

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

This series is the fifth for this specification, although in effect only three examinations have been taken. There has been much disruption over the past two years for the present cohort and no matter how much teachers have sought to mitigate the issues with continued effort and skill, the extent to which candidates have been able to familiarise themselves with the techniques and skills required by the specification continues to be a concern. This is especially the case with the analysis and evaluation of evidence, both literary and material. This paper covers a wide range of differing evidence which require varying skills if the candidates are to deploy the sources successfully. Candidates must attune themselves to very different historical contexts of the Period Study and the Depth Study. However, examiners have experienced excellent work across the paper from a good range of candidates, with only a small number lacking the skills and knowledge to perform well.

The examination questions proved accessible to candidates with very few who appeared not to understand the scope of the question or its intention. Candidates had knowledge of the prescribed sources and most had detailed examples to apply to their responses. There was a generally good appreciation of the nature and differences in terms of genre and content. Examiners saw a consistent engagement with the sources at all levels. The candidates had engaged with the material in the specification and had understood the issues in both the Period and Depth Study.

It is important for a successful response to integrate the knowledge and evidence into the explanation. This results in a coherent analysis which answers the question. This is not achieved by a piece of information, followed 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 provides a well-developed series of judgements that are co-ordinated around the terms of the question. Less successful responses tend to be assertions rather than convincing and substantiated analysis.

The majority of responses did produce developed judgements based around the available evidence. There were examples of generalised knowledge and assertions about authors or texts. Candidates are less successful where assertion replaces argument. A good piece of evidence was followed by 'this shows that...' without an attempt to explain how we get from the evidence to the conclusion. The majority of candidates understood the need to support their statements with clear and detailed examples from their knowledge and prescribed sources. The majority of 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 with limited time, errors were made and misconceptions arose, more numerous only in the less successful responses.

The majority of good responses used the evidence, literary and material to produce convincing, and at times thorough, explanations in part of the response. The majority of responses had parts where a really thoughtful point was developed, supported and led to a sound conclusion. Candidates are more successful if they try to be consistent throughout most of a response for the highest levels. The vast majority of responses offered good or very good explanations at some point in the response but not consistently.

Candidates did not do well when they provided few or no sources in their response; this is clearly a difficulty in exams where the majority of marks for a question are for the use of sources. Even in the modern interpretation, the discussion of convincing needs to be supported with knowledge, often from the sources.

Less successful responses were characterised by limited sources, generalised factual knowledge, inaccurate chronology, general source references ('Suetonius tells us', 'According to Plutarch' or a name in brackets, e.g. (Tacitus)), confusion between emperors and simple inaccuracies.

Evaluation of the evidence is a very important component of the exam. There are still instances where candidates offered a paragraph on the author or genre, or the background and supposed bias. An example would be 'Suetonius was a senator, and is prone to using gossip, so is unreliable'. There was little or no effort to relate the evaluation to the evidence being used. Some of these paragraphs can take up a page of writing. 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. However, the majority of responses displayed a more complex understanding of the value of the evidence in context; they often assess the evidence by comparing sources where possible. Alternatively, they assessed the credibility of the information by providing knowledge from elsewhere.

Examiners did not see evidence that time was an issue for candidates, with very few partially developed responses. Candidates did not in general display a difference in knowledge between the Period and Depth Studies.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • had a secure knowledge of the period studied, and a precise application of the knowledge to the specific question • showed a precise and clear grasp of the chronology, and an approach which places information/sources in the correct context • used specific sources relevant to terms of the question • prioritised the analysis of the issue in the terms of the question, using evidence and knowledge in support, rather than a narrative of knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • misidentified an event in terms of the time frame or the person/group involved • confused the reign of one emperor with another, and the source which is relevant to the emperor • did not focus on the main issue of the question but offered a generalised account of the period • provided a narrative of events, not an analysis • used few or no sources; identified a source by name attached to a piece of information instead of a detail from the source.

Section A overview

Question 1 and Question 2 seemed to be equally popular. Question 1 focused on evaluation of sources on a specific topic, which clearly caught the interest of very many candidates. There was a good display of evidence from the sources for Question 1, with many candidates using a variety of sources. There were errors over the information on the periods when authors were writing. However, responses provided good detail of the texts, often with quotations, usually attributed to the correct authors. There was confusion between authors – Cassius Dio, Tacitus and Suetonius. Question 2 responses showed understanding of the politics of the Empire. However, the role and responsibilities of the Senate, and individual senators, was less well known.

Question 3 allowed candidates to display a very good range of knowledge concerning Claudius, sometimes at length, to the detriment of other responses. Candidates engaged very well with the extract. They offered very varied judgements on the author's views.

Question 1*

- 1* 'The sources fail to provide an adequate assessment of the reigns of the emperors Gaius and Nero.'

How far do you agree with this view?

