

# A Level OCR Latin Set Texts Guide

Tacitus, *Annals* XII (Selections)

AS: Prose Literature for 2024–2025

A Level: Prose Literature (Group 1) 2025–2026

[zigzageducation.co.uk](https://www.zigzageducation.co.uk)

POD  
12127

Publish your own work... Write to a brief...  
Register at [publishmenow.co.uk](https://www.publishmenow.co.uk)

Follow us on Twitter [@ZigZagClassics](https://twitter.com/ZigZagClassics)

# Contents

<b>Product Support from ZigZag Education .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Terms and Conditions of Use .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Introduction for Teachers .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The Author .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Tacitus as a Historian .....	2
The Historical Background .....	4
Tacitus's Bias .....	5
Tacitus's Sources .....	6
Tacitus's Style .....	7
<b>Translation and Notes .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Summary of Chapters 1–24 .....	9
Chapter 25: Pallas urges Claudius to adopt Nero, Agrippina's son .....	10
Chapter 26: The effect of Nero's adoption on Britannicus .....	13
Summary of Chapters 27–40 .....	14
Chapter 41: Nero enters public life .....	15
Chapter 41 cont. Agrippina persuades Claudius to get rid of most of Nero's tutors .....	17
Chapter 42: Agrippina exploits her power .....	19
Chapter 43: Portents and famine in Rome .....	22
Summary of Chapters 44–51 .....	24
Chapter 52: Furius and Vibia are banished .....	25
Chapter 53: Pallas is honoured .....	27
Summary of Chapters 54–55 .....	29
Chapter 56: Naval Battle on the Fucine Lake .....	30
Chapter 57: Panic as the lake overflows .....	33
Chapter 58: Nero marries Octavia and takes up legal work .....	35
Chapter 59: Taurus is accused of extortion and commits suicide .....	37
Summary of Chapters 60–63 .....	38
Chapter 64: Various portents; Agrippina arranges the death of Domitia Lepida .....	39
Chapter 65: Narcissus voices his suspicions of Agrippina .....	42
Chapter 66: Agrippina makes arrangements to poison Claudius .....	45
Chapter 67: The poisoning of Claudius .....	47
Chapter 68: Agrippina closes the palace to conceal Claudius's death .....	49
Chapter 69: Nero is proclaimed emperor .....	51
<b>Exam-type Questions .....</b>	<b>53</b>
Paper 1 .....	53
Paper 2 .....	55
<b>Indicative Answers .....</b>	<b>57</b>
Paper 1 .....	57
Paper 2 .....	59
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>61</b>
Appendix 1: Augustus and his plans for a successor .....	61
Appendix 2: The Julio–Claudian family .....	62
Appendix 3: Glossary of Grammatical and Stylistic Terms with Chapter References .....	63

# Introduction for Teachers

One of the prescribed texts for H043/02 and H443/03, Group 1, is Tacitus, *Annals* XII, Sections 25–26, 41–43, 52–53, 56–59, 64–69. The edition prescribed by OCR is the Bloomsbury edition by S Allcock, which appears to be the same as the OCT, except for changing some, but not all, accusative plural endings *-is* to *-es*. The ISBN number is PB 978-1-3501-5638-8.

## Remember!

Always check the exam board website for new information, including changes to the specification and sample assessment material.

The marks allocated for each section of the AS exam paper are as follows:

Translation 5; Essay 10; Context questions 11; Style questions 14. Clearly, questions on style are the most important, as they constitute 35% of the overall mark for the paper. I have, therefore, concentrated on stylistic points, though not to the exclusion of other points. Questions on the context are normally confined to the passage, i.e. comprehension questions, though there is an occasional reference to other matters, e.g. who is the speaker?

The following points have been made in various Examiner reports:

- Learners should answer the question set rather than the one they wanted to answer (i.e. they must adapt their prepared essay!).
- In answering questions on style, it is not sufficient to put the first and last word of the Latin sentence.
- Learners must quote all the Latin words involved in the point they are making, translate them and explain how the rhetorical device enlivens the content, as there is a tendency for learners to identify stylistic features without explaining their effect.
- Some learners need to spend more time considering their answers to content/style questions to ensure they are focused and relevant, rather than rush on to the essay.
- Doing the questions in the wrong order sometimes leads to omission of the shorter questions.
- On the essay question, credit is given for references to parts of the text outside the specified sections.
- Candidates should be advised to take note of the number of marks allotted to each sub-question and answer accordingly.

Tacitus frequently omits words, necessitating additions to the translation to bring out the full meaning.

I have inserted in brackets English words which are not in the Latin text, as the text of *Annals* XII is so condensed; indeed, as Sir Ronald Syme, *Tacitus*, page 347, states, 'The omission of words and connectives goes to ruthless extremes... baffling translation.' The overall meaning is usually clear enough, but Tacitus seems to revel in straining the meaning of some Latin words so as to make literal translation impossible. It is also difficult sometimes to find an exact equivalent for abstract nouns. On such occasions, I have given the literal translation in the notes, but have tried to give a more natural translation in the Translation section. One might well question the wisdom of examination boards in setting Tacitus, when there are other easier authors around.

**NB** References to *Annals* XII normally omit the number of the book unless reference has previously been made to a different book; references to other books include the number of the book.

While the Penguin translation is useful for an overall view of the sense, it is very free and sometimes inaccurate.

In the text, I have used *v* for consonantal *u*, and *-es*, not *is*, for the third declension accusative plural as these will be the forms used in the examination. Also, capital letters other than for names at the beginning of sections have been replaced by lower case, in line with OCR house style.

I would like to thank Lucy Harrow for her very helpful suggestions for the numerous activities in this Guide.

June 2023

## The Author

The exact date and place of Tacitus's birth are unknown. He was born around AD 117. Whether his *praenomen* was Gaius or Publius is also unknown.

Tacitus wrote several works, one of which was a biography of his father-in-law. His major work was the *Histories*, which he composed between 104 and 109. It covers the period from the death of Nero up to the death of Domitian, but only the first five books have survived. This is a great pity, as Tacitus lived through that period, and given us great insight into the events covered by these books.

The *Annals* cover the period from the death of Augustus (AD 14) up to the last of his works. Despite his claim to have written without indignation, his picture of the emperors tends to concentrate on their bad points, to the exclusion of their good. This is understandable, as he lived under probably the worst of the Roman emperors who reigned from AD 81–96.

## Tacitus as a Historian

See Goodyear, *Tacitus, Greece and Rome*, Chapter III, which is a very good introduction to his methods and sources.

In his introduction to the *Histories*, Tacitus writes, 'I am embarking on a work which will be full of battles, discordant with civil strife, savage even in peace itself' (1, 2.1). The sentence there are three beautifully balanced phrases, each comprising an ablative, followed by a singular noun, the ablative plus adjective in apposition to what has preceded it (adjective + noun + noun adjective). There is also asyndeton between phrases (1, 2.1). The influence of his rhetorical training is immense. In this chapter, Tacitus writes of disasters of various kinds, ending with a typically Tacitean phrase: *in quibus deerat inimicus per amicos oppressi* (those who lacked a personal enemy, but were overcome by their friends). Note again the chiasmic arrangement of verb noun, noun verb, and opposite meaning but from the same root (polyptoton): *inimicus... amicos... sunt* with *oppressi* (all those points in six words!).

I make no apology for quoting from other works by Tacitus, or to chapters where the prescribed text is from *Annals* XII, in view of the expectation in the introduction to the appropriate supporting selection of ancient literature in translation' (page 10) into Tacitus's character and rhetorical style.

He rarely reveals his attitude towards religion. He seems to believe in a caring God of Christianity, as he states in *Histories* 2.3: 'For it was never the gods care not for our safety, but for revenge.' In *Annals* IV, 1.2, he regards the fire of 64 AD as due not to his own cunning, but to the wrath of the gods against the Roman state. At the very start of *Annals* V, Tacitus states that suddenly fortune began to turn – *repente fortuna coepit* (typically, Tacitus expects the reader to know that *coepit* means 'began' or 'started'). In *Annals* 12, 22, he writes that he is uncertain whether the affairs of the empire were changing by necessity or by chance (*mihi... in incerto est fatone res mortaliae fortevolvuntur*).

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Like Livy, he seems to regard strange events as supernatural, for in *Annals* Paetus's advance into Armenia as inauspicious – *tristi omine* – he then goes on to relate strange events which Tacitus seems to regard as supernatural warnings not to follow. Paetus continues, disregarding the omens, like Flaminius before the Battle of the Metaurus – and disaster follows. He does give a list of omens in Chapter 43. Livy, who gives such lists at the beginning of each year.

In Book 4, Chapters 32–33, Tacitus makes an interesting digression into his method of writing, stating that he is fully aware that the majority of the events which he has related are trivial and unimportant (leaving a large part of the events which he has related to be regarded as trivial and unimportant) and that no one should compare his *Annals* with those of the early events of Rome, viz. great wars, sieges, and agrarian laws and the struggle of the plebs against the patricians, stating that often great events have their origin in small matters. (The whole of the digression is worth reading as they give a very good insight into Tacitus's attitude to writing history.)

However, Tacitus could be justly criticised for the undue length which he gives to important events, for he devotes two long chapters (56 and 57) to the draining of the Fens. The annalistic method (relating the events of each year in chronological order) tends to produce a 'bitty' account, as the author moves from one topic to another. 'The annalistic framework... is a primary obstacle: it breaks and disperses, juxtaposes unrelated items in mere enumeration'. However, the annalistic method leads to a more interesting account than long digressions on wars which he himself shows his awareness of the disadvantages of this method by stating that if he had determined to relate everything in its own year, he would have concluded the conspiracy of the conspirators who had plotted the downfall of Sabina with their later punishment. Under the reign of Gaius, he would deal with that at the proper time. Tacitus does concentrate on a single topic, but he apologises for breaking the chronological order in *Annals* XII, 40, where he says: 'These transactions (in Britain), though of great importance to the praetors, and occurring over several years, I have closely connected, lest, if related less easily, they would be forgotten. I now return to the chronological order.'

However, he is always aware of the necessity of keeping to his task, for, at the end of Chapters 33–34, 'but I return to my theme. In the following year...'. In the following year...

His epigrams are short and to the point, e.g. 64.12. Eulogies on the deaths of emperors, the prevailing climate of suicides and executions, were quite frequent, gave Tacitus an opportunity to use the epigram. The most famous is probably his summing up of the emperor Nero: *imperasset*, meaning that he had the qualities needed for being emperor, or that he should have become emperor – an epigram typical of Tacitus.

As is the case with all ancient historians, speeches were not reported *verbatim*, but the historian to make up speeches suitable to the context. Speeches made in the Senate were reported in the *acta senatus*, but Tacitus seems to write his own speeches, as is shown by a bronze tablet of a speech delivered by Claudius which is quite different from what is reported. Given that Claudius was a very poor speaker, Tacitus would not have written a speech by a poor speaker. (The whole of the digression is worth reading as they give a very good insight into Tacitus's attitude to writing history.)

Tacitus depicts character more by the speeches which he attributes to his characters than by straight descriptions, as with Narcissus in Chapter 55, and he does describe Lepida and Agrippina, calling the latter *truci ac minaci*, 'aggressive and threatening'.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



Unlike Suetonius, Tacitus rarely describes physical appearance; however, of Tiberius that his height was very slender and bent, his head was bereft of hair and mostly variegated with cosmetics. Little is said of Claudius's appearance, but he probably had something in the missing Books 7–10.

He reveals his knowledge of geography when he describes the Caelian Hill in Book 1, the situation and climate of the isle of Capri in Book 1, Chapter 67, and the disaster at the Fucine Lake in Chapters 56–57. He also shows some knowledge of the

## The Historical Background

After the assassination of Julius Caesar, two civil wars took place: in the first, Octavian defeated the conspirators led by Brutus and Cassius; in the second, Octavian defeated Mark Antony and Cleopatra in 31 BC. From then onwards, Rome was ruled by members of the Julio-Claudian families until the death of Nero in AD 68, firstly Augustus (Octavian), then Tiberius, Caligula, and, finally, Nero.

On the assassination of the perverted emperor Gaius (Caligula) by the Praetorian Guard (his bodyguards), the guards eventually found Claudius in fear of his life hiding in a palace room and dragged him out and proclaimed him emperor.

Claudius was very clever, even adding a few letters to the Latin language, but after his death, as was his suggestion that dots be put between words to assist reading, did not exist at the time. Opinions vary about his disabilities, which would not have been unusual for various wives; according to Suetonius *Claudius* 30, before his accession, he had a runny nose and limped because his knees were weak. However, once he became emperor, he suddenly became excellent'. In Chapter 43, Suetonius states that Claudius was afraid of assassination, which is probably true, given the bloodthirstiness and cruelty of emperor Gaius (Caligula).

His choice of wives was very unfortunate; Suetonius states in Chapter 43 that he seemed fated to marry wives 'who were unchaste but remained unrepentant'. He broke off his engagement to the first lady to whom he was betrothed because her father died; the second lady died on what was to be her wedding day; he divorced his third wife, Messalina, who was only 15 when she married. She was a notorious adulteress and eventually went too far, having an affair with the consul Silius and going into exile during his marriage while Claudius was away in Ostia. On hearing the news, he had a debate on whom Claudius should marry; among the three candidates were the two whom he had divorced earlier, which eventually ruled her out. The second candidate was Paulina, whom the third candidate, Agrippina II, managed to get exiled. Agrippina II was married to Nero by a former husband (see Appendix 2) and was the niece of Claudius through her mother, Pallas, a freedman of Claudius. Despite the close relationship, Claudius was a control freak and was very troublesome to both Claudius and Nero by interfering in their lives. She was eventually murdered by Nero.

Claudius was a very competent administrator; he employed several freedmen to help him with a number of public works, including two aqueducts. He also extended his travels, including 16 days visiting. He was also very literate, writing 28 volumes of speeches, however, tended to be so rambling that Tacitus rewrote them, word for word here and there for the sake of veracity.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Tacitus's Bias

In the opening chapter of the *Annals*, Tacitus states that he intends to write *et studio*. How far he succeeds, however, is debatable – and would make a long story. It does not take long for his bias against the emperor Tiberius to show through. His account of Tiberius's reign as follows: *primum facinus non principatus fuit*. The first **crime** of the new reign was the murder of Augustus's stepson, Caligula's uncle, Germanicus. So, the

In the following chapter, describing Tiberius's suspicious attitude towards Germanicus, Tacitus writes, 'Twisting their words and expressions into a source of accusation, he [Tiberius] laid the foundation for the future reference [to Germanicus's death]'. There is no doubt that part of Tacitus's technique was to portray Tiberius by attacking him implicitly and explicitly with Germanicus, who was popular in Germany, although the problem with the German leader, Arminius, was not solved many years later. In *Annals*, 1, 31, Tacitus contrasts Germanicus's wonderful appearance and obscure speech of Tiberius. In Book 1, 62, Tacitus states that the action by Germanicus in the worst possible light (*Tiberio cuncta in deterius*). In Chapter 17, Tacitus describes Tiberius as never kind towards the house of Augustus. In Book 12, Tacitus denigrates Agrippina II, mainly for her interference in state affairs. In Chapters 1–24 and Chapter 57 where she accuses Narcissus of profiteering and finally destroys Lepida.

Bias is often seen in the way in which Tacitus presents various explanations for the actions of the emperors. He leaves the less favourable interpretation to the end, e.g. in Book 14, Chapter 55, where he states, 'or perhaps because the thought of a woman, who, in her girlish years, had committed adultery and gained power'; see, also, the note on Chapter 52, lines 4–5. This method of leaving the less favourable interpretation to the end makes his criticism of earlier historians, who were 'being influenced by malice', seem somewhat unjustified. As Goodyear states in *Tacitus (New Cambridge Classics, Greece and Rome)*, 'the sinister alternative memory', Syme states, page 355, 'bad men are more interesting'.

However, this biased view of emperors has its antecedents in Tacitus's own experience of the emperor Domitian, who was undoubtedly an even greater monster than Tiberius. After murdering many senators, Domitian forbade the publication of any form of criticism. Tacitus had to wait until after Domitian's death to publish his first two works, the *Dialogus* and the *Germania*. In the *Agricola*, Tacitus does not seem to be grieved to have written the memory of their former slavery, and this is reflected in his portrayal of all the Julio-Claudian emperors. While they had many bad qualities, the better side of the emperors, particularly Claudius, who was a good administrator, is only occasionally seen. However, whereas Suetonius revels in the cruelty and debauchery (Chapters 34–35), Tacitus rarely gives any such details.

Tacitus does praise Claudius on a number of occasions; e.g. in Book 11.13, where he mentions the censor and his construction of an aqueduct and mentions his mildness towards Caratacus, who had led the British resistance to Roman rule, and his wife and family (11.37). Tacitus also mentions Claudius's order to Nero to tell him not to advance across the Rhine, to which Nero refused to obey. On the other hand, he does criticise Claudius's draining of the Fucine Lake as a means of attacking Agrippina.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Tacitus's Sources

There was plenty of evidence from which Tacitus derived most of his information, whose works have not been preserved, e.g. Aufidius Bassus and Servilius. Tacitus went to considerable lengths to consult the evidence available and this reveals his sources. Generally, he refers to *auctoribus* or *scriptores*, as in Chapter 42, where the writers of those times related that the poison which killed Claudius was a mushroom. However, in Book 1, Chapter 60, Tacitus mentions Pliny the Elder and refers specifically to the memoirs of Agrippina's daughter for something that has been reported by other authors – *repperi in commentariis Agrippinae filiae*. Tacitus names two sources: Lucius and Fabius Rusticus, and states that the others agreed with Lucius. He goes on to say that tradition (*fama*) inclined towards Lucius is also mentioned three times in Books 13, 14 and 15.

Two main sources on which he relied heavily were the *acta senatus*, a report of the Senate, and the *diurna acta*, a daily report of events, to which he refers in Book 1. He could not find any reference to Germanicus's mother, Antonia, attending the funeral of the historians, nor in the daily records of events – *non apud scriptores rerum repperio*. These records would have to be accurate, as they were written down by the descendants of senators who would also have their own family records to check against (repperio apud... senatores lectas in senatu litteras – Book 2, 88). However, Tacitus accounts, as Tacitus enlivens them with his rhetoric and personal comment. In Book 1, where he says that if Tiberius had finished his speech on the death of Drusus, he would have earned the pity of his audience, but he ruined the effect by ranting about the 'republic', which made the senators doubt his sincerity. In Book 4, Chapter 16, Tacitus mentions the contents of two letters written to the Senate by Tiberius, which Tacitus must have seen in the *diurna acta*. Other sources would have included funeral orations, biographies, etc.

Interestingly, Tacitus refers to Pliny the Younger asking him for information about Vesuvius, which Pliny had witnessed first-hand. Pliny wrote two letters to Tacitus, doubtless, as he states elsewhere, hoping to achieve immortality through Tacitus. The portion of Tacitus's *Histories* which would have dealt with the eruption of Vesuvius, Pliny's letters have.

