

AS LEVEL

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

H007


For first teaching in 2017


H007/02 Summer 2019 series

Version 1

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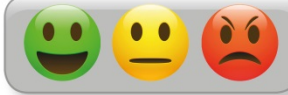
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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates. The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report. A full copy of the question paper can be downloaded from OCR.

Paper 2 series overview

Overall the candidature seemed to cope well with the demands of the questions and there was evidence that the demands of this new specification were being met.

Most candidates coped well with the time constraints with very few examples seen of candidates demonstrably running out of time.

In all questions it is important that candidates comply with the precise terms especially sticking within any dates mentioned in the wording of the question.

Section A overview

Question 1 requires no additional support from sources; a simple factual response to the issue which then goes on to make convincing judgements is all that is required. The central issues are wide enough for all candidates to score highly even by approaching the question in different ways.

Question 2 asks the candidates to extract relevant support from the passage(s) cited and to use supporting evidence from other relevant sources to address the question posed.

Question 1

1 Explain the methods Augustus used to secure a successor.

[10]

The better answers focused on methods rather than simply giving the names and the biographies of the key individuals whom Augustus had in mind as potential successors. Most answers mentioned Agrippa, Gaius and Lucius, and Tiberius with some also mentioning Germanicus and Marcellus.

Adoption and marriage to Julia were mostly mentioned methods which was encouraging; some added titles (often with no example), public promotion (*princeps iuventutis*) and bestowing powers (*Trib. Pot.*).

Common misconceptions seemed to be the order of successors, the relationship of Marcellus, and Gaius and Lucius to Augustus, and the name of Julia who was called 'Livia' too often. Some answers focused on Augustus as a successor to Julius Caesar which we put down to a misreading of the question, but sadly we could not make any allowances for this as Augustus was not strictly Caesar's successor and the period starts in 31 BC anyway.

Marks in the lowest bands were given to simple narratives of the succession i.e. who died when and how etc.

Question 2

2 Read the following passages.

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Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, Tiberius 61

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Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome* 3.65

On the basis of these passages and other sources you have studied, how far do you agree that Tiberius' reign was one of terror and suspicion? [20]

This extract question caused more difficulties than it should have as the passages are set sources and the context is not obscure. A few responses did not detail the claims made in the two passages and approached the response in a very general way with a discussion of the reign of Tiberius rather than focus on the two aspects in the question.

The Suetonius passage was better dealt with than the Tacitus; possibly because the Suetonius had a more specific use of examples of terror and suspicion in the extract itself. Responses did not always understand that Tacitus was complaining about the senators and Tiberius' comment was directed at them.

Neither of the two passages were evaluated clearly – mostly in general terms; a misconception was that Suetonius was a senator and so was anti-Tiberius since he was harmful to them. Both had access to imperial records which was never explained (in any case Tacitus did not). Most knew what informers were, what Suetonius meant by 'capital one', what Tacitus meant by 'obsequious' and 'sychophantic' but did not always elaborate with a context.

There were examples of scripts which dealt well with the extracts and discussed the extent to which Tiberius' reign was one of terror and suspicion using other episodes from the reign of Tiberius to support the proposition. Maiestas trials, the rise and fall of Sejanus and Tiberius' treatment of individuals such as Germanicus, Agrippina, Piso and various members of the aristocracy were all used well to support the ideas put forward in the extracts.

Exemplar 1

This shows how the extract question should be tackled. There is clear engagement with the specific issue of the extent to which Tiberius' reign was filled with terror and suspicion. The extracts are mined for suitable support (but not everything possible is extracted showing that candidates do not need to get everything out of the passages for full marks). There is good support from other sources, which are analysed with respect to the central issue. 20/20 marks.

Tiberius ~~of~~ succeeded Augustus as his adopted son. He was the emperor from AD 14 to AD 37, but ~~in~~ ^{most of} the ancient sources do not present him or his rule in a positive light. Suspicion was brought into his reign through his character and the Senate and terror was brought in by the use of treason trials. However, Tiberius' reign can not be completely assumed to be ~~bad~~ full of terror.

The ancient sources, especially Tacitus, criticise Tiberius' character. Tacitus calls him 'haughty and ~~is~~ ambiguous', ~~suggesting~~ There is definitely evidence of suspicion between Tiberius and his increasingly servile Senate. Tiberius ~~is~~ It seems as though Tiberius wanted a Senate full of free speech and debate, but this never happened, causing him to declare upon leaving the Senate, according to Tacitus, that the senators were 'men fit to be slaves'. This negative relationship with the Senate only increased throughout his reign. Under Augustus, Tacitus tells us

that the wealth and status of senators increased in proportion to their servility' and we see a continuation of this under Tiberius. He kept the senate guessing with his ambiguous answers and hesitations, suggesting that there was little truth and much deception in the senate. Tacitus confirms this by calling Tiberius 'freedom's enemy' and saying the 'greatest figures had to protect their positions by subterfuge'. As a senator himself, Tacitus loathes the loss of senatorial influence and power that happened under the Julio-Claudians, so he writes very against the emperors and their relations with the senate. Overall, I believe that Tiberius' reign was one filled with suspicion.

