, formed the foundations of his rivalry with Pompey. In a series of events, this rivalry led to the outbreak of Civil War and ultimately the fall of the Roman Republic.

Caesar's conquest of Gaul extended Roman influence beyond the boundaries of his provinces which allowed Rome to secure the natural border of the river Rhine. Caesar's provinces bordered on unconquered territory and he saw an opportunity arise when the Helvetii began to migrate with what he saw as warlike intentions. The Belgae tribe of north-eastern Gaul also began to arm themselves but were quickly conquered. Caesar made alliances with Celtic chieftains which greatly increased his ability to dominate the region. As a result of their subjugation, a co-ordinated rebellion arose forcing cooperation between the fiercely independent tribes. This united front culminated in 52 BC under the leadership of Vercingetorix of the Arverni who adopted a "scorched earth" policy. The Aedui, traditionally pro-Roman, joined the rebel forces. Vercingetorix defeated Caesar at the Battle of Gergovia which increased rebel support. The Battle of Alesia, an oppidum, put an end to the resistance due to Caesar's elaborate siege-works. Evidence of Caesar's exploits are still present today in the archaeological excavation of the fortifications at Alesia. Although victorious, the size of the relief army showed that most of Gaul had revolted. 51 BC was spent organizing and establishing garrisons to retain its control. Veteran soldiers settled and spread Roman culture and the revolt caused Caesar to sign many treaties. The Gallic campaign was significant in that Caesar "reduced to the form of a province the whole of Gaul...and exacted an annual tribute of 400 000 gold pieces" (Suetonius). Plutarch claimed that of the three million men who fought against Caesar, 1 million died and 1 million were enslaved. 300 tribes were conquered and 800 cities destroyed. In his own commentaries, Caesar reports that 258 000 Helvetii people were massacred. Keeping in mind the difficulty in finding accurate counts, Caesar's propagandistic purposes and the Roman desire to measure success in spectacular numbers, the stated totals must be doubted. However, the immediate impact of Caesar's conquest was that of loss of life and Romanisation.

Similarly, Caesar's activities in Germany and Britain had great impacts. In 55 BC Caesar's army slaughtered and enslaved thousands of immigrant Germans led by Ariovistus. One result of Caesar's victories was the number of people enslaved. In the same year he invaded Britain and observed that "All Britons, indeed, dye themselves with woad" which demonstrates the knowledge learnt including detailed descriptions of the charioteers which is attested in archaeology. However, one would be wary of applying his observations as he did not penetrate far in land. No information was available before, so Caesar's discoveries benefited Roman interests. The second invasion in 54 BC allowed Caesar to win several battles and arrange diplomatic alliances. Mandubracius, leader of the Trinovantes became an ally which led wavering tribes into alliance with Rome and marked the beginnings of a system of client kingdoms, thus bringing the island into Rome's sphere of political influence. The fruits of Romanisation can be seen in the number of Italian wine-amphorae which now begin to appear in the tombs of nobility. These links opened up the possibility of permanent conquest. The reconnaissance missions brought about knowledge which may have been used by Claudius when he conquered Britain in AD43. C.E. Stevens has pointed out that Caesar employs terms such as *editio* and *vectigal* which indicate the first steps to forming a province. Although Caesar made no conquests, "it may be said that he revealed, rather than bequeathed, Britain to Rome" (Tacitus). Therefore, Caesar had temporary impacts on Britain which would have long term effects when Claudius invades.

Caesar's Gallic victories gave him the military glory and wealth he craved; "All things were now possible to Caesar by reason of his large army, his great riches and his readiness to serve

everyone” (Appian) This acquisition of gloria enhanced his political auctoritas. Caesar had accumulated much wealth from slaves and local taxes which helped pay his debt of 55 million sesterces. His commentaries, *The Gallic War*, were published during 51 BC in order to cultivate support for political struggles to come. Therefore it portrays Caesar in a heroic light as he stresses the wars waged to protect Rome. Therefore, Caesar’s ability as a commander is assessed exclusively from his own writings. His oratory skills ensured good public relations and Peter Connolly indicates that Caesar’s commands were “All about building Caesar’s image”. Consequently, his popularity increased. This unbalance of power aggravated his alliance between Crassus and Pompey in the previously formed First Triumvirate. This alliance died when Pompey’s wife, Caesar’s daughter, Julia died and Crassus, the mediator, was killed which resulted in Pompey’s sole consulship. The “First Triumvirate had been weakened by the deaths of Julia and Crassus” (Scullard). Nevertheless, winning gloria inflated Caesar’s career.

Caesar’s military success aggravated his political rivalry with Pompey because “..they did not think the Roman Empire was big enough to contain them both” (Plutarch). Caesar crossed the River Rubicon with his army consciously igniting the Civil War of 49 BC which divided Romans. Caesar’s soldiers were war-hardened, highly trained, unified and extremely loyal to Caesar rather than the Republic. Caesar rewarded each soldier generously and shared their hardships which confirmed the legions faith. His relationship with his legions was advantageous as the discipline and obedience of his legionaries led to Caesar defeating Pompey at Pharsalus in 48 BC despite the fact that they were outnumbered. Subsequently, Caesar increased in power and Mark Antony arranged for the Senate, which had become obsolete, to declare Caesar dictator of Rome with no fixed term. During the Gallic Triumph, Caesar was pulled by four white horses, a symbol of his god-like status. Caesar’s coins were stamped with *dict perpetuo*, meaning perpetual dictator. However “that which brought upon him the most apparent and mortal hatred, was his desire of being king” (Plutarch). The Senate saw that his martial prowess outshone all others by too great a margin. The plot to assassinate Caesar in 44 BC was thus formed. His death launched new civil war which led to the establishment of a permanent autocracy. The Republic was replaced by the Empire of which the first five emperors came from Caesar’s family. Thus, the ultimate consequence of Caesar’s military activities was the fall of the Roman Republic.

In conclusion, Caesar’s military activities had a significant impact on the natives, the soldiers and on Caesar’s political dominance. Caesar’s campaigns almost doubled the size of the Roman territory and brought Roman culture to northwestern Europe. The gloria garnered from his victories led to political instability and the upheaval of the Roman Republic through Caesar’s perpetual dictatorship. Caesar’s military activities may have indirectly brought about the so-called Roman Revolution, the most dramatic in its history.