

A LEVEL

Examiners' report

ANCIENT HISTORY

H407

For first teaching in 2017

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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. A selection of candidate answers is also provided. 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.

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Paper 22 series overview

After some years of disruption, the general impression is that teachers and candidates have developed the skills and techniques required by the specification to a high degree. This component demands a wide range of differing evidence and varying skills. Candidates need to develop an understanding of the different scopes of the Period Study and the Depth Study. However, excellent work across the component was seen from a good range of candidates, with only a small number lacking the skills and knowledge to perform well.

It is important for a successful response to provide a coherent analysis which answers the question by integrating the knowledge and evidence into an explanation. This requires information supported by a reference to a source which appears to confirm the information; this may be followed by a sentence which repeats in some form the terms of the question. A good response sustains a series of judgments focused on the terms of the question. Statements or assertions unsupported by evidence and vaguely linked to the information do not offer a developed answer.

Very few appeared to not understand the scope of the questions or their issues. Candidates had knowledge of the prescribed sources. Most provided detailed knowledge and understanding. A consistent engagement with the sources at all levels was seen.

As always, there was generalised knowledge and assertions about authors or texts. Candidates do less well where assertion replaces argument. The phrase 'this tells us that' or 'this shows that' after some knowledge or evidence is not sufficient. There should be an explanation of how and why the evidence is linked to the view and/or the issue in the question.

Good responses displayed secure knowledge and understanding of, at least, part of the period and the depth study. Clearly, in the context of an examination of limited time, errors were made and misconceptions arose, more numerous only in the less successful responses. By and large, these errors were minor. Candidates did well when they tried to be consistent throughout most of their responses for the highest levels. The vast majority of responses offered good or very good explanations at some point in the response but not consistently.

There are still responses which provide very few (1 or 2) sources or none at all. The majority of marks for the essays are for the use of sources and evidence. Supporting the judgment with evidence is the primary aim of any response; even in the modern interpretation, support is needed to develop a substantiated argument regarding how convincing it is.

There are candidates who present a paragraph on the author or genre (sometimes), or the background and supposed bias. There is little or no effort to relate the evaluation to the evidence being used. Some of these paragraphs can take up a page of writing (and time). They often end with a statement about the unreliability of the evidence which the candidate has just used to support their view or explanation, negating their argument. Good responses try to compare sources when evaluating where possible; alternatively, they make the evaluation focused on the specific evidence being used. In addition, they employ other evidence in support to assess the reliability of the evidence they are using.

Very few appeared to have problems in finishing the paper; this was sometimes due to answering the two essays first before Questions 3 and 4. As a result, they tended to spend too much time on the essays to the detriment of the shorter questions.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> displayed a secure knowledge of the periods studied, specifically the chronology of the reigns of emperors in both period and depth study had a precise and clear grasp of the events/actions, and an approach which places information/sources in the correct context specified sources relevant to the terms of the question and gave precise attribution of sources especially in questions focused on sources gave evaluation related to the specific evidence prioritised the analysis over a narrative of the period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> misidentified an event in terms of the time frame or the person/group involved; inaccurate chronology in both Period and Depth study confused the reign of one emperor with another, and the source which is relevant to the emperor employed generalised factual knowledge provided unsupported judgments or assertions especially on the reliability of the sources provided limited sources or generalised phrases e.g. 'according to Suetonius' did not focus on the terms of the question.

Section A overview

Question 1 was more popular than Question 2. Question 1 asked candidates to express a view about how the reigns of emperors developed. It was suggested that candidates should provide comments on at least two emperors with no need to do more; most did all five, some quite briefly; this did not allow for a thorough analysis in some cases. However, most had good detail on at least two. Question 3 was more thematic in asking about the means by which emperors gained and kept good relations with the ordinary people. The question also required analysis of the reasons. The responses were often good to very good; some though less successful on the reasons than the ways; some hardly mentioned the reasons, focusing on a list of actions instead.

Over the years, candidates have become more assured in dealing with the modern interpretation. They are now much more willing to examine its argument and meaning in some detail. They are less inclined to discuss the debate on which it is based without relating it to the text. The questions appeared to be accessible to all levels.

Question 1*

1* 'The Julio-Claudian emperors' reigns always started well, became worse and then finished badly.'

