

**ADVANCED SUBSIDIARY GCE  
CLASSICAL CIVILISATION (JACT)**

Roman Historians

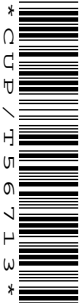
**FRIDAY 23 MAY 2008**

**2739**

Afternoon  
Time: 1 hour 30 minutes

**Additional materials (enclosed):** None

**Additional materials (required):**  
Answer Booklet (8 page)



**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Write your name in capital letters, your Centre Number and Candidate Number in the spaces provided on the Answer Booklet.
- Read each question carefully and make sure you know what you have to do before starting your answer.
- You must answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
- Start your answer to each question on a new page.
- Use an 8 page answer booklet followed by a 4 page booklet if extra paper is required.

**INFORMATION FOR CANDIDATES**

- The number of marks for each question is given in brackets [ ] at the end of each question or part question.
- All questions are worth 50 marks in total including 5 marks for quality of written communication.
- The total number of marks for this paper is **100**.

This document consists of **4** printed pages.

## Section A

Answer **one** question from this section.

**A1** Read the following translation and answer the questions at the end.

A brilliant comet now appeared. The general belief is that a comet means a change of emperor. So people speculated on Nero's successor as though Nero were already dethroned. Everybody talked of Rubellius Plautus, a Julian on his mother's side. His personal tastes were old-fashioned, his bearing austere, and his life respectable and secluded. Retirement, due to fear, had enhanced his reputation. The talk about the comet was intensified by equally superstitious reactions to a flash of lightning, which struck and broke the table at which Nero was dining in his mansion at Sublaqueum near the Simbruine Lakes. Since this was near Tibur, the birthplace of Plautus' father, the belief arose that the Divine Will had marked Plautus out. He was frequently courted by those whose devouring and often misguided ambitions attach them prematurely to new and hazardous causes. Nero was worried. He wrote asking Plautus, in the interests of the city's peace, to withdraw from malevolent gossip to enjoy his youthful years in the safety and calm of his family estates in Asia. So there Plautus went, with his wife, Antistia Pollitta, and his closest friends. 5  
10

Nero, in these days, endangered and discredited himself by an extravagant eccentricity: he bathed in the source of the Marcian Aqueduct. His immersion therein was held to have polluted the sanctity of its holy waters. The divine anger was apparent when he became seriously ill. 15

TACITUS, *Annals* 14.22 (M. Grant; Penguin)

- (a) What events has Tacitus described since the death of Agrippina? [10]
- (b) Explain how Tacitus aims to influence the way his readers think about Nero in this passage. In your answer you should include discussion of the language used. [15]
- (c) How does Tacitus use omens in this passage? How typical is this of the way that he uses omens elsewhere? [20]

[Quality of Written Communication: 5 marks]

[Total: 50 marks]

**A2** Read the following translation and answer the questions at the end.

Nero introduced his own new style of architecture in the city: building out porches from the fronts of apartments and private houses to serve as fire-fighting platforms, and subsidizing the work himself. He also considered a scheme for extending the city wall as far as Ostia, and cutting a canal which would allow ships to sail straight up to Rome. 5

During his reign a great many public abuses were suppressed by the imposition of heavy penalties, and among the equally numerous novel enactments were sumptuary laws limiting private expenditure; the substitution of a simple grain distribution for public banquets; and a decree restricting the food sold in wine-shops to green vegetables and dried beans – whereas before all kinds of snacks had been displayed. Punishments were also inflicted on the Christians, a sect professing a new and mischievous religious belief; and Nero ended the licence which the charioteers had so long enjoyed that they claimed it as a right: to wander down the streets, swindling and robbing the populace. He likewise expelled from the city all pantomime actors and their hangers-on. 10 15

SUETONIUS, *Life of Nero* 16 (R. Graves; Penguin)

- (a) What events has Suetonius described since Claudius' death? [10]
- (b) Explain how Suetonius portrays Nero in this passage. In your answer you should include discussion of what he says and how he says it. [15]
- (c) How typical is this passage of Suetonius' approach to writing? In your answer you should include discussion of what he says both in this passage and elsewhere in his account of Nero's reign. [20]

[Quality of Written Communication: 5 marks]

[Total: 50 marks]

**Section B**

Answer **one** question from this section.

Start your answer on a new page.

- B3** 'Tacitus is too interested in criticising Nero for us to take him seriously as a historian.' How far do you agree with this statement? In your answer you should include discussion of what makes a good historian. [50]
- B4** Which author have you found more interesting to read, Tacitus or Suetonius? In your answer you should include detailed reference to both writers. [50]

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*Copyright Acknowledgements:*

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- A2 text            Extract from Suetonius, *Nero* 16. From R. Graves, *The Twelve Caesars*, A. P. Watt Ltd, 2003. Reproduced by permission of A. P. Watt Ltd on behalf of The Trustees of the Robert Graves Copyright Trust.

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