

summary

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SUMMARIES AND COMPARISON OF TWO SOURCES

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Summaries

The Dictator by Jane F. Gardner

In this short story, Jane Gardner covers Julius Caesar's reign as a ruler of the Roman empire. The article primarily entails how Julius Caesar employed despotic antics during his reign. During that time (49-44 BC), Caesar derived his constitutional powers from dictatorship to which he was inappropriately appointed and partly from consulship. During that time, dictators were rarely appointed for the sake of meeting various immediate needs when the consuls were unavailable.¹ Mostly, they were chosen to organize the Latin Festival or hold elections. They could also undertake military command and general civil duties. Also, the power of office lacked a reliable definition. Caesar's dominance did not rely ¹ much on any specific office but his military prowess and the loyalty of those who hoped to gain or had gained something from him. He appointed his deputy to help run his course of dictatorship.

The first one was Mark Antony, while the second one was Lepidus.² Caesar was appointed dictator severally. Magistrates that he appointed could enact laws on Caesar's behalf. Caesar exercised the coined laws by himself or via his deputy. The regulations could also be passed via the assembly, edict, senatorial decree, and plebiscite. During his first reign in 49BC, Caesar held elections for magistrates and assigned them to provinces.³ His power was considered

1. Jane Gardner. ² F.' The Dictator', in M.Griffin (ed), A Companion to Julius Caesar.Oxford: Blacksell, 2009: 57-71.

2. Ibid, 59.

3. Ibid, 58.

perpetual a reason behind his Assassination. As a dictator, he revised the Senator's roll thrice. The article concludes that the "reign of Caesar would lapse with his lifetime."⁴ He did not take any necessary action to make the office a permanent part of the constitution or king. Also, he did nothing to choose ¹ and build up any of his associates and senior commanders as an inevitable successor to his political power. Caesar did not have male siblings; hence he did not bother to build a hereditary dynasty. His will was conventional to benefit friends, family, and political associates.

The Assassination by Andrew Lintott

The main center of interest in this article is the Assassination of Julius Caesar. The report also pinpoints the primary reasons that led to Caesar's assignation by a group of senators in March 44 BC. One explanation behind the assassination is that some forged conspiracy hoping that if they eliminate Caesar from their way, they will take over his leadership.⁵ Others were bitter about via indignation concerning their suffering in the war because of the loss of money, the death of their kins, and the failure of offices in the city. They denounced the rule of man and instead embraced a republican government. Annals claimed that the new regime opposed the monarchical rule within or outside the Roman empire.⁶ The article also discusses reasons that led to the assassination of Caesar. One of the reasons is that he failed to meet the senate's desired reputation. Also, ¹ when two tribunes, Marullus, and Caesetius, removed a diadem from Caesar's

4. Ibid, 66.

5. Andrew Lintott.' The Assassination, in M. Griffin (ed.), A Companion to Julius Caesar. Oxford: Blacksell, 2009: 72-82

6. Ibid, 73.

statue and imprisoned the victim who put the diadem there, he dismissed them from office. To him, the two stage-managed the incident for him to appear authoritative. This was even though tribunes were sacrosanct. Another level of arrogance by Caesar was displayed during the festival of the Wolfmen. When Mark Antony crowned him with a diadem, he put it aside.

Caesar's arrogance was also shown when he refused to be moved by the dream by his wife, including "the unfavorable omens in the sacrificial victims."⁷ Such events had traditional value as interpreted by the Etruscan diviner Spurinna. He also planned to leave and campaign in the Danube and the East in Parthians' land. He wanted to extend his influence. Such reasons led to a plan by the senators to assassinate him. The conspirators started as a small group but expanded to 60. The main conspirators were Marcus Junius and Gaius Cassius. Caesar was stabbed about 35 times. There also existed sympathizers who avoided the whole saga. One of them was Lucius Cornelius Cinna (a former brother-in-law of Caesar). Before Caesar's Assassination in the senate meeting, the conspirators met secretly in small groups as they maintained secrecy. The article concludes that the arrogant behavior and the need to end dictatorship was the primary reason behind the Assassination. Also, the conspirators failed to streamline the Republic as was earlier expected.

Comparison of Jane and Lintott's work

The two compositions cover the same theme about Julius Caesar and his authoritarian leadership. The second article, *The Assassination* by Andrew Linnott, complements Gardner's article *The Dictator* by explaining how a group of 60 senators assassinated Caesar. The first article explained Caesar's dictatorial antics that the article explains, which led to his

7. Ibid, 77.

Assassination. The second piece picks from there to explain step by step how Caesar was assassinated, including the planning and lastly, the Assassination during a senator meeting. It describes how Marcus Iunius and Cassius Longinus, together with other 58 members, secretly planned to execute Caesar for the Republic's sake. The first article also mentions that Caesar's dictatorship was made perpetual in early 44 BC, a misjudgment that likely precipitated his death. The sentiments are then elaborated further in the second article. The authors agree on the perpetual status of Caesar as a dictator. Gardner explained that dictatorship was short-lived to fill the gap of the absent consul. Gardner explains that a dictator was appointed to rule over the short term to perform civil duties, for instance, organizing the Latin Festival and carrying out military commands. Lintott replicates the same information by stating that his office was of a perpetual dictator during the time of Caesar's death. Lintott explains that "the dictatorship was in origin a republican magistracy, devised to give temporary authority to one man in various sorts of special circumstances."⁸

The two articles differ ¹ in the coverage of Caesar's attributes. The second article only highlights the negative side of the dictator. The first one covers both the positive and the negative aspects of Caesar. Some of the positivity outlined include the welcoming of foreign professionals to help develop the city.⁹ Also, during his reign, Caesar established more colonies for his empire.

8. Ibid, 74.

9. Jane Gardner. F.' The Dictator', in M.Griffin (ed), A Companion to Julius Caesar.Oxford: Blacksell, 2009: 57-71.

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Gardner, Jane. F.' The Dictator', in M. Giffin (ed), A Companion to Julius Caesar.Oxford:

Blacksell, 2009: 57-71.

Lintott, Andrew.' The Assassination, in M. Griffin (ed.), A Companion to Julius Caesar. Oxford:

Blacksell, 2009: 72-82

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"A Companion to Julius Caesar", Wiley, 2009

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