Tacitus often refers to rumours, e.g. 25.6, *adnotabant periti*, 'experts noted', but does not include much of the scurrilous behaviour that Suetonius revels in.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





## Tacitus's Style

A detailed account of Tacitus's style, with examples, is given in Furneaux, and in Goodyear's *Tacitus*.

Syme, page 340, writing about Tacitus's *Histories*, states, 'Tacitus's style at once departs from the normal, and an insistent predilection for unusual grammatical forms'. On the same page he states that the *Annals* are 'much more condensed, austere and terse'. Elsewhere, he also states that it 'baffles translation'.

When analysing a passage of Tacitus, there are many things to look for; abbreviations, brevity, rhetorical devices and choice of words, particularly abstract nouns.

### Abstract nouns

Tacitus is very fond of using abstract nouns rather than adjectives. By using a noun, he throws more emphasis onto it than if he had used an adjective. He seems to do this, e.g. *adulationibus* (41.2) or in *-tas*, e.g. *egestas*, (43.2), *benignitate* (43.6) and *inimicitia* (43.7).

### Afterthoughts

Tacitus is very fond of adding extra bits at the end of a sentence, almost as if he is thinking of something else. This is called an afterthought. For example, 42.9. There is no technical term for this, as far as I know, perhaps 'tacking on'.

### Balance and contrast

When using parallel pairs of phrases, Tacitus varies between balance and contrast. For example, *imperatorio, illum puerili habitu*, where *hunc* and *illum* balance, but the ablative case contrasts (noun, adjective, adjective, noun).

### Brevity

Tacitus makes descriptive passages more vivid, by leaving out words which the reader can supply for himself. This is called ellipsis. Thus, he usually omits the subject and uses participles instead of main verbs. He also prefers the dative case, and infinitives, rather than using a preposition.

He uses the historic present and infinitive frequently, almost as if he cannot remember the endings of the various tenses! His sentences are often loosely connected, as if he is not bothered to use subordinate clauses. It gives an overall impression of speed and brevity. His brevity can be seen in Chapter 25, where the English translation is over nine lines.

### Choice of words

Often Tacitus will use an unusual word for effect, or even invent a new word. There are 16 words which appear to be Tacitean inventions, though they may have been used before.

He is also fond of words ending in *-sor* or *-tor*, e.g. *conciliator* (25.2), *educator* (53.2) and *repertorem* (53.7).

He frequently uses impersonal verbs (see Chapter 13 for four examples and more).

He uses words in a strained or unusual sense, e.g. *exercemus* (43.8) and *trahimus* (43.8).

He often uses poetic words, particularly Virgilian ones, e.g. *desolatus* (26.7). He seems to be very fond of and knowledgeable about Virgil. A particular feature of the neuter plural adjective as a noun, followed by a partitive genitive, as in *montiumque edita*, 'the high parts of the mountains'. Aeneas, wandering around Carthage, marvels at the paving of the roads, which would appeal to a Roman; by using the neuter plural, Virgil throws emphasis on the paving rather than the genitive. So, Tacitus borrows this usage, as in 56.7, *reliqua lacus*, 'the lake', and *montiumque edita*, 'the high parts of the mountains'.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



He also uses words and phrases 'borrowed' from Sallust and Livy.

He seems to have been quite fond of the prefixes *prae* and *per*, e.g. the adjective *praecipiti* (66.3); verbs, *praesumeret*, (41.7) and *praeficeretur* (42.5), *perrupte perpetrat* (58.4). According to Syme, page 717, he uses *praevalere* 12 times in the text. He also uses the prefixes *in-* and *im-*, e.g. *infecunditate* (43.7), *impatiens* (52.3), *innumera* (58.3).

**Participles and adjectives as nouns:** Tacitus often uses participles as nouns, e.g. *impudens* (42.8) and *potentium* (42.9).

### Rhetorical points

A good acronym to remember features of Tacitus's style and most of his rhetorical devices is 'J S B A C H',

**J** juxtaposition

**S** similitude, simile, synecdoche

**B** balance, brevity

**A** abstract nouns, afterthoughts, alliteration, anacoleuthon, anaphora, anastrophe, assonance and asyndeton

**C** chiasmus, choice of words, connecting relative, contrast

**H** hendiadys, historic present/infinite

This could be applied to other Latin authors, particularly Cicero and Virgil.

Again, these rhetorical points will be dealt with as they occur in the text. For those with which you are unfamiliar, see the glossary of stylistic terms at the end of the book. Examples of the points which occur in the prescribed sections of Book 12.

**variatio:** the use of *variatio* is seen in the different words Tacitus employs. See Appendix 3 for examples.

He also varies construction, e.g. giving reasons or explanations, using *quod* followed by a relative clause, as in Chapter 41.5, *fictis causis... per spem* followed by a purpose clause.

Roman authors were greatly influenced by their predecessors, even to the point of copying phrases, similes and events. Whereas this is frowned upon in modern times, Roman authors should draw upon their Greek and Latin predecessors. Thus, Virgil is copying and improving the original. The three authors who influenced Tacitus are undoubtedly Sallust, Livy and Virgil. In Tacitus's third work, *Dialogus*, 20.3, he states that orators were expected to use poetical phrases in their speeches, particularly those of Horace, Virgil and Lucan. The influence of Virgil is seen both in adaptation of phrases (e.g. *per spem* on 58.3) and in grammatical usages, e.g. the use of the dative, rather than the contracted form *-ere* for *-erunt* or *-eris*.

Tacitus also uses rarer grammatical or syntactical forms, e.g. the genitive of the accusative, e.g. *intellegens falsi* (26.4), and the use of the gerundive to other authors had used this, e.g. Livy 1.1.1.

Hint – when memorising examples to use in the examination, try to find examples that illustrate more than one point.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



# Translation and Notes

## Summary of Chapters 1–24

The first few chapters deal with discussions as to who should succeed Messalina's wife and Agrippina's scheming to secure this marriage with Claudius and Nero. She wanted Nero to marry Claudius's daughter, Octavia, but Octavia was married to another man. Agrippina persuaded an ex-consul Vitellius to prosecute Silanus for adultery. He was found guilty, and his sister was banished, whereupon Claudius cancelled his will. On the day that Agrippina married Claudius, Silanus committed suicide.

In Chapter 8, Agrippina persuades Claudius to recall Seneca, a notable philosopher from exile, so that he could become Nero's tutor. Chapter 9 deals with the marriage of Claudius and Agrippina; they married four years later, when Nero was 16.

Chapters 10–14 describe Claudius's dealings with the Parthians, while Chapters 15–19 describe the war with Mithridates.

Chapter 22 describes how Agrippina got rid of Lollia Paulina, the third wife of Claudius, for her association with astrologers and magicians. Claudius banished her, but Agrippina arranged for her forced suicide.

Chapters 23–24 deal with Claudius's extension of the city's boundaries.



Detail of Britannicus from an AD 45 statue with him and his mother

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 25: Pallas urges Claudius to adopt Nero, A

C. Antistio M. Suillio consulibus adoptio in Domitium auctoritate Pallantis festina  
 Agrippinae ut conciliator nuptiarum et mox stupro eius inligatus, stimulabat  
 publicae, Britannici pueritiam robore circumdaret: sic apud divum Augustum  
 subnixum, viguisse privignos; a Tiberio super propriam nepem Germanicum  
 accingeret iuvene partem curarum capessituro, huiusmodi victus triennio maiorem  
 anteposit, habita apud senatum oratio eius eundem in quem a liberto acceperat  
 nullam antehac adoptionem inter patricos Claudios reperiri, eosque ab Atto

### Translation

In the consulships of C. Antistius and M. Suillius the adoption regarding Domitius, by the authority of Pallas, who, bound to Agrippina as matchmaker of the marriage and her adultery with her, pressed Claudius to consider the interests of the state and Britannicus: similarly with the divine Augustus, although he was relying on Germanicus who flourished; Germanicus had been adopted by Tiberius over his own offspring; Tiberius himself with a young man who would take on part of the cares of administration (arguments), he preferred Domitius, older by a period of three years, to his nephew. He presented the Senate in the same manner as that which he had received from his free father. After this adoption was found after this among the patrician Claudians, and they had never before (from the time of) Attus Clausus.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 C. Antistio M. Suillio consulibus: relative of time within which.  
*in Domitium*: in relation to, so translate as 'regarding Domitius'.  
*festina*: historic present; translate it as a past tense.
- 2 *eius* must refer to Agrippina; if it referred to Pallas, Tacitus would have used *illius* as subject of the sentence.
- 2-3 *consuleret... circumdaret*: understand *ut* with both verbs, as the verbs are infinitives.  
*rei publicae*: *consulo* followed by the dative means 'consult the interests of the state'.  
*accusative*, it means 'consult'.
- 3 *pueritiam robore circumdaret*: literally, 'to surround the boyhood with strength',  
 paraphrased as 'to strengthen the boyhood'.
- 3-4 *quamquam... subnixum*: normally, *quamquam* takes the indicative, but here it is in imitation of the Greek construction with *καὶ ὅτι*.
- 4 *viguisse privignos*: indirect statement (historic present), as Tacitus is reporting a past event.  
*adsumptum*: understand *esse*. The omission of parts of the verb 'to be' is a common feature of indirect statement.
- 5 *accingeret*: understand *ut* as in lines 2-3.  
*curarum*: means both 'care' and 'administration'. Tacitus seems to be referring to the future here. Claudius wanted someone to share in the problems of governing the empire, the 'cares of administration'.  
*capessituro* is a future participle agreeing with *iuvene*, 'a young man who is about to take on the term used for a man old enough to serve in the army, so anyone but a young man'.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
 PROTECTED



his: understand 'arguments'; Claudius is the subject of *evictus*.

*triennio*: ablative of the measure of difference.

*maio rem natu*: literally 'greater in (respect of) birth', so 'older'; *natu* is an

- 6 *eundem in quem... modum*: I have translated it literally 'in the same manner', but basically, Tacitus is saying that this speech was virtually the same as the one given by Pallas. This phrase illustrates the difficulty of translating Tacitus.

## Context and style notes

NB In view of the number of references to names, this would make a good

- 1 *C. Ant. P. Suillio consulibus*: the insertion of the consuls' names may be kept, keeping with the title of the work, *Annals*, so this is AD 50.

*Domitium*: his full name was Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus; after his death, his son, Nero Claudius Caesar Drusus Germanicus, and on the death of his father, the emperor. The Domitian family were powerful aristocrats; an earlier member, Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus, opposed Julius Caesar and was largely responsible for the civil war between Caesar and Pompey.

*Pallantis*: Pallas was originally from Greece, but became enslaved and was the mother of Claudius, who set him free. On her death, he was employed by Claudius and, along with two other freed men, Narcissus and Callistus, he became one of the emperor's advisers. Pallas became very rich (see Chapter 53) and is mentioned by Tacitus as one of the men of his time. On the death of Messalina, Pallas advised Claudius to marry Agrippina the Younger, becoming very powerful, as Agrippina virtually controlled the emperor. Pallas was in charge of the emperor's correspondence, tell out of favour, as he wanted to remarry his second wife, Poppaea. Whether Pallas's association with Agrippina was administrative is debatable. Here, Tacitus clearly states that he was guilty of adultery. On other occasions, Chapter 65 and Book 14, Chapter 2, Suetonius, all too keen to mention scurrilous events, makes much of Pallas's adultery. When Nero became emperor, he decided to get rid of his mother's influence, so he decided first to dismiss Pallas in AD 54. In view of the great wealth of Pallas, Nero eventually had him poisoned in AD 63.

- 1-3 *auctoritate... circumdaret*: Syme, page 707, suggests that the proposal was given by Claudius himself, as was the remark that no one had been advised by the emperor's family (Suetonius, *Claudius*, Chapter 39), which Tacitus attributes to 'the emperor's weight in the choice of *circumdaret* which literally means 'surround' and 'hostile surroundings'. This is exactly what is happening to Britannicus.
- 2 *Agrippinae*: i.e. Agrippina II; see Appendix 2. She was the daughter of Claudius and so the great-granddaughter of Augustus via Julia on one side, and Agrippina the Younger on the other. *stupro eius inligatus*: a typical derogatory insult by Tacitus. Pallas's association with Agrippina here, other than to emphasise his close relationship with Agrippina.
- 2-3 *consuleret rei publicae*: *circumdaret* is a chiasmus (verb, object, subject, verb). His duty to the state as opposed to his duty towards his own family. Note the omission of *circumdaret* in the translation.
- 3 *pueritiam*: at this time, Britannicus was only nine years old. He was the son of Claudius and Messalina, named Britannicus because of his father's successes in Britain. As a heir, he was regarded by Agrippina as an obstacle to her own son Nero. Unsurprisingly, she had Britannicus poisoned in AD 55.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Activity

Look again at lines 1–3. As we begin the prescribed text, consider how Tacitus refers to Agrippina. What does he say? Consider the influence she has and Tacitus's attitude towards her.

- 3–4 *nepotibus subnixum, viguisse privignos* is another chiasmus (noun, verb, noun, verb).  
 4 *viguisse privignos*: see Appendix 1. Tacitus is referring to Marcellus, Agrippina's successive husbands of Julia, his adopted son and descendant. As Augustus had no sons, he looked elsewhere for a possible heir, so he arranged for Julia to marry first Marcellus. On the death of Marcellus, she was married off to Agrippa and, on Agrippa's death, she was adopted by his brother Drusus; however, on the death of Drusus, she became the adopted daughter of Augustus. It is apparent, as Augustus's two grandchildren were still in the family, that the grandchildren died in AD 2 and 4, Augustus, *faute de mieux*, marked Tiberius as his successor.

- 4 *a Tiberio super propriam stirpem Germanicum adsumptum*: this bald statement of the circumstances involved, for Augustus forced Tiberius to become his heir, although Tiberius had a son of his own (*propriam stirpem*), Drusus, with Vipsania; Augustus also forced Tiberius to divorce Vipsania, in order to marry his daughter of Augustus; this marked out Tiberius as his successor. The adoption sounds as if it was a voluntary action; far from it. For the rest of his life, both of Augustus's actions, even going into exile for seven years to escape him, according to Tacitus (*Annals* 1.53).

*Germanicum*: originally Nero Claudius Drusus, he was given the title of Germanicus for his victories over the Germans, by which he recovered two of the eagle standards in AD 9. His father was the brother of Tiberius, and he, therefore, a member of the Julio-Claudian family. He married Agrippina II, daughter of Julia, becoming a member of the Julio-Claudian family. He was extremely popular, which was a major reason for Tiberius's natural resentment (see previous note). This popularity increased the jealousy and suspicion of Tiberius, who arranged for his adoption by Germanicus.

- 5 *accingere*: a metaphor, as its original meaning was to surround oneself with a sword, etc.

*partem curarum capessituro*: the alliteration of *c* and *r* possibly emphasises the emperor's role.

*triennio... Domitium*: Domitius was born in December 37 and so was 12 years old when Claudius's son (*filius*), Britannicus, was born in February 41, so Domitius was 4 years older than Britannicus.

- 6 *anteponit*: by the adoption, Nero was on equal terms with Britannicus, but he was preferred to him by Claudius.

*liberto*: i.e. Pallas.

- 7 *patricios*: the patricians were descendants of the first settlers of Rome and were allowed to wear a toga with a broad purple border. People who settled in Rome later, and held the offices of state, e.g. consuls, praetors, etc., were originally held by plebeians. After bitter struggles between the two classes that the plebs obtained the same rights as the patricians. The Claudians, therefore, were a very ancient family. Attus Clausus died in 451 BC, so the family was one of the oldest in Rome.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Chapter 26: The effect of Nero's adoption on B

ceterum actae principi grates, quaesitiore in Domitium adulatione; rogataque  
Claudiam et nomen Neronis transiret. augetur et Agrippina cognomento Augusta  
nemo adeo expers misericordiae fuit quem non Britannici fortuna maerore ad  
etiam servilibus ministeriis perintempestiva noverce, in ludibrium ve  
neque enim segnem ei fuisse indolem ferunt si peram, seu periculis comm  
sine experimento.

### Translation

Moreover, thanks were given to the emperor, with more exquisite flattery  
proposed by which he might pass over to the Claudian family and (adopt)  
was also enriched with the surname Augusta. When these things were acc  
devoid of pity that the misfortune of Britannicus did not fill them with sor  
deprived of the services of slaves, he made a mockery of the very ill-timed  
recognising their falsity. For they say his character was by no means lazy;  
commended because of the dangers he had faced, he held the reputation v

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *actae... rogataque*: understand *sunt* with *actae*, and *est* with *rogataque*; the senators, as Claudius has just made a speech in the Senate.
- 1–2 *qua... transiret*: a purpose clause; when a verb in the main clause (usually repeated in the purpose clause) is replaced by the relative pronoun. Literally, the clause is 'by which he might pass over to the Claudian family and Nero's name', but the relative pronoun is replaced by the relative pronoun 'which'. However, Tacitus complicates the sense by using *transiret* as a zeugma (two objects with a different meaning for each).
- 2 *quibus patrat*: ablative absolute; *quibus* is a connecting relative pronoun 'things', not 'which things'.
- 3 *quem... adficeret*: a result clause, signposted by *tam expers*; note that the *non* not *ne*. *adficere* is used with various abstract nouns, and is a good word for composition, e.g. *poena adficere*, to punish, *praemio adficere*, to reward, or *luctu adficere*, to make sorrowful, fill with sorrow.
- 4 *perintempestiva*: the word is not in Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*. 'ill-timed', and *per* means 'very', so, 'very ill-timed'. Although I suspect it means 'obsequious'. An interesting suggestion is that Tacitus wrote '*puer*', which was joined to *intempestiva* and the two words were joined together.
- 5 *intellegens falsi*: gerundive of *intelligere*, an adjective; see the Introduction, page 8.
- 5 *ei* is dative of possession with *fuisse*, an alternative to using *habere*. *fuisse indolem*: indirect statement. *periculis*: ablative of cause.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 1 *quaesitiore... adulatione*: a typical example of 'tacking on'. Tacitus is very fond of this device, usually expressed in the ablative absolute, to a sentence which is already complete. *quaesitiore*: the root of the adjective is *quaer-*, which means 'seek'. The good sense, 'exquisite, complimentary', and a bad one, 'artificial'. One can also imply that the flattery given to Nero was more elaborate than the flattery given to his father. One can also suspect that Tacitus is hinting that Nero had difficulty finding nice things to say and had to search harder (superlative comparative) for compliments.
- 2 *augetur*: a good example of the historic present in the middle of past tenses. *Augustus*: Augustus's title had been given to Livia, the wife of Augustus, and was seen by Agrippina as granting her additional power.
- 3 *nemo... expers*: litotes, the use of two negatives to express a strong positive. 'everyone was full'. The sentence is unusually long-winded for Tacitus. *maerore*: everyone felt sorry for Britannicus. There is an example of assonance, *maerore*, so one can only assume that Tacitus has sacrificed brevity in the name of style. *Britannici*: the son of Claudius and Messalina, his third wife. Octavia, his sister, was married to Nero, Agrippina's son. See Appendix 2.  
*desolatus*: a poetical word, apparently first used by Virgil; Tacitus and Suetonius use it in prose.
- 4 *perintempestiva*: if this is what Tacitus wrote, it illustrates his liking for the characteristics of Virgil's style. *intempestiva* would have done, but adding *per*, 'very', to further blacken the character of Agrippina.  
*novercae*: i.e. Agrippina, the step-mother of Britannicus; see the note on *nocturna*.
- 5 *segnem*: a good example of the historic present in the middle of past tenses. *variatio*: note the *variatio* and making the second reason the less favourable.