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

The responses varied from those who knew their sources – and a wide range of them as well, to those who had a general idea of what they tell us.

The important issue in this question is the value of the evidence for the two emperors. A successful response focused on the assessment rather than on how much of the reigns can be included. A less successful response tended to produce examples of the sources and offer a short judgement on whether it was an adequate assessment of the emperor. Good responses integrated the information from the sources with the evaluation. Less successful ones offered an evaluation as a separate paragraph.

Certain features of the reigns were commonly used. Nero's Five Good Years, the Fire of AD 64, the murder of Agrippina, his love of the arts (especially Greek) and chariot racing. Gaius' reign was characterised by his 'madness', his cruelty, his assassination, his divinity and the auction tax reduction (and his horse). More successful responses used a more varied selection. These included Gaius' bridge at Baiae (variously named), his buildings, the expedition to Gaul, including collecting the seashells and treason trials. Nero's reign covered other aspects also, such as the Piso plot and Vindex revolt, his trip to Greece, the other deaths, Seneca for example, and the aftermath of the Fire.

The sources were equally quite varied. The more successful responses were precise and specific, both in terms of the information and who said what. Clearly Suetonius and Tacitus predominated, at least in Nero. For Gaius, candidates offered Josephus, Pliny, Seneca and Cassius Dio. For Nero, in addition, there was some Cassius Dio, and some material evidence - coins and archaeological material. Some candidates were quite extensive in covering the sources, and able to compare accounts in assessing adequacy.

A more successful and common response was the account of the Fire of AD 64 in Suetonius, Tacitus and Cassius Dio. Successful responses had the detail correct and attributed the information to the correct author. Less successful ones were confused over who said Nero started the Fire, and which author praised his buildings after the Fire. Many were less secure on what Cassius Dio had to tell us, and some seemed to mention his name without knowing what he had to say.

Many good responses identified that all the sources provide both good and bad aspects of the reigns. In this sort of response, Gaius' first six months were set against Suetonius' 'monster' claim, showing that the sources are not entirely portraying him as 'mad'; equally Nero's early years were given space against the later excesses. Good responses assessed how balanced the accounts were. They also assessed the underlying agenda of the authors. There were some generalisations in this respect. Josephus, being Jewish, hated Gaius, and loved the Flavians, so he made Gaius worse so the Flavians could be seen as better; Tacitus, being senator, and a Republican, simply hated emperors, and women, which doubly damned Nero. Suetonius was inclined to gossip, which he got from the imperial archives. These views are not necessarily without merit. However, they need to be focused on the material, and precise links made if they are to be of value.

Some very thoughtful responses evaluated the assumptions in the sources. For example, Gaius' obsession with divinity was less about being a god and more about developing his position. He did not have the military or political background as Augustus and Tiberius had; he was new to the job; he needed to make a clear statement of his control. Some responses argued his treatment of the Senate was more about stating the Senate's weaknesses. Others questioned the elite opposition to Nero compared with the general popular support he had.

Their deaths were covered by the majority of the candidates. There were claims that Nero was assassinated also; Tacitus was referenced by some for the end of Nero's life (and even for Gaius); most knew of the praetorian involvement; some were aware of Josephus' account of three leaders with various motives; many suggested the ordinary people were upset at Gaius' death when none of the sources suggest this at all. Some used the accounts to indicate how inadequate they were. They criticised the dramatic telling of the deaths, including final last words, all possibly unreliable.

Misconception



Suetonius was often termed a 'senator'. He is said to have a bias against emperors in support of the Senate. He was, in fact, an equestrian.

It was stated that Gaius stated he would make his horse, Incitatus, (rarely named) as a senator. In fact, Dio and Suetonius say he intended to make the horse a consul, and Dio at another point says he would make the horse a priest.

Tacitus was, too often, referenced as a source for Gaius – that portion of the '*Annals*' is lost.

Exemplar 1

Suetonius considers that "even before he came to power" ^{Gaius} ~~he~~ was corrupt, and "turned viciousness into a fine art". This could be entirely possible, as many sources attribute Gaius' unstable mental state to his upbringing. Not only was his family prosecuted by ~~the~~ Tiberius, but he then stayed on Capri with the emperor for several years, which can be proven by the inscription 'Gaius' on the side of a house on the island. All accounts of Tiberius show him to be an overwhelmingly cruel and mentally unwell man, and Suetonius accounts his indulgence in immoral sexual pleasures as well as tortures whilst on ~~Capri~~ Capri. Caligula was encouraged to watch and take part, which could have indeed made him corrupt and ~~the~~ vicious. However, Suetonius was of senatorial class during the reign of Domitian, and his experience first hand of the treason trials perhaps influenced his perspective on Tiberius negatively, as he also allowed treason trials. In addition to this, Suetonius gathers much of

his source material from Antonia the elder, mother of Germanicus and her accounts, leaving a very negatively biased view on Tiberius. This means that Suetonius as a source ~~off~~ for ~~for~~ Gaius is unnecessarily negative. This is obvious from his accounts of Gaius' personality which seem unnecessarily harsh. He accounts Gaius commenting that the facet of his character "he was most proud of was his ~~inflexible~~ flexibility by which he must have meant brazen impudence". These factors make the extensive accounts of Suetonius unreliable, and it is better to read from Cassius Dio, who offers a slightly more neutral account. However, due to his writing over a century after Gaius reigned, his account relied on senatorial accounts and previous historians' works, meaning his work also has a bias that means it fails to provide an adequate assessment of Gaius' reign.

