



rcusCommittee: Historical Crisis

Topic: The Fall of the Roman Republic

Theme of AUSMUN 2024

The theme for this year's AUSMUN is "Forging Tomorrow with Yesterday's Lessons". Dating back to 500 BC, great minds such as Confucius have spread this ideal: "Study the past, if you would divine the future". During a typical Model United Nations conference, delegates are expected to learn from their country's past and, in many cases, actively rewrite it. Historical knowledge when used effectively can lead to informed decisions; by reflecting on what has and has not worked in the past, collectively we are able to gain perspective on current and future policy. We encourage delegates to keep this ideal in mind while wrestling with the nuances and complications inherent in the ideas of modern day problems.

AUSMUN is committed to actively serving its community and combating pressing issues. As we continue to expand in numbers, we further seek to expand our positive impact on the world around us. We are proud to announce that we have partnered with Dress for Success, a non-profit organization that enables women to become economically independent by offering professional clothing, a network of support, and the resources necessary for both personal and professional growth. By participating in AUSMUN 2024, in addition to debating "model" policy, you are actively bettering society and changing the world.

The 2024 AUSMUN board is honored to host all delegates for our largest conference yet. We cannot wait to see what delegates bring forward to each committee in their efforts to embody values of collaboration and this year's theme. Looking twenty twenty-forward to seeing you!

Notes for Delegates:

a) Names will be listed in full on their first appearance, followed by the shortened version in parentheses which they will be referred to throughout the remainder of the text. (i.e. Gaius Julius Caesar (Caesar))

b) Footnotes are used in the cases of words or terms which may be unfamiliar to people not engrossed in Roman history. If you do not recognize a term and it does not have a footnote, please google it

c) Augustus/Octavian will be referred to as Octavian throughout the background guide and throughout debate in order to avoid confusion

d) History is confusing, and there are some varied accounts on the events that happened during the Roman Republic. If you find in your individual research that something minimal conflicts with this background guide (i.e. a date is off by a year), please defer to the background guide so that all delegates may be on the same page. If you discover a major error, please contact your chair.

Rationale

Studying and understanding the Roman Empire's rise, faults, and fall is vital to the development of modern-day society. A shining gem of the ancient world, the Roman Republic is widely known for its long-lived and incomparable establishments, as well as several ever-relevant creations: the Julian calendar, aqueducts, and the mighty Colosseum. The city's center sat in what is, of course, modern day Rome. Highly inspired by the greatness of ancient

Greece, the Roman Republic started as the Roman Monarchy, an institution that was born from the story of Romulus and Remus- brothers born from the God of war, Mars. As legend has it, Romulus and Remus' mother, Rhea Silvia, was forced as a young girl to become a Vestal Virgin, forcing her abstinence as a holy priestess. However, Rhea Silvia broke this oath, bearing Mars' twins- Romulus and Remus (British Columbia Campus). At the time of the boys' births, Rhea's uncle ordered that the infants be killed by drowning, but the two survived and washed up ashore at what became the new city of Rome. After killing his brother Remus, Romulus founded the city of Rome and crowned himself king (Britannica). This Monarchy existed for over 200 years, until the eventual coup that birthed the Roman Republic in 509 BC. The republic stood for another 500 years, until Julius Caesar's rise to power shifted Rome from a republic to an Empire.

This switch from monarchy to people's republic to empire in many ways mirrors several of today's ever changing government institutions. As we watch major world democracies decline, in Hungary, in India, and elsewhere, it is paramount that we keep an eye on the past when examining the future. The Fall of the Roman Republic as a democratic institution is one that will be echoed time and time again throughout history.

Background of the Issue

The Roman Republic was instituted following the overthrow of the final king of the Roman Monarchy, Tarquinius Superbus, in 509 B.C. (Cornell 1). What followed was five centuries of the Republic, during which there were class struggles between the Patricians (aristocracy) and Plebeians (common people). Rome conquered a vast portion of Europe and Northern Africa, and various political institutions were established, such as the comitia

centuriata, the Tribune of the Plebs, and the Law of the Twelve Tables, alongside numerous other events (Britannica).