### Activity

1. How does Tacitus depict the 'sad situation' of Britannicus?
2. How does Tacitus, by his choice of words, show that he thought Britannicus was a victim?

## Summary of Chapters 27–40

These chapters deal with various problems, mainly rebellions, in Germany and Britain. In Germany, the rebellions were led by Caratacus, who was eventually defeated by the Roman governor Suetonius Paulinus. Tacitus describes in great detail. Caratacus was taken prisoner to Rome and made an appeal to Claudius, who pardoned him and his family. Then the Romans relaxed their guard, whereupon the Britons attacked and put to flight the Romans, destroying the whole army. Ostorius rallied the troops, however, and the Romans made a stand, rather than fighting full-scale battles. Before he could do this, however, Ostorius died and was replaced by Aulus Didius. On the way to Britain, the Silures inflicted another defeat on the Romans. Among the Britons themselves, with Rome supporting Cartismandua against the Romans eventually defeated.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





## Chapter 41: Nero enters public life

Ti. Claudio quintum Servio Cornelio Orfito consulibus virilis toga Neroni mat  
publicae habilis videretur. et Caesar adulationibus senatus libens cessit ut vic  
consulatum Nero iniret atque interim designatus proconsulare imperium ext  
princeps iuventutis appellaretur. additum nomine eius oblativum militi, con  
circensium, quod adquirendis vulgi studiis *elegerat*, Britannicus in praetexta  
travecti sunt: spectaret populus *maius* *decore* imperatorio, illum puerili habitu  
utriusque praesum

### Translation

In the consulships of Tiberius Claudius – for the fifth time – and Servius C  
of the) manly toga to Nero was accelerated, so that he might seem suitable  
Also, the emperor willingly yielded to the flattering suggestions of the Sen  
upon the consulship in the 20th year of his life and in the meantime, as con  
proconsular power outside the city and be called leader of the youth. A de  
soldiers in Nero's name, (and) a handout for the plebs. Also, at a perform  
which was provided in order to get the goodwill of the mob, Britannicus re  
Nero in triumphal clothing: (the reasoning was that) the people should loo  
glory and the former in boyhood apparel and would therefore anticipate th

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *Ti... consulibus*: ablative of time when. See the note on Chapter 25, line 1. *quinto* means 'for the fifth time'. This is AD 51.  
*maturata*: 'and... finished'.
- 1–2 *quo... oblativum*: originally, *quo* was only used instead of *ut* when the phrase was comparative, but later writers tended to use *quo* even when there was no comparison, as here.  
*capessendae rei publicae*: dative of purpose after *habilis*; an alternative to *capessendae rei publicae*.
- 2 *Caesar*: i.e. Claudius.  
*adulationibus*: the plural implies that many of the senators were suggesting this.  
*vicesimo... anno*: ablative of time when.
- 4 *ludicro*: 'at a performance', ablative of place where.
- 5 *adquirendis... studiis*: dative of purpose; cf. line 2.  
*triumphali veste*: ablative of description (or *triumphali* understood); *decore imperatorio* and *puerili habitu* are also ablatives of description.
- 6 *spectaret*: virtual *optaret* (wishes), whether it is a purpose or causal clause.  
*hunc*: 'this one' refers to the nearer of the two; therefore, *illum* refers to the one further away, so 'the former'.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 1 *Orfito*: little is known about Orfitus, other than that he was put to death. *virilis toga*: a toga with a purple stripe, *toga praetexta*, was worn by boys when they were given the manly toga, *toga virilis*, which was pure white. At the age of 14, so the process was 'fast-tracked' for Nero.

- 2 *cessit* is probably sarcastic and implies that Claudius was initially reluctant to give way to flattery from the senators, but eventually gave way.

- 3 *consulatus*: 20 was a very early age to be given the consulship, though this, as Augustus had granted the consulship to both of his grandsons in 20. However, under the republic, the minimum age for the consulship was 30. Candidates for the consulship had normally been quaestors, praetors or consuls. A further restriction was that the consulship could not be held until 10 years had elapsed, though this was often flouted, e.g. Marius held the consulship 7 years between 104 and 100 BC and Octavian/Augustus had 12 consulships.

*proconsulare imperium*: there were two words for the powers held by magistrates held *potestas*, but consuls held *imperium*, which, in addition to *potestas*, included the right to put citizens to death and to raise armies. Provinces outside Italy needed governors with *imperium*, the governors of provinces outside Italy needed governors with *imperium*, the governors of provinces outside Italy needed governors with *imperium*, the governors of provinces outside Italy needed governors with *imperium*. A further restriction was that the consulship could not be held until 10 years had elapsed, though this was often flouted, e.g. Marius held the consulship 7 years between 104 and 100 BC and Octavian/Augustus had 12 consulships.

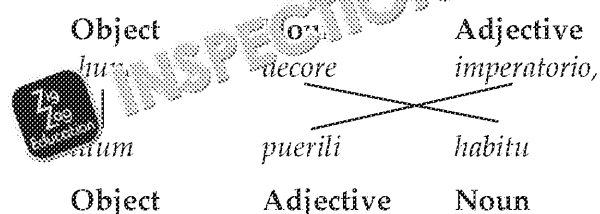
*urbem*: i.e. Rome.

- 4 *princeps iuventutis*: prior to the rule of Augustus, this title was given to the most powerful young man in Rome, the *princeps iuventutis*, so, in effect, he was the head of the youth. However, Augustus gave this title to his grandsons Gaius in 5 BC, and the title was given to the sons of the emperor as an introduction to public life as the emperor's successor.

*donativum militi, congiarium plebei*: note the balance. The security of the empire was wholly on the support of the army, as Claudius's accession proved, while the emperor was behind a curtain by a member of the Praetorian Guard and proclaimed the emperor. The four emperors, also proved the importance of the armies' support. The emperor's popularity, also proved the importance of the armies' support. The emperor's popularity, also proved the importance of the armies' support.

- 5 *circensium*: these were chariot races, usually held at the *Circus Maximus*. The emperor's popularity, also proved the importance of the armies' support. The emperor's popularity, also proved the importance of the armies' support.

- 6 *hunc... habitum*: balance, with a child, i.e. inside it, viz.



- 7 *praesumeret*: note the use of the prefix *prae-*; see the Introduction, page 16.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 41 cont. Agrippina persuades Claudius to get rid of

10

simul qui centurionum tribunorumque sortem Britannici miserabantur, remota  
speciem honoris; etiam libertorum si quis incorrupta fide, depellitur tali occasione  
Britannicum nomine, ille Domitium salutavere. quod ut discordiae initium Agrippina  
maritum defert: sperni quippe adoptionem, quaeque censuerint patres, iussu  
abrogari; ac nisi pravitas tam infensa docentium egeret, eruptura in publicum  
his quasi criminibus optimum principis educatorem filii exilio aut morte adflicto  
custodiae eius imparet.

### Translation

At the same time, those of the centurions and tribunes who were pitying the emperor  
removed on false pretexts, and others under the pretence of some distinction  
the freedmen had incorruptible loyalty, he was driven out on a similar pretext.  
The other, Nero greeted Britannicus by name, Britannicus greeted the other as  
this to her husband with much complaining as the beginning of disharmony.  
The adoption was being disregarded, and what the senators had resolved as  
being annulled within their own home; and unless the wickedness of those  
hostility was prevented, it would break out to the ruination of the state. Did  
if they were accusations, (Claudius) exiled or killed all the best teachers and  
assigned by his stepmother in charge of him.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 8 *centurionum tribunorumque*: partitive genitive; the genitive represents a group  
of which *qui* is a member. *remota*: understand *sunt*.
- 9 *honoris* is vague; presumably they were transferred to another post. It is  
distinction or other'.  
*si quis*: understand *erat* 'if there was anyone who...'.  
*incorrupta fide*: ablative of description.
- 10 *ille*: i.e. Britannicus; see the note on line 6.  
*salutavere* = *salutaverunt*.  
*multo questu*: ablative of manner, describing how she reported it.
- 11 *maritum*: i.e. Claudius.  
*sperni*: virtual *oratio obliqua*; understand 'she said that'.  
*censuerint... iusserit* are in the pluperfective because they are relative clauses.  
*censuerint* is perfect subjunctive, which is a primary tense following the pluperfect.  
Normally the pluperfect was followed by historic tenses of the subjunctive.  
*perpetuarentur*. When he uses the historic infinitive, Tacitus uses the  
subjunctive in subordinate clauses, as in 68.4, *demorari ne... egrederetur*.
- 12 *infensa* is neuter plural accusative, the object of *docentium*, 'of those who  
*eruptura* is a future participle, agreeing with *pravitas*.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- 12 *commotus*: the subject is Claudius understood.
- 13 *optimum quemque*: this use of the superlative with *quisque* is an idiom, *exilio aut morte adficit*: see the note on Chapter 26.3.
- datos* is used here as a noun, 'people assigned'; this use of the participial feature of Tacitus's style; see the Introduction, page 3.

## Context and style notes

- 8 *centurionum tribunorumque*: these officers were members of the Praetorian Guard, the emperor and his family.
- sortem*: refers to the assumed preference of Claudius for his nephew son Britannicus. Although the measures taken here were done by Claudius instigated by Agrippina, who was scheming to make her son Nero emperor beginning of Chapter 42, *nondum... summa moliri audebat*.
- 8–9 *fictis causis... per speciem honoris*: *variatio*, an ablative absolute followed by *speciem*: Tacitus seems fond of this word, but there was a lot of pretence.
- 9 *depellitur*: note the switch to the historic present, which continues to the end of the chapter.
- 9–10 *Nero Britannicum*: the juxtaposition highlights the rivalry and antipathy between Nero and Britannicus, who succeeded Claudius.
- 10 *Domitium*: the point is that Britannicus should have called Domitius by name. However, Britannicus was only 10 years old, and Nero had been calling him Domitius. Agrippina had no real excuse for taking this step, she was using this step for blackening the character of Britannicus and advancing the cause of Nero.
- 11 *quippe*: by inserting *quippe*, Tacitus is showing that Agrippina's remarks are also intended to reflect the explosive alliteration of *p*, viz. *spurni quod populum penates*, which emphasises the indignation of Agrippina.
- penates* are household gods, but here, it is simply a picturesque way of saying 'home'.
- 12 *docentium*: among Nero's tutors from AD 49 was the famous philosopher Seneca who was one of Nero's advisors when he became emperor. Agrippina recalls Seneca from exile in AD 49 in order to be a tutor for Nero, and, Tacitus says, 'because he was believed to be hostile to Claudius' (Chapter 8.3).
- in publicam perniciem*: note the alliteration of *p* again. Whether Agrippina's actions suit Tacitus's purpose given the portents which occur in the next chapter is debatable.
- 12–13 *commotus his*: chiastic *variatio* on *his evictus* (25.5), which means the same as *his*.
- 13 *educatorem*: note the use of a noun ending in *-tor*; see the Introduction, page 3.

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



### Activity

How does Tacitus make it clear that he does not like Agrippina?

## Chapter 42: Agrippina exploits her power

nondum tamen summa moliri Agrippina audebat, ni praetoriarum cohortium Geta et Rufrius Crispinus, quos Messalinae memores et liberis eius devinctos cohortes ambitu duorum et, si ab uno regerentur, intentiorem fore disciplinam transfertur regimen cohortium ad Burrum Afranium, egregiae militaris fama sponte praeficeretur. suum quoque fastidium Agrippina extollere altius: carperet qui honos sacerdotibus et sacris antiquis concessus venerationem augebat. genitam, sororem eius, materam potitus sit et coniugem et matrem fuisse, unum exemplum. Inter quae praecipuus propugnator eius Vitellius, validissima (adeo incertae sunt potentium res) accusatione corripitur, deferente Iunio Lupus maiestatis et cupidinem imperii obiectabat; praebeissetque aures Caesar, nisi quam precibus mutatus esset, ut accusatori aqua atque igni interdiceret. hactenus

### Translation

However, Agrippina did not yet dare to attempt her most important aim, to remove Geta and Rufrius Crispinus were removed from the management of the praetorian cohorts as they remembered Messalina and were devoted to her children. Therefore, she stated that the cohorts were being pulled apart by the ambition of these two men. By one, discipline would be tighter, the control of the cohorts was transferred to (a man) of outstanding military reputation, but well-known for the wrong reasons, was put in charge. Agrippina also raised her own high status higher; she entered in a wheeled carriage, an honour which was reserved for priests and sacred emblems. This increased the respect for her as a woman, who is a unique example to this day. From an empress, she had been the sister of a man who acquired (supreme power) the wife and mother of emperors. Among these events an outstanding example (a man) of very powerful influence and extreme old age, (so uncertain are the limits of his power), was brought to trial by an accusation, the senator Junius Lupus charged him with the crimes of treason and a desire for supreme power; Caesar rebuffed him, if he had not been changed by the threats of Agrippina, more than by the pleas of the man. He banished the accuser from water and fire. This was as much as Vitellius had

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *summa*: literally, 'the highest things', so 'her most important aim'; *ni* = 'if not'.
- 2 *Messalinae memores*: adjectives and verbs of remembering and forgetting in the genitive case.  
*devinctos*: understand *esse* to complete the indirect statement.
- 2-3 The thread of the sentence is as follows: *uxore adseverante* (ablative absolute, indirect statement), *praetoriarum et disciplinam fore intentiorem* (indirect statement).
- 4 *egregiae*: genitive of description. Originally, the genitive was used for external features, but the distinction became blurred later.
- 4-5 *cuius sponte praeficeretur*: indirect question.
- 5 *extollere... ingredi*: historic infinitives, making the scene more vivid.
- 6-7 *quam... fuisse* is an indirect statement governed by *unicum... exemplum*.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- 7 *qui rerum potitus sit*: subjunctive because it is a relative clause inside *omnium* after *potitus sit*, one of the few verbs which take an object in the genitive.
- 8 *quae* is a connecting relative pronoun; translate it as 'these (events)'.  
*validissima gratia, aetate extrema*: ablatives of description; see the note on 9–10.
- 9–10 *crimina maiestatis et cupidinem imperii*: the genitives are both objective and verbal idea contained in the nouns governed by them, *Lupus* is accusing supreme power.
- 10 *praebissetque aures*: *prae* is 'before', so 'would have offered his ears', so 'would have listened'. See also Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, 'Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears'.  
*Caesar*: *Caesar* is *Caesar*. *audius*.
- 10–11 *minis... precibus*: instrumental ablatives.
- 11 *aqua atque igni interdiceret*: this was the formula for banishing people from the land to water and fire and depriving them of their property. However, they were banished to the country to which they wished to go, as opposed to *exilium in insulam*, e.g. Octavia, Nero's first wife, suffered, both being exiled to the island of Ithaca.

## Context and style notes

### Activity

Agrippina is the main character in this chapter, but Tacitus only mentions her name twice; write down the other words (excluding verbs) which he uses to refer to her.

- 1 *nondum*: the emphatic negative indicates that although Agrippina has reached her supreme aim, she is not yet there, a date to come later date.
- praetorianorum cohortium*: there were nine praetorian cohorts at this time, each of 600 men. Their job was to act as the emperor's bodyguard, and as no other troops were in Italy, they had great power and influence, e.g. their role in proclaiming an earlier emperor, Tiberius, one commander, Sejanus, virtually controlled the empire. He retired to Capri, but he overstepped his power and was executed for perjury, also, the note on Burrus below.
- 2 *Messalinae*: the previous wife of Claudius; see the Introduction, page 4.  
*liberis eius*: i.e. Britannicus and Octavia, who became the first wife of Nero.
- 2–3 *distrahi... uxore*: note the position of these words at the beginning and end of the sentence, emphasising the division in the Praetorian cohorts and the wife of Claudius, and the scheme to supplant the two commanders.
- 3 *duorum... uno*: from the time of the republic, the last king of Rome, Numa Pompilius Augustus, the Romans had never allowed one person to have supreme power in a national emergency; instead they appointed a dictator for a limited period, usually 6 months. Later abolished by Julius Caesar, who was elected dictator three times, the office was revived in 10 years AD, shortly before his death was appointed dictator for life.
- 4 *transfertur*: note the switch from the past tenses to the historic present.  
*Burrus Afranium*: Burrus held sole command of the Praetorian Guard after the death of Agrippina and became tutor and advisor to Nero, whose accession to the throne he had helped to secure.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



16 Burrus assisted; see Chapter 69. He also assisted Nero in the murder in favour and died in AD 62, allegedly poisoned by Nero.

*egregiae militaris famae*: a rare compliment, though there is little evidence that he had only been a tribune, not a commander of legions.

- 5 *suum... altius*: again, the first and last words are emphatic; having secured the post of commander of the Guard, Agrippina now concentrates on improving the status of higher things; *altius* may be an intensification of *summa* (line 1), as *altus* is with height.

*carpento*: again, the first important word is put first word in the sentence. An increase in the respect of the citizens, the more learned of Tacitus's readers will be reminded of Livy 1, 48.6, who uses the same word to describe the carrying of the dead body of her father, Servius Tullius, the sixth king of Rome. So the outrage felt by Tacitus over Agrippina's actions here, as she was not even carrying *carpentum* (*qui honos... concessus*), although Messalina had also done so, but she had no *venerationem* for Agrippina, whom he continues to slander at the end of the book.

- 6–7 *imperatore genitam*: *Imperator* was a title given to triumphant commanders of the army, the Great. Under the Empire, it came to be used for 'Emperor', but here Tacitus refers to Tiberius to Agrippina's father, Germanicus, in recognition of his military achievements, also, of course 'sprung from an Emperor', as she was the great-granddaughter of Augustus.

- 7 *sororem... matrem*: Agrippina was the sister of the emperor Gaius (Caligula), the mother of Claudius and mother of the future emperor, Nero; as Tacitus states, it was the case in his time; see Appendix 2 for the relationships.