In Exemplar 1 the candidate is addressing the issue of the adequacy of Suetonius' account of Gaius. It begins with a quote which is attributed to Suetonius, from Josephus (JA 19.201f). However, this presents a view which the candidate indicates is possible. The candidate suggests 'many sources' support this view. Unfortunately, since it is not Suetonius, the point is undermined. However, it allows the candidate to divert onto Tiberius. The connection with Gaius is that Tiberius' behaviour influenced Gaius. This is designed to evaluate a reference (which is not Suetonius) from the author by selecting information from Suetonius. Clearly the misattribution (or insecure knowledge) has made the argument much weaker.

There follows a section on Suetonius: Suetonius was not a senator, although he associated with them (especially Pliny). He was certainly not a senator under Domitian. In fact he was only about 20 (c. AD 90) when in Rome as a student. Whether he experienced the trials is debatable. However, the candidate is using this information to discuss Tiberius, not Gaius. They claim he got information from Antonia the Elder. However, the mother of Germanicus was Antonia Minor, who committed suicide during Gaius' reign. There is no evidence that he used accounts from either Antonia as such. In any case the candidate seems to have lost sight of the question, which is about Gaius, in an effort to display knowledge of the background of Suetonius.

The candidate tries to link it to Gaius by suggesting Suetonius is negative, claiming it is obvious from his accounts of his personality. In support of this he quotes from *Gaius* 29 (slightly misquoted - inflexibility, not flexibility). There is no discussion of this quote but an assertion that Suetonius is unreliable, and less trustworthy than Cassius Dio (with no evidence). Cassius Dio, however, is dismissed as writing later, based on senatorial accounts and other works (who?) and for being biased. The conclusion seems to be that both are inadequate.

The candidate has not put together a coherent analysis but a series of pieces of information from the sources. These are treated as facts rather than opinions. The general evaluation of Suetonius adds little to our understanding of his reliability and undermines the conclusion on the issue in the question.

Question 2*

- 2* To what extent do you agree that the Senate and senators had only themselves to blame for the decline in their status and power under the principate?

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

It is important to read the question carefully. However, some candidates did not notice that the question concerned the Senate and senators 'under the principate' not in the Republic. A very short explanation of the roles and responsibilities of the Senate and senators before the reign of Augustus would set the scene determining what power and status they declined from. However, lengthy description of the Senate's position under Cicero was not relevant; nor were quotes from Cicero. Fortunately, these responses were rare. However, references to the Republican system were still noticeable at times.

The more successful responses were able to identify the roles that the Senate and individual senators took in the Empire. The majority treated them as a unified group. Very few mentioned individual senators. They continued to provide the personnel for most of the state offices, the governors of provinces, roles in the army, specific commissions and boards of various services for food supply, water, security and amenities.

The responses naturally concentrated on the relationship with the emperor of the day. The majority argued, as is apparent, that each emperor saw a continuing decline, and the state of the Senate grew worse as the period progressed.

Most responses tended to take a chronological approach to answering the question, emperor by emperor. This is often the case with questions in the Period Study. It has been noted in previous sessions that this is not always the most successful way to deal with questions which cover the period. They lead to narratives rather than analysis, and in the less successful responses, list of events or actions, with limited judgements.

The more successful responses looked thematically at the issue. They picked out moments or events where the Senate/senators could have taken more control or power and those where they clearly lost out to the power of the princeps. More analytical responses assessed the decline as not a straight line down but going up and down. The Senate appeared to gain at the start of some reigns, only to decline as the reigns progressed. Some saw this as a false dawn, with the underlying power of the princeps remaining the same.

All responses discussed Augustus and his reforms; it was pleasing to see that some had the Settlements perfectly recorded and knew which source referenced them. Many were quite vague about what happened and in which year. They often confused the two Settlements and did not know the source for them. The majority were aware of the implications of the arrangements, essentially the control of the army and the political system in Rome. More successful responses could quote Tacitus on the *tribunician potestas*; Cassius Dio was also a source for the details. Many claimed Suetonius gave us the details, more possibly thought they were in the *Res Gestae*. Most responses mentioned Augustus' claim to have transferred power (RG 34).