How far do you agree with this view?

You must consider the reigns of at least **two** emperors in your answer.

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

This question was more popular than Question 2.

Many responses covered all five emperors and their reigns, although it was suggested that two might be acceptable for a good answer. The attempts to cover the five meant that many responses were superficial in their narratives of events. Alternatively, responses covered one (usually Augustus or Nero) with some detail but left the others to a short paragraph. These paragraphs tended to be general in knowledge rather than dealing with the issue of progression in a reign. It is important to approach these thematic questions by selecting material rather than trying to narrate everything possible.

A large number of responses tended to deal with the start and end in detail. The issue of 'becoming worse' was barely discussed especially with Gaius and Nero.

Responses which dealt with these emperors were often very good. They were detailed on the accession of both, using Suetonius and/or Tacitus (with Nero at least); they used precise examples of 'good elements' for example Suetonius *Nero* 10; they itemised the main events of the early and middle periods – again referencing Suetonius on actions preceding his 'illness'; the key moments of change were identified (Nero's murder of Britannicus, Agrippina, Octavia, his growing obsession with chariots racing and musical performance (Tacitus *Annals* 14.4–15); better ones recognised this was popular with the ordinary Romans, so that he remained 'doing well'; naturally the Fire of AD 64 (a date not always correct) featured; the differences in the sources highlighted by the better responses; again most recognised that Nero did behave well (in Tacitus at least); good responses highlighted Piso and the trip to Greece as the points at which Nero declined most clearly. Better responses on Gaius were detailed on his behaviour (even down to the sea-shell incident) and offered a more nuanced explanation than simply madness; they distinguished between the upper-class and lower-class views of Gaius. Good responses developed the evaluation of the sources throughout the answer.

Less strong responses went from '*quinquennium Neronis*' to the Fire with little in between; Gaius' reign went from his popular support at first and the auction tax to making his horse a consul (or senator incorrectly). They often lacked evaluation of the evidence, especially in the case of Gaius. Tacitus was frequently cited incorrectly for this emperor. Less successful responses confused the chronology of Nero's reign, placing the Fire almost immediately after Agrippina's murder. They sometimes conflated events, perhaps confused because of Suetonius' own lack of chronology.

There was a tendency with the sources to preface a narrative with 'According to Suetonius and Tacitus'. Given that large parts of Tacitus *Annals* are missing, there are periods when only Suetonius would apply. The phrase means very little in terms of use of sources; equally making a statement or describing an event, ending with an author's name in brackets, does not identify what the source is contributing.

Augustus was commonly cited as one who did not become worse or ended badly. Some, however, did note the issues with succession, and the German frontier (possibly Livia's murder of him, but not in Tacitus as claimed); Claudius was well-used as another example of one who did not fit the rule. The common view was that he started badly and finished either badly or well but got better in the middle. There were some very knowledgeable and sound responses using both of these examples. Some thought that Tiberius fitted the statement well.

In general, most responses provided good or very good answers, showing knowledge of the period and sources.

Misconception



The '*Quinquennium Neronis*' is not mentioned as such in Suetonius or Tacitus but a phrase used by Trajan.

Res Gestae (often spelled incorrectly) does not use the sentence 'I found Rome built of bricks and left it clothed in marble'. It is found in Suetonius, and a version in Cassius Dio.

Question 2*

- 2*** In what ways and for what reasons did the Julio-Claudians try to maintain good relations with the ordinary people of Rome?

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

Very good responses dealt with both aspects of the question. They provided a range of 'ways' and a number of 'reasons'. There was a tendency to focus on the 'ways' in many responses to the exclusion of the reasons for attempting to gain good relations.

Good to very good responses focused on the 'ordinary people' as the question asked. Less successful ones widened the discussion to the senators and equestrians, which was not the focus of the question. Lengthy accounts of Tiberius' treason trials were barely related to the ordinary people but described how the relations with the senators declined. This was the same with Gaius with examples of mistreatment of the senators; they often ignored his relations with the ordinary people.

