and tribute they promised.
- Caesar’s expeditions into Britain provided little material outcome. However, they captured the imagination of the Roman people who ‘magnified it to a remarkable degree’. Cassius Dio, 39:53.

**Gaul 54 – 52 BC**
- In the winter of 54 BC the ‘whole of Gaul broke into revolt’ (Plutarch, *Caesar*:24), with the tribes determined to force the Romans from their lands.
- Caesar had increased his army in Gaul by adding auxiliary forces from conquered Gallic tribes. However, he now borrowed two legions from Pompey.
- A young, charismatic leader, Vercingetorix was chosen as the Gauls’ supreme commander. The Aedui, formerly allies of the Romans, joined the rebellion.
- The final battle was fought outside the stronghold of Alesia. Caesar’s victory became legendary. Vastly outnumbered and caught between two gigantic forces, Caesar compelled his men to build a double line of fortifications to prevent enemy forces joining, then he successfully defeated the enemy. (See Ch 7)

**Significance of the Mithridatic and Parthian wars**
- The Eastern Settlement of 63 BC was the outcome of hard campaigning by Lucullus and a combination of force and diplomacy from Pompey. The wars against Mithridates were a drawn-out affair with Rome emerging the dominant force - at terrible cost.
- Caesar had revisited the Eastern region in 47 BC and regained territories lost to the son of Mithridates who had taken advantage of Rome’s civil war to assert his influence.
- The conquest of Parthia had been particularly costly to Rome, as both Crassus and Antony found to their cost. Rome’s supremacy in Parthia was never certain, even in Augustus’ time.
- The extension of the Roman empire into the East demonstrated the limits of its influence. It is probable that Roman citizenship was of little value to Eastern cultures. The result was sustained resistance to Roman presence, which at times erupted into warfare.

**The First Triumvirate**
- In 60 BC Pompey returned to Rome and celebrated a massive triumph for his victories in the East. Although the Senate granted Pompey’s triumph, they wanted to restrain him and so refused to ratify his Eastern settlement.
- Having dismissed his legions, Pompey found himself powerless in the face of the Senate’s opposition.

- Crassus had his own motives for opposing the *Optimates*. He needed a rebate for the equestrian tax farmers he had financed against the expected return of taxes from the Eastern provinces. Crassus had also been implicated in the Catiline conspiracy.
- So in 60 BC, Caesar, Pompey and Crassus met and formed a secret alliance (*amicitia*) in which they agreed to share power. Caesar was to be elected consul for 59 BC. He, in turn, would pass laws to provide land for Pompey’s veterans and ratify his Eastern settlement. He would also ensure a tax rebate and provincial command for Crassus. For himself, Caesar wanted command of the province of Gaul.
- The political alliance was underscored by the marriage between Pompey and Caesar’s daughter Julia.
- The *Optimates* were aware that Caesar had sufficient popular support to gain a position as consul and attempted to restrain him. They promoted M. Calpurnius Bibulus as his fellow consul, and ruled that neither would get a provincial command after their consulship. Instead, they were allocated the ‘pastures and fields’ of Italy, a post which did not require command of a standing army.

**FIRST TRIUMVIRATE**

**CAESAR, CRASSUS, POMPEY**

- **Caesar**
  - Wanted the consulship for 59BC and the command of Gaul

- **Varro**:
  - ‘the beast with three heads’

- **Appian**:
  - ‘These three, the most powerful men in Rome, then pooled their interests’

- **Plutarch**:
  - ‘...now these forces were united into one and there was nothing to stop violent party interest from overthrowing everything...’

- **Cassius Dio**:
  - ‘Having formed their friendship By virtue of mutual self-interest, they ratified it with oaths and then managed public affairs among themselves.’

