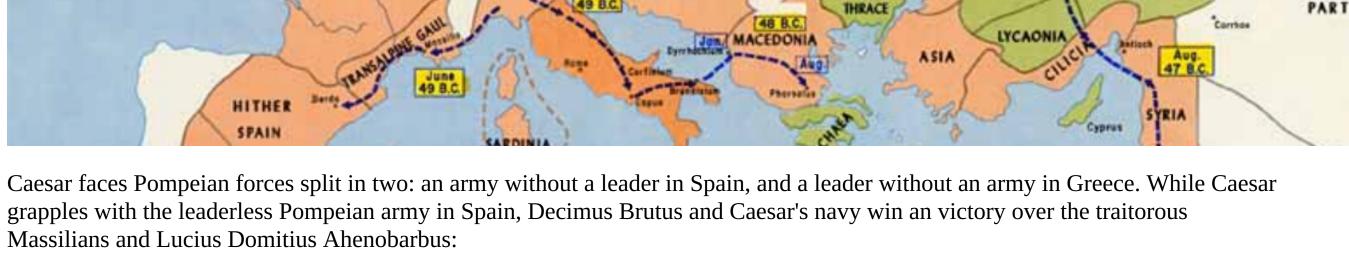
## Grasping Reality with Both Hands

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Liveblogging the Fall of the Roman Republic

The Caesarian Navy Led by Decimus Brutus Wins a Victory at Massilia:



Massilians and Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus: **Gaius Julius Caesar**: *The Civil War* http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10657/pg10657-images.html: 'Decimus Brutus and the Caesarian Navy Win a Victory at Massilia: Whilst these affairs are going forward at Ilerda, the Massilians, adopting the advice of

Domitius, prepared seventeen ships of war, of which eleven were decked. To these they add several smaller vessels, that our fleet might be terrified by numbers...

...They man them with a great number of archers and of the Albici, of whom mention has been already made, and these they incited by rewards and promises. Domitius required certain ships for his own use, which he

manned with colonists and shepherds, whom he had brought along with him. A fleet being thus furnished with every necessary, he advanced with great confidence against our ships, commanded by Decimus Brutus. It was stationed at an island opposite to Massilia.

Brutus was much inferior in number of ships; but Caesar had appointed to that fleet the bravest men selected from all his legions, antesignani and centurions, who had requested to be employed in that service. They had provided iron hooks and harpoons, and had furnished themselves with a vast number of javelins, darts, and

missiles. Thus prepared, and being apprised of the enemy's approach, they put out from the harbour, and engaged the Massilians.

Both sides fought with great courage and resolution; nor did the Albici, a hardy people, bred on the highlands and inured to arms, fall much short of our men in valour: and being lately come from the Massilians, they retained in their minds their recent promises: and the wild shepherds, encouraged by the hope of liberty, were

The Massilians themselves, confiding in the quickness of their ships, and the skill of their pilots, eluded ours, and evaded the shock, and as long as they were permitted by clear space, lengthening their line they endeavoured to surround us, or to attack single ships with several of theirs, or to run across our ships, and carry away our oars, if possible; but when necessity obliged them to come nearer, they had recourse, from the skill and art of the pilots, to the valour of the mountaineers.

But our men, not having such expert seamen, or skilful pilots, for they had been hastily drafted from the

merchant ships, and were not yet acquainted even with the names of the rigging, were moreover impeded by

the heaviness and slowness of our vessels, which having been built in a hurry and of green timber, were not so

easily manoeuvred. Therefore, when Caesar's men had an opportunity of a close engagement, they cheerfully opposed two of the enemy's ships with one of theirs. And throwing in the grappling irons, and holding both ships fast, they fought on both sides of the deck, and boarded the enemy's; and having killed numbers of the Albici and shepherds, they sank some of their ships, took others with the men on board, and drove the rest into the harbour.

That day the Massilians lost nine ships, including those that were taken.