The ways in which relations were maintained varied: the most frequent ones were the corn supply, water supply, largesse, infrastructure projects, festivals, and games; others referenced were security (vigils), fire control (Nero), and religion (Imperial Cult). Most responses provided specific examples supported by sources. Augustus dominated the accounts as the one who maintained good relations; Tiberius was the example who did not. Almost every answer quoted 'To the Tiber with Tiberius' as proof that he failed. Some thought he was actually thrown into the Tiber. Tacitus does not use the phrase (which many thought he did). If candidates had read the entire section of Suetonius (75), they would discover he was cremated with due ceremony.

As in Question 1, the knowledge of the chronology of the reigns was varied but less damaging in this question; the events in Claudius' reign were conflated so that it was unclear when he had a shortage of grain, or which aqueducts he built; the point at which Augustus refused the dictatorship was often unclear; its relationship to the grain problem not developed. Not all were clear about the death of Germanicus, who was confused with Drusus by some.

The better responses dealt with the reasons specifically and identified how each emperor had different problems to solve. Claudius needed to establish himself with his poor relations with the senators; Augustus needed to overcome the past reputation of the civil wars; Gaius, with no experience in politics and military, needed to establish a base of support; all needed to avoid the mob rioting when hungry (although few could give an example of when they did – such as Claudius pelted with stale bread). Less successful answers dealt with this in one or two sentences at the end of a list of actions taken by emperors. There was limited development of the judgment or supporting evidence in these responses. The responses were unbalanced; they consisted of a narrative of actions with much evidence but little analysis.

Responses were mostly knowledgeable and focused; there was ample detail of the 'ways'; better responses had a wide range of these; weaker responses tended to focus on two; grain and largesse.

Exemplar 1

		Claudius, the fourth fourth emperor of the Julio-
		Claudian Dynasty, tried to maintain the support
		of the ordinary people of Rome vastly different
		reasons to Augustus, in 41 AD, Claudius became
		Emperor unexpectedly after the assassination of
		Caligula ('Gaius the monster' (Suetonius)). Claudius
		tried to create good relations for two reasons,
		to protect himself and to restore/secure the
		republic. Claudius did this through a number of
		social and political reforms. According to
		Tacitus, Claudius rebuilt the harbour at Ostia,
		something promised by Julius Caesar, he built
		aqueducts started by Tiberius and drained a
		lake promised by Augustus, the building works
		were also followed by his invasion of Britain,
		which secured glory for the army and therefore
		the ordinary citizens of Rome. While Suetonius
		describes the invasion as 'of no great
		importance', the invasion expanded the empire,
		and the glory of the army significantly
		increased his support from the people (Tacitus).
		Tacitus, while non contemporary, was a significant
		historian for understanding the time of the
		Julio claudian emperors, making him reliable for his
		works (although Caligula books 7-12 were lost).

This candidate's response displays some of the issues with responses to this question.

The focus on reasons at the start is good; the comparison with Augustus (already discussed) is valid; the context of his accession explains his need for protection and to stabilise the state. The response lists some of his actions to gain and maintain good relations – Ostia, aqueducts, draining of a lake, invasion of Britain. These are stated to have increased his support among the people (supported by Tacitus). The one specific reference to Suetonius is not immediately related to the issue of support, although it might have been developed to indicate an attitude towards Claudius which prevails in the sources.

Apart from a suggestion his aqueducts were begun by Tiberius, the response establishes both methods and reasons. It tries to use sources but this is less successful. The naming of the source in brackets or saying 'According to Tacitus' does not add to the analysis or the knowledge – in what way does it help the discussion if Tacitus does remark on Ostia or the aqueducts? Is Tacitus the source for Augustus' promise which Claudius now fulfils? Tacitus is claimed to be the support for the view that the invasion increased support. This section of Tacitus is missing in the *Annals*; Britain enters only when Scapula is governor; the *Agricola* is brief on the invasion. This naming of a source as if somewhere the author will make the comment is undermining the response. Finally, a brief effort at evaluation; reliability is confirmed because he is a 'significant historian'. This might help to confirm the existence of Ostia or support if there were specific examples. However, as it stands it has no value.

Question 3

3 Read the interpretation below.

Augustus represented his pre-eminence as the means by which Rome could rediscover her traditions and disciplines and face the challenges that lay before her. Although clearly his position in the state was abnormal, his exceptional position was justified by the guarantee of social and political order that he brought.