**CRASSUS**

- Wanted a tax rebate for equestrians to whom he had lent money against future revenue

**POMPEY**

- Wanted ratification of his Eastern Settlement and land for his veterans

*Figure 9.4 The First Triumvirate*
Ancient Sources on the First Triumvirate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dio Cassius</th>
<th>Plutarch</th>
<th>Appian</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caesar ... actually reconciled the men themselves, not because he was desirous that they should agree, but because he saw that they were most powerful. He understood well that without the aid of both, or at least of one, he could never come to any great power; and if he made a friend of either one of them alone, he would by that very fact have the other as his opponent and would meet with more failures through his support than successes through the support of the other. For he (Caesar) understood perfectly that he would master others at once through their friendship, and a little later master them through each other.</td>
<td>Caesar ... saw that while Pompey and Caesar were at daggers drawn, he could only make a friend of one of them at the cost of making an enemy of the other. He therefore attempted to bring about a reconciliation between them— an admirable thing in itself and even a patriotic action, but one that was undertaken by Caesar for the wrong motives and with the skill of a practised master of intrigue. A city, like a ship, can gain stability from opposed forces which together prevent it rocking one way or the other; but now these forces were united into one and there was nothing to stop violent party interest from overthrowing everything. Plutarch claims Cato said: ‘it is not the quarrel between Caesar and Pompey that caused disaster, but the friendship between them.’</td>
<td>Meanwhile Pompey, who had gained great prestige and power from his Mithridatic successes, wanted the Senate to confirm the many grants he had made to kings and petty rulers and cities. A number of Senators were jealous of this, particularly Lucullus. So Pompey, in his irritation, took Caesar into partnership and swore to help him win the consulship. Caesar at once made peace between him and Crassus. These three, the most powerful men in Rome, then pooled their interests. Appian records this coalition was treated in a volume by the Roman writer Varro, who called it ‘the Beast with Three Heads’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman History, 37:57</td>
<td>Pompey, 47</td>
<td>Civil Wars, 2:9</td>
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Figure 9.5 Ancient Sources on the First Triumvirate

Actions of the First Triumvirate

59 BC Consuls: Caesar and Bibulus

- As consul, Caesar immediately began to bring forward legislation. He advised the Senate to distribute land to veterans and plebeians, a sensible proposal to deal with the increasing urban population.
- The Senate, led by Cato, rejected the land proposal, despite Caesar having put forward the measure in a way to avoid offending the nobility. The Senate feared the popularity Caesar would gain from the land law and so delayed it.
- Pompey supported the land law and vowed that if force were needed he would ‘snatch up his shield’. Crassus also gave his approval. Bibulus, however, would not yield and used the support of three tribunes to block the law.
- In frustration, Caesar put the measure to the people’s assembly. He had nothing further to do with the Senate during his year of office, and instead took his proposals directly to the assembly.
- Caesar fixed a day for ratifying the law. Bibulus interposed and was physically attacked. Bibulus then attempted to have the Senate annul the law, but Pompey’s veterans appeared in the Forum and the law was passed. After this, Bibulus stayed in his house and regularly notified Caesar that it was a sacred period and no business could be transacted. Caesar ignored him.
- Caesar also released the Equestrians from one third of the tax commission they had paid. Dio Cassius reported that ‘By this means Caesar attached the plebs to his cause; and he won over the knights’ (Roman History 38:7). Caesar also ratified all Pompey’s acts.
- Bibulus’ withdrawal from politics meant that Caesar was in effect sole consul. Laws made in this period were known as Julian Laws and critics referred to the consulship of Julius and Caesar!

58 BC Tribunate of P. Clodius Pulcher

- Caesar was granted the provinces of Illyricum and Cisalpine Gaul with legions for five years. He also received Transalpine Gaul and another legion. A. Gabinius (who had proposed Pompey’s command against the pirates) was to be consul for 58 BC.
- Caesar employed the tribune Clodius Pulcher to safeguard his interests in Rome while he was away in Gaul. He instructed Clodius to curb the actions of Cicero who openly opposed the triumvirs. Caesar was also aware of the friendship which had once existed between Cicero and Pompey.
- Clodius attacked Cicero by proposing that it was unlawful for any citizen to be put to death without the condemnation of the people, a reference to Cicero having sentenced the Catiline conspirators to death without a trial. Cicero was threatened and exiled himself from Rome. He was formally banished and his property confiscated.
- When Pompey accused Clodius of taking a bribe, Clodius reacted with physical abuse: