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Final Exam

History 101-001BW

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Julius Caesar: “Veni, Vidi, Vici”

Julius Caesar was known as a great military leader and ruler of Rome. Many of his achievements are still influential in today’s society. He is known for everything from his military and political achievements to his love affair with Cleopatra. He was able to become a great and powerful leader, whom was able to change the entire Roman empire. Many things are said to be named after Julius Caesar as well. He is also well known for his famous quotes and his tragic death. Julius Caesar today remains an influential and important part of history. This will tell of his life, military career, and tragedies.

Julius Caesar was born Gaius Julius Caesar on July 12, 100 B.C., in Rome. His parents were Gaius Caesar and Aurelia. He was supposedly born by what is now called the “cesarean” section. His family was well respected and his aunt was said to be married to Gaius Marius, a highly influential person amongst the Popular groups. When Julius was 16 his father died and left him and his 2 sisters to be raised by their mother. Soon after his father’s death he was named Flamen Dialis which means “High Priest of Jupiter”. Caesar was said to have been very well educated and was highly intelligent. At a young age he decided that he wanted to become a great political leader. This then sparked his ability to take over lands and strategize intelligently in his military plights.

When Julius was 18 he married a girl by the name of Cornelia, in which they had one daughter named Julia. Some time later Julius was told that he must divorce Cornelia by Sulla. Sulla was a dictator that was wanting to rid of all of his enemies and their families, therefore Julius was ordered to divorce her or face execution. Upon this news Julius joined the army and left Rome, because he refused the divorce. After Sulla's death Julius then returned to Rome, and became a writer and orator (speaker). Being such a great orator made it possible for Caesar to become a great politician and Roman leader.

Some time later Caesar was sailing across the Aegean Sea and was captured by pirates. He was held for 40 days and was released after a ransom was paid for him. He had told the pirates that he was going to be back to seek his revenge upon them. He was later able to find the pirates that had enslaved him and had them all executed upon his request. With this he was then called upon for more military duties.

In 69 B.C. Caesar's wife Cornelia and his aunt Julia had both passed away. During that same year Julius went to Spain where he was a praetor. In 67 B.C. he married a girl by the name of Pompeia, whom ironically was the granddaughter of Sulla. They were later divorced. In 63 BC he ran for the office of Pontifex Maximus and won. Caesar was also appointed Governor of Spain, in which he ran for 3 years.

Caesar, Pompey, and Crassus formed an alliance called the First Triumvirate. One of the major factors in this alliance was that Pompey had married Caesar's daughter Julia. Caesar himself wed for the third time to Calpurnia, whom had strong political ties because of her father. This alliance was in order to keep strong ties amongst each other and help him remain in power. Caesar was able to promise that the others would be protected as long as they were able to get him elected to the office that he wanted.

In 58 BC Caesar left for Gaul (present day France). While there he was able to accomplish many feats that still affect us today. One of those feats would be that he was able to take over much of central Europe. He had also defeated many tribes and was able to defeat the Britains as well. He expanded much of the Roman territory and forever sealed his fate as one of the greatest military leaders of all time. "I Came. I Saw, I Conquered"-(Julius Caesar). He had also written about his expeditions and experiences while in Gaul in a book titled *The Gallic Wars*.

While Caesar was out fighting and expanding territories his daughter Julia had died as well did Crassus. With only Pompey and Caesar alive it left tensions amongst the two and eventually the Triumvirate was no longer. With the dissolving of the Triumvirate Pompey was elected into power in Rome and had ordered that Caesar and his army be returned. Julius, refusing to return took his army and crossed the Rubicon, which in turn, led to a civil war. Instead of Pompey taking his new formed military and standing up against Caesar he did the opposite and fled south. Caesar went to Spain and left the Italian territory to be led by Mark Antony. With Antony in charge of Italy, Caesar was able to pursue Pompey and ultimately defeat him. With Pompey out of power Caesar was awarded the title of dictator and he chose Mark Anthony as his "right hand man". Caesars ruff with Pompey was not over yet and he continued to pursue him all the way to Egypt, where Pompey was eventually murdered. Although, Caesar had pursued Pompey he was said to have been very sad at his death and was said to have even cried. While in Egypt Caesar found himself in the middle of yet another civil war. This time it was between the leaders of Egypt, Cleopatra and her pharaoh brother-husband. Caesar sided with Cleopatra and she was eventually placed into the power position of Egypt. Cleopatra and

Julius had even fallen in love but were never allowed to marry because it was against Roman rules for them to marry outside of Roman citizenship. Their love affair lasted for approximately 14 years and had even resulted in the birth of their son Caesarion.