... That bargain entailed a take-over of the Roman state... in which the old Roman Republic ... was absorbed and managed by the emperor. Augustus established a form of dependency in which the atypical position of the emperor was necessary to protect and preserve the political values of Rome, values which were traditionally incompatible with the elevation of an individual to such a position. This is the paradox of the imperial settlement. ... Behind the emperor lay his wealth and his legions. Power and political ideology were mutually supportive and those who did not accept the ideology were bound to reflect on the power of the regime. To a considerable extent, that power had been displayed in its absence from late 22–19 BC: only Augustus could bring peace to Rome.

R. Alston, *Aspects of Roman History 31 BC–AD 117* (adapted)

How convincing do you find Alston's view that there was a 'take-over of the Roman state in which the old Roman Republic was absorbed and managed by the emperor'?

You must use your knowledge of the historical period and the ancient sources you have studied to analyse and evaluate Alston's view. **[20]**

Candidates responded very well to the issue raised in the interpretation. The vast majority had knowledge of his actions. Candidates now show a good set of skills in dealing with complex discussion of an issue.

It must be emphasised that candidates are asked to assess the content of the extract. Candidates spend time explaining what is not said. They argue that it is not convincing because of what it omits. The question is asking the candidate to assess the view in the extract; the candidate can then bring in material which they feel counters the points in the passage. They should cover the evidence which they believe shows that it is or is not convincing. However, arguing it is not convincing because Alston here does not itemise the settlements is not dealing with what is being claimed; suggesting Augustus does not bring peace because there are generals actually doing the fighting does not deal with the full context of the point in the extract.

These extracts will be a summary of some aspect of one of the three debates; they will provide an opinion or view on an issue. That should be the focus of the response: whether it is supported by the evidence we have.

There were a number of issues which the extract raised; the candidates were asked to assess the idea of a 'take-over' and how far Augustus managed/absorbed the Republic; good responses identified areas where Augustus could be said to have done this; precise information on his powers and settlements supported their analysis. Some could not distinguish the two settlements or confused them. Some added powers/positions which were not included. The majority were accurate and detailed.

Most responses picked up the idea of 'traditions', 'social order' and 'values'. They focused on the Julian Laws. However, many did not include the full sentence; Augustus 'represented his pre-eminence as the means...' and so did not quite analyse the point Alston is making; that he did focus on tradition as a way to support the position he held. Better responses dealt with 'his exceptional position' or 'atypical position' and how represented it. Some discussed the 'paradox' of his position within the Republic.

Many expanded on the idea of a dependency very well; equally, many discussed the issue of wealth and legions with specific support regarding his control of both. Most took issue with the assertion that only Augustus could bring peace. However, few related it to the events of 22–19 BC which was Alston's context.

A few responses discussed the 'take-over' by reference to the other emperors rather than Augustus, despite the passage being clearly about Augustus. The debate again concerns Augustus. The idea of 'peace' was argued as unconvincing using the revolt of Vindex and the victory of Vespasian.

Exemplar 2

This is convincing as it shows that Augustus transformed Rome from a Republic into a state where he had all the power.

Alstons says "as the means by which Rome could rediscover her traditions and discipline" showing that Augustus set himself up as a necessary part of the new Rome and that this could only be achieved by giving him power. Alston says "his position was abnormal" showing that that amount of power wasn't normal for one man and that he was warping the Republic into something different, but keeping up the facade of a Republic. Cassius Dio backs that up when he describes Augustus as a king which shows that he was taking all the power, but showing that the ^{Republic} still had power and it hadn't changed. The laws of 27 BC also show this when although he gives up his tribune power he gains proconsul and consul at the same time which hadn't happened before and in 23 BC he gained *maius imperium* and *tribunicia potestas* showing he gained lots of power, but still kept up the facade of a Republic but secretly had power over a lot of different areas of the Senate.

		Alston also says "traditionally incompatible with the elevation of an individual to such a position"
		showing he presented himself as the only way to restore the republic, but him being that power went against the republic's values showing how he integrated himself into the system and made it seem normal. Alston says "Behind the emperor were his legions (ay his wealth and legions)"
		Showing that he secretly held all the power but pretended he was letting the Senate rule.

