

Repercussions of Political Crises in Rome from 70 BC until the Proclamation of the Empire

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Abstract

The political crises in Rome had repercussions on all aspects of life. These repercussions included the various classes of society and all state institutions, judicial, political, administrative, and military. All of them were subject to change, including the Senate, through laws and legislation issued by the victorious parties. When Julius Caesar won the second civil war (49-44 BC), he initiated a set of social and governmental reforms, which included changing the Roman calendar from the lunar to the solar calendar. Caesar also carried out several other reforms that included the middle and low classes in Rome, including the distribution of subsidized grain by the state and the granting of Roman citizenship to many residents of remote areas. In addition to that, Caesar did land reform and support for veterans, and the number of senators was increased to make it an institution representing all parts of the republic. The devastating war that Rome was exposed to between Octavius (Augustus) on the one hand, and Mark Antony and Cleopatra on the other hand, undoubtedly had its impact and consequences on the political system and all aspects of life. This was especially clear after the victory of Octavius in the Battle of Actium (31 BC) and his uniqueness in the leadership of Rome after the change from the republican system to the imperial system.

Key words: Rome, Senate, Crises, Sulla, Politicians, Consul.

1. Introduction

The Roman Republic was subjected to a long series of political crises throughout the first century BC, which affected all aspects of the state. Therefore this research focused on the results and implications of those crises on the general situation of the state. We tried to shed light on the most important repercussions for the period after Sulla until the end of the era of the Republic. At this time, there was a time period full of problems and political events in which there was a lot of struggle for

power and competition between military leaders to occupy important positions in order to achieve their goals and political and economic ambitions, as Rome entered into a slide of wars: a long civil society that left it devastated, and from this point of view, the research focused on reviewing the most important political, economic, social, civil, and judicial transformations. In addition, the research explains the dimensions of political crises at the level of state institutions and what they were exposed to in terms of change, as the agony of conflict or heat between Octavius and Antonius had dire consequences for the Roman Republic changed the entire political system.

2. Economic repercussions

After the two leaders, Pompey and Crassus, took control of the consulate for the year 70 BC, in a peaceful coup, they immediately abolished Sulla's constitution, granted the knights a share in the jury courts, and restored the powers and prerogatives of the courts that Sulla had stripped from them (Ronald, Syme, 1939, p.29).

Most of the nobles benefited from the political turmoil and crises that afflicted the Roman Republic, and they were able to accumulate huge financial fortunes (R. Dudley, Donald, 1964, p. 172). Crassus was classified as the richest man in Rome during the fifties of the last century of the Roman Republic. His first beginnings and his wealth did not exceed 3,000 talents (Aimar, Andre and Obawayh, Janine, 1986, p. 163), but later, specifically in the year 55 BC, he became the first man in Rome, as his wealth amounted to about(7000) talents (H.H., Scullard, 2010, p. 149). In addition to that, he bought dilapidated and burnt houses at low prices, and sold them after their restoration (Michael, M. Sage, 2011, p. 64), and he was able to accumulate great wealth at that time, and through the above, it becomes clear to us the extent of the class inequality in the Roman society. The nobles worked to take advantage of every possible opportunity that could improve their economic reality and increase their wealth, as they did not leave anything to the classes below them, and what increased the resentment of those classes is that those nobles did not care what the state of the country had reached, but rather their concern was to increase their wealth and not Prejudice to their interests (Sheikh, Hussein, 2005, p. 180).

That bad economic reality in which Rome was living, which was caused by political crises and civil wars, its effects were not reflected except on the poor among the common people, as for the noble class, as they lived a luxurious life, as evidenced by the fact that Cicero alone had eight palaces in the most prestigious rural places. If this indicates anything, it indicates the amount of luxury and prosperity that the aristocratic class lived at the expense of the general class (Nashi, Ibrahim, 1973, p. 738).

Because of the class differences between the poor and the rich, who assume the rule and administration of the country, as well as the burden of debt that burdened those poor, they were affected by the political conflicts that were taking place in the country (Rich, John & Shipley, Graham, 1993, p. 97), as we find Catiline's conspiracy in the year 63 BC. Most of Catiline's supporters were from the poor and peasants, especially those whose debts were large, as that poor class became drifting behind every political current that promised them rights and privileges, because of the low economic situation they had reached (Aimar, Andrei & Obawayh, Janine, 1986, p. 165).

In recent years, Julius Caesar was able, despite the short period of his rule, to carry out some reforms, which had an impact on various aspects, especially the political system. He carried out a comprehensive reform revolution, through which he wanted to rebuild the Roman Republic on sound foundations, and repair what had been ruined by civil wars and others.