However, there's only so much we can cover; let's fast forward to the last century of the Roman Republic. In 63 B.C., Marcus Tullius Cicero (Cicero), an infamous orator and politician, was elected to the consulship¹. His opponent was one Lucius Sergius Catalina (Cataline), who was suffering his third defeat for consulship. During Cicero's consulship, he focused a lot of time on uncovering and defeating Cataline's conspiracy to seize control of the Roman government. Once uncovered, Cataline's accomplices' fates were debated among the Senate. Ultimately, Cicero had them executed without trial. A popular action at the time, but one he would be exiled for in 58 B.C. Cataline's Conspiracy and subsequent exile marked the beginning of a period of conflict in Rome. The divide between the Patricians and the Plebeians grew wider, and what followed was a period of civil wars. Many Romans grouped into factions which had no allegiance to official Roman states. (Ferguson et al.)

Amidst the civil wars, in 59 B.C., Gaius Julius Caesar (Caesar) was elected to consulship. The Senate, who were opposed to Caesar as consul, managed (through bribery) to elect Bibulus (notorious for his opposition to Caesar and Caesar's politics) as the other consul. During his consulship, Caesar formed a secret alliance with Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus (Pompey), and Marcus Licinius Crassus (Crassus): the First Triumvirate. This alliance was cemented by Pompey's marriage to Caesar's only legitimate child, Julia. Once Caesar's consulship expired in 58 B.C., he was elected to the proconsulship² in Provincia³.

¹ The Consul was the highest office of government in the Republic. Two Consuls were elected each year.

² A Proconsul was an official who acted on behalf of the Consuls in regions outside of Rome, typically a former Consul.

³ A region in modern-day Southern France

During his proconsulship, Caesar conquered much of Gaul despite the superior Gallic cavalry, was the first Roman to reach Britannia (modern-day Britain), and conquered various Germanic and European tribes.

Back in Rome, however, things were not so successful. The First Triumvirate's alliance was strained, with Pompey in Rome, Crassus in the East, and Caesar in the North. Additionally, with Julia's death in 54 B.C., Pompey and Caesar's familial alliance was, literally, dead. Pompey had begun to grow fearful and resentful of Caesar's power and accomplishments, and allied himself with senators and nobles who hated Caesar. Crassus was killed in Syria, effectively dissolving the First Triumvirate.

Then, in 49 B.C., the issue of Caesar's transition of station became glaringly obvious. If he were to resign his proconsulship (and armies) in order to take charge of his second consulship, there was the possibility of a lapse of time, in which Caesar would be a civilian, unprotected by military or governmental rank. An argument between Caesar, Pompey, and the Senate ensued. The Senate, in the end, gave military power of all troops in Italy to Pompey and declared that if Caesar did not surrender his troops at the allotted time, he would be treated as a public enemy. Caesar, deciding this was the last straw, took his existing troops and stormed across the Rubicon River⁴ and into Rome, thus declaring war on Rome. (Britannica 15-17)

The civil wars that followed among Caesar, Pompey, and the Roman nobility stretched across multiple continents and uprooted Roman society. In the years 49-45 B.C., Caesar spent the majority of his time fighting battles in foreign countries (Britannica 17-20). Eventually, however, he returned to Rome in order to tend to the Roman government. In 45 B.C., under Caesar's coercion, the Senate named him Dictator for Life (National Geographic 5). He reformed the

⁴ The crossing of the Rubicon River was an extremely culturally and religiously significant movement

Julian calendar, created more representatives for the people among the Senate, and granted property to veterans (PBS 14).

His autocratic style of ruling, reforms, and general disregard for the Senate, however, was not very popular among the Senators. They believed that his reign was a threat to Roman democracy (Klein 11). Dozens of them, including some of Caesar's friends and supporters, began to conspire to assassinate him. And on the Ides⁵ in March in 44 B.C., they succeeded (PBS 15).

In his will, Caesar, whose only son had been born and raised by Cleopatra, had simultaneously adopted and named his grand-nephew, Octavian, as his heir (Grant 3). Octavian, a boy of nineteen, now faces a legacy, his predecessor's killers, and attempts to replace him on the throne. Will they succeed?