This candidate's response takes a very organised approach to dealing with selected sentences from the interpretation. It begins with the first sentence of the passage, although it omits part of it which is somewhat important (his pre-eminence as the means). The response does establish that Alston is saying that Augustus is securing his position by suggesting he is necessary despite his exceptional status. It picks up the idea of 'abnormal' as a support for the view of Augustus 'warping' the Republic while pretending to preserve the values. The response makes good use of supporting information in Cassius Dio. This continues with reasonably accurate accounts of the settlements to show the exceptional nature of Augustus' position, thus agreeing with Alston. The response continues with reference to the extent to which his position was incompatible with the Republic, while maintaining a normality on the surface. It adds the issue of 'wealth and legions' although does not develop this with support or explanation.

The response focuses on the issue of Augustus' position and Alston's analysis of its atypical nature and how Augustus justified it by reference to aspects of the Republic. The response lacks some supporting information in some respects although it displays accurate knowledge where necessary. It is very focused on the passage; it selects specific issues/ideas and assesses them in the light of knowledge; it could develop both the assessment and knowledge in places with more detail.

Section B overview

Question 4 required candidates to assess and evaluate the extracts with a view to the importance of the army for the Flavians. Most candidates had knowledge of the three authors, but some omitted one or more of the extracts. The contexts of the passage were understood and used by most; some seemed unaware of the specific situations.

Question 5 asked candidates to assess a specific issue; discontent in Rome and the Empire. Most responses focused on the issue in the question; some omitted mention of the Empire. There was some focus on the upper classes in some responses. There was in Question 6, a tendency to offer examples with limited explanation of how they displayed an aspect of personality. There is a tendency for candidates to entirely discount a source after questioning its reliability; it would serve better by explaining what we can do with the evidence provided despite its limitations. Some candidates are still presenting blocks of generic information about the reliability of sources at the opening/conclusion of their essays, which is as a result entirely disconnected from their analysis/argument.

Question 4

4 Read the passages below.

These were the arguments of the soldiers in their various companies. After this, they joined together into one body, and, encouraging each other, they declared Vespasian the emperor, and urged him to save the empire, which was now in danger.

Josephus, *Jewish War* 4. 601

Vespasian was pondering war, weapons and the forces available to him far and near. The troops were devoted to him.... The Third Legion was counted by Vespasian as his own, since it had crossed into Moesia from Syria. It was hoped that the other legions from Illyricum would follow any lead it gave, as the whole army was incensed by the arrogance of the soldiers coming from Vitellius.

5

Tacitus, *Histories* 2.74

His new building programme and expensive entertainments, added to the rise in army pay, were more than Domitian could afford, so he decided to reduce expenditure by cutting down on the number of soldiers. But then realising that this would expose his frontiers to barbarian attack...he resorted to every form of extortion.

Suetonius, *Domitian* 12

How useful are these passages for our understanding of the importance of the army for the Flavian emperors?

[12]

The majority of candidates had little difficulty in recognising the importance of the army in the three extracts; most identified one or two key points in each source; most developed some argument or evaluation of the information in relation to the question. Some compared the information and/or the usefulness of the sources, where they differ or agree.

The Josephus passage is an account of a meeting in Syria at a very early stage of the campaign; some mentioned that Josephus could not have been present, assessing its reliability; some added that he was very pro-Flavian and again questioned its accuracy; most identified it as a key moment in Vespasian's decision and so the importance of the army. Stronger responses developed the point that it was the army choosing the *princeps* not the Senate. These responses highlighted Tacitus' comment that the *princeps* was being made outside of Rome. The context of this being the first legions to declare and Vespasian not yet committed was well used.

The Tacitus passage was well assessed by most candidates; better ones noted that Tacitus gives us information on how Vespasian is thinking; they questioned how he knew this; equally, he claims to know what the 'whole' army was thinking; better responses could support the factual information with knowledge from the events; they used the declaration of Tiberius Alexander in Egypt as perhaps more significant. The focus on the need for resources before Vespasian committed was noted by most.

The Suetonius passage was generally well evaluated with more focus on reliability than the other passages. A number referred to Section 23 where the army were deeply affected by his assassination to support the army's good relations with Domitian. Some went further and said that later they demanded the assassins were punished. Good responses noted that Suetonius uses the information to criticise Domitian in the final sentence. They usually judged that Domitian would rather upset the people than the army.