The Roman economy deteriorated, with the collapse of trade and the decay of agriculture. Civil wars and political conflicts left negative effects on economic life in Rome. This led to the bankruptcy of the poor class in society, and they were forced to borrow money with great interest. These conditions caused the spread of usury on a wide scale in Rome, and there became a large percentage of the Roman people in debt to a small group of usurers, and that was the first problem that faced Julius Caesar, after he tightened his grip on Rome. This burdened them because of the exorbitant benefits, and Caesar sought to solve that problem and fix what was spoiled by the war, although he did not want to interfere with the private property of individuals (Nasseri, Sayyid Ahmed, 1975, p. 383), and therefore he ordered the dropping of the interest imposed on Debt during the war years, by evaluating all property at the price it was before the war (Richard A, Billows, 2009, p. 243), as well as stopping unfair rent payments, and supervising himself and his close people on those reforms, in order to prevent the recurrence of the economic tragedy that occurred during the reign of Sulla, due to the committees' manipulation of property (Edward, J. Watts, 2018, p. 192), and thus Caesar was able, with his policy, to lift the Roman economy and return it to its right track, in addition to that he was able, in his moderate manner, to satisfy both parties, the creditor and the debtor (M. Cary & H. Scullard, 1975, p. 277.)

One of the bad policies produced by the political crises in Rome is that the victorious party confiscates the property of their enemies or competitors for power upon victory. , The situation reached the point where Caesar did not hesitate to take the money of a temple when he needed it, and Octavius is also borrowed a lot of money from the temples, and imposed taxes on society, as he forced citizens to pay a quarter of what they get annually from the money to the state, in order

to cover the expenses of his wars with Antonius, and the Senate tried to confront that bankruptcy that afflicted the state treasury, by imposing additional taxes on every Roman house, in addition to another tax amounting to (4%) on property, the lands suffered a lot of agricultural land was expropriated because of the civil wars, and many lands were confiscated from their owners, and were granted to the fighters demobilized from the wars (Al-Ahmad, Sami, 1988, pp. 120-121), and the poor also had a share of the plots of land, which he distributed, and more than that, he stipulated that they should not be sold until twenty years had passed, in order to prevent the re-concentration of agricultural ownership and its monopoly in the hands of the nobles (Ayoub, Ibrahim, 1996, pp. 267-268), and he also issued an order to farm owners that free workers constitute one-third of the total number of workers on their farms (H., H. Scullard, 2010, p. 122).

The many conflicts and political crises that resulted in devastating civil wars in Rome had an impact on the general economic situation of the state. This gave the opportunity to the leaders of the armies who have political orientations to issue a gold coin, and engrave their pictures and names on it, so that they can pay the rewards of their fighters, as these leaders became competing with each other in giving rewards to their fighters, in order to achieve their goals in reaching power, as well for that, the spoils they obtained upon victory did not go to the state treasury, as most of them were spent as rewards and grants to win supporters and buy land and private property as extravagance and extravagance, which caused the state's public treasury to be emptied and bankrupt (Al-Ahmad, Sami, 1988, p. 120).

The second civil war, which lasted about 20 years, had a devastating impact on both the social and economic structure. Farms were destroyed, the wealth of cities exhausted by the siege was plundered, thieves spread in the streets, and cities became insecure, trade stopped, debts multiplied, and interest rates increased dramatically. Great, and morals were corrupted as the city of Rome was filled with men who lost their economic and moral status in society, as people began to look at a juvenile or a person who would save them from that reality (Durant, Will, 1988, pp. 6-7).

But Rome arose from its slumber, as if life had returned to it again after Octavius took control of the wealth and money of Egypt and brought it to Rome, as he supported all aspects of life. His soldiers promised them money and lands after their demobilization, and he filled the state treasury with money after it was suffering from a deficit, in addition to that he canceled all delayed taxes on property owners, as he burned records proving their indebtedness before their eyes, and he had a major role in supporting the poor and hardworking people Sons of the Roman people, as he distributed foodstuffs to the needy (Durant, Will, 1988, pp. 9-10), in addition to that, he granted them the right to

supervise the collection of taxes from merchants and owners of capital. There is no doubt that these reforms had positive repercussions in improving social and economic conditions, in addition to enhancing security and political stability by gaining the sympathy of citizens (Brasted, James, 1930, p. 577).

3. Social repercussions

When Caesar wanted to compensate for the decrease in the number of the Roman population, because of what the wars had caused, he decided to grant Roman citizenship to foreign people, who have some professions in Rome such as teachers, doctors, and others, in order to encourage them to stay in the city (Dillon & Garland, 2005, p. 576).