Contemporary Evidence

It's been one month since Julius Caesar was assassinated. The Roman Republic has erupted into a series of civil wars between Mark Antony and his supporters and Octavian and his supporters. The conflict has brought to the center stage the struggles of the Republic and its many problems ranging from major class differences, and the "elected" officials' corruption and greed. The corrupt Roman senators who had Caesar killed pardoned themselves and several others fled the empire.

⁵ Roman term for the 15th day of March, May, July, and October, being only select months due to the nature of the Roman calendar

Directive

In the month following Julius Caesar's assassination, a power vacuum filled the empty space, leaving the Republic of Rome in dire need of a leader. The civil conflicts that preceded Caesar's dictatorship have returned in full force, and Rome has recessed to bitter conflict. At this time, it's imperative that delegates act quickly in the preservation of the falling Republic. As factions begin to form, each delegate must consider with whom to place his or her trust.

Although events that occurred after 44 B.C. historically should not be directly referenced during debate, delegates may use them as a reference to guide their opinions and political alliances.

We would encourage delegates to discuss the government that will rule Rome following assassination of the Julius Caesar and who should be the central figure at the head of it. We would discourage delegates from attempting to go to war with other factions or groups and conquering any further territories- delegates' interests should remain within the Empire. The flow of debate should focus on what the future of Roman government and leadership will look like. Remember- the choices made in committee will dictate the great Roman Empire's legacy for millennia.

1. What was your delegation's relationship to Julius Caesar? How will that impact their political decisions?
2. Is your delegation closely allied to either Octavian or Mark Antony?
3. What political issues are most important to your delegation? Who is most likely to represent those issues?
4. Will your delegation want to gain power in the fallout after Caesar's death? Or will they be looking for a new leader to follow?

5. Does your delegation support the Republic? Or do they think that the Republic is over with and should be replaced by a new system?

Delegations

Note: some delegations are either quite young or newly dead in 44 B.C. Unfortunately, historical records are limited and it is difficult to find an array of figures with easily accessible information so some creative liberties were taken.

1. **Agrippa** - Agrippa played many roles in Roman society. A statesman, military general, and close friend of Octavian, Agrippa's many connections and talents have secured him a prominent position in Rome's future- however uncertain. As a highly experienced and decorated military figure, Agrippa's expertise will be vital in whatever undertakings each delegate has planned.

[Who Was Marcus Agrippa? The Roman General Behind Emperor Augustus](#)

[Marcus Agrippa - World History Encyclopedia](#)

2. **Artavasdes II of Armenia** - Artavasdes II was the King of Armenia, one of Rome's neighboring allies. Artavasdes II himself was an ally of Rome at times, although had occasional rocky relationships when Rome's conquests ventured too far. Overall, Artavasdes II could be swayed to support either Octavian, Mark Antony, or another Roman leader, but would be a powerful ally to any Roman leader.

[Artavasdes II | Parthian Ruler, Armenian King | Britannica](#)

[Artavasdes II of Armenia](#)

- 3. Burebista** - Burebista was the king of the Dacian Empire which bordered the Roman Republic. Caesar had plans to conquer the Dacian Empire before he was killed, so when he died, Burebista wanted to conquer more territory and protect his kingdom from the Roman Republic.

[Burebista | king of Dacia | Britannica](#)

[Dacia | Europe, Map, Culture, & History | Britannica](#)

- 4. Caesarion (Ptolemy XV, not to be confused with Ptolemy XIV)** - Caesarion was Julius Caesar and Cleopatra's son and part of the Ptolemaic dynasty which controlled areas of Egypt. When Caesar was assassinated, he was still young but destined to be a leader in the future. His mom Cleopatra said that Caesarion was the only legal heir to Caesar, which led to political disagreements and conflict.

[Caesarion - World History Encyclopedia](#)

[Caesarion | Biography & Facts | Britannica](#)

- 5. Cicero** - Philosopher and staunch supporter of an equal Roman Republic, Cicero's role in the Roman Empire's fall was a vital one. Cicero served as a strong force in the preservation of the Republic and is desperate to salvage any remaining integrity within Rome's institutions. Known for criticizing both Caesar and Mark Antony, earning Cicero's support and favor is paramount for political success in committee.