- 8 *praecipuus propugnator*: note the use of the prefix *prae-* and a noun ending in *-tor*; fourfold alliteration of *p*, a letter frequently used to denigrate the person concerned. Vitellius was a very successful courtier (*validissima gratia*), as Book 11.11 shows. He was governor of Syria. In Book 6.32, Tacitus accuses him of bad character and of successful flattery. His son became emperor in AD 69.

*validissima gratia, aetate extrema*: chiasmus (adjective, noun, noun, adjective, noun); two superlatives.

- 9 *potentium*: the participle is used as a noun, here, 'those in power'; see also *cf. datos* in Chapter 41.13. The comment is typical of Tacitus's pessimism about the future.

*deferente Iunio Lupo senatore*: a good example of 'tacking on', where Tacitus adds a phrase, often an ablative absolute, as here, to a sentence which is already complete.

- 9–10 *crimina maiestatis et cupidinem imperii*: balance.

- 10–11 *minis magis quam precibus mutatus esset*: the alliteration of *m* and *s* emphasizes the contempt for Agrippina's efforts.



COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



### Activity

In Chapters 41–42, how successful is Agrippina in improving the status of her family?

## Chapter 43: Portents and famine in Rome

multa eo anno prodigia evenere. insessum diris avibus Capitolium, crebris terremotibus domus, ac dum latius metuitur, trepidatione vulgi invalidus quisque obtriti; frugum orta ex eo fames in prodigium accipiebatur. nec occulti tantum questus, sed in circumvasere clamoribus turbidis, pulsumque in extremum fori partem vi urgens globo infensos perrupit. quindecim dierum in praedia arbi, non amplius superbia deum benignitate et modestia hominum: sed ad extremis subventum. at hercule o longinquas in provincias inmeatus portabat, nec nunc infecunditate laborare Aegyptum videmus, navibusque et casibus vita populi Romani permissa est.

### Translation

Many portents happened in that year. The Capitol was occupied by birds destroyed by frequent earthquakes, and while it was feared more widely, trodden upon by the panic of the crowd; shortage of crops also, and the famine were regarded as a portent. Not only were there hidden complaints, but with justice, (people) surrounded him with boisterous shouts, and when they had part of the forum, they pressed upon him with violence, until he broke through a group of soldiers. It was established that there were 15 days' provisions left. In the extreme circumstances were relieved by the great kindness of the gods in that winter. But, by Hercules, in the past, Italy produced provisions for the legions and the difficulty now is not because of infertility of the soil. We reap Africa and the Roman people has been entrusted to the powers of the gods.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *eo anno*: relative of time when.  
*evenere* = *evenerunt*; cf. *circumvasere*, line 4. As the *-ere* form is so common, it need not be noted.
- 1-2 *insessum... prorutae... obtriti*: understand the relevant part of *esse* with *diris*. It is frequent in Tacitus that further examples will not be included unless it is necessary to understand the Latin. *insessum* originally meant 'sat upon' but came to mean 'occupied'. Why Tacitus did not simply write *aves dirae Capitolio insedere* is anyone's guess.
- 2 *dum... metuitur*: *dum* takes the present indicative, if the main verb interrupts it.  
*quisque obtriti*: 'all the weak (people)': see the note on Chapter 41.13.  
*frugum* is a partitive genitive, 'crops' being the object of the need. *Lites* probably means 'crops' generally, because the general shortage was of cereals.
- 3 *accipiebatur*: in Latin, the verb often agrees in number with the nearer noun.  
*nec... questus*: understood from *prodigia*.
- 4 *circumvasere*: understand 'the people complaining' (from *questus*).  
*clamoribus turbidis*: ablative of description.  
*pulsumque* agrees with *Claudium* understood from the previous clause.  
*fori*: partitive genitive.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





- 5 The word order is as follows: *constitit* ('It was established that' + acc. + (provisions) *quindecim dierum superfuisse* (were left) *urbi, non amplius*.  
*quindecim dierum*: gen of definition.  
*urbi*: i.e. Rome, as in Chapter 41.3.
- 6 *deum* = *deorum*.  
*rebus extremis*: dative after the compound verb *subventum*, the normal  
*hercule*: by Hercules; it was a common practice in the ancient world to swear  
 making a strong statement or oath. It is doubtful if there was any religious  
 more than the phrase today when people say 'O my God'.
- 7 *laborati* take *nec* with *infecunditate*, 'not because of infertility', ablative  
 impersonal verbs, e.g. *metuitur*, line 2, *constitit*, line 5 and *subventum*, line 6.
- 8 *exceremus*: an odd choice of word; elsewhere Tacitus uses it with *solum*  
 have used 'reap' here.

## Context and style notes

- 1 *multa... prodigia*: enclosing order; unlike his predecessor, Livy, who first  
 portents in his *History*, this is the first list of portents in the *Annals*.
- 1-3 *prodigia... prodigium*: scholars debate whether Tacitus believed in omens  
 scholar N P Miller believed that what was more important to Tacitus was  
 created. When we consider the atmosphere created here, it is noticeable  
 discuss the portents immediately after the chapter narrating Agrippina  
 did not like strong women and Agrippina was an excellent target. Is this  
 disasters in Rome?
- 1 *avibus*: certain birds, particularly the owl, were considered ill omens in  
 Capitoline, i.e. the temple of Jupiter, which was situated on Mons Capitolinus  
 of Rome, in the middle of the city. The hill also contained two lesser temples.  
 It was regarded as the citadel, where the last stand was made against the  
 Gauls in 390 BC.
- 2 *metuitur, trepidatione*: note the *variatio*, as both words are connected with  
 abstract noun ending in *-io*.  
*obtriti*: Furneaux makes the point that a mob running through the narrow  
 would have easily resulted in people being trampled to death.
- frugum... egestas*: in Chapter 19, Suetonius states that Claudius took control of  
 shortage, including compensating merchants for loss of ships in storms  
 reward to shipbuilders for new transport ships. He also built a new port  
 transport of corn to Rome. Tacitus may have intended these measures  
 would have been appropriate to include here, so their omission is  
 against Claudius, about whom Tacitus has little good to say.
- Prior to the Punic Wars in the third Century BC, Italy had been self-sufficient  
 wars, and men who had been away a long time from home, sold up  
 landowners bought up and converted into large estates, rearing cattle  
 for which they used slave labour, which became plentiful as Rome increased  
 consequently, this cheap labour caused a decline in the numbers of Italian  
 land. This change led to Rome becoming dependent on the provinces for  
 reference to *navibusque et casibus* in line 8.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- 3 *prodigium*: polyptoton with *prodigia* in line 1.

*iura reddentem Claudium*: the emperor tended to try the more important crimes and cases involving people of high rank. He also tried cases which by right to the emperor, as St Paul did (*Acts* 25.11). Suetonius, *Claudius* 'behaviour in court varied unpredictably', and that he was 'sometimes other times downright foolish'. Suetonius then goes on to relate several instances of Claudius in a bad light.

### Activity

Notice the fact pattern in the first three lines. What atmosphere is created by anything that contributes to the atmosphere?

- 3–4 *Claudium circumvasere clamoribus*: the alliteration of *c* (a harsh-sounding letter) contributes to the noisy shouts of the mob.
- 5 *infensos*: the adjective is used here as a noun; cf. *potentium* (42.9) and *severos* (42.10).
- 6 *deum beniginitate et modestia hiemis*: chiasmus (ABBA).
- extremis*: polyptoton, as *extremam* occurred in line 4.
- at*: this particle usually denotes a contrast with what has preceded, or contrasts what took place in the past contrasted with the present state.
- 6–7 Note the position of *Italia* and *Africam* towards the beginning of their respective clauses, emphasising the change of source for their food.
- 7 *longinquas in provincias*: it was good style 'in' (the preposition between a noun and a clause); cf. Chapter 56.2, *lacu in insula*. However, Tacitus rarely uses this construction; cf. *in familiam Claudiam* and Chapter 44.12, *in publicam perniciem*.
- infecunditate*: rare abstract noun ending in *-tas*; cf. *egestas*, line 2, *benignitas*, line 6. Introductory page 7.

## Summary of Chapters 44–51

Chapters 44–51 deal with the war between the Armenians, supported by Rome, and the Parthians, supported by the Armenians.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Chapter 52: Furius and Vibia are banished

Fausto Sulla Salvio Othone consulibus Furius Scribonianus in exilium agitur, et Chaldaeos scrutaretur. adnectebatur crimini Vibia mater eius, ut casus prioris impatiens. pater Scriboniani Camillus arma per Dalmatiam moverat; idque ad Caesar, quod stirpem hostilem iterum conservaret. nec tamen exuli longa perfortuita an per venenum extinctus esset, ut cui quod cecidit, vulgavere. de maius factum senatus consultum atrox et invidia laudati dehinc oratione principis ordine senatorio sponte remota, motique qui remanendo impudentiam paucos

### Translation

In the consulships of Faustus Sulla and Salvius Otho, Furius Scribonius was banished on grounds that he enquired about the death of the emperor by means of astrology. Vibia, who was connected with the charge, as she was intolerant of her former fortune, was connected to the crime. Camillus, the father of Scribonianus, had raised an armed rebellion through drawing out this matter with a view towards mercy, in that he was saving the emperor. However, the exile did not have a long life after this. Whether he was destroyed by means of poison, according to each person's belief – they spread it all over Italy. A decree of the Senate about expelling astrologers from Italy was passed. And the family poverty, had left the senatorial order of their own accord, were praised by the emperor, while those who were adding shamelessness to their poverty by remaining were removed (from it).

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *Fausto Sulla Salvio Othone consulibus*: temporal ablative of time when; see the note on Chapter 41.10.
- 1–2 *quasi... scrutaretur*: causal clause; *quasi* means 'as if', so 'on the grounds that'; *scrutaretur* is a subjunctive, as the reason is alleged. Note that the historic present *agitur* is a present tense compound subjunctive; see the note on Chapter 41.11.
- 2 *crimini*: dative after a compound verb. This construction was quite common in Virgil, but in prose a preposition with the accusative was more normal. *casus*: genitive after the adjective *impatiens*.
- 3 *trahebat*: a typical example of Tacitus straining the meaning of a word. *trahe* means 'drag' and Tacitus was probably implying that Claudius was taking his time to draw out the matter. Translated it 'was dragging out this matter'. English has a similar metaphorical use of *draw*.
- 4 *quod... conservaret*: causal clause in the subjunctive, as this is what Claudius was doing. *exuli*: dative of possession with *fuit*.
- 4–5 *morte... extinctus esset*: indirect question, with the introductory word (*ut*) and the instrumental ablative.
- 5 *vulgavere*: the main verb draws on from what has preceded it. *Italia*: normally a preposition would be used to express place whence something is spread.
- 7 *ordine senatorio*: ablative of separation.  
*cederent... adicerent*: the subjunctives are generic, referring to two different groups. *motique*: 'were removed'; Tacitus sometimes used the root verb rather than *removere* where *moti* = *remoti*; cf. *pellendis* = *expellendis* in line 5.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Context and style notes

- 1 *Fausto Sulla Salvio Othone consulibus*: i.e. AD 52; see the note on Chapter 1. Sulla Felix was a descendant of the dictator Sulla and was married to his second wife, Aelia Paetina. As a son of Claudius, the emperor Nero he was exiled for allegedly plotting against Nero in AD 59 and murdered. Lucius Salvius Otho Titianus became consul in AD 69, when his brother-in-law, Furius Scribonianus: his full name was Marcus Furius Camillus Scribonianus, so Tacitus uses the name *Scribonius*, here, to distinguish the son from the father. Camillus's father had supported a rebellion in Dalmatia in AD 42, line 3, which rebellion failed after five days when his troops deserted from the island of Braida and committed suicide. Although his son escaped punishment, he was exiled in AD 52 for allegedly consulting astrologers about the likelihood of his return. Tacitus explains in the rest of the sentence.

*agitur*: note the historic present.

- 2 *Chaldaeos*: the Chaldaeans were noted astrologers, and the word came to mean any specific reference to their nationality.

*relegata erat*: presumably she had been banished in AD 42 after the collapse of the Republic in which her husband took a leading part, to which *casus prioris* refers.

- 3 *Camillus*: see the note on line 1.

- 4 *iterum*: Claudius had not punished the son when his father revolted against him; a second time he was considering leniency.

- 4–5 *morte... per venenum*: an excellent example of *variatio*, instrumental ablative with prepositional phrase. Note that Tacitus follows his normal practice, he puts the reason last; see the next section, page 5.

- 5–6 *de maioribus pellendis... inritum*: the most important words are placed at the end of the sentence – ‘expelling astrologers... (proved) useless’. Note how Tacitus uses *inritum* – the tone is ‘and it didn’t work anyway’.

- 6–7 Note the balance – *laudati... qui... cederent, motique qui... adicerent*. Note the words for ‘poverty’, *angustias* and *paupertati*.

- 7 *ordine senatorio*: this was a property qualification. In the sixth century BC Rome divided the citizens into six classes comprising 193 centuries based on property. Citizens had to provide for service in the army. The top two classes were the first class, who were heavy-armed infantry (80), so they had a vote in voting in the *Comitia Centuriata*.

Augustus revised the system, and the qualification for the *senatorius ordo* was set at 100,000 sesterces. If you fell below this amount, you could no longer be a member of the Senate, and you had to list those who no longer qualified as senators.

*impudentiam paupertatis*: the repetition of the triple *p* may be intentional, emphasizing the shame of such behaviour.

### Activity

How typical is this chapter of Tacitus’s approach to recording history? Consider his comments and the language he uses.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 53: Pallas is honoured

inter quae refert ad patres de poena feminarum quae servis coniungerentur; domino ad id prolapsae in servitute, sin consensisset, pro libertis haberentur eius relationis ediderat Caesar, praetoria insignia et centies quinquagies sestertii designatus Barea Soranus. additum a Scipione Cornelianus, quod si publicae agendas postea ortus veterrimam nobilitatem usui publico, ut se haberet seque inter ministros adseveravit Claudius contentum, non tamen fallantem intra priorem paupertatem [aere] publico senatus, in quo libertinus sestertii ter milies possessor laudibus celebratur.

### Translation

Among these events (Claudius) referred to the senators the question of the women who had become married to slaves; and it was decided that if they had sunk to this position of their master, they should be considered as slaves, but as freedwomen if they had not. To whom Claudius had declared to be the author of that proposal, Barea Soranus, he proposed the distinctions of a praetor and fifteen million sesterces. Cornelius should be offered publicly (to Boranus), because, although he was descended from a king, he esteemed his very ancient nobility less than the public need and allowed himself to be among the ministers of the emperor. Claudius avowed that Pallas was happy to have continued within his former poverty. And a decree of the Senate was fixed, whereby the freedman who possessed 300 million sesterces was heaped with honours as a long-standing thrift.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *refert*: *refertur* is the subject understood.
- 2 *coniungerentur*: generic subjunctive, denoting the type of women who are referred to.
- 3 *ignaro domino*: ablative absolute with a conditional sense, 'if the master was ignorant'.
- 4 *haberentur*: indirect command; *habere* is sometimes used, as here, meaning 'to have', meaning 'as, in the category of'.
- 5 *centies quinquagies sestertium*: this means 15 million sesterces.
- 6 *grates... agendas (esse)*: *agendas* is a gerundive of obligation with *esse* understood, 'that thanks should be offered'.
- 7 *regibus Arcadiae*: ablative of origin, 'sprung from the kings of Arcadia (in S. Greece)'.
- 8 *postponeret*: *postponere* is to place one thing before / lower than something else.
- 9 *sestertii ter milies*: 300 million sesterces. This is a huge amount of money, about 400 million.
- 10 *aere* is in brackets as it was not in the original manuscripts, but it is added in VIII.6, in which he criticises this decree.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 2 *prolapsae*: in view of Tacitus's careful choice of words, the use of *prolapsae* 'fallen, sunk', shows his disparaging attitude towards women marrying *in servitute*... *pro libertis*: *variatio* in the use of the two contrasting phrases.

*Pallanti*: see Chapter 25.1. Tacitus significantly notes that Pallas first would have been a slave, but had been granted his freedom, so it was perhaps not surprising that he made this proposal. Certainly the tone of this paragraph is highly sarcastic, to be considered 'and the reference to his *paupertatem*, when he was the subject of Letter VII.6, Tacitus expresses his disgust at this decree, criticising Pallas and Claudius for allowing it to be passed and the Senate for agreeing to it. Significantly, Pliny refers to Pallas as a slave, not a freedman. It is almost certain that Tacitus had read Pliny's letter, as they were great friends (see the Introduction). *reptorem*: note the noun ending in *-tor* and *possessor* in line 7.

- 3 *praetoria insignia*: the distinctions of a praetor, the second highest magistracy, included a toga with a purple stripe, the *sella curulis*, an ivory chair, on which to sit in court, the right to do business, and the right to be accompanied in Rome by two lictors (attendants carrying rods surrounding an axe). However, these distinctions did not include marriage; freedmen were not allowed this privilege.

*centies quinquagies*... *censuit consul*: the alliteration of *c/q* is noticeable, but not intentional, Tacitus is showing his disapproval of a freedman possessing so much money; see below.

- 4 *Barea Soranus*: Borea is praised by Tacitus in Book 16.23 for his *iustitia* (justice), being a very just man (or because he was later condemned to death for practising magic, he was accused of practising magic). It may seem odd that Tacitus would subject flattery of Pallas, but, as Furneaux points out, Borea had to speak first in the debate and was probably under a great deal of pressure (Chapter 16, line 2).

*Scipione Cornelio*: P. Cornelius Lentulus Scipio (Tacitus often reverses the order of names). He was consul in AD 56. In Book 11.2, Tacitus relates that Claudius asked him to dinner, why his wife was not with him. 'She is dead', he replied. The Scipios were a very famous Roman family, dating from the early Republic; the most famous, Scipio Africanus, was the conqueror of Hannibal in 202 BC.

- 4-5 *regibus Arcadiae ortus*: this is a reference to King Evander, who migrated to Italy and sent his son, Pallas, to help Aeneas in the war against Turnus. Unfortunately, Turnus killed Pallas. Scipio, here, fancifully imagines that the freedman Pallas was descended from the early heroes of Rome, e.g. Augustus Caesar, who was descended from the son of Aeneas.

- 5 *publico postponeret*... *principis*: in line 3, the alliteration, here of *p*, is certainly intentional, as is the alliteration of *se*... *min* in line 4.

- 6 *Pallanti*... *propterea paupertatem*: the alliteration of *p* continues, here in line 6, and in line 7, where he combines it with *s*, a letter often used to denote poverty: *possessor*... *parsimoniae*.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- 7–8 *libertinus... laudibus cumulabatur*: Tacitus ends the chapter with further preposterous praise for long-standing thrift heaped upon Pallas, the paterfamilias, starting with *libertinus* – it was bad enough that anyone should be a slave of money, but an EX-SLAVE? Note, also, the noun ending in *-sor*.