The accession of Tiberius was commonly used to show how the Senate lost a chance to recover power/status; only the more successful ones noted that the sources see Tiberius reluctance as a sham. They proceeded to evaluate the sources' view well. Equally, more successful responses noted that many of the trials were initiated by fellow senators not Tiberius; the numbers quoted of trials and deaths varied considerably. Thousands, however, seemed excessive. More successful assessments were around 52. The senators welcoming of Gaius was again seen as the senators being to blame, it was argued they could have refused. It was also argued well that by AD 37, the principate was too well established. Tacitus was quoted appropriately when he said no one remembered the Republic. Much was made of the Senate's missed opportunity at the accession of Claudius; more thoughtful responses argued that the Senate's problem was they had no army (as Augustus had seen to that). Good use was made of Josephus who pointed out that the people did not want the corrupt Senate to rule. There was good discussion of Claudius' freedmen, and Agrippina's orchestration of Nero's accession as reason not to blame the senators. Some responses did deal with the revolt of Vindex and the Senate's role. Those who did argued they had little contribution other than to declare Nero an enemy of the state once the revolt had started. This emphasised their real loss of power and status.

Many good responses could support their analysis with sound and accurate sources. They showed a very good knowledge of the period. Less successful ones tended towards narrative.

Misconception



The *Res Gestae* contains details of the Settlements of 27 BC and 23 BC.

The Settlement of 27 BC gave Augustus *maius imperium proconsulare*; he had control of provinces Syria, Gaul, Spain and Egypt in 27 BC; 23 BC gave him the *imperium*

Question 3

3 Read the interpretation below.

Claudius wanted to rule well, and in many respects he achieved his desire. Yet the main trend of the surviving literary tradition about his rule is contemptuous when it is not hostile, and depicts him as the victim of unscrupulous exploitation by his ambitious freedmen and scheming wives, ... But luckily sufficient imperial enactments survive in inscriptions and papyri to reveal the thought of Claudius himself and these...show that he possessed great administrative common sense. He not only showed skill in his choice of efficient freedmen-servants and outstanding generals (as Corbulo, Vespasian, Hosidius Geta and Suetonius Paulinus), but he also impressed his own mind and policy upon public affairs. In the last few years of his reign, however, his powers began to fail and the traditional view of him as a pawn in the hands of more determined men and women approximates more closely to the truth. 5 10

H.H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero* (adapted)

How convincing do you find Scullard's interpretation of Claudius' character and abilities?

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

Scullard's interpretation of Claudius provided candidates with a number of areas to discuss. Candidates responded very well to the stimulus. The vast majority had knowledge of his reign and the sources we have for him. Examiners were pleased to see that candidates have developed good techniques and skills in dealing with this question.

It must be emphasised that candidates are asked to assess the content of the extract. Candidates still discuss what is not in the extract. They argue that it is not convincing because of what it omits. However, the question is asking whether what is said is convincing on the basis of the evidence we have. For example, some stated that it was not convincing because he did not mention the invasion of Britain. However, many assessed his role in public administration by using Britain as an example of his ability, good or not. 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.

Scullard begins by making it clear that there is a mismatch between his achievements and the portrayal in the sources. Most candidates agreed that the sources were 'hostile' and offered accurate examples. They did not always see that Scullard implies that he thinks the sources are being unfair. The responses often repeated the source comments without assessment. A number moved onto a narrative of his wives, Messalina and Agrippina as examples to prove that the sources were hostile. In addition, responses often moved on to the last sentence, where Scullard agrees that the sources may be accurate. In the process they omitted much of the centre of the extract. As a result, the responses did not focus on the interpretation, rather a narrative of their knowledge.

The vast majority of responses had examples and sources for his 'administrative common sense', his aqueducts (usually named), Ostia, Fucine Lake, concern for the corn supply. These were supported using Seneca (the number of days of shortage varied), Pliny on buildings, and Suetonius and/or Tacitus. All the examples were used for and against the view in the extract. His activities in court were applied to his role in public affairs. Very many assessed the interpretation on these areas very well, with focused and succinct judgements.

His choices of freedmen and generals were less successfully discussed. Candidates were either vague offering nothing concrete or provided a long description of the actions of freedmen and generals, usually in Britain. Most identified Vespasian or Paulinus. The latter was confused with Aulus Plautius, putting Paulinus at the invasion. Responses did tend to disagree with Scullard over freedmen, reciting examples of their exploitation of Claudius (linked to the final sentence).

The reference to existing evidence of his enactments was rarely developed. The inscription at Ostia was used as evidence of his administration, but not to support his point. A few responses referred to the Letter to the Alexandrians, even fewer to the introduction of the Gauls into the Senate.