[Cicero](#)

[The Philosophical and Political Decline of Rome according to Cicero](#)

- 6. Cleopatra VII** - Egypt's famous final pharaoh, Cleopatra is best known for her vast intelligence and for her love affairs with both Julius Caesar and Mark Antony. Cleopatra was a close friend (and lover) of Caesar's and was living with him in Rome at the time of his death. Alongside her infant son, Cesarean (son of Julius Caesar), Cleopatra's rule over Egypt remains strong, and gaining her support is vital for each party present.

[Cleopatra - Life, Rule & Death | HISTORY](#)

[Cleopatra Facts: Her Life, Loves & Children, Plus 6 Little-Known Facts | HistoryExtra](#)

- 7. Cornelius Gallus** - Cornelius Gallus was a famous poet and new to the political scene. He was ambitious and would be likely to side with Mark Antony due to their similar political ideas. Gallus likely also believed Antony was more competent of a leader, due to his age and experience. He was often misunderstood and disliked by his peers.

[Gaius Cornelius Gallus | Roman Consul, Poet, Diplomat | Britannica](#)

[Cornelius Gallus \(Gallus\) | Encyclopedia.com.](#)

- 8. Decimus Brutus** - Decimus Brutus was a Roman general who was closely linked to Caesar's assassination. After the assassination, he was forced to go to Northern Italy because the people of the Roman Republic were outraged. He was heavily motivated by money and power.

[Marcus Junius Brutus | Biography, Julius Caesar, Death, & Facts | Britannica](#)

[Julius Caesar's Forgotten Assassin | HISTORY](#)

9. Fulvia - One of Rome's most significant noblewomen, Fulvia's impact on the Roman Republic mustn't be belittled. At the time of Caesar's death, Fulvia was married to Mark Antony, making her one of if not *the* most influential women in the entire Republic. Fulvia fully supported her husband's participation in the Second Triumvirate and was herself a member.

[Fulvia: Queen of the Roman Street Gangs](#)

[Fulvia: The Roman Woman Who Would Be King | History Today](#)

10. Gaius Cassius Longinus - Gaius Cassius Longinus was a Roman senator and brother-in-law of Brutus. He helped conspire Caesar's assassination, and after he was killed, he was forced to move to Syria (part of the Roman Republic). He craved power and was plotting to take this region over from Publius Cornelius Dolabella who ruled this province.

[Gaius Cassius Longinus « IMPERIUM ROMANUM](#)

[Gaius Cassius Longinus | Roman Quaestor & Assassin of Julius Caesar | Britannica](#)

11. Gaius Trebonius - Gaius Trebonius was a politician and military commander. After Caesar offered him consul, he joined the group of conspirators who assassinated Caesar. After Caesar's death, he was in the process of becoming a proconsul of Asia.

[Gaius Trebonius | Triumvir, Caesar's Ally, Consul | Britannica](#)

[Trebonius | Historica](#)

12. Gaius Verres - Gaius Verres was the son of a senator, so he naturally worked his way up the political world of the Roman Republic and eventually became a magistrate of the area of Sicily. He was notorious for his greed and corruption throughout the region, frequently using extortion to get his way and gain wealth.

[Gaius Verres | Roman Magistrate & Corrupt Governor | Britannica](#)

[The Trial of Gaius Verres: An Account](#)

13. Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus - Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus was a Roman general who had long since opposed Julius Caesar's rule of Rome. Due to this, he subsequently supported Mark Antony in the following political fall out. Ahenobarbus has command over a navy and Roman legions and will likely lend his support to Mark Antony's cause.

[Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus | Consul, Battle of Corfinium, Pompey's Ally | Britannica](#)

[Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus Biography | Pantheon](#)

14. Juba I of Numidia - Although historically Juba I of Numidia died in 46 B.C., historical records do not show another ruler of Numidia until 30 B.C. Therefore, for the purposes of this debate, Juba I is alive and well in 44 B.C. and holds the same political position that he did prior to his death (King of Numidia). Previously, Juba sided with Pompey in Rome's civil war against Julius Caesar. Thus, he would most likely side with anti-Caesarians throughout debate.