.#history #livebloggingthefalloftheromanrepublic #politics #2020-08-09

eager to prove their zeal in the presence of their masters.

of crimes after he lays down his power. Let us start with some foreshadowing from Gaius Sallustius Crispus...

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Foreshadowing from Gaius Sallustius Crispus https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/foreshadowing-from-gaius-sallustius-

arrest and trial...

under the circumstances"?...

Pompeian armies in Spain. It is now 18 Mar -49...

inconclusive skirmishing follows...

Pompey's Strategy and Domitius' Stand https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/burns-pompeys-strategy-and-domitius-standnoted.html: In his *The Civil War* Gaius Julius Caesar presented "just the facts" in a way that made Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus look like a cowardly and incompetent idiot. The attractive interpretation is that Ahenobarbus was just trying to do the job of defeating Caesar, but had failed to recognize that Pompey was not his ally. Pompey, rather, was somebody whose first goal was to gain the submission of Ahenobarbus and the other Optimates, and only after that submission was gained would he even think about fighting Caesar. Still an idiot, but not an incompetent or a cowardly one: **Alfred Burns** https://github.com/braddelong/public-

crispus-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: A strongly unconventional high politician facing the expiration of his term

of office. He knows that there is a very high probability that, because of his actions in office, his adversaries will try and convict him

files/blob/master/readings/article-burns-pompey.pdf: 'In early 49, the alliance confronting Caesar consisted of the old republican senate families who under the leadership of [Lucius] Domitius [Ahenonbarbus] tried to maintain the traditional institutions and of Pompey who clung to his own extra-legal position of semi-dictatorial power. Both parties to the alliance were as mutually distrustful as they were dependent on each other...

Marcus Tullius Cicero's Take on the First Three Months of -49 https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/marcus-tullius-ciceros-take-on-the-first-three-months-of-49-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: 'We have a primary source for the start of the Roman Civil Warin addition to Gaius Julius Caesar's deceptively powerful plain-spoken "just the facts" narrative in his Commentaries on the Civl War—a narrative that is also a clever and sophisticated lawyer's brief. Our one other primary source: Marcus Tullius Cicero's letters to his BFF Titus Pomponius Atticus. Caesar, in his The Civil War, makes himself out to be reasonable, rational, decisive, and clever. Cicero, in his Letters to Atticus is a contrast. He lets his hair down. He is writing to someone he trusts to love him without reservation. He is completely unconcerned with making himself appear to be less flawed than he appears. And

the impression he leaves is absolutely dreadful: he makes himself out to be erratic, emotional, dithering, and idiotic...

Reflecting on the First Three Months of -49 https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/reflecting-on-the-first-three-months-of-49-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: 'The key question for the first three months of the year -49 is: what did the factions anticipate would happen in that year? The Optimates seemed to think that they had Caesar cornered: Either he surrendered... and then submitted to trial... or he... was quickly crushed.... Cicero appears to have believed that either the Senate surrendered to Ceesar and let him... put Cataline's conspiracy into action but legally... and then ruled With the support of his electoral coalition of mountebank ex-debtors and ex-veterans to whom he had given land; or... Pompey... crushed Cesar militarily... follow[ed] up with proscriptions and executions after which he would rule as a second Sulla. What is not at all clear to me is what Pompey thought would happen.... My guess, reading between the lines of Plutarch, is that Pompey found himself allied with the Senate in January-February of -49, but not in command of anything—as shown by Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus's behavior at Corfinium, attempting to trap Pompey into fighting alongside him in central Italy. And so he retreated to Greece, where he was in undisputed command...

solution-or-so-caesar-says-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: The Beginning of Caesar's *Commentaries on the Civil War*, in which Caesar says that he had proposed a compromise solution to the political crisis.... 'The dispatch from Gaius Caesar was delivered to the consuls; but it was only after strong representations from the tribunes that they gave their grudging permission for it to be read in the Senate. Even then, they would not consent to a debate on its contents, but initiated instead a general debate on 'matters of State'.... Scipio spoke... Pompey, he said, intended to stand by his duty to the State, if the Senate would support him; but if they hesitated and showed weakness, then, should they want his help later, they would ask for it in vain...