The interpretation that the traditional view of him is more accurate later in the reign was universally assessed. Some took issue with the idea of the 'end of reign'. They pointed to Messalina early in the reign. Her plot against Claudius was accurately reported as were other examples of her action, as in the sources. Agrippina's exploitation was used in the vast majority of the responses. The adoption of her son was argued as the prime example proving the interpretation convincing. Most continued with the claim that she murdered Claudius. It was not clear how this showed his powers were beginning to fail. The more successful responses questioned the validity of the view in the sources. They quoted Tacitus' comment that Claudius was thinking of supporting his own son, which impelled Agrippina to act.

Most candidates found some aspects of the interpretation to discuss. They had the knowledge to support their views, often with support from sources. Very few offered a generalised view of Claudius' reign.

Misconception



Tacitus does not give an account of the invasion of Britain in the '*Annals*'.

Suetonius Paulinus is not appointed as Governor of Britain by Claudius; he was appointed to Mauretania earlier in his reign.

Messalina was not his first wife, nor Agrippina his second; they were the third and fourth respectively.

Exemplar 2

Scullard's interpretation of Claudius' character and abilities is convincing when it says he is depicted as a "victim" of "exploitation by his ~~at~~ ambitious freedmen and scheming wives". This is highly convincing as the sources suggest that "everything Claudius did was dictated by his wives and freedmen" Suet 25. Suetonius is highly reliable as he is writing a biography and would therefore be the obvious choice of source for Scullard who is also writing about Claudius' character. Scullard is also quite convincing when he says "Claudius wanted to rule well." This is convincing as we know he wanted to rule in the same successful way that Augustus had done. "Outstanding generals" is also convincing as Claudius was highly successful in Britain which had "never been attempted by anyone since Julius Caesar" Suet 17 however Suetonius 17 also says it is "no great importance". Britain was important for Claudius as he came to the "empire by a very surprising turn of fortune" with no real military success but also needed a way to prove his right to rule. When Scullard talks about the end of Claudius' rule and how his "power began to fail", he is the most convincing when he says "more closely to the truth." This is highly convincing as Agrippina was highly influential in the later part of his reign especially when she became his wife as she wanted her son Nero to be emperor but the sources also suggest she had a part

to play in his death Scullard is less convincing ~~when~~ as he doesn't fully mention Britain and its ~~in~~ importance but also the Praetorians role in making Claudius emperor. ~~Claudio~~ ^{On} the death of Gaius, Claudius is said to ~~of~~ have been hiding behind a curtain and was found by the Praetorians who made him emperor. This is extremely valuable especially when talking about Claudius' character as well as his abilities as it shows none of it was possible without the Praetorians as the Senators had an "eagerness for democracy" ^{yet} ~~however~~ all of this is missing from Scullard's account.

Overall, Scullard is ^{quite} convincing for Claudius' character and abilities as he mirrors our reliable ancient sources however he misses out Claudius' accession and the role of the Praetorians as well as Claudius' suggested disability.

Exemplar 2 addresses the points in the interpretation in some detail and covers the text well.

It deals with the second point Scullard raises concerning the, possibly, unfair depiction of Claudius in the sources with a useful quote from Suetonius. The short evaluation of Suetonius adds little to the point that Scullard seems to be right. The quote repeats what Scullard says and little more. Scullard is making a point about the unfairness of the depiction, which is not developed here, in fact the candidate seems to think Scullard and the sourced agree at the end.

The response then quotes from the interpretation about Claudius wanting to rule well, again some information is used to suggest this is true but not an analysis as to how it proves Scullard's point.

The candidate picks up the point about 'generals' and moves onto Claudius' success in Britain, and his motive for or benefit from the invasion. We do not get a named general, nor an assessment of their worth which might support the point in the interpretation.

The response moves onto the issue at the end of his reign, as the most convincing. Agrippina's behaviour is used to support the candidate's opinion.

The response now says that the interpretation is no longer convincing because it omits reference to Britain and the Praetorians' role in the accession. The candidate argues they were vital to Claudius' character and abilities (and successes presumably). What the extract might omit is not relevant unless it is serving to support or contradict what the extract does say. The candidate did precisely this by using Britain as an example of a success of a general chosen by Claudius.

Candidates must deal with what is said and assess the information or opinion on the basis of their knowledge and evidence.

Section B overview

Question 4 required candidates to assess and evaluate the extract with a view to the importance of Mucianus. Most candidates had sufficient knowledge to support their assessments, however, it varied in detail and relevance. Questions 5 and 6 asked candidates to assess a specific issue. Most responses focused on the issue in the question. There was some attempt to deal briefly with the focus of the question and then move on to 'other factors' in Question 5. Question 5 was the more popular option. There was in Question 6, a tendency to narrate the period, either in part or the whole reign of Domitian, leaving little space for analysis. There is tendency for candidates to entirely discount a source after questioning its reliability rather than 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 passage below.