[Juba I | Numidian Ruler, Punic Wars & Carthage | Britannica](#)

[A Dictionary of Greek and Roman biography and mythology, Iacchus, Isme'ne, Juba](#)

15. Lepidus - Lepidus was a close friend of Julius Caesar but helped aid in his assassination.

After Caesar's death, he sided with Mark Antony and was given the position of high priest. He and Antony together wanted a new triumvirate.

[Marcus Aemilius Lepidus | Triumvir, Pontifex Maximus, Consul | Britannica](#)

[Second Triumvirate - World History Encyclopedia](#)

16. Lucius Aemilius Paullus - Lucius Aemilius Paullus was a Consul of the Republic during

50 B.C. and had connections within elite Roman families. He can find an ally in Cicero and his allies, although will clash heads with former Pompey supporters due to past familial conflicts. This will affect who Paullus allies with within debate.

[Lucius Aemilius Lepidus Paullus Biography | Pantheon](#)

[Lucius Aemilius Paullus \(consul 50 BC\)](#)

17. Lucius Tillius Cimber - Caesar had given Cimber governorship of Bithynia and Pontus

the year prior. However, Lucius Tillius Cimber turned on Caesar and played an important part in Caesar's assassination. After his death, he fled to Bithynia.

[Tillius Cimber](#)

[Tillius Cimber | Historica](#)

18. Marcus Antonius Antyllus - Marcus Antonius Antyllus was the son of the infamous

Mark Antony and Fulvia. His status as Mark Antony's son gives him lots of political leverage, as well as several allies within the committee. Antyllus would also be a primary target for Octavian, should he come into power.

[Marcus Antonius Antyllus Biography | Pantheon](#)

[Marcus Antonius Antyllus](#)

19. Marcus Junius Brutus - Caesar's adopted son turned political traitor, Brutus' role in the Roman Republic was deeply complicated. Brutus was a prominent senator and supporter of the republic, as well as a dear accomplice of Caesars, with many sources accounting Caesar as Brutus' pseudo adoptive father. But as Caesar rose higher and higher in power, Brutus grew weary of Rome's future, and was famously involved in Caesar's assassination due to this fear- "Et Tu Brute?" Brutus' actions following Caesar's death should lean towards the Republic's best interests.

['Et Tu, Brute?' Who Was the Real Brutus? | HowStuffWorks](#)

[The Complicated Story Of Marcus Junius Brutus — And How He Became Known As History's Most Infamous Traitor](#)

20. Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus (not to be confused with Marcus Livius Drusus, his father) - Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus was adopted by Marcus Livius Drusus as a young child. Although the direct descendant of a consul and censor in his own right, the fame of his adoptive father (as well as the wealth he inherited after his adoptive father's death around 91 B.C.) likely spurred Claudianus' political career, and he moved up through the Roman political ranks and became a Senator. Despite his connections in the Senate, Claudianus may have sympathies for Octavian and his regime.

[Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus](#)

[Marcus Livius Drusus Claudianus: museum-digital](#)

21. Mark Antony - A distant relative of Julius Caesar, Mark Antony (sometimes seen as Marc Antony) had a long and complicated relationship with the late emperor. Antony has been Caesar's right-hand man, political enemy, and closest confidant. This makes Antony an incredibly powerful figure, especially since the entire treasury and all of Caesar's documents have been left to Antony in his death. Many believe, Antony included, that as Caesar's right hand man and militant lieutenant, that Antony is the most logical successor to lead the Roman Republic. Yet, Caesar's will left the helm to his adopted son, Octavian. How will Antony react?

[Mark Antony | Octavian: Rise to Power](#)

[Mark Antony - Cleopatra, Rome & Caesar | HISTORY](#)

22. Nero Claudius Drusus - Although Nero Claudius Drusus was born after 44 B.C., we can take creative liberty and drop him as an adult in the midst of the committee's time period. Drusus is the son of Octavian and Livia, and held many Roman political positions. He is likely to be fiercely loyal to his father and an influential figure throughout the debate.

[Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus | Father of Claudius, Conqueror of Germania, Roman](#)

[General | Britannica](#)

[C. Suetonius Tranquillus, The Lives of the Caesars, Nero Claudius Drusus, chapter 1](#)

23. Octavian (Caesar Augustus) - Born Gaius Octavian, Augustus was the first emperor of Rome and the great-nephew of Julius Caesar. The two were very close, and Octavian fought closely alongside his great-uncle, leading Caesar to leave his entire political

inheritance and fortune to nineteen year-old Octavian following his assassination. This makes Octavian both an eminent political figure and an easy target for his great-uncle's adversaries.

[Caesar Augustus](#)

[BBC - History - Augustus](#)

24. Porcia (wife of Brutus) - Porcia was the daughter of Cato the Younger (influential political figure) and the wife of Marcus Junius Brutus (the most infamous of Caesar's assassins). She is alleged to have been privy to the assassination plans and her husband's role in them. Porcia is influential among the Roman people and holds a high position in Roman society, as well as a strong and defiant disposition. She will ally with her husband and is most likely to confer with Cicero and Pompey's supporters.

[Faithful wife of Brutus « IMPERIUM ROMANUM](#)

[Porcia \(wife of Brutus\) - Wikipedia](#)

25. Publius Canidius Crassus (not to be confused with Marcus Licinius Crassus) - Publius Canidius Crassus was a Roman general and confidant of Mark Antony. He has extensive military knowledge and influence over both Mark Antony and Lepidus. Additionally, he issued many coins throughout the Roman Republic.

[Publius Canidius Crassus - Wikipedia](#)

[Canidius Crassus, Publius | Oxford Classical Dictionary](#)

26. Publius Servilius Casca Longus - Publius Servilius Casca Longus was a childhood friend of Julius Caesar's. This did not stop him, however, from being the first to strike Caesar during his assassination. Prior to the assassination, Casca was the Tribune of the Plebs (a highly respected and powerful political position). He will be against Caesarians and Caesar's former supporters, and will side with his allies in the Senate.

[Publius Servilius Casca - Wikipedia](#)

[Casca and the Assassination of Julius Caesar](#)

27. Servilia II (mother of Brutus) - Servilia II was first married to Julius Caesar's assassin, Marcus Junius Brutus, then later became one of Julius Caesar's long term mistresses. In addition to this, Servilia's daughter Tertia (from her first marriage with Marcus Junius Brutus) married Cassius, one of the primary instigators of Caesar's assassination. These positions give Servilia power and influence, but also complicated allegiance.

[Servilia | Roman Matriarch, Mother of Brutus | Britannica](#)

[A Dictionary of Greek and Roman biography and mythology William Smith, Ed.](#)

[Servilia II \(c. 100–after 42 BCE\) | Encyclopedia.com](#)

28. Sextus Pompeius - Sextus Pompeius was a military leader under Caesar prior to his assassination. His father was the infamous Pompey the Great, one of the members of the First Triumvirate. After Caesar's death, Mark Antony gave Pompeius leadership of a naval command and he became a prominent Roman general. In the ensuing civil wars, Pompeius will most likely side with Mark Antony and his allies, due to their past history and similar values.

[Sextus Pompeius Magnus Pius | Triumvir, Admiral, Rebel | Britannica](#)

[Sextus Pompey - Wikipedia](#)

29. Tiberius Claudius Nero - Tiberius Claudius Nero was the son of Livia, a woman who Octavian had his sights upon to marry. As a result of this, he will most likely favor Octavian in a political dispute. Additionally, Tiberius Claudius Nero is a powerful military figure and strategist.

[BBC - History - Historic Figures: Tiberius \(42 BC - 37 AD\)](#)

[Tiberius Claudius Nero \(father of Tiberius Caesar\) - Wikipedia](#)

30. Tribune of the Plebs - The plebians (common people) are in a state of panic. Their dear humanitarian leader, Julius Caesar, has been assassinated and the risk of total aristocracy or dictatorship seems almost imminent. The Tribune of the Plebeians was a counsel of elected officials focused on improving and protecting the quality of life for the Roman People. As Rome crumbles, the Tribunes of the Plebs must act quickly and decisively to preserve Caesar's altruistic efforts before it is too late.

[Plebeian tribune « IMPERIUM ROMANUM](#)

[Tribuni Plebis](#)

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