The Optimate Faction Rejects Caesar's Compromise https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/the-optimate-faction-rejects-caesars-compromise-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Caesar narrates the reasons that the leaders of the Optimate faction—Cato, Lentulus, Scipio, and Pompey—worked hard to set the stage for war, and how the majority of Senators in the timorous middle were robbed of the power to decide freely, and driven reluctantly to vote for Scipio's motion to rob Caesar of his protections against

Caesar Offers a Compromise Solution (or So Caesar Says) https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/caesar-offers-a-compromise-

narrates: Whatever norms he may or may not have broken during his consulate—in order to wrest land from the hands of corrupt plutocrats and grant it to the deserving—he says, the Optimate faction does much worse. In the first seven days of the year of the consulate of Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Crus and Gaius Claudius Marcellus Maior, the Optimate faction goes beyond norm-breaking into outright illegality. And to that they add impiety. They illegaly seize power, as they grant themselves proconsular and propraetorial imperium over the provinces, without the constitutionally-required popular confirmation of imperium. They impiously violate the separation of church and state by seizing temple funds for their own use. They thus incur the wrath of the gods. And they incur the enmity of all who believe in constitutional balance, as opposed to armed plutocratic dictatorship…

delong.com/2020/07/caesar-presents-his-case-to-the-13th-legion-negotiates-unsucccessfully-with-pompey-liveblogging-the-fall-of-

Pompey refuses to give up his dominant position. He holds imperium over Spain and commanding the ten Spanish garrison legions,

while also residing in the suburbs of Rome and thus dominating the discussions of the Senate. Pompey refuses to commit to setting a

the-roman-rep.html: Caesar presents his case to the 13th Legion, and wins its enthusiastic support. Caesar and Pompey negotiate, but

The Optimate Faction Arms for War, & Illegally Usurps Provincial Imperium https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/the-

optimate-faction-arms-for-war-illegally-usurps-provincial-imperium-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Caesar

Caesar Presents His Case to the 13th Legion, & Negotiates Unsuccessfully with Pompey https://www.bradford-

The Optimate Faction Panics and Abandons Rome https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/the-optimate-faction-panics-and-abandons-rome-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Caesar narrates: The Optimate faction panics at a rumor of Caesar's approach, and flees from Rome with the looted Treasury reserve. The towns of Italy support Caesar. Even the town of Cingulum rallied to Caesar, even though its founder Titus Labienus, Caesar's second-in-command in the Gallic War, had deserted Caesar for his earlier allegiance to Pompey. And Pompey's attempts to reinforce his army by recruiting veterans who had obtained their farms through Caesar's legislative initiatives did not go well...

Caesar Besieges Domitius in Corfinum https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/caesar-besieges-domitius-in-corfinum-

liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus began raising troops, and by the start of February

-49 had 13000 soldiers in the town of Corfinum. On 09 Feb -49 Domitius decided to stand at Corfinum rather than retreat to the

south of Italy. So he wrote to Pompey... urged that the Optimate faction join its military forces together at Corfinum to outnumber

and fight Caesar. Pompey disagreed. Why did he decide that he, Pompey, "cannot risk the whole war in a single battle, especially

republic.html: Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus's deception that Pompey is coming to the Optimates' aid in Corfinum falls apart, Ahenobarbus tries to flee, Lentulus Spinther begs for his life, Caesar grants clemency to all, and adds the three Optimate and Pompeian legions to his army. Before Corfinum Caesar had had two legions in Italy to the Optimate and Pompeian six. After Corfinum (with the arrival of Legio VIII plus new recruits) Caesar has seven legions in Italy to the Pompeian three. It is now 21 Feb -49: Gaius Julius Caesar: *The Civil War*: 'Domitius's looks, however, belied his words; indeed, his whole demeanour was much more anxious and fearful than usual. When to this was added the fact that, contrary to his usual custom, he spent a lot of time talking to his friends in private, making plans, while avoiding a meeting of the officers or an assembly of the troops, then the truth could not be concealed or misrepresented for long...