### Activity

Using examples from what Tacitus says in Chapters 52 and 53, how far does Tacitus have a low opinion of Claudius?



## Summary of Chapters 54–55

Chapters 54 and 55 deal with rebellions in Judaea and Cilicia.



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



INSPECTION COPY

## Chapter 56: Naval Battle on the Fucine Lake

sub idem tempus inter lacum Fucinum amnemque Lirim perrupto monte, quo  
pluribus viseretur, lacu in ipso navale proelium adornatur, ut quondam Augustus  
stagno, sed levibus navigiis et minore copia ediderat. Claudius triremes quadam  
5 vim remigii, gubernantium artes, impetus acritudoque proelio solita. in ratibus  
manipuli turmaeque adstiterunt, ante portis propugnaculis ex quis catapultae  
reliqua lacus classis, et in navibus obtinebant. ripas et colles montiumque  
multitudo adstrata complevit, proximis e municipiis et alii urbe ex ipsa, visendi  
10 principem. ipse insigni paludamento neque procul Agrippina chlamyde aurata  
quamquam inter sotes fortium virorum animo, ac post multum vulnerum occidit.

### Translation

About the same time, the mountain between the Fucine Lake and the river Liris  
and so that the splendour of the work might be seen by more people, a naval  
lake itself, just as Augustus had once produced, having constructed a pond  
light boats and less abundance. Claudius equipped the triremes and quadriremes  
having surrounded the circumference with rafts, so that there might not be  
but still enclosing a space (large enough) to suit the force of the rowing, the  
attacks of the ships and the usual events in a battle. In the rafts maniples  
praetorian cohorts had taken up their position: with ramparts placed in front  
catapults and stone throwing engines might be aimed. Marines occupied the  
ships. A countless host filled the banks, hills and the high parts of the mountain  
(some came) from the neighbouring towns, others from Rome itself in their desire to see  
emperor. The emperor himself in a distinguished cloak and Agrippina not far  
presided. The battle was fought in the spirit of brave men although it was  
after a lot of wounds, they were exempted from death.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1–2 *quo... viseretur*: purpose clause; see the note on Chapter 41.1–2.
- 2 *trans*: the manuscripts and some editions read *cis*, ‘this side of’.
- 4 *ne vaga effugia forent*: purpose clause; *forent* is an alternative form of *essent*,  
clear, i.e. to prevent the criminals from wandering off and escaping, in  
*vagus* means ‘wandering’, which Furneaux takes to mean ‘at uncertain points’  
Brodribb, ‘at various points’. I suspect it means ‘to prevent any unwanted  
escape’, but I have used ‘unpredictable escape’ to be closer to the text.
- 4–5 *ad vim*: *ad* means ‘with a vigorous mind’. Bearing in mind (the force of the  
translated it ‘large enough to suit’, which is a bit free, but that is what the  
big engine would not restrict the rowers from rowing full out.
- 6 *quis* = ‘anyone’.
- 7 *colles*: the Bloomsbury edition prints *collis*, but elsewhere prints *accus*.
- 8 *visendi cupidine aut officio*: the ablatives are causal, ‘because of their desire  
*visendi* is an objective genitive.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





- 9 *insigni paludamento... chlamyde aurata*: ablatives of description.
- 9–10 The word order is *pugnatum (est) animo fortium virorum quamquam inter*
- 10 *vulnerum* is a partitive genitive after *multum*; see the note on Chapter 4

## Context and style notes

- 1 *lacum Fucinum*: this was a land-locked lake, which was frequently flooded, but it was unable to carry off its surplus water. Augustus turned down the local Marsians to drain the lake. Claudius employed 30,000 men for 11 years to drain the lake. The three-mile-long project of which involved levelling a hill and building a canal was completed, and before the lake was drained, Claudius held this battle. 20,000 soldiers took part.
- 3 *stagno*: *variatio* on *lacu*; *stagnum* is a pool, or pond, so Tacitus uses the word to mark the contrast with the much larger Fucine Lake.
- levibus... minore*: two more indications that Claudius's naval battle was less significant than Augustus's.
- triremes quadriremesque*: these are warships, contrasting with *navigiis*, which are propelled by three banks of oars situated at three different levels, quadriremes having four oars. Suetonius, *Claudius*, 21, tells us that 12 Rhodian triremes fought at Actium. Tacitus makes no mention of quadriremes. An ancient inscription, the *Monumentum Atrium Vestae*, mentions there were 30 triremes, Dio gives a total of 100 ships. There is obviously a distinction between the triremes and light ships (*levibus navigiis*).
- 5 *vim... solita*: a triple chiasmus, in effect, a dative construction governed by *ad* and the dative alternates as follows: (*vim... solita*), (*gubernantium artes*), (*gubernantes*), (*impetus navium... proelium*). Note the use of the participle, *gubernantes*, as a noun, 'helmsmen'. Note also, the *variatio* of the dative *proelio* after the participle.
- 6 *turmae*: there were three maniples per cohort; at full strength the cohort contained approximately 500 men, allowing for absentees and casualties, so the *turma* was more than 170. The *turma* was a body of 30 men. However, Tacitus is probably using the word to mean two separate groups of men drawn from the Praetorian Guard.
- 7 *reliqua lacus*: 'the remaining parts of the lake'. Tacitus imitates Virgil, his use of neuter plural adjectives with a dependent genitive as a variant for the use of the noun; see the Introduction, page 8. Tacitus imitates Virgil, here, and not *reliquum lacum*. The use of the neuter plural throws emphasis on the remaining parts of the lake; a similar example is *montiumque edita* in the Introduction, 'the mountains'.
- 7–8 *montium... modum... multitudo innumera complevit*: the preponderance of the word *montium* to imitate the noise made by the large crowd.
- 8 *innumera*: note the use of the prefix *in-*; see the Introduction, page 8.
- proximis e municipiis... ipsa*: another chiasmus (adjective... noun). The preposition *ab* is placed neatly between them.
- 8–9 *visendi... aut officio in principem*: two points to note: chiasmus (of *visendi* and *officio*) and *variatio* (genitive followed by prepositional phrase).
- 9 *praesedere*: note the prefix *prae-*, emphasising the pre-eminence of Claudius.

INSPECTION COPY

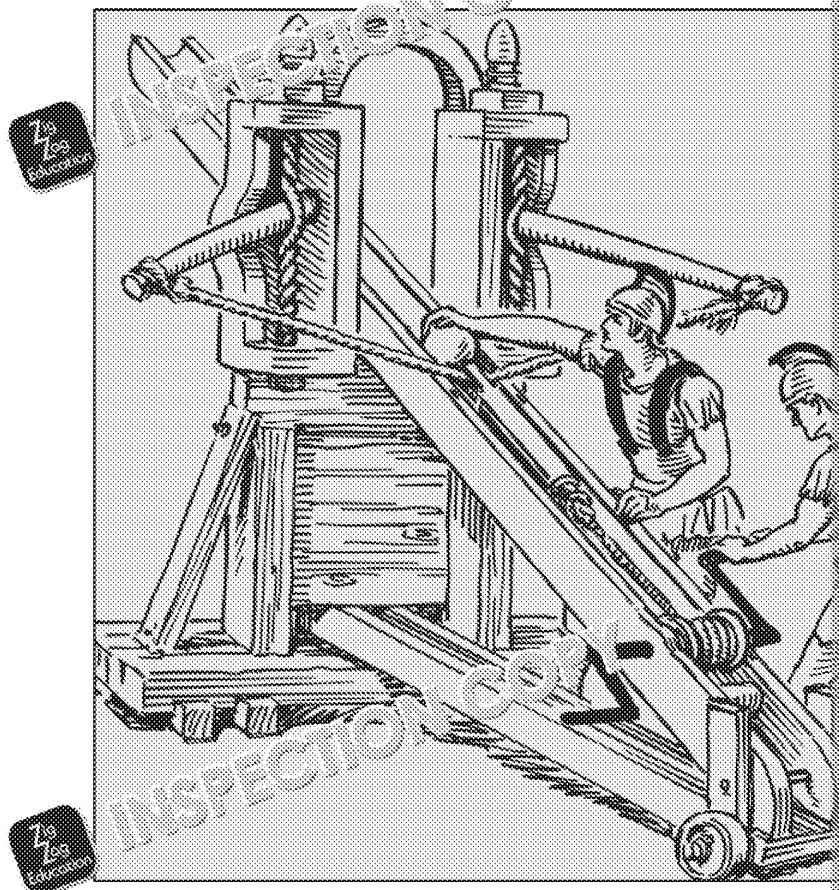
**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- 10 *fortium virorum*: this account is different from that given by Suetonius, who initially refused to fight, having misunderstood something Claudius said, but after Claudius threatened them.

### Activity

How far do you agree that this is a disappointing account of the naval battle of Actium?



Roman ballista

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

INSPECTION COPY



## Chapter 57: Panic as the lake overflow

sed perfecto spectaculo apertum aquarum iter. incuria operis manifesta fuit, ima vel media. eoque tempore interiecto altius effossi specus, et contrahendae gladiatorum spectaculum editur, inditis pontibus pedestrem ad pugnam. quin lacus adpositum magna formidine cunctos adfecit, cuius aquarum prorump-  
5 convulsis ulterioribus aut fragore et sonitu exterritis. simul Agrippina trepidationem ministrum operis Narcissum in causa cupidinis ac praedarum. nec ille reticet, nimiasque spes eiuebat.

### Translation

But when the show was completed, a channel for the waters was opened. The lake was clear, which had not been dug deep enough for the lowest parts or (even) the middle. And therefore, after some time had elapsed, the hollows were dug out more deeply. The show was set up to gather the crowd again, with rafts placed (on the lake) for the gladiators. However, a banquet placed at the outpouring of the lake greatly terrified the crowd, the waters bursting forth dragged away the nearest parts, while those further away were terrified by the crash and the noise. At the same time, Agrippina, using the architect Narcissus, the architect of the work, for avarice and profiteering. But he did not hold back her womanly lack of self-control and excessive hopes.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *perfecto spectaculo*: ablative absolute; *eoque tempore interiecto* in line 2. *depressi* agrees with *lacus* in line 1; *exterritis* is genitive; see the Introduction, page 7, and cf. Chapter 26.3.
- 2 *eoque*: 'and therefore'; *eo* does not agree with *tempore*. *specus* usually means 'cave', but here it means 'hollows', i.e. the hollows of the lake. *contrahendae... multitudini*: dative of purpose, 'in order to'.
- 4 *formidine... adfecit*: see the note on Chapter 26.3. Here, it means 'terrified', translated as an adverb, 'greatly', or translate it as 'filled with great fear'.
- 4–5 *proxima... ulterioribus... exterritis*: these are all neuter, though *exterritis* is plural, referring to parts, rather than the places themselves. The ellipsis in thought is natural.
- 5 *trepidatione* is the object of *usa*, a verb which takes an object in the ablative.
- 6 *cupidinis ac praedarum*: genitive of the charge; as in English, what one is charged with is in the genitive. *impotentiam* means 'lack of self-control', not 'powerlessness', as it would seem.

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Context and style notes

- 1 *incuria*: note the abstract noun beginning with the negative prefix *in-*; page 8.
- 1–2 *haud... media*: what Tacitus is saying here is that the channel was not of volume of water pouring out of the lake, so it overflowed.  
*lacus ima vel media*: note the use of the comparative adjective used as a following; see the Introduction (a).
- 3 *pontibus pedestrem*: the alliteration of *p* is pronounced, here, disparately. We show, but it is difficult to see how else he could.
- 4 *aquarum rumpens proxima*: the balanced assonance of *rum* and *pro* and bursting forth of the waters.
- 5 *fragore et sonitu*: a very rare example of synonyms in Tacitus's works.
- 6 *Narcissum*: see the note on Chapter 25.1, *Pallantis*, for the reason why.  
*impotentiam*: another abstract noun with the prefix *im-* (= *in*). See line 1 page 8.
- 6–7 *impotentiam muliebrem nimiasque spes*: Tacitus ends the section with an adjective, adjective, noun). There is marked alliteration of *m* and *n* (see which emphasises Tacitus's dislike of Agrippina.

### Activity

To what extent is Tacitus only interested in who to blame?

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 58: Nero marries Octavia and takes up

D. Iunio Q. Haterio consulibus sedecim annos natus Nero Octaviam Caesaris filiam accepit. utque studiis honestis et eloquentiae gloria enitesceret, causa Iliensis Troia demissum et Iuliae stirpis auctorem Aeneam aliaque haud procul fabulae perpetrat, ut Ilienses omni publico munere solverentur, eodem oratore Bononiae subventum centies sestertii largitione, redempta Rhodanis libertas, adempta saepe externis meruerant aut domi se machinae reliquerant; tributumque Apamensibus quinquennium remissum.

### Translation

In the consulships of D. Junius and Q. Haterius, Nero (now) sixteen years old married the daughter of Claudius, in marriage. And so that he might shine forth with reputation for eloquence, having undertaken a case involving the Trojans, Romans were descended from Troy, that Aeneas was the founder of the Julian line, events not far removed from myths, and achieved the release of the Trojans. Because of this same orator, help was given to the colony of Bononia, which was freed with a donation of 10 million sesterces. Freedom was restored to the Rhodians, away or established, depending on whether they had deserved it through their loyalty or it through mutiny at home. The tribute was relaxed for a five-year period to the Armenians who were devastated by an earthquake.

### Grammar and translation notes

- D. Iunio Q. Haterio consulibus*: 1. Ablative of time when. The year is AD 53.  
*sedecim annos*: 2. Ablative of time how long.
- ut... enitesceret*: 3. Purpose clause.  
*et*: the problem, here, is whether *gloria* is ablative or nominative. The OED takes it as ablative, parallel with *studiis*, but Furneaux takes it as nominative. It has easily have been omitted in view of the following *et*.  
*Romanum*: 'the Romans', an imitation of Livy, who often uses the singular.
- demissum* means 'descended from', here, a meaning only found in poetry.
- perpetrat, ut... solverentur*: a result clause, 'achieved the release'. *perpetrat* is used by Tacitus and Caesar, but was widely used by Livy, particularly in the ablative case, which seems to be a Tacitean invention.  
*munere*: ablative of separation.  
*eodem oratore*: ablative of attendant circumstances or cause; the most idiom is probably 'thanks to this speaker'.  
*igni*: instrument of destruction.
- subvenit*: 4. Understand *est*, 'help was given', an impersonal use of the verb in the passive (*coloniae*).  
*largitione*: ablative of means.
- domi* is the locative case, 'at home'.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 1 D. Junius Silanus Torquatus was a great-great-grandson of Augustus, apparently liked to boast, as Nero put him to death for this.

Quintus Haterius Agrippa, who, according to Tacitus (VI, 4.5), was 'set to his nightly depravity in brothels', was granted an annual stipend by ancestral wealth (13.34).

*Nero Octaviam Caesaris*: the juxtaposition of the three names emphasises the relationship between the three people.

Octavia was Augustus's daughter by his third wife, Messalina, and Nero was her son by his mother Agrippina, so the relationship was a bit 'iffy' as regards blood.

- 2 *causa... suscepta*: the fact that Tacitus mentions Nero's involvement in the case of the Bononians is an example of irony.

*Iliensium*: the Trojans are often called *Ilienses* (see line 4) as Troy was also called Ilios. Troy is sometimes called Ilion in Homer.

- 2-3 *Romanum Troia demissum et Iuliae stirpis auctorem*: the descent of the Romans from the Trojans is emphasised by the juxtaposition of *Romanum Troia*. The two phrases are used by Virgil, *Aeneid* 1, 288: *Iulius, a magno demissum nomen Iulo*. As has been noted, the Romans loved to trace their ancestry back as far as possible to ancient times, and there was no exception, linking their family with Iulus, the son of Aeneas.

- 4 *omni publico munere solverentur*: all provinces of the Roman Empire had to have been favourably treated by Rome. Suetonius, *Claudius* 25, mentions Claudius ordering King Seleucus to ensure that the Trojans be kept free from taxation. In the first century BC, both Sulla and Pompey had exempted them from taxation, but it would appear that this had been revoked and they became subject to Roman taxation.

*Bononiensium* (modern Bologna) was a colony in Cisalpine Gaul (N. Italy).

*haustae*: *haurire* originally meant 'drink up', but it came to be used metaphorically meaning 'destroy'.

- 5 *subventum*: note this impersonal use of the verb; see the Introduction, p. 10. *adempta... firmata*: this is true not only of Rhodes' relations with Rome, but of its history, as it was subject to Athens and Sparta at different times. It was only in the second century BC. The Rhodians were deprived of their freedom by the Romans, having crucified Roman citizens, but Claudius restored it, here.

- 5-6 *prout... deliquerant*: there were constant feuds for control of Rhodes (between the democrats and oligarchs (as elsewhere in Greece), which sometimes they supported in time of war (*bellis externis*), and the freedom sometimes they backed.

- 6 *Apamensibus*: Apame was an important town in Phrygia, which owed its importance on a junction of important Roman roads.

### Activity

Is Tacitus praising Nero here or is criticism really intended? Consider what Nero has achieved and consider the value placed on it by Tacitus.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 59: Taurus is accused of extortion and corruption

at Claudius saevissima quaeque promere adigebatur eiusdem Agrippinae artibus. Taurum opibus inlustrem hortis eius inhians pervertit accusante Tarquitio Prisco Africa proconsulari regentis, postquam revererant, pauca repetundarum magicas superstitiones obiectabat. nec ille diutius falsam accusationem, indignum vitae suae attulit ante sententiam senatus. Tarquitiū tamen curia exactus est contra ambitum Agrippinae non necesse est.

### Translation

Meanwhile, Claudius was compelled to effect all the very savage acts by the arts of Agrippina, who, on the accusation of Tarquitiū Priscus, overthrew Statilius Taurus, because she coveted his gardens. Tarquitiū, the deputy of Taurus in Africa with proconsular power, after their return, brought forth a few accusations, in particular, of magic superstitions. Taurus, no longer putting up with the unworthy condition of an accused person, put a violent end to his life before Tarquitiū, however, was expelled from the Senate house; (a victory) which was because of their hatred of the informer and contrary to the canvassing of Agrippina.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *saevissima quaeque*: 'all the very savage acts'; see the note on 41.13.
- 2 *opibus*: ablative of respect, 'in respect of his wealth', or causal ablative, 'because of his wealth'.  
*hortis*: dative, because *inhians* 'yearning for' takes a dative object in the dative.  
*is* refers to Tarquitiū.
- 3 *ceterum*: 'but in particular', contrasting with *pauca*.
- 4 Tacitus could have written *falsam accusationem* but probably preferred *falsam*.
- 5 *curia*: ablative of place whence.  
*odio*: causal ablative.  
*delatoris*: objective genitive, as it is the object of the hatred.