... While he (Vespasian) was still away in Egypt, Mucianus carried on the whole administration of government with the help of Domitian. Mucianus was inclined to give himself airs, boasting loudly that he had personally bestowed the emperorship on Vespasian. He was particularly proud of the fact that Vespasian called him his "brother," and had given him authority to take whatever decisions he wished without reference back to himself, and simply to issue written instructions under the emperor's name. ... Indeed, Mucianus and Domitian handed out offices in all directions, appointing a succession of governors, procurators, praetors and even consuls... . 5

Mucianus was also all too eager to rake in untold sums of cash from all possible sources, which he piled up in the public treasury. In this way he spared Vespasian the inevitable unpopularity by diverting it to himself. His constant motto was that cash formed the sinews of government, and for this reason he would urge Vespasian to acquire it from every possible source. He himself had never ceased to do so from the beginning, and had as a result provided massive reserves for the empire – and significant quantities for himself as well. 10 15

Dio Cassius 66.2.1–2, 5

How useful is this passage for our understanding of the significance of Mucianus for the success of the Flavians? [12]

It is important in this question to evaluate the source. Specifically, the response should focus on the value of the information/opinion in the source. General overviews of a source's background or agenda/bias need to be tied to the specific source for some merit. The author is Cassius Dio, who is the least contemporary of the writers about the Flavians. For successful responses, there needs to be some assessment of Cassius Dio's value in this context.

There are a number of points which could be assessed by candidates in this extract. Almost every candidate considered the financial aspects of his role while most discussed his role in administration. The issue of his boast was not always developed, while his relationship with Domitian was rarely mentioned. The majority of candidates emphasised his role in saving Vespasian from unpopularity.

Successful responses were able to develop what is said in the extract through the appropriate use of other sources/information. Some responses used Josephus' account of his persuasion of Vespasian to enter the Civil War. Others could point to Tacitus' similar comment that he would rather make an emperor than be one. In this way they could assess the reliability/credibility of Dio's information, aware mostly that Dio might be using these sources.

More successful responses were able to present a view on the importance of administering Rome at the time; they had information on the context, and the state of the city. Some argued that the handing out of offices was part of the programme of gaining supporters. This suggested Mucianus' importance. Successful responses focused on this question of importance with each discussion of his actions. The comment about being called 'brother' and being treated as a colleague rather than a subordinate was effectively used to stress his importance, sometimes tied in with Tacitus' comment along the same lines. More effective responses dealt with the importance of 'cash' with reference to Vespasian's need once the war was over; Suetonius and Cassius Dio were both used to support the expenditure in his reign, as well as is 'greed' as Suetonius documents.

The issue of popularity was mentioned in almost all responses. Some pointed out that Vespasian's taxes made him unpopular (e.g. the urine tax). Others mentioned that Mucianus did make some unpopular actions such as the killing of Vitellius' son, or the expulsion of Stoics. Most accepted that his role here was a good thing but did not go on to develop the point.

Less successful responses tended to rewrite the passage, before entering into a general discussion about Vespasian's reign with some reference on Mucianus. Some omitted any evaluation of the passage completely. Some spent time on explaining what Cassius Dio does not include in the passage such as his role as Governor of Syria. A small number discussed his importance in comparison to others. Some responses spent time showing Julius Alexander was more important (he provided the grain from Egypt among other support).

Question 5*

5* How essential was the Flavians' use of propaganda in maintaining their power and popularity?

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

[36]

Overall candidates had a good range of material for discussing the use of propaganda. The issue in the question is its relationship to the maintenance of power and popularity. Giving examples of propaganda without relating it to these aspects led to less successful responses, certainly in their analysis. Less successful responses tended to offer the name of a building or a source of coin with very little supporting detail to show its relevance. For an example to be effective there needed to be detail which can be applied to the issue. The Law on the power of Vespasian is an example of this.

Some responses did little more than mention it and assumed that was sufficient. In reality, its terms explore aspects of the image the Flavians wished to create – for example, the references to Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius but not Gaius and Nero. Candidates might have made more use of the detail to make effective arguments about the propaganda. This also returns to a key issue – the importance of evaluating evidence consistently.

Coins were usually included in the means of spreading the message and keeping popularity. They record the acts which the Flavians wish to publicise, examples include the *Judaea Capta* of Vespasian and *Germania Capta* of Domitian; the sons as *principes iuventutis* copying Augustus' use of Gaius and Lucius; Titus first handout of largesse; *Roma Resurgens* and so on. Again, it must be stressed that naming a coin was not sufficient to support the assessment; there needed to be secure detail for it to be effective. At the same time, the example should be related to the issue of 'essential' as in the question.

Buildings were often named as a means of propaganda, again to keep the Flavians' success in the public eye. The temple of Peace was often used as an example. However, only the more successful responses could detail the propaganda aspects. Domitian's extensive building programme was developed by some; successful responses noted his Stadium, the finishing of the Colosseum, the Arch of Titus, and the Temple to the Flavian Gens. The responses related some of these to Domitian's use of entertainments to maintain popularity, showing how essential they had been. Others were linked to his attempt to enhance his power, with elements of the Imperial Cult. Naturally, the '*dominus et deus*' was introduced on this point. More successful responses argued that for all his efforts Domitian's popularity declined and the propaganda did not work.