Caesar also sought to reduce the unemployment rate and reduce the population momentum in the city of Rome, as well as reduce the intensity of economic tensions, which were caused by the disturbances of the conditions of civil wars and financial instability (Goltz, Huzar, 1978, p. 73). Caesar sent employees to the Roman cities, they carry out a census of the Roman community, registering every man, woman, and child, and determining their marital status and income, because there were suspicions in Caesar's mind that the aid or grain subsidies that were provided free of charge were being misused, and did not go to those who deserved them, as the resident foreign citizens were in Rome, those who were excluded from government charitable works compete with poor Roman citizens, in addition to that they were a burden on the state (Mike, Duncan, 2016, pp. 732-733), and when the results of the population inventory appeared, it was found that about (320,000) thousand people were. They receive that aid from wheat, while the actual beneficiaries are (150,000) thousand people only (A. Brunt, p. 135), so Caesar reduced the wheat quota in half, which provided huge sums of money to the state treasury (Shotter, David, 2005, p. 85), and he transferred more than (80,000) thousand citizens to the colonies of Italy and others (Dzino, Danijel, 2010, p. 121), even his soldiers, when he demobilized them, gave them financial rewards and large plots of land outside Rome in the colonies of the Roman Republic (Richard, A. Billows, 2009, p. 242).

Civil wars and political crises and their effects cast a shadow on Roman society, as it changed many social customs and moral values, which led to the spread of moral corruption and the disintegration of Roman families. Marriage by granting them some privileges (Okasha, Ali & Al-Natour, Shehadeh & Baydoun, Jamil, 1991, p. 228), and he also issued a law known as "The Right of the Three Children" *Ius Trium Liberorum*. This law granted the right to married couples who have three or more children priority in appointment to jobs public (Al-Abbadi, Mustafa,

1999, p. 101), as well as a set of other laws that combat adultery and marital infidelity (Alston, Richard, 2014, p. 117).

4. Religious reflections

As for the religious aspect, Caesar held the position of high priest in Rome. His policy in that regard was to allow all people to practice their religious beliefs and rituals without restriction or condition. He gave people absolute freedom of thought and worship, and ordered the abolition of orders that forbid worshipping the god Isis. In addition, he directed not to attack the Jews when they practice their religious rituals (Al-Hassani, Maadi, 2010, p. 156).

5. Fix the calendar

Caesar also worked on reforming the Roman calendar, when he found that it was not compatible with the seasons of the year. Since the inception of Rome, it has been working on the lunar calendar (Richard, A. Billows, 2009, p. 244), so that the high priests could equalize the difference between the lunar year that the number of its days is (355) days, and the solar year whose number of days is (365) days (Steel, Catherine, 2013, p. 207), they used to add the difference in days, in order to maintain the compatibility of months and years, and during the chaos caused by the war years, the calendar was neglected, Things got out of control (Mike, Duncan, 2016, p. 734), and to prevent this mess from happening again, Caesar officially moved Rome to the solar calendar (365) days (Nic, Fieds, 2008, p. 51), with the addition of An extra day every four years (leap year) which is a modified form of the Egyptian calendar using the calculations of the Greek astronomer (S. Mackay, Christopher, 2009, p. 306), in addition to that he made the year start in January instead of March, and he also changed The name of the month in which he was born and his family name (July) (Potter, David, 2007, p. 27).

6. Legal implications

On the other hand, he enacted a set of laws that stressed the prohibition of dealing with usury, and he ordered the help of the poor, who could not pay their debts, by setting a bankruptcy law, in addition to that he was able to restore the value of the monetary currency, and maintain its stability by introducing gold, and minting a gold coin on which his image was engraved (Al-Husseini, Maadi, 2010, p. 155). In addition to that, he imposed taxes on imported foreign goods, after they were abolished since 60 BC (H.H., Scullard, 2010, p. 122).

The legal system was not far from the reforms and legislations of Julius Caesar, as it included a comprehensive reform. It introduced a system of fixed and stricter penalties against perpetrators of major crimes. In addition, it changed the composition of juries, as it made its members equal from the Senate and Knights (Swain & Davies, 2010 , p. 199), and another set of laws was passed that limit exorbitant spending and generosity, and it forbade the use of adornment, and pretending to be extravagant, extravagant, and luxury, as his law was applied to luxury in particular, so that he set guards on the markets, to monitor foods and foodstuffs the other (Dillon & Garland, 2005, p. 577).

7. Political and administrative repercussions

Although Caesar believed that Sulla's comprehensive reform package was highly reactionary, some of the administrative reforms carried out by Caesar are in fact reminiscent of the measures taken by Sulla, for example Caesar expanded the circle of membership in the Senate, increasing the number of its members from six hundred to Nine hundred members (Stevenson, Tom, 2015, p. 143). Many of whom were Italian, and some of whom came from outside Italy, with the aim of making it an inclusive institution representing all the provinces and states of the Roman Republic (Parenti, Michael, 2003, p. 161), with replacing four hundred of the former members with new members of his supporters, as a reward for the assistance they provided to him, in addition to that he will have many supporters within the Senate, and thus through them he can carry out all his desires (Al-Husseini, Maadi, 2010, p. 173). Although he limited the powers of the members of the Council in such a way as to make it an advisory body, it had no power as the governing body of Rome (M. Gwynn, David, 2012, p. 102), and he also limited the membership of the jury to members of the Senate and the Knights class to the exclusion of the plebeian Trapane including (S. Mackay, Christopher, 2009, p. 306).

We can say that Caesar sought to make state institutions subject to his absolute control, headed by the Senate, as he aimed to strip the aristocrats of all powers, in order to strengthen the influence of the popular class that supports him.

But when Octavius was able to control power after the defeat of Antony and Cleopatra, he faced a great challenge, represented in finding a stable political system in Rome after a century of wars and revolutions. Octavius worked to adapt the traditional Roman constitutional procedures to the new conditions, as the Senate continued to exist, but it became a council Marginal, and fertile ground for recruitment of reliable persons, rather than the governing body in Rome, and the magistrates continued to hold office, but they were chosen by Octavius,

not by popular election, and although Rome was a court by the rule of law, Octavius He was above the law (Strauss, Barry, 2012, p. 240).

The Senate was the supreme authority in the Roman Republic, but that authority was dissipated and retreated at certain periods, especially during the reign of Julius Caesar, but Octavius when he became the master of the Roman world. He wanted that council to be as it was in its previous era, of power and control in managing the country, because it is believed that most of the people who took over the management of public government jobs were made by that council (Nasseri, Sayed Ahmed, 1975, p. 36).

After Octavius realized the importance of the Senate, he sought to purify that institution from the emergency members, who took advantage of the political crises and civil wars that the country was going through as an opportunity to win membership in the Senate (Hafez, Ahmed, 2007, p. 46). Octavius deliberately excluded them, as he issued three lists of their names in different periods (11,18,29 BC) (Wells, Colin, 1992, p. 56), through which he was able to reduce the number of council members, from 900 to 600 members (Eck, Werner, 2007, pp. 80-81), and Octavius reduced the number of praetorians to ten and later raised it to twelve, after they numbered sixteen praetorians during the reign of Julius Caesar, and one of their responsibilities was to preside over the general courts, and he retained for himself absolute control over the army, as well as linking by all the provinces that contain military forces (S. Mackay, Christopher, 2009, p. 366). Octavius also reduced the number of military legions from sixty legions to twenty-eight legions, that army that ended a century of civil wars, and laid the foundations for two hundred years of peace and prosperity (Strauss, Barry, 2012, p. 243).

In the same regard, Octavius strove to fully control the jobs through which an individual can reach membership in the Senate, and he was very keen to limit those jobs to people loyal to him, only in order to ensure an overwhelming majority within the Senate, as Octavius was trying to add New blood to the Senate, serving his political interests and aspirations, by supporting the people of the middle and lower classes in Roman society, to win public jobs and help them with the necessary funds if necessary, because those jobs were considered the gateway, through which access to membership in the Senate, such as praetorians and others (Al-Nasiri, Sayed Ahmed, 1975, p. 36).

The Senate became endowed with wide powers and powers during the reign of Octavius, even granting it the right to form a Supreme Constitutional Court, in which the two consuls preside over its meetings, and whose task is to consider cases and violations committed by members of the Senate, such as treason, for example (Hafez, Ahmed, 2007, p. 47). In addition to that, he made the Council a legislative authority concerned with the management and organization of the country's internal affairs, and as for the political side, he monopolized

that for himself (Nasseri, Syed Ahmed, 1975, p. 37), and despite the creation of some new positions and institutions in the imperial era, only most of the institutions and councils that prevailed in the republican era continued to function, but some changes were introduced to them in their tasks and powers (Okasha, Ali and Al-Natour, Shehadeh and Baydoun, Jamil, 1991, p. 223).

Octavius was keen to write the letters (Ex.s.c) at the end of every decision he made. In addition to that, he ordered that they be written on public buildings, and it was inscribed on the money as well (Hafez, Ahmed, 2007, pg. 47), which is an abbreviation for the phrase (Ex-Senatus Consulto), which means “on the advice of the Senate” and comes as a matter of affirming the council’s rights and responsibilities in those matters (Al-Nasiri, Syed Ahmed, 1975, p. 38).

8. Conclusions:

1. The outgrowth of political crises resulted in a political vacuum resulting from the inability of the Senate to take decisive action on crucial issues.
2. The political crises provided an opportunity for the sons of the aristocracy to improve their economic situation.
3. The political crises created a large economic gap between the classes of Roman society, although Julius Caesar tried to reduce those differences by supporting those lower classes.
4. Julius Caesar, as high priest, allowed the freedom to choose faith and the freedom to practice religious rites.
5. Political crises resulted in a number of laws that dealt with all political, economic and social problems.
6. Some changes have been made to many political and administrative jobs and positions.

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