### Context and style notes

- 1 *at Claudius*: see the note on Chapter 43.6; here, it marks the contrast between the savage acts of Nero and the savage acts of Claudius.  
*eiusdem Agrippinae*: the insertion of *eiusdem* shows Tacitus's bias against Agrippina. He does not need to insert the word, but by doing so, he exaggerates her even further as villainous as before, i.e. 'A leopard does not change its spots'. This implies that Agrippina's influence over Nero and the elevation and marriage of Nero to Agrippina's daughter were part of her plan to make Nero a tyrant. Tacitus's disparaging description of Agrippina.
- 1–2 *Statilius Taurus*: consul in AD 44, he had amassed great wealth or influence. Statilius Taurus, who had been a very powerful general of Octavian, he was a general in the forces at the Battle of Actium in 31 BC and was consul in AD 16. Tacitus is calling the father Sisenna Statilius in Book 2, 1.1, Taurus Statilius in 6, 1.1, and Taurus, here (*variatio*).

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- 2 *inhians*: literally, 'gaping, open mouthed', was used metaphorically to mean the assonance of *inlustrem...inhians*, both words beginning with the prefix *in*.
- accusante Tarquitio Prisco*: ironically, Tarquitiu, having prosecuted Taccus, was prosecuted in AD 62 for committing the same offence in Bithynia.
- 3 *imperio proconsulari*: see the note on Chapter 41.3.
- repetundarum*: an abbreviation of the phrase *restitutio repetundarum*, literally 'paying back', i.e. restitution of property. It was administered by the provincial governor, which examined cases involving extortion, the *quaestio de rebus repetundis*, a series of scandals and trials in cases involving extortion. This was the first of a series of trials.
- 4 *sordes*: it was customary at Rome for the accused and his family to wear black robes, which were often dirty or soiled, in order to rouse sympathy for the accused. The accused would want to undergo this unworthy condition (*indignas*) and committed suicide.
- 4–5 *vim vitae*: the alliteration emphasises the violence involved and Tacitus' description of the accusation leading to death of the accused.

### Activity

How does this chapter prove that Agrippina was the power behind the throne?

### Summary of Chapters 60–63

Claudius gives the Equites more power over judicial matters and exempts them from taxation as a personal favour to his friend, who came from Cos. The Byzantine Empire was given five years.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





## Chapter 64: Various portents; Agrippina arranges the death

M. Asinio M'. Acilio consulibus mutationem rerum in deterius portendi cognitum est crebra signa ac tentoria militum igne caelesti arsere; fastigio Capitolii examen apium hominum partus et suis fetum editum cui accipitrum unguis inessent. numerus deminutus omnium magistratuum numerus, quaestores et iudices, tribuno ac praetori intra menses defunctis. sed in praecipuo reo Agrippina, vocem Claudii, qui fatale sibi ut coniugum flagitia ferre debet puniret, metuens, agere et celerare Domitia Lepida mulieris causis, quia Lepida minore Antonia genita, avunculi sobrina praeterea Gnaei mariti eius soror, parem sibi claritudinem credebat. non distabant; et utraque impudica, infamis, violenta, haud minus vitiis aemulabantur. fortuna prospera acceperant. enimvero certamen acerrimum, amita potius an praevaleret: nam Lepida blandimentis ac largitionibus iuvenilem animum de minimi Agrippina, quae filio dare imperium, tolerare imperitantem nequibat.

### Translation

In the consulship of M. Asinius and M'. Acilius, it was recognised because change of events for the worse was being indicated. The standards and tentoria heavenly fire; a swarm of bees settled on the gable end of the Capitol; (it is men and the birth of a pig on which there were the talons of hawks were a number of all the magistrates was reckoned among the portents, since a quaestor and consul had died within a few months. But Agrippina was in a particular an utterance of Claudius, which she made when intoxicated, that he would punish the scandals of his wives, she decided to act. She first destroyed Domitia Lepida for feminine reasons, because Lepida was the daughter of Antonia, her grand uncle Augustus as grand uncle, and was the cousin of Agrippina of (Agrippina's) husband Gnaeus, (and so) believed she was of equal eminence. Their wealth were not much different; moreover, both (being) shameless, of ill repute in other in vices just as much as any prosperity they had received from fortune. There was a very bitter contest as to whether the aunt rather, or the mother would prevail over Nero. For Lepida, by means of flattery and gifts of money was beginning to win over herself), while Agrippina, on the other hand, was aggressive and threatening to her son, but could not endure him when he was emperor.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *M. Asinio M'. Acilio consulibus*: ablative of time when. The year is AD 54.  
The word order is as follows: *M. Asinio... consulibus, cognitum est crebra signa ac tentoria militum igne caelesti arsere; fastigio Capitolii examen apium hominum partus et suis fetum editum cui accipitrum unguis inessent. numerus deminutus omnium magistratuum numerus, quaestores et iudices, tribuno ac praetori intra menses defunctis.*  
*sed in praecipuo reo Agrippina, vocem Claudii, qui fatale sibi ut coniugum flagitia ferre debet puniret, metuens, agere et celerare Domitia Lepida mulieris causis, quia Lepida minore Antonia genita, avunculi sobrina praeterea Gnaei mariti eius soror, parem sibi claritudinem credebat. non distabant; et utraque impudica, infamis, violenta, haud minus vitiis aemulabantur. fortuna prospera acceperant. enimvero certamen acerrimum, amita potius an praevaleret: nam Lepida blandimentis ac largitionibus iuvenilem animum de minimi Agrippina, quae filio dare imperium, tolerare imperitantem nequibat.*  
*prodigiis*: causal ablative.
- 2 *fastigio Capitolii*: see Chapter 52.2.
- 2-3 *biforme editum*: as *partus* and *fetum* are both accusative, the only way the sentence is to assume, as Madvig does, that a verb of saying has dropped out. *partus... editum (esse)* is an indirect statement, 'It is said that half-bested of a pig were published'. Note that although there are two accusatives, the nearer accusative, which is singular.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- 3 *suis* is the genitive of *sus*, *suis*, a pig, not a form of *suus*, *-a*, *-um*.  
*cui... inessent*: *cui* is dative after *inessent*, a compound of *esse*. *inessent* is of the indirect statement.
- 5–6 *vocem* is the object of *metuens* in line 6, and *esse* must be understood with statement introduced by *vocem*, viz. ‘fearing an utterance of Claudius’.
- 6 *ut... ferret*: a result clause ‘it was fated that... should endure...’.
- 7 *Antonia*: ablative of origin, ‘springing from Antonia’, i.e. ‘daughter of’.  
*avunculo Augusto*: ‘from the absolute’.
- 8 *eius*: i.e. Agrippina’s (husband). Note that although Agrippina is the subject used here, *Lepida (sibi)* is the subject of this clause.  
*multum* is accusative, showing the extent of the difference, ‘their beauty much different’.
- 9 *vitiis*: ablative of respect (or, rather, disrespect!); ‘they were rivals in respect *qua*, ‘any’ agrees with the neuter plural *prospera*, ‘any advantages’, not
- 10 *certamen acerrimum*: understand *erat*.
- 10–11 *an... praevaleret*: an alternative indirect question with *utrum* omitted by
- 11 *blandimentis ac largitionibus*: ablative of means, ‘by means of flattery and *devinciebat* (from *devincire*, ‘to bind’, not *devincere*, ‘to conquer’): this is the imperfect tense, ‘was beginning to bind’, because she did not get very far by Agrippina.
- 12 *dare*: *quibat*, ‘was able’ must be supplied from *nequibat*.

### Context and notes

- 1 *mutatio... portendi*: note the abstract noun ending in *-io*.  
*portendi*: cf. Chapter 43 for a list of portents.
- 3 *partus... fetum*: *variatio*, as both words mean ‘birth’.
- 4 *quaestore... consule*: these magistrates are in ascending order of importance *honorum*. In 81 BC, Sulla reformed the system, by which it was stipulated that a quaestor was 29, for a praetor 39, and for a consul 42, but under the Empire these qualifications were disregarded, for Octavian (Augustus) was given the consulship at 29 and Nero was given it at the age of 20; see Chapter 41.3.
- 5 *praecipuo pavor*: the alliteration of *p* emphasises the panic of Agrippina. *praecipuo* is an adjective with the prefix *prae-*.
- 6 *fatale... flagitia ferret*: further alliteration to emphasise the exact nature of the crimes, adultery of various wives. Claudius had divorced his first wife, Plautia, to marry Agrippina, and had his third wife, Messalina, executed (*puniret*), because she had publicised the details of his scandalous affairs; see the note on Chapter 25.1.  
*perdita*: this alliteration expresses Tacitus’s disgust over Agrippina’s actions.
- 7 *muliebribus causis*: two other reasons, which Tacitus does not give, are Messalina, Claudius’s third wife, and that Lepida, according to Suetonius, was in incest with her brother, Domitius Ahenobarbus, Agrippina’s husband.

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



*minore Antonia*: Tacitus is wrong, here; it was *Antonia maior*, the elder Lepida. Tacitus makes the same mistake in Book 4.44.

*avunculo Augusto*: see Appendix 2. Lepida was the daughter of the elder daughter of Octavia, Augustus's sister, so Augustus was Lepida's great-uncle.

- 8 *Gnaei*: i.e. Gnaeus Domitius Ahenobarbus, husband of Agrippina and father of Calpurnia. *forma aetnas*: as Agrippina and Lepida were young children of Augustus and Octavia, respectively, it is not surprising that their beauty and age were considered eternal.
- 9 *impudica, infamis, violata*: the three adjectives balance the three nouns that the first two nouns have with the prefix *in-*. *haud minus*: *haud* 'not', *minus* 'less', 'no less' = 'just as much'; see the note on 26.3.
- 10 *certamen acerrimum*: note the superlative; the bitterness of the conflict is emphasized by the alliteration of *c*, *r*, *m* and the assonance of *cer*.
- 11 *Lepida blandimentis ac largitionibus... truci... ac minaci Agrippina*: chiasmatic arrangement of attitudes framed by the names of the two rivals.
- 12 *dare imperium, tolerare imperitantem nequibat*: a neat epigram with polypersonification. The clause is very reminiscent of the earlier phrase to end the chapter in Tacitus's *Annales*, *imperii nisi imperasset*, '(by universal agreement) suitable for holding so long as it had been given it'.

### Activity

Why do you think Tacitus included a list of portents at the end of this chapter?

How do the portents affect Augustus's reign?

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 65: Narcissus voices his suspicions of

ceterum obiecta sunt quod coniugem principis devotionibus petivisset quod  
Calabriam servorum agminibus pacem Italiae turbaret. ob haec mors indicta,  
Narcisso, qui Agrippinam magis magisque suspectans prompsisse inter proximi  
perniciem, seu Britannicus rerum seu Nero poteretur. Nam ita de se meritum  
5 eius impenderet. convictam Messalinam et Silium pares iterum accusandi causa  
imperitaret; Britannico successore etiam principi metum: at novercae insidias  
maiores flagitio quam pudicitiam prioris coniugis reticuisset. quamquam  
nunc abesse. Noverca, ante adultero, ne quis ambigat decus pudorem corpus, cunctis  
haec atque talia dictitans amplecti Britannicum, robur aetatis quam maturum  
10 modo ad ipsum tendere manus, adolesceret, patris inimicos depelleret, matris  
ulcisceretur.

### Translation

However, charges were made that she had attacked the emperor's wife who  
was disturbing the peace of Italy because she had kept little control over the  
Calabria. For these charges, death was pronounced, although Narcissus on  
suspecting Agrippina more and more, was reported to have declared among  
there was certain ruin for him, whether Britannicus or Nero got control of  
deserved so well of him that he would lay down his life for the emperor's sake  
had been condemned; there were similar reasons for making accusations at  
throne; if Britannicus is the heir, the emperor has no fear: but because of the  
whole house was being destroyed, with greater scandal than if he had kept  
his former mistress. Noverca, not even immorality was now absent with her  
should do so. She regarded decency, modesty, the body, (in short), even  
Making these and similar remarks repeatedly, he embraced Britannicus, put  
now to the gods, now to Britannicus himself, that the strength of his youth  
possible, that he would drive out the enemies of his father, and even avenge

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *obiecta sunt* is an impersonal use, 'charges were made'.  
*coniugem* is Agrippina.  
*quod... petivisset*: the subject is Lepida, understood, from the previous chapter.  
used with *quod* when the reason was alleged, although Tacitus sometimes uses it  
when the reason was true.  
*devotionibus*: instrumental ablative.
- 2-8 *ob haec... habere*: the *causatio obliqua*, so the main verbs are in the  
clause. *habere* is in the subjunctive, apart from *ferebatur*.
- 2 *multum... insasante*: literally it means 'accusing much', but translate it as  
'putting up a fierce resistance'; *multum* is accusative of extent: cf. 64.8.
- 3-4 *certam sibi perniciem*: understand *esse* to complete the indirect statement.
- 4 *rerum*: *potior* takes an object in the genitive case.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- de se meritum Caesarem*: literally, 'Caesar had deserved of him', i.e. 'he  
 4–5 (*ita*) *ut... impenderet*': a result clause, 'to such an extent that he would  
*usui* is a predicative dative, 'for the benefit of'; the predicative dative is  
 of words, e.g. *praesidio*, 'as a protection for', *auxilio*, 'as a help to'. *eius*  
 6 *Britannico successore*: ablative absolute without a verb, as there was no  
 Latin; cf. 53.1–2 and 64.7. This construction is often used with *consilium*,  
 year, cf. 64.1. Here, the ablative *in* stands for a conditional clause  
*nullum principi metum*: *metum* stands *esse* with *principi*, which is a dative  
 to using *habere* to denote possession, 'the emperor has no fear'.  
 7 *reticuit*: the subject is Narcissus.  
*quamquam* means 'however, nevertheless', here, not 'although'.  
 8 *ne quis ambigat*: a purpose clause, 'lest anyone might doubt'. *quis* is often  
*regno*: ablative of comparison after *viliora*.  
*habere*, here, means 'regard, consider'. Understand *Agrippinam* as the  
 8–9 *amplecti... precari... tendere*: these are all historic infinitives; translate the  
 Narcissus as their subject.  
 9 *quam maturrimum*: with the superlative adjective or adverb, *quam* means  
 10 *ipsum*: i.e. Britannicus.  
 10–11 *adoleret... ulcisceretur* is an indirect petition dependent upon *tendere*  
 would grow up, etc.'

### Context and style notes

- 1 *obiectis*: Suetonius, Nero 7, states that Nero accused Lepida 'to please  
*principi*... *petivisset*: the alliteration of *p* (continued in *parum... per... p*  
 the assonance of *i*, may indicate Tacitus's disapproval of the charges.  
 1–2 *coercitis... agminibus*: enclosing order.  
 2 Calabria is the peninsula in SE Italy which forms the 'heel' of Italy.  
*servorum agminibus*: the use of *agmen*, which originally meant the army  
 large number of slaves, which shows that Lepida was very wealthy.  
 3 *Narcisso*: see the note on 25.1. He strongly opposed the charges against  
 mother of Messalina, whom Narcissus had supported.  
*prompsisse inter proximos*: the assonance of *pro-* is quite pronounced, po  
 danger of Narcissus's position, or the secret of his remarks.  
 3–4 *certam sibi perniciem*: in Chapter 7 Tacitus writes at some length on the  
 gave for Claudius's possible remarriage to Paetina, whereas Pallas had  
 marry Agrippina. When Agrippina was chosen, Narcissus's position  
 Agrippina's strong influence upon Claudius.  
 4 Britannicus was the natural heir to Claudius, as the son of Claudius and  
 5 *convictam Messalinam et Silium (esse)*: see the Introduction, page 4.  
 6 *nullum principi metum*: enclosing order, as if fear would embrace the emperor

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



*at novercae*: see the note on 43.6; here, *at* contrasts the possible future with the intrigues of Agrippina to get Nero as heir. Note that Tacitus does not call her 'stepmother' instead, her relationship to Britannicus. Stepmothers were cruel in the ancient world, hence Tacitus's choice of the word, here. Tacitus states that there are 21 stepmothers attacked in various extant Latin sources of wicked stepmothers in more recent stories, e.g. Snow White.

*novercae... convelli*: the frequency of *n* and *m* may be intentional to draw attention to there is a definite pattern, *n, n, m, n, n, n, n, n, m, n, n*.

- 7 *impudicitiam*: note the repetition of this word beginning with the prefix *prioris* (see the note on Messalina, the third wife; see the Introduction, page 4).
- 7–8 Tacitus may be guilty of inconsistency here, in attacking Agrippina for Chapter 7 that she only indulged in immorality when it was useful as a ruler (*nihil domi impudicum nisi dominationi expediret*). Tacitus accuses Pallas of seducing Agrippina, but he was probably influenced by Pliny's outrage in two letters we have read, in which Pliny describes Pallas as *caenum, sordes*, 'filth and dirt'. See also Wikipedia, 'Modern historians suggest that their relationship was sexual, but do not give any reference for this.
- 9 *haec atque talia*: Tacitus uses this phrase quite often at the end of speeches.
- 9–10 *amplecti Britannicum, robur... precari... tendere manus* is a double chiasm (verb, infinitive, infinitive, object).
- 10 *adulesceret, patris inimicos depelleret, matris*: double hendioteleuton (same words close to each other). *patris* is Claudius, *matris* is Messalina. The actual slayer was sent by Narcissus to kill her, so that *perpetratores* includes Narcissus as well as the emperor behind it all. Note the negative prefix *in-* in *tor*.
- 10–11 *patris... ulcisceretur*: contrast with the previous chiasmi, Tacitus ends with a new accusative (repeated).

### Activity

In Chapters 64 and 65 can you detect any weaknesses in Agrippina's character?  
In your opinion, was Narcissus a good judge of character?