The donatives and entertainments were another common feature of responses. These were linked to coins and other displays for the people of Rome. Most stressed the 100 days of games in Suetonius *Titus* 7; some referred to the Secular Games of Domitian (although very few knew what they were and why they were held). More effective responses made use of the Jewish Triumph and the Arch of Titus as propaganda, they developed the essential nature of this for the early days of the dynasty. Domitian's triumph was dealt with following Tacitus' largely for information and as a result, it was not seen as effective propaganda. Some evaluation of the evidence was needed on this issue.

Religion was a substantial part of some responses, often to the exclusion of much else. Vespasian's use of omens and miracles as recorded in both Tacitus and Suetonius were mentioned, again with a lack of detail by many candidates. However, most could see their effectiveness in the early period. Vespasian's coin on four priesthoods, again copying Augustus was explored by the more successful responses, while others simply mentioned it. The deification, mainly done by Domitian, was a core aspect of the responses on this issue. Some saw it as essential to Domitian, but rather a side show for Vespasian, which itself was an interesting view to take. As elsewhere the information from the sources on Domitian needed to be more thoroughly evaluated, rather than treated as fact.

Some mentioned the extent of literary support, Martial, Josephus, Silius Italicus; this was less in evidence for the majority of responses.

A few responses, after a paragraph on propaganda, argued other factors were more essential: for example, the establishment of financial security, provision of employment, the defence of the Empire, and subsequent successes. The question did ask for an assessment of the propaganda and this needed to be properly explored before any other issues were dealt with. The question did not ask 'What was the most essential element in the Flavians maintaining popularity and power'.

Exemplar 3

Moreover, Vespasian ^{also} ~~wanted~~ to gain popularity from the plebs by distribution of corn and supporting them.

~~He wrote Tacitus Histories in his Histories~~ When Rome struggled with lack of ~~the~~ supplies ~~the~~ 'Vespasian sent his fastest ships to the sea' and 'this supplies relieved the situation'. ~~Flavian~~ - Tacitus Histories 4.22. It means Vespasian distributed corn from the Egypt to help hungry people. This is supported by the coin 4.22, which ~~shows~~ displays corn distribution by Vespasian. It means he want to provide the ^{image} ~~idea~~ ^{kind} of emperor and supportive emperor, which will make people love and support him. Tacitus Histories is a ^{fair} ~~reliable~~ ^{later source} source, because reliable ~~because~~ he has lots of details, and he is not biased about Vespasian's reign. But the coin is part of the Flavians' propaganda, presenting them very positively, it is a biased, subjective source. This example, also, shows that the Flavians used propaganda in maintaining their power and popularity.

On the other hand, providing propaganda ~~not~~ was not the only action Flavianus did to secure their power. For Vespasian was very important to have a good relationship with the senate, too. That is why 'he ^{regularly} ~~always~~ attended to the senate', 'was always open to discussion on every topic with its members' - Dio C10. It shows that Vespasian tried to secure his power by ~~having~~ ^{having} strong and good relationship with the senate. Suetonius supports this idea 'distributed & subjugations' to the senators. It demonstrates that Vespasian did everything to maintain his power, and ~~to~~ used not only propaganda. Cassius Dio is a later source, he writes under Trajan and Hadrian, he is not very reliable because based his sources on oral evidence. But still very useful ~~on~~ because provide ^{image} relationship of relationship between Vespasian and the senate. Suetonius ^{is} contemporary to Cassius Dio, he writes in 121 C. He is subjective and divides emperors into 'good' and 'bad', that makes him less reliable, however, he was Hadrian's secretary, which means he had access to archives and ~~it~~ based his work on primary sources. It makes him very useful.

In Exemplar 3 the candidate has discussed some aspect of propaganda, and its use to gain popularity. The response continues to discuss means of gaining popularity. It is not at first focused on methods of propaganda but on an action of Vespasian, when he supplied corn during a shortage. The candidate uses an account from Tacitus (*Histories* 4.52), which is accurate. However, the reference is the passage number in LACTOR 20 (the book from which the prescribed source is used). This practice is repeated later in using a coin. However, the LACTOR reference is unclear. There is no coin concerning corn supply in Section H; they may mean K83 which does celebrate Vespasian and the corn supply, issued in AD 77/8. This response typifies the problems created by incorrect attribution, or a lack of details on the source.

The interpretation put on the coin makes sense and is relevant to the issue of propaganda. However, the response has become more a discussion of popularity rather than the question of how essential it is.