There were many events that lead to Caesars tragic death. Before his death he named his grandnephew Octavian as sole heir to his empire and Marcus Brutus as the second in line in case of Octavian's death. On March 15, 49 BC, "The Ides of March", Julius Caesar was assassinated. He was supposed to be attending a Senate meeting that day but instead was greeted with something else entirely. There were several people that had conspired to kill Julius Caesar including that of his friend Brutus. He had been stabbed at least 23 different times and it is speculated that his last words were the now all too famous phrase "Et tu, Brute?", meaning "You Too Brutus?" He had supposedly stated this because he could not believe that his good friend Brutus would have a part in his assassination. Although this saying well known, there is no proof that it was actually stated by Caesar and that it was not just a line in Shakespeare's play. He was also ironically assassinated under a statue of Pompey.

Many of Caesars assassins thought that they were doing the Romans a good deed, but instead could never have imagined that quite the opposite was in store. Many people thought of Julius as a hero and a great man and they were outraged at the fact that someone had killed him. With Octavian being named the sole heir of Caesars empire, he had full control of the Roman empire. Mark Antony was thought to be a loyal friend to Caesar and even became part of a new Triumvirate involving Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus. Antony too had an affair with Cleopatra, but unlike Caesar he married her. Some may have been because of love, but the other was because Antony saw it as a way

to take over Rome. This in turn, led to another civil war, this time between Egypt and Rome. Octavian was able to become the first emperor of Rome and later changed his name to Caesar Augustus in honor of Julius. It seemed as if most people in Caesar's life had turned against him for various reasons. Some thought that he had too much control and was wanting to become a king. They felt they had to alleviate the problem before he gained anymore power. Others wanted what Caesar had and therefore conspired against him in a plot to assassinate him. Maybe it was karma, or maybe it was just a tragic idea that he could not truly trust anyone that he thought he could.

Julius Caesar along with being known for his military skill and his leadership abilities he is also known for many other things. There are many things that are named after him and many quotes he is known for stating. Some of the things that Caesar is credited for are true while others are considered myths. Whether fact or fiction they are too well known in some way or the other. The first one being that he was said to have suffered from epilepsy, hence the word "seizure". Some doctors think that Caesar's seizures were actually a case of hypoglycemia or a disorder called Caesar Complex which is "temporal lobe epilepsy, a progressive disorder resulting in a loss of mental and physical control (including bowel control)." (Yahoo Answers), but there is no evidence that has been stated that Caesar had a hearing problem.

There were also rumors that Caesar was bi-sexual and had taken many lovers, not only women but men as well. He was known to have had a great deal of affairs and admirers. One of his most famous rumored homosexual affairs was with that of Nicomedes IV of Bithynia. Whether that is true or not is not known. Ultimately it could have been used as a way to rouse Caesar and trash his name publicly.

Julius Caesar also introduced the Julian calendar. The Julian calendar has a 365 day cycle for a year and has 12 months. It even includes the leap year every four years in February. Some of the months are named after famous Roman people. July is named after Julius Caesar and August is named after Augustus. Although we use the Gregorian calendar now, the Julian one had a great impact.

Caesar was also known for combing his hair forward in order to cover up his baldness, in which he was said to have been quite ashamed of. He then wore a wreath on his head at almost all times. This is where the term the “Caesar haircut” came about. The bangs are cut straight across and the hair is combed forward.

He was known as a great orator and writer. He had written several poems and books. He had even delivered the eulogies at his aunt Julie’s and wife Cornelia’s funerals. Some of his works include his writings about the Gallic wars and about the civil wars. He gave many speeches to the people of Rome and was able to persuade them into his way of thinking. He was also known to keep a diary of all of his conquests and his everyday life.

William Shakespeare had written a poem about Julius Caesar called Julius Caesar. This play is about shows in great detail his tragic death. Though the play is called Julius Caesar, it is more about the conspiracy that surrounded his death and the events that led up to it. From this play many movies have also been made that depict the life and times of the great Julius Caesar.

Julius Caesar was known to most as a great war hero and ruler of the Roman empire. He was capable of fixing many of the problems that Rome had been facing throughout his childhood. Others see Julius Caesar as a womanizer and a shrewd man. No

matter what their opinion there is no denying that he has changed Roman history forever and was influential in his roles as a leader, orator, and politician.

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