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



## Chapter 66: Agrippina makes arrangements to poison

in tanta mole curarum valetudine adversa corripitur, refovendisque viribus non  
aquarum Sinuessam pergit. tum Agrippina, sceleris olim certa et oblatae occasus  
ministrorum egens, de genere veneni consultavit, ne repentino et praecipiti facere  
et tabidum delegisset, ne admotus supremis Claudius cuncto intellecto ad amicum  
5 exquisitum aliquid placebat, quod turbaret, ne et mortem differret. delictum  
vocabulo Locusta, nuper veneficiis damnata et diu inter instrumenta regni habita  
paratum virus, cuius antea in epaspadonibus fuit Halotus, inferre epulas et experiri

### Translation

Amid such a great mound of anxieties, Narcissus was seized by ill health, in  
order to recover his strength with the gentleness of the climate and the health of the sea.  
Then Agrippina, firmly fixed on the crime long ago and quick to seize the opportunity  
needing assistants, consulted about the type of poison, to avoid the deed by a sudden  
swift (type); if she chose a slow, wasting (type), (she feared) lest Claudius, who  
having perceived the trickery, might return to love of his son. She decided on a slow  
(type) which would confuse the mind and delay death. An expert in such matters was  
Locusta, recently condemned for poison, and kept for a long time among the instruments  
of the expertise of that woman the venom was prepared, whose supplier was Halotus,  
who was accustomed to bring in the banquets and test them by tasting.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *valetudine adversa*: instrumental dative.  
*corripitur*: the subject is Narcissus understood from the previous chapter.  
*refoven*: 'refreshes'. *viribus*: dative of purpose; cf. 41.1–2. Note the use of the gerund  
which the noun is attracted into the case of the gerund (dative), and the  
gender of the noun (feminine plural).  
*mollitia... salubritate*: ablative of means, the means by which he would recover.
- 2 *Sinuessam*: accusative of motion towards; names of towns do not take  
motion towards. Countries, however, take *ad* or *in*.
- 3 *ministrorum*: genitive after *egens*; verbs of filling and wanting are followed by  
*egestas* in 43.2.  
*ne... proderetur*: a verb of fearing is probably understood.  
*repentino et praecipiti*: understand *genere* or *veneni* from the main clause.
- 5 *turbaret... differret*: the subjunctives are gerundive, as the poison had to be prepared  
and remain undetected.
- 6 *veneficii damnata*: 'condemned', as accusing and condemning take a genitive of the  
crime. *habita*: 'retained', as in 65.8, or 'retained'.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 1 *Sinuessani*: Sinuessa was situated on the coast north of Naples. There were villas outside the city, which, according to Dio, were good for gout.
- 1–2 *mollitia caeli et salubritate aquarum*: balance (ablative, genitive, repeated).
- 2 *pergit*: Tacitus uses the historic present to make the scene more vivid.  
*oblatae occasionis*: the opportunity was offered because Narcissus was a friend of Claudius of Rome.
- 2–3 *sceleris... facinus*: both words refer to the proposed poisoning.
- 4 *filiis*: i.e. Claudius's sons.
- 5 *exquisitum*, literally 'sought out', is in an emphatic position at the beginning of the sentence, stressing the importance of finding a poison which would not be recognised by the doctor, of a nature, would confuse Claudius's mind (*turbaret mentem*) and not kill him immediately (*turbaret mentem et mortem differret*: chiasmus (verb, object, object, verb) and homoioteleuton, -ret, -tem, -tem, -ret).
- deligitur*: after a number of past tenses describing the necessary preparations, Tacitus uses the historic present to describe the subsequent action.
- 6 *Locusta* (or *Lucusta*) was a noted poisoner, whom Nero used later to poison his mother. In this dangerous profession, she managed to survive Nero, as did Halotus, by the way, not by Nero's successor, Galba.
- 7 *virus*: *variatio*, as *veneni* was used for 'poison' in line 3.  
*minister*: Tacitus is guilty of inconsistency here. Having stated in line 3 that Locusta had no assistants (*nec ministerium agens*), she now employs Halotus as an assistant.  
*exploratus*: Locusta was a clever choice, because, as official taster, she was responsible for food, to taste it, pronounce it free of poison, then hand it to Claudius (and his family, who were possibly still here!) widely used in the Middle East, where the rulers favoured such a role for a notable at Rome.

### Activity

How does Tacitus, by what he says and by his use of language, show Agricola as a man of action and calculating?

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED





## Chapter 67: The poisoning of Claudius

adeoque cuncta mox pernotuere ut temporum illorum scriptores prodiderint  
venenum, nec vim medicaminis statim intellectam, socordiane an Claudii vino  
subvenisse videbatur. igitur exterrita Agrippina et, quando ultima timebatur  
invidia provisam iam sibi Xenophontis medici conscribere adhibet. ille tamen  
5 adiuvalet, pinnam rapido veneno inlitam, et ille generas demisisse creditur, haec  
incipi cum periculo, peragi cum praetio.

### Translation

Soon everything became so well known that writers of those times have re-  
poured into a tasty mushroom and the power of the poison was not immediate  
because of Claudius's indolence or intoxication; the bowels seemed to have  
time and to have given (some) relief. Therefore, Agrippina was terrified, and  
disregarding her hatred of present circumstances, she employed the collusion  
which she had already provided for. He, as if he was helping the efforts of  
to have put a feather smeared with a quick poison down his throat, knowing  
crimes are begun with danger and completed with a reward.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *ut... prodiderint*: result clause, signposted by *adeoque*. Note that the Rule  
to result clauses, as the main verb, *pernotuere* is historic, but the subject
- 1-2 *infusum... intellectam*: supply *esse* to complete the indirect statements.
- 2 *socordiane... vinolentia*: 'a' coratives inside an indirect question with
- 3 *exterrita*: past participle of *terrere*, main verb, here, in view of the following *et*, so under
- 3-4 *spretam... invidia* is an ablative absolute. Its meaning is somewhat obscure  
masculine or neuter. It might just mean 'scorning the hatred of those  
did not care about her reputation, as Allcock neatly puts it, 'It was better  
murderer than executed as an unsuccessful one.', but, much more likely  
her hatred of present circumstances', i.e. her hatred was not enough to  
enough, so she resorts to poison. As elsewhere, because of his desire for  
obscure.
- 4 *provisam... sibi*: 'provided for by her', *sibi* being dative of the agent instead  
*nisus* is accusative plural of the noun *nisus*, 'effort', not the past participle

### Context and style notes

- 1 *temporum illorum scriptores prodiderint*: this is evidence that Tacitus has  
this event; see the Introduction, page 6.
- 1-2 *infusum... veneno*: enclosing order; cf. *pinnam... inlitam*, line 5. Also,  
*intellectam* forms a chiasmus, which includes alliteration of *v... m* to emphasise  
the poison.
- 2-3 *simul soluta aious subvenisse*: the sibilance and assonance of *u* may well  
the state of the bowels!

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- 4 *Xenophontis*: although most authorities agree that Claudius died as a result of the poisoning, only Tacitus mentions Xenophon's part in the poisoning. However, Tacitus suggests that he was rewarded handsomely for the poisoning.
- 5 *pinna... demisisse*: it was common practice in Roman banquets to insert a feather into the mouth to make the banqueter vomit, in order to make room for more food, so it was not unusual with smearing the feather with poison; only Tacitus mentions this feast. The phrase *haud ignarus* 'not ignorant' or 'knowing very well', is an example of *haud ignarus*.
- 6 *incipi cum periculo, regnum cum praemio*: a neatly balanced alliterative construction.

### Activity

How far does Tacitus make this chapter an intense piece of narrative?

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 68: Agrippina closes the palace to conceal

vocabatur interim senatus votaque pro incolumitate principis consules et sacerdotes  
iam exanimis vestibibus et fomentis obtegeretur, dum quae res forent firmando  
componuntur. iam primum Agrippina, velut dolore victa et solacia conquirens  
Britannicum, veram paterni oris effigiem appellare ac variis artibus demorari  
5 Antoniam quoque et Octaviam sorores eius retinere, et cunctos aditus custodiri  
vulgabat ire in melius valetudinem principis, quo miles bona in spe ageret terrore  
monitis Chaldeorum advertaret.

### Translation

Meanwhile the Senate was summoned, and the consuls and priests announced the emperor, although he was already lifeless and covered with garments which were (necessary) for the strengthening of Nero's power were being applied. Agrippina, as if overcome by grief and seeking consolation, held Britannicus as a true image of his father's face and by various devices delaying him from leaving, detained Antonia and Octavia, his sisters, and had shut off all entrances with the hope of announcing that the health of the emperor was getting better, so that the soldiers might await the favourable moment in accordance with the orders of the Chaldeans.

### Grammar and translation notes

- 1 *cum* means 'although', here, as it is a concessive clause.
- 2 *exanimis* is nominative, agreeing with *princeps* understood from the previous sentence. *res* is the subject of *forent* but is attracted into the relative clause *quae res forent*. *forent* = subjunctive: the subjunctive is used as it is part of the concessive clause, however, about the correct reading of this clause.  
*firmando... imperio*: dative of purpose.
- 3 *componuntur*: for the use of the present indicative with *dum*, see 43.2.
- 3–4 *tenere... appellare... demorari*: historic infinitives; cf. 42.5.
- 4 *variis artibus*: ablative of means.
- 5 *eius* = 'Nero's'.
- 6–7 *quo... advertaret*: purpose clause; see the note on 41.1–2.
- 6 *miles*: the singular is sometimes used in a collective sense for all the soldiers/guards outside the palace, cf. Chapter 58.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Context and style notes

- 1 *vocabatur... senatus... consules et sacerdotes nuncupabant*: chiasmus (verb first) but not very effective owing to the number of other words between.
- 2 *forent firmando*: the alliteration is probably deliberate to emphasise the force as Tacitus could have used *essent* instead of *forent*.
- 3–4 *tenere amplexu Britannicum*: probably a deliberate echo of 65.9, *amplecti* Narcissus's embrace of Britannicus is genuine, contrasting with the Agrippina, intending to kill Britannicus later, attempts to hide her guilt.
- 5 *sorores* *et alii*: they were stepsisters, as Antonia was the daughter of Octavia, the daughter of Claudius and Messalina; see Appendix 2.
- cunctos... custodiis clauserat, crebroque*: the alliteration of *c* is very pronounced, the slamming of the doors in order to prevent anyone from leaving or taken by Tanaquil to prevent news of the death of Tarquinius Priscus and Fumeaux mentions a similar move by Livia, the wife of Augustus, mentions in Book 1.5.
- 7 *Chaldaeorum*: see the note on 52.2.

### Activity

'Claudius died because he was a weak emperor.' How far do you agree?

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Chapter 69: Nero is proclaimed emperor

tunc medio diei tertium ante Idus Octobres, foribus palatii repente diductis, cō-  
egreditur ad cohortem, quae more militiae excubiis adest. ibi monente praefecto  
inditur lecticae. dubitavisse quosdam ferunt, respectantes rogitanesque ubi  
in diversum auctore quae offerebantur secuti sunt. in his quoque castris Nero et  
5 praefatus, promisso donativo ad exemplum patris de largitionis, imperator cō-  
militum secuta patrum consensu, ne recitatum est apud provincias. caelestes  
decernuntur et funus solenne perinde ac divo Augusto celebratur, aemulan-  
Liviae magnae sententiam. testamentum tamen haud recitatum, ne antepositus filius  
invidia animos vulgi turbaret.

### Translation

Then, in the middle of the day on the third day before the Ides of October,  
suddenly drawn apart, and Nero, accompanied by Burrus, went out to the  
accordance with military practice. There, on the commander's advice, when  
favourable cries, he was placed in a litter. They say that some hesitated, looking  
repeatedly where Britannicus was: soon, as no one was giving contrary advice  
being offered. Nero, carried into the camp and having spoken words suitable  
promised a largesse after the example of his father's grant, was saluted as emperor.  
He followed the soldiers' decision, and there was no hesitation in the provinces  
decreed for Claudius and the funeral rites were celebrated just as (they were)  
Agrippina rivalling the splendour of her grandmother Livia. His will was  
lest the fact that the stepson had been preferred to his (natural) son might  
crowd because of the hatred and unpopularity.

### Grammar translation notes

- 1 *medio*: ablative of time when; in Latin, there were two ways of expressing time: as an adjective, *medio die*, or as a noun with a dependent genitive (*diei*), as in *foribus... diductis*: ablative absolute, as is *comitante Burro*.
- 2 *more militiae*: this probably refers to the duty roster, but Tacitus is not sure. *excubiis*: dative after *adest*, a compound of *sum*.
- 3 *lecticae*: dative after the compound verb *inditur* instead of *in* + accusative. Note that *dare* when compounded with prepositions usually means 'put' rather than 'give'.  
*ubi... esset*: indirect question.
- 5 *sententiam*: originally, the word meant 'opinion'; then, as senators were asked for their opinion, it came to mean 'decision', its meaning here.
- 8–9 *ne... timentis*: purpose clause.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



- ## Activity

Page 52 of 66

## Exam-type Questions

### Paper 1

NB Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked

Read the following passages and answer the questions.

additum nomine eius donativum rariis, congiarium plebei, et ludicro circi  
vulgi studiis edebatur. **5** *Et* *non* *in* *praetexta*, Nero triumphali veste tra  
populo *et* *in* *imperatorio*, illum puerili habitu, ac perinde fortuna  
simul *et* *curatorum* *tribunorumque* sortem Britannici miserabantur,  
speciem honoris; etiam libertorum si quis incorrupta fide, depellitur tali  
Nero Britannicum nomine, ille Domitium salutavere. quod ut discordiae  
questu ad maritum defert...

nondum tamen summa moliri Agrippina audebat, ni praetoriarum cohort  
Lusius Geta et Rufrius Crispinus, quos Messalinae memores et liberis eius  
10 distrahi cohortes ambitu duorum et, si ab uno regerentur, intentiorem for  
uxore,

- (a) *additum... occasione* (lines 1–5): how does Tacitus bring out the difference  
Claudius's character?

Make **three** points *et* *in* *your* *answer* *with* *reference* *to* *the* *Latin*

- (b) *multo* (lines 6–7): what was Agrippina's complaint?

- (c) *nondum... uxore* (lines 8–11):

- (i) Why did Agrippina really want to get rid of Geta and Crispinus?  
(ii) What **two** reasons did Agrippina state for getting rid of Geta and

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



sed perfecto spectaculo apertum aquarum iter. incuria operis manifesta  
 lacus ima vel media. eoque tempore interiecto altius effossi specus, et con  
 multitudini gladiatorum spectaculum editur, inditis pontibus pedestrem  
 convivium effluvio lacus adpositum magna formidine cunctos adfecit, qui  
 prorumpens proxima trahebat, convulsis ulterioribus. Intus fragore et sonitu  
 Agrippina trepidatione principis usa minis, rui operis Narcissum incusat  
 nec ille reticet, impotentiam, non propter nimiasque spes eius arguens.

D. Iunio O. Haterius, sedecim annos natus Nero Octaviam Caesaris  
 accepit. Ille studiis honestis et eloquentiae gloria enitesceret, causa Ilie  
 Troia demissum et Iuliae stirpis auctorem Aeneam aliaque haud procul fa  
 executus perpetrat, ut Ilienses omni publico munere solverentur.

(d) *spectaculo* (line 1):

- (i) To what does this refer?
- (ii) Where did it take place?
- (iii) What was the cause of the disaster?

(e) *eoque... arguens* (lines 2–7): how does Tacitus make this scene vivid and  
 Make **four** points and support your answer with reference to the Latin

(f) Translate *utque... scelus* (lines 9–11).

\*(g) How does Tacitus portray the characters of Agrippina and Claudius in  
 which you have read? Is he fair to both?

COPYRIGHT  
 PROTECTED





NB Quality of extended response will be assessed in questions marked

Read the following passages and answer the questions.

M. Asinio M'. Acilio consulibus mutationem rerum in detestis portendi cognit  
signa ac tentoria militum igne caelesti arserunt: festis Capitolii examen apium  
hominum partus et suis fetum edidit: praecipitrum unguis inessent. ... sed  
5 metuens, a Claudiis ad templum temulentus iecerat, fatale sibi ut coniugum fl  
Antonia genita, avunculo Augusto, Agrippinae sobrina prior ac Gnaei mariti es  
claritudinem credebat. nec forma aetas opes multum distabant; et utraque in  
haud minus vitiis aemulabantur quam si qua ex fortuna prospera acceperant  
acerrimum, amita potius an mater apud Neronem praevaleret: nam Lepida b  
10 iuvenilem animum devinciebat, truci contra ac minaci Agrippina, quae filio d  
imperitantem nequibat.

- (a) (i) *crebris prodigiis* (line 1): what **four** omens were reported?  
(ii) What did these omens portend?
- (b) *sed in praecipuo pavore Agrippinae* (line 4): why was Agrippina particu
- (c) *nec forma* ... Agrippinae (lines 7–10): how does Tacitus bring out the chara  
and L  
Make three points and support your answer with reference to the Latin
- (d) *Agrippina... nequibat* (lines 10–11): what does Tacitus say about Agripp

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



tum Agrippina, sceleris olim certa et oblatae occasionis propera nec minus  
 veneni consultavit, ne repentino et praecipiti facinus proderetur; si lentus  
 admotus supremis Claudius et dolo intellecto ad amorem filii rediret, ex  
 quod turbaret mentem et mortem differret. deligitur artifex talium vocal  
 5 veneficii damnata et diu inter instrumenta regni habita. eius mulieris ing  
 minister e spadonibus fuit Halotus, inferre epum et explorare gustu soli  
 adeoque cuncta mox peragueret. temporum illorum scriptores prodid  
 boleto venenu. in medicaminis statim intellectam, socordiane an  
 soluta subvenisse videbatur. igitur exterrita Agrippina et, quando u  
 10 praesentium invidia provisam iam sibi Xenophontis medici conscientiam  
 nisus evomentis adiuicaret, pinnam rapido veneno inlitam faucibus eius  
 ignarus summa scelera incipi cum periculo, peragi cum praemio.

- (e) Translate *tum Agrippina... rediret* (lines 1–3).
- (f) Why was Halotus chosen to administer the poison?
- (g) *adeoque... praemio* (lines 7–12): how does Tacitus make his account of the  
 and interesting?
- \*(h) ‘Book 12 of the *Annals* is particularly interesting.’ How far would you agree?

#### Other essays

- ‘A dull account of a dull emperor.’ How far is this a fair assessment of
- ‘Tales of corruption.’ How far is this a fair assessment of *Annals* XII?
- ‘Tacitus understands the human mind so well.’ How far do you agree
- ‘Tacitus is cold and factual.’ How far do you agree with this statement

**COPYRIGHT  
 PROTECTED**



# Indicative Answers

## Paper 1

- (a) Refer to the OCR marking grid to mark this question. Award up to 8 marks.
- Balance of *donativum militi, congiarium plebei* shows how Claudius treated the army and the people. Similarly, *Britannicus in praetexta et triumphali veste* shows how he presented himself. This is accentuated by *in aetate decore imperatorio, illum puerili habitu* by the contrast between the emperor and the young emperor... *puerili habitu*.
- The character of Claudius is brought out by his treatment of those who were loyal to Britannicus, e.g. *remoti fictis causis et alii per speciem honoris* 'they were removed on reasons or pretended promotion', which is emphasised by the *variation* followed by a prepositional phrase and the position of *fictis*.
- libertorum si quis incorrupta fide, depellitur tali occasione*: Claudius gets rid of freedmen (*incorrupta fide*), emphasised by the juxtaposition of (*incorrupta fide*).
- (b) Britannicus called Domitius by his former name Domitius, instead of Domitianus.
- (c) (i) They had been loyal to Messalina (1) and devoted to her children (1).  
(ii) The cohorts would be divided (in their loyalty) (1) by the ambition of Domitian.  
Discipline would be tighter (1) if the cohorts were ruled by one person.
- (d) (i) The naval battle.  
(ii) Fucine Lake.  
(iii) The lake was not deep enough.
- (e) Refer to the OCR 8 mark grid to mark this question.
- Brings the crowd back again – position of *contrahendae*.
- Contrast of the crowd with the gladiators – *multitudini gladiatorum*.
- editur* – historic present makes scene more vivid.
- pontibus pedestrem ad pugnam* – alliteration of *p* may denote Tacitus's disapproval.
- convivium effluvio lacus adpositum* – enclosing order and juxtaposition of *adpositum* emphasises the danger of putting the banquet near the overflow.
- magna formidine* emphasises the panic.
- prorumpens proxima*: assonance of *pro* emphasises the water bursting forth.
- fragore et sonitu* – the noise is emphasised by using synonyms.
- exterritis*: the crowd are frightened out of their skins.
- (f) Refer to the OCR marking grid to mark this question.
- And so when he might shine forth with honourable pursuits and a reputation had been undertaken a case involving the Trojans, he eloquently related that the story of the fall from Troy, that Aeneas was the founder of the Julian clan, and other legends removed from myths, and achieved the release of the Trojans from all

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**



\*(g) Refer to the OCR 10 mark grid to mark this question.