Largely, good conclusions were drawn from the passages by all candidates; the passages seemed to be accessible to all levels. A very few seemed to think Domitian did reduce the pay of the legions.

Exemplar 3

4		<p>When trying to understand the importance of the army for the Flavian dynasty these passages are exceptionally useful. Firstly, the passage from Josep Joseph Stalin Josephus' 'Jewish War' describes Vespasian's initial rise to power - which was solely thanks to his military power. After all, it was the soldiers that 'declared Vespasian the emperor', according to Josephus. This clearly demonstrates the importance to Vespasian ^{and the Flavians} of to the army, as it was the army that encouraged encouraged and allowed the Flavian dynasty to grasp power in the first place. It should be noted that this tale is likely apocryphal, as Josephus would have been trying to paint Vespasian as humble and unworthy of power. Secondly, the passage from Tacitus' 'Histories' also clearly demonstrates the importance of military power to the Flavians, highlighting that Vespasian had the 'weapons and forces available to him' and that his 'troops were devoted to him'. This lines up with Josephus as it insinuates that military power was the only reason Vespasian was able to grasp power. Lastly, we have a passage from Suetonius' 'Domitian'. This passage describes an emperor already secure in his position, not needing to grab power with the army, unlike Vespasian did. None the less Nevertheless, the importance of the army for Domitian and the Flavian dynasty</p>
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		dynasty as a whole is on full display. As his new policies were 'more than Domitian ^{could} afford', he 'resorted to every form of extortion' - rather than ^{cutting down} reducing the number of soldiers. This choice to extort his subjects and upset them, rather than leave his ports ^{frontiers} open to barbarian attack illustrates fully the importance of the army for Domitian and the Flavians. Overall, these sources all agree that the army was extremely important to the Flavians and therefore, these passages are very useful to one's understanding of the importance of the army for the Flavians.
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This candidate's response provides a good range of examples from the sources; they are relevant to the question and developed to answer the issue of importance. They are analysed to draw out conclusions and the judgments are reached on the basis of the evidence.

The response points out that Josephus emphasises that military power was the only reason Vespasian could take power. The Tacitus passage is seen as supporting Josephus to some extent in stating that military power was vital. The Tacitus passage is not examined for its information in detail but the main point about resources is valid. The contrast with the situation in the Domitian passage is noted. Again the response focused on the essential issue that the army is more important than other groups in society.

The response has assessed the passage for their information and usefulness for the issue well; it has used details from each passage and provided some context in terms of author and historical situation. However, there is no evaluation of the reliability of the passages which is part of the AO3 Assessment Objective. There is no reference to context which might have affected their accounts, for example, Josephus' past, his position with Vespasian, the fact that this is, at least, a second-hand account which may be true, though not as he tells it. The response does not provide additional information on the movement of legions or Domitian's use and need of the army; or what Suetonius' view of Domitian is in the passage which might affect how useful it is. This is what was needed to move the response into a higher level.

Question 5*

5* To what extent was there discontent with the rule of the Flavians in Rome and the Empire?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. [36]

There were some very good responses which dealt in detail with a range of discontent. There were also some which focused entirely on the upper class (senators), especially under Domitian. Some omitted the Empire altogether or focused on Domitian. Very few were unable to refer to sources, although confusing authors did occur.

The majority of responses dealt with all three emperors, although Domitian tended to dominate. Stronger responses gave details of specific plots; examples included the Caecina, Marcellus plot in Suetonius *Titus* 6, the Saturninus revolt in Cassius Dio 67, the suggested plots of Domitian against Titus in Suetonius and naturally the assassination of Domitian. This latter event was variously recorded. Less successful responses included senators in the plot, and praetorians (on the basis of Cassius Dio). These responses tended to be a narrative rather than an analysis of the extent of discontent.

Discontent among the senatorial class was well documented, headed by Priscus; support from Suetonius and Cassius Dio was prominent and accurate; better responses detailed the account of Agricola in Tacitus and his narrative of senatorial oppression; these responses evaluated Tacitus' account in assessing the extent of discontent. The majority gave the story of the 'Black Room' as evidence of Domitian causing discontent. Better responses gave detail of discontent with Titus before his accession in Suetonius *Titus* 6–7. There were a few responses which developed the problems with the philosophers documented in Suetonius and Cassius Dio.