There was also a lot of terror under Tiberius due to the Maiestas trials that he returned to Rome. 'Nobody believed his republicanism, for he revived the treason law' - Tacitus. Our Ancient sources are almost unanimously negative on the treason trials under Tiberius, but Tacitus especially because of the treason trials he suffered himself under the emperor's domination. However, despite his bias, I believe that the treason trials were a big source of terror through his reign, and I believed this is

supported in the ancient sources. Seneca describes the situation as 'a state of national madness' where 'jokes and drunken conversations became the targets for informers'. As Seneca says, the treason trials gave way to professional informers - Delatores - who were given a quarter of the land of those who they exposed. Suetonius mentions these informers saying that men were condemned 'some actually by their children' which shows the extent of the terror under Tiberius, with 'the informers word always being believed'. Suetonius tells us that 'every crime became a capital one', which I think sums up the evidence to suggest that Tiberius' reign was one of terror. Suetonius is reliable on this topic as, with access to the imperial archives, he would know such statistics as 'not a day... passed without an execution'.

On the other hand, Tiberius was open with Sejanus - 'partner of my labours'. Tacitus tells us the 'only with Sejanus the otherwise cryptic emperor spoke openly'. Velleius says he is 'a distinguished assistant' who 'shared the burden of the imperial office'. Velleius' history of Rome was published in AD 30, the year before Sejanus downfall.

the 4s always positive of both Augustus and Tiberius because "he owed his position & career to them, therefore his words need to be treated almost as a form of propaganda, but as he gives us an impression of the emperors in the way they wanted to be seen. However, it was Sejanus who encouraged Tiberius to move to Campania and then Capri in AD 25 and 26 respectively. Justinius tells us that the villa Jovis was 'accessible by only one small beach'. Dio describes Tiberius as 'a kind of offshore monarch'. Both these sources suggest that there was a lot of suspicion during Tiberius' reign, especially after his move to Capri.

In conclusion, I agree to a large extent that Tiberius' reign was ~~just~~ one of terror and suspicion because, despite his openness with Sejanus, the treason trials he introduced, his move to Capri and then his relationship with the Senate caused a lot of suspicion, as ~~well~~.

Section B overview

Most answers to the essay questions reached sensible conclusions derived from the ancient evidence and answers, which provided a mere factual response with unsupported assertion masquerading as analysis, were thankfully a lot rarer this year. To repeat the advice from last year: evaluation of the sources must be specific to the point being made. There was still far too much generic evaluation bolted on at the end of an essay, which, quite reasonably, received very little credit.

Question 3

3* How reliable are the portrayals of Gaius and Nero in the ancient sources?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge. **[30]**

Good answers to this question depended on candidates providing specific and detailed examples from the sources for the two emperors: the most common were Gaius and his horse (insult to senate), the Fire of Rome (Nero singing while it burned), Gaius' good 6 months, his illness, examples of cruelty, assassination and Nero's stage performances and relations with his mother. Less used were the better aspects of the reigns, e.g. Nero's redesigning Rome, Gaius' aqueducts and tax reforms. Also, these examples needed to be evaluated for reliability as the question demands. This was often approached, with varying degrees of success, in some general way by evaluating the author in terms of distance from the events, access to records, attitude (as senators) to the treatment of the senate, rather than assessing the information specifically as credible. It was noticeable that a number took the information at face value.

The support from sources was variable – occasional responses included none or one; some would refer generally to the author by name with a generalised comment lacking detail. The better answers evaluated the reliability of the reigns of the two emperors but were supported with detailed references, episodes and comments from Tacitus, Suetonius, Dio Cassius, Pliny and Josephus.

Question 4

- 4* 'Assassination was the only way to get rid of an emperor.' How far do you agree with this statement?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as supporting your answer with your own knowledge. **[30]**

The proposition in the question was approached by most of the candidates with a narrative of each emperor's death followed by a view on whether it was natural or assassination with variable support from the accounts in the sources. This gained some credit.

Most responses had a clear argument about the usefulness/indispensability of assassination with some clearly showing understanding that there was no legal way to remove an emperor given the weakness of the senate and the emperor's control of the army. There was reasonable analysis of the evidence with (for example) considerable discussion of whether Nero was assassinated by being virtually forced to commit suicide, often well organised and substantiated with evidence, and discussion of whether Claudius' death was only necessary because of Agrippina's ambition for her son.

The commonest misconception was that Tacitus told the story of the death of Gaius and Nero which seemed to be a confusion between him and one of the other authors. A further misconception was that senators were not involved in Gaius' death. Equally few responses recognised that Gaius/Macro may have killed Tiberius. Some suggested Claudius was not assassinated but killed by his wife. Chronology was a problem for some in terms of order of events and errors in confusing emperors.

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