The Latin is quoted for ease of reference. It is not expected of the learner to know the Latin.  
Plenty of examples needed to obtain high marks.

### Agrippina

**Domineering and ambitious** – gets Claudius to do a number of things that he takes umbrage when Britannicus does not like. Domitius's new name is taken out of a molehill over what is nearly a slip of the tongue; she arranges for Nero and gets rid of Calpurnia and Crispinus in order to appoint her son the Praetorian Prefect; 'She was not yet aiming at supreme power' (42) but she achieves it; status 'as if by right' (42). Keeps death of Claudius secret (68).

**Arrogance** – Tacitus mentions the colony she founded – a good point to mention after herself. Unauthorised ride into the Capitol. Gets Senate to grant her a triumph.

**Nagging** – *multo questu*, 'with much complaining'. She complains also that she is spurned by the public (*spem quippe adoptionem*, Chapter 41); she gets Claudius 'more by threats than by prayers' (42). Gets Claudius to remove some of the alleged wickedness by saying it would ruin the state, in order to get her son appointed (41).

**Cruelty** – destroys Lepida simply out of female jealousy (64).

### Claudius

**Weakness** – clearly under Agrippina's thumb: he 'willingly yielded' to her. Changes his mind more because of Agrippina's threats than because he is influenced by Agrippina, he shows preference for Nero in Chapter 25. He parades him 'in triumphal garb' at the expense of his natural son 'in order to have to put up with the scandals of his wives and then to punish the emperor'.

**Proneness to bribery to strengthen his position** – 'Donative to troops' (41). Gives a gladiatorial show (41). Arranges draining of Fucine Lake in order to have a banquet (56–57). The inclusion of and length Tacitus devotes to this shows his desire to portray Claudius in a bad light, for Suetonius devotes only one sentence to it.

**Cruelty** – he 'removes' those officers of the Praetorian Guard who were loyal to Britannicus and exiles or executes some of Nero's tutors, undoubtedly with Agrippina's approval.

Is Agrippina merely doing what most mothers would do for their children? Is she poisoning their husbands! Tacitus often chooses not to mention her. *noverca* several times (stepmothers were often regarded as evil in the ancient world). Tacitus accuses her of adultery with Pallas, though Suetonius does not mention it. Her character is clouded by having lived under the reign of the monster Nero.

### Drunkenness (67)

NB Credit should be given for references to chapters and authors only.

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



- (a) (i) The soldiers' tents and standards were set on fire

Swarm of bees settled on the Capitol

Men with two bodies were born

Pig was born with a hawk's talons

- (ii) A change for the worse

- (b) She had heard Claudius saying it was fated for him (1) to endure and of his (1).

- (c) Refer to the OCR marking grid to mark this question. Award up to

They were not much different in beauty, age and wealth – asyndeton

Both were shameless, infamous and violent – asyndeton of *impudica*,

The three adjectives balance the three nouns.

Very bitter contest between them – use of superlative *acerrimum*.

In order to win over Britannicus, Lepida used flattery and bribes, but threatening – the two nouns balance the two adjectives.

Chiasmus of *Lepida blandimentis... minaci Agrippina* emphasises difference between Lepida and Agrippina.

- (d) She could make him emperor / give him more power (1) but could not be emperor (1).

- (e) Refer to the OCR 5 marking grid to mark this question.

Then Agrippina was firmly fixed on the crime long ago and quick to seize the opportunity. Needing assistants, consulted about the type of poison, to avoid the danger of sudden, swift (type); if she chose a slow, wasting (type), (she feared) lest she might lose her last years and having perceived the trickery, might return to love of her husband.

- (f) He took in the meals and tasted them first.

- (g) Refer to the OCR 8 mark grid to mark this question.

Reference to contemporary writers – *temporum illorum scriptores*.

Mushroom imbued with poison – chiasmic arrangement of *infusum de*

Reasons why Claudius did not notice it – indolence or drunk.

Sibilance of description of loose bowels.

Agrippina terrified – position of *exterrita*

Position of *provisam* – emphasis on previous planning.

Juxtaposition of *et* in *conscientia* emphasises close cooperation.

Why the poison was not detected – normal practice at banquets to use for the purpose of thus having room for more food.

*pinnam rapido veneno inlitam* – chiasmus (AbBa).

Xenophon is very aware of the danger of what he was doing – litotes

Balance of closing statement (and alliteration of *p*) – *incipi cum periculo*

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



\*(h) Refer to the OCR 10 mark grid to mark this question.

The Latin is quoted for ease of reference. It is not expected of the learner to translate.  
Plenty of examples needed to obtain high marks.

NB Learners should bear in mind that what is dull to them might be of interest to the audience for whom Tacitus was writing, e.g. names of consuls or of members of their clan, geographical details relating to places close to their home.

Dull sections?

Details of Nero's adoption – first known adoption into the Claudian family.  
Have been interesting to members of the Claudian clan.

Prosecution of Vitellius

Corn supply

Nero's advocacy (58)

Cruelty of Agrippina in destroying Lepida?

Narcissus's speech

Accession of Nero

Interesting details?

Similarity of Agrippina's and Lepida's characters

Contrasting characters of Agrippina and Claudius interesting; details

Poisoning of Claudius interesting, given the modern appeal of murder

Draining and overflow of the Fens interesting

Pity for Britannia's treatment – deprived of the services of slaves  
stepmother's hypocrisy (*intellegens falsi*) (26)

Prodigies

INSPECTION COPY

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Appendix 1: Augustus and his plans for a successor

Augustus was very keen to ensure that the position of emperor continued. The appointment of Augustus's heir seemed to be an appointment with death! I have provided a summary of the various plans Augustus made, with a table of the complicated intermarriages of the Julio-Claudian family in Appendix 2.

- 23 BC Augustus, believing that he was about to die, handed his signet ring and *imperium proconsulare* over to Agrippa, the provinces controlled by the emperor. Agrippa had previously marked out Agrippa as his heir. However, apparently he had married Agrippa's daughter Julia to Marcellus, which Agrippa took as a sign that he was his preferred successor, but Marcellus died shortly afterwards.
- 21 BC Agrippa married Julia, a fruitful marriage which produced three sons, Agrippa Postumus, and two daughters, Julia and Agrippina.
- 17 BC Augustus adopted Gaius and Lucius as his sons, thus marking the end of the Julio-Claudian family.
- 12 BC Agrippa died.
- 11 BC Julia was married off (again!) to Tiberius, who was forced by Augustus to marry her. Tiberius was very resentful of this.
- 2 BC Julia was banished for immorality.
- AD 2 Lucius died.
- AD 4 Gaius died. Augustus adopted Tiberius as his son and marked him with *tribunicia potestas* and *imperium proconsulare* for 10 years. Augustus also adopted Germanicus, his nephew, as his son and heir, although Tiberius was the preferred heir.
- AD 7 Julia, the daughter of Agrippa and Julia, was banished, together with her son, for immorality. This left only Tiberius, who eventually became emperor, in which Julia died.

INSPECTION COPY

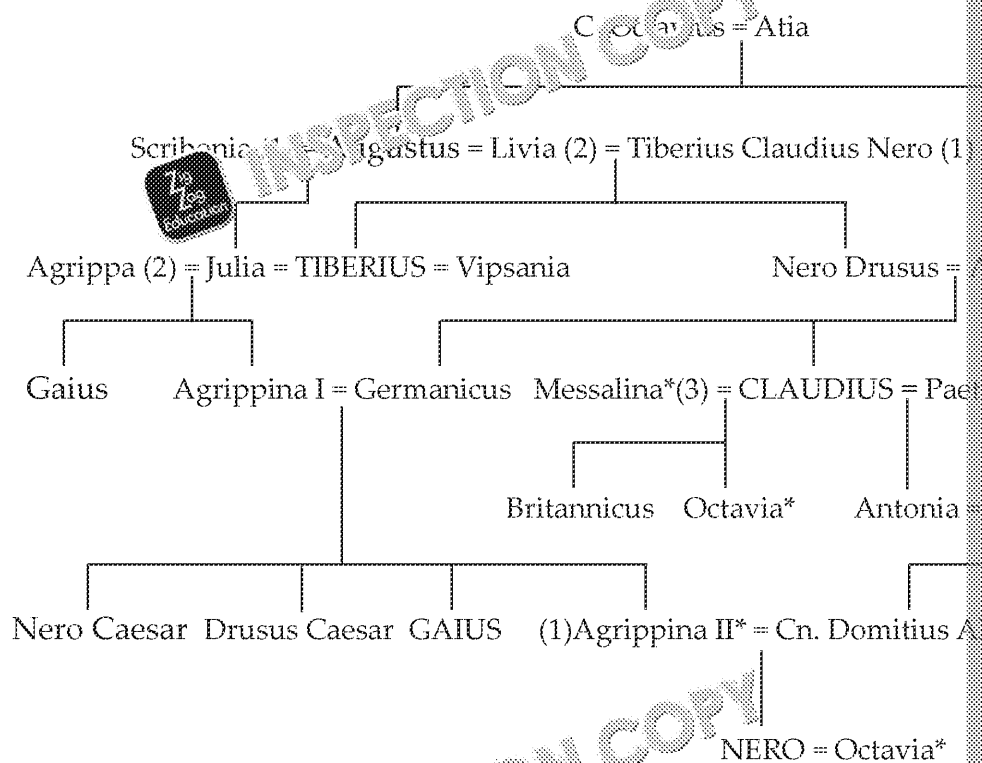
COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED

INSPECTION COPY



## Appendix 2: The Julio–Claudian family

**NB** Some members have been omitted for simplicity's sake. The table shows relationships were because of the number of marriages! The Emperors are in the table see the Penguin translation of the *Annals* or Cary's *History of Rome*. W



Numbers in **bold** indicate the first or second marriage. \*denotes the same

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**





## Appendix 3: Glossary of Grammatical and Stylistic Terms with

NB References are to the chapters and line numbers; the number of the chapter numbers are in normal font. References to grammatical terms are to be found in 'Grammar and translation notes', linguistic terms under the heading 'Context'. If a particular grammatical reference has an asterisk, it means that the reference is to a term and vice versa, as the point has more relevance to that section. If the examples, I have inserted 'etc.'.

### Grammatical terms

NB Simple cases, e.g. direct and indirect object, possessive genitive and

Cases		
The Accusative	accusative of extent	the accusative limits the action of a verb to
	accusative of motion	the accusative is used without a preposition to denote the names of towns, <i>domus</i> , <i>rus</i> and <i>humus</i> (66.2)
The Genitive Case	genitive after adjectives or verbs	certain adjectives and verbs take an object in the genitive (52.2; 65.4; 66.2)
	genitive of charge	the charge with which one is charged goes into the genitive
	genitive of definition	the genitive is used to define something more precisely
	genitive of description	originally, the genitive was used to describe a person or thing while the ablative was used to describe an action. However, the distinction became blurred and the genitive was used for both (42.4)
	objective genitive	used to express the object of the verbal idea, e.g. <i>odium laboris</i> (= <i>odi laborem</i> ), 'my hatred of work'
The Dative Case	partitive genitive	used to denote the whole of which something is a part, e.g. 'some of the soldiers' (41.8; 43.2, 4; 56.10; 57.2)
	dative after verbs	(i) <b>Compound verbs:</b> the dative is used to denote the person to whom the action is directed (69.2) and sometimes instead of a preposition to denote the meaning of a compound verb. This is more common than in prose. (43.6; 52.2; 59.2; 64.2; 66.2) (ii) <b>Simple verbs or adjectives:</b> certain verbs and adjectives take an object in the dative case, e.g. <i>impero</i> , 'I command'
	dative of motion	the dative is often used in poetry, instead of the accusative, to express motion towards, e.g. <i>facile est descendere ad inferos</i> 'descent to the underworld is easy'. However, the accusative is also used (41.1-2, 5; 57.2; 66.1; 68.2)
	dative of possession	the dative is used to express the person to whom something belongs. It is usually found with the verb 'to be', e.g. <i>liber est</i> (26.5; 52.4)
	dative of purpose	the dative is sometimes used to express purpose, e.g. <i>ad auxilium</i> 'to the aid' (41.1-2, 5; 57.2; 66.1; 68.2)
The Ablative Case	ablative of instrument	used to express the purpose behind an action, e.g. <i>ad auxilium</i> 'to help' (65.4)
	ablative of agent	used to express the person or thing by which an action is performed, e.g. <i>ab eo</i> 'by him' (41.1-2, 5; 57.2; 66.1; 68.2)

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



The Ablative Case	ablative absolute	the use of a participle and noun instead of (42.3; 53.1–2; 57.1, 2; 64.7; 65.6, etc.)
	ablative of attendant circumstances	similar to the ablative absolute, but without a participle
	ablative of cause	the ablative expresses the reason for an action, e.g. <i>Neronis</i> – ‘because of hatred of Nero’ (26.2; 58.1; 64.9, etc.)
	ablative of comparison	this is used after a comparative adjective or adverb to express the object of the comparison, e.g. <i>fortius</i> (65.8)
	ablative of manner	the ablative is used to express the way in which something is done (41.10)
	ablative of means	the ablative is used to express the means by which something is done; it is very similar to the instrumental ablative
	ablative of measure of difference	the ablative is used to express by how much something is different from another, e.g. <i>multo post</i> , ‘much later’ (25.5; 58.1; 64.9)
	ablative of origin	the ablative is used to express the origin of something, e.g. ‘the origin of a goddess’ (53.4; 64.7)
	ablative of place	the ablative is used to express the place where an action takes place, usually with a preposition, e.g. <i>humi</i> and the names of small islands and rivers
	ablative of respect	this expresses the point of view from which something is done (25.5; 59.1; 64.9)
	ablative of separation	this is used after verbs or adjectives, e.g. <i>separatus</i>
	ablative of time	the ablative is used to express the time when something happens (58.1; 64.9, etc.)
	after verbs and adjectives	many verbs and adjectives take the ablative case
	instrumental ablative	this expresses the instrument or means by which something is done; usually found after passive verbs, e.g. <i>gladio</i> ‘with a sword’ (42.10–11; 52.5; 58.4; 65.1; 65.6)
The Locative Case		the locative is a separate case, though it uses the same endings as the other cases; in the first declension singular it is the genitive, e.g. <i>Romae</i> , at Rome; in the plural it is the ablative, e.g. <i>Athenis</i> , at Athens (58.5)
Connecting Relative		the use of the relative pronoun rather than a separate sentence to the previous one (26.2; 42.8)

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



Verbs		
Gerund + Gerundive	gerundival attraction	the noun is attracted into the case into the number and gender of the
	gerundive of obligation	used to express what <u>should</u> be done
Moods		
Indicative	<i>dum</i>	<i>dum</i> is formed by the present indicative and the action of the <i>dum</i> clause
	historic present	the present indicative or infinitive tense to make the passage more vivid (9, 11; 52.1, etc.); <b>infinitive</b> (42.5; 65.1, etc.)
	impersonal verbs	Tacitus is fond of using verbs impersonally (43.2, 5, 6, 7; 58.5; 65.1, etc.)
Infinitive	indirect statement	a statement which becomes indirect after a previous verb of saying, thinking, etc. The verb is put into the infinitive (25.4; 65.1, etc.)
Participles	Tacitus often used participles as nouns: (Introduction, p. 8; 42.1, etc.)	
Subjunctive	causal clauses	these denote the reason for an action
	concessive clauses	clauses introduced by 'although' in the subjunctive is used after verbs introduced by <i>ne</i> and negative fear
	fearing clauses	this denotes the action of a type of fear (66.5)
	generic subjunctive	a command or petition which becomes indirect after a previous verb of ordering, asking, etc. (10–11)
	indirect command	a question which becomes indirect after a previous verb of asking (why), knowing, etc. (64.10–11; 69.3)
	indirect question	a clause which expresses the purpose of an action (41.1–2; 56.1–2, 3; 58.2; 65.8, etc.)
	purpose clause	the subjunctive is used to express the result of an action (26.3; 58.4; 64.6; 65.4; 66.1, etc.)
	result (or consecutive) clause	the verbs in subordinate clauses within an indirect statement change to the subjunctive ( <i>oratio obliqua</i> )

COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED



## Stylistic terms

<b>abstract nouns:</b>	(a) Tacitus often uses an abstract noun + genitive in an agreement with a noun to throw emphasis onto the abstract noun, e.g. <i>altitudinem tectorum</i> , 'the height of the buildings', rather than <i>alta tecta</i> , 'the tall buildings' (56.7) (b) other uses of abstract nouns (Introduction, p. 8, 4)
<b>alliteration:</b>	the repetition of the same letter or consonantal sound at the beginning of connected words (25.5; 41.11, 12; 42.10–11; 43.1, 3, etc.)
<b>assonance:</b>	the repetition of the same vowel sound in adjacent words (25.5; 41.11, 12; 42.10–11; 43.1, 3, etc.)
<b>balance:</b>	two or more phrases placed in the same order, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> is the opposite of chiasmus (41.4, 6; 42.10; 52.6–7; 64.1, 2)
<b>chiasmus:</b>	inversion in the second of two parallel phrases of the noun + verb, verb + noun – the opposite of balance (25.5; 41.4, 6; 42.10; 43.6, etc.)
<b>choice of words:</b>	Tacitus has a preference for certain types of words: beginning with <i>prae-</i> (41.7; 42.8; 56.1, 2; 59.2; 64.9; 65.7); beginning with <i>prae-</i> (41.7; 42.8; 56.1, 2; 59.2; 64.9; 65.7); beginning with <i>prae-</i> (41.7; 42.8; 56.1, 2; 59.2; 64.9; 65.7); other examples (41.13; 42.8; 53.2, 7; 59.4; 65.10, etc.); other examples (41.13; 42.8; 53.2, 7; 59.4; 65.