Other groups were less well documented, largely because sources are less explicit. Some used Josephus' account of Vespasian and Titus on their arrival in Rome to indicate a low level of discontent. The reactions to Titus' death and that of Domitian were contrasted with evidence from Suetonius. Stronger responses noted that the public were indifferent to Domitian's death according to Suetonius 23. Less successful responses claimed they were pleased. Many used Suetonius *Domitian* 14 'hated and feared' supported by Tacitus *Agricola* 42; some used Juvenal *Satire* 4 to show how Domitian inspired fear.

Good responses referred to unpopular policies of Vespasian and Domitian for example the vine edict, and the urine tax; some sensibly used the Suetonius passage in Question 4 to indicate the discontent which might follow Domitian's exploitation.

Those who dealt with the Empire showed very good knowledge of both events and sources; they used the *Agricola* well; equally knowledge of Cassius Dio and Domitian's expeditions was displayed to good effect. The sources are limited on this aspect; a number of responses used what there is successfully.

Misconception



It was stated that there was no discontent with Vespasian; Suetonius, however, states in section 25 'frequent plots'; in 15 he details Helvidius Priscus; in 16, he describes his 'avarice' and in 19 further evidence of the Alexandrians discontent over taxes. Cassius Dio records the unpopularity of Mucianus in acquiring resources on his behalf.

Question 6*

6* How useful are the sources for our understanding of the personalities of the Flavian emperors?

You must use and analyse the ancient sources you have studied as well as your own knowledge to support your answer. [36]

It was essential in this question that the response focused on the issue of 'useful' rather than a list of the characteristics of emperors. Often responses detailed the actions of the Flavians, described in sources. They did not always develop this knowledge into what it tells us about their personalities. There were some unbalanced responses which focused either on Vespasian or Domitian, rather than the three emperors. Naturally, there was limited material on Titus, but it does exist. However, some responses gave the impression we know very little about him.

Good responses used a variety of sources, both literary and material. Less successful ones limited themselves to mostly Suetonius; some basically repeated what he had to say without developing the analysis. Stronger responses discussed the agendas of the sources. It was suggested that Titus especially, but also Vespasian, were presented as good in order to denigrate Domitian even more. The responses argued that the senatorial perspective on Domitian coloured the portrait. Not everyone knew Suetonius was not a senator. Tacitus was critical of Domitian because of Agricola, so his account is less reliable than the other two. Responses tended to assess sources on the grounds that they all agreed, making the claims reliable. It was rarely suggested that Cassius Dio might be using either or both of the earlier authors.

Some very good responses made very good use of various material evidence; coins were often used to identify aspects of personality or emperor's agendas which implied an aspect of character. Domitian's 'Germania Capta' suggested his pride or arrogance; Vespasian and the temple of Isis indicated his interest in foreign cults; Domitian's Secular Games coin displayed a religious aspect to his character; his love of games is shown in the coin of his stadium; good responses discussed the coins and buildings as propaganda which may not be reliable as evidence of their real personalities. Many promote the dynasty, especially the succession indicating Vespasian's desire to create one.

While use was made of the *Agricola* by Tacitus on Domitian, the *Histories* were less well used. There are expressions of Tacitus about their personalities; calling Vespasian avaricious, jealous of Mucianus, cautious (as the sources in Question 4 suggest if used). Tacitus offers a study of Titus at the start of Book 5; he is aware of his youthful excess, recorded in Suetonius also. Tacitus in 4.85 delivers a critical view of Domitian's early plotting, his jealousy of Titus, and his deceitfulness.

Universally Domitian was pictured killing flies either in Cassius Dio or Suetonius; stronger responses offered a more varied and reasoned view of Domitian using a variety of sources. Stronger responses gave a balanced assessment noting that in the sources there were good aspects to his character; concern for honesty in government, and his concern for morality (Vestals); Suetonius says he was not greedy or mean in his youth; he was popular with the army (having increased their pay); he was not entirely 'hated and feared'.

Evaluation of the sources should have been the focus of the response to this question; the approach should have been to examine each piece of evidence used for its value. Lengthy paragraphs of general assessment tend not to be integrated into the analysis but attached as some sort of extra. They do not help to assess the individual items of evidence being used.

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