

The Gracchi brothers worked to limit the amount of land that any individual could hold. Those whose land exceeded the limit would lose some of their property, which officials would then allocate to small farmers.

12 The Gracchi Brothers

The Gracchi had little influence because most of the members of the elite class considered them dangerous radicals and found ways to undermine their efforts.

Fearing that the brothers might gain influence over Roman affairs, their enemies assassinated Tiberius in 132 B.C.E., and executed Gaius on trumped up charges in 121 B.C.E.

The experience of the Gracchi brothers clearly showed that the constitution of the Roman republic, originally designed for a small city state, might not be suitable for a large and growing empire

13 Julius Caesar

Julius Caesar seized power in 83 B.C.E.

After Caesar seized power, he initiated a grisly slaughter of his enemies.

During his reign Caesar executed an estimated 10,000 people

Julius Caesar inaugurated the process by which Rome replaced its republican constitution with a centralized imperial form of government.

14 Augustus Caesar

Augustus was bestowed emperor in 27 B.C.E. and was granted the right to rule virtually unopposed for 45 years.

Augustus's government was a monarchy disguised as a republic.

Like Caesar, Augustus ruled by centralizing political and military power

He accumulated vast powers for himself and ultimately took responsibility for all important governmental functions. He reorganized the military system, creating a new standing army which commanders who owed their allegiance to the Emperor.