There is brief reference to Tacitus' reliability which seems disconnected from the extract used. The coin is then evaluated, although given the vague use, it is difficult to see this as much more than a statement of fact. A judgement is then made, partially referencing back to the question. The structure and argument in the section is not clear and not well-developed.

The response then moves onto other ways to secure power, presumably in answer to the issue of 'essential' although this is not made clear. The use of Cassius Dio on his relations with the Senate is appropriate, with a brief use of Suetonius. It is asserted then that elation with the Senate secured his power, but there is no developed reasoning to support this.

A mistake is made over Cassius Dio's background and how he gained his information. A further general evaluation of Suetonius follows. Neither passage relate specifically to the information used. In any case Cassius Dio is said not to be reliable which undermines the judgement being made about the Senate and Vespasian.

This response is not well-structured and the reasoning is unclear at times. The focus is not on propaganda but on the means for popularity.

Misconception



The time when Cassius Dio was writing is placed in various periods. It is stated that he had access to imperial records.

It is Cassius Dio who suggests that had Titus lived longer he would have been less popular, not Suetonius.

Question 6*

- 6* How far do you agree that Domitian's policies and actions were disastrous for 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]**

Most responses took the view that Domitian's policies and actions were not disastrous but certainly damaged Rome and the Empire. Generally they concentrated on his reign; few looked at the actions before. He was involved (as the passage in Question 4 says) in the period before Vespasian returned to Rome; there are accounts in sources where he is said to be involved in events. Tacitus records his attempts to persuade Cerialis to hand over his legions, and his desire to take on a military role. This is prevented by Mucianus. Cassius Dio (66.26) and Suetonius (*Titus* 9 and *Domitian* 2) indicate he was involved in causing problems for Titus.

More successful responses selected areas for development rather than trying to cover the whole reign, the most frequently used were his foreign policy and actions, his domestic and financial policies, the Imperial Cult, his relations with the senators, the people of Rome and the army and his move towards a more autocratic form of government.

Most responses covered his policies and actions regarding the provinces. Most often these focused on the activities against the Chatti and Dacia. There was good discussion of the source's negative views. The effective responses considered his purposes, as well as the successes and failures in these areas. More successful responses identified the need to secure the borders and Domitian's relative success in doing so. Others argued that in the long-term damage was done which, later, had to be dealt with. None thought it was disastrous as such, although a number argued that the sources unfairly characterised his action in that way. At the same time, more successful responses noted successes in other areas such as Britain, sensibly dealing with Tacitus' account.

His financial policies were assessed, using the evidence from the sources to some extent. Suetonius' claim that he was extravagant and need to acquire resources was assessed. His increase of army pay was seen as necessary; his attempts to increase grain production in Italy and the vine edict were usually considered as damaging rather than disastrous. That he had financial problems was not doubted but the extent of the damage was questioned. However, the sources claim his lack of money led to his cruelty and murder. Only the more effective responses took this up as a possibly damaging aspect. His actions on social issues such as the Vestal Virgin scandal were seen largely as positive; he was noted in the sources as a good but strict administrator (Suetonius *Domitian* 8).

In his relations with others, there were varied views. The responses generally viewed his relations with the Senate as damaging if not actually disastrous. The sources were used extensively and accurately. Juvenal *Satire* 4 was not often used to show the extent of his bad relations. Some saw his cruelty in dealing with opposition as disastrous to Rome, without developing how. Responses referred to his assassination but not all knew that it was more of a palace plot than a reaction to his bad relations. Tacitus' evidence needed careful evaluation before being accepted as reliable, and not all did that. His relationship with other groups was not seen as in any sense disastrous. He provided largess and entertainments which kept the populace generally content; the army was loyal with increased pay. Most referred to the *damnatio memoriae* as evidence of the damage he had done to the elite classes, although it was not always made clear how. It was often asserted that the people were pleased with his death. Suetonius says they were indifferent.

Responses were often successful in examining his view of the Imperial Cult. The deification of family members and his own use of '*dominus et deus*' were supported with evidence from coins and literature. There was much detail on the promotion of the Flavian gens through various means: building of the Temple, the issuing of coins of Domitia, the altar of well-being coin. His use of it related to his autocratic style. His personality was sometimes seen as one of the most damaging aspects of his rule. His monarchical approach had damaged the system but not so much that it did not survive as some responses noted.

The limitation of the sources for Domitian was an issue for some who felt it was difficult to make a judgement. The sources are hostile; we do not have Tacitus, except for the rather one-sided *Agricola*; Cassius Dio is writing much later; Suetonius, while contemporary, is much less detailed than earlier biographies. The archaeology provides some support but again the damning of his reign meant evidence was destroyed or lost. Some responses argued this difficulty well, making a valid case for suspending judgement to some extent.

Misconception



Domitian was not assassinated by members of the Senate but by members of his staff, and possibly his wife.

Tacitus' *Histories* do not cover Domitian's reign. Most information is in the *Agricola*.

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