Pompey Refuses to Negotiate & Flees to Greece https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/pompey-refuses-to-negotiate-flees-to-

greece-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Pompey flees to the southern Adriatic port of Brundisium. Caesar catches

Cementing Caesarian Control of the Center of the Empire: Late March -49 https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/cementing-

up to him and begs him to negotiate. Pompey refuses and flees to Greece. Caesar decides not to follow, but to turn and first defeat the

Caesar Captures Corfinum https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/caesar-captures-corfinum-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-

caesarian-control-of-the-center-of-the-empire-late-march-49-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: Caesar, now that the Pompeians and the High Optimates have fled, offers to share power with the dysfunctional Senate but, filibustered and vetoed by Optimate tribunes, he consolidates his hold on the center of the empire and heads for Spain...

Treachery at Massilia: April-May -49 https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/07/treachery-at-massilia-april-may-49-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: The Massiliotes profess neutrality—until Pompeian reinforcements arrive, and then they go back on their word. Pompeians to whom Caesar had shown clemency at Corfinium have again taken up weapons against him: Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus at Massilia, and Vibullius Rufus to command the Pompeian legions in Spain...

Rendezvous in Spain, at Ilerda https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/08/rendezvous-in-spain-at-ilerda-livelogging-the-fall-of-the-

control of the heart of the empire, he moves first to deal with the Pompeian forces in Spain to his west: 'The First Spanish Campaign:

obeying orders, lost no time in dislodging the guards from the pass and proceeded by forced marches to encounter Afranius's army...

Pompey's lieutenant, Lucius Afranius. He ordered the remaining legions, which were wintering farther away, to follow on. Fabius,

roman-repubvlic.html: Caesar's first probing military moves demonstrate his position is very strong. From a central position in

Fabius's orders were to make haste to seize the passes over the Pyrenees, which at that time were being held by the troops of

Caesar Begins His First Spanish Campaign https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/08/caesar-begins-his-first-spanish-campaign-livelogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: A strongly unconventional high politician knows that his adversaries will try and convict him of crimes after he lays down his military command, so he lets the dice fly. His first probing military moves demonstrate his position is very strong. He moves first to deal with the Pompeian forces in Spain to his west. He has his men build a fortified camp close enough to the Pompeian base that the soldiers will inevitably start to fraternize...

Heavy But Inconclusive Skirmishing Between the Military Camps at Ilerda https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/08/heavy-but-

inconclusive-skirmishing-between-the-military-camps-at-ilerda-livelogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: 'From a central

position in control of the heart of the empire, Caesar moves first to deal with the Pompeian forces in Spain to his west. Heavy but

Floods and Supply Lines: Livelogging the Fall of the Roman Republic https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/08/floods-and-

suppyl-liner-livelogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: From a central position in control of the heart of the empire, Caesar moves first to deal with the Pompeian forces in Spain to his west: **Gaius Julius Caesar**: *The Civil War*: 'Floods and Supply Lines: The enemy fortified the hill, about which the contest had been, with strong works, and posted a garrison on it. In two days after this transaction, there happened an unexpected misfortune. For so great a storm arose, that it was agreed that there were never seen higher floods in those countries; it swept down the snow from all the mountains, and broke over the banks of the river, and in one day carried away both the bridges which Fabius had built, a circumstance which caused great difficulties...

Caesar Turns the Tables on the Pompeian Skirmishers https://www.bradford-delong.com/2020/08/caesar-turns-the-tables-on-the-

pompeian-skirmishers-liveblogging-the-fall-of-the-roman-republic.html: 'Caesar faces Pompeian forces split in two: an army without

a leader in Spain, and a leader without an army in Greece. With clever engineering and tactics, he overcomes his logistical difficulties

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and begins to turn the tables on the Pompeian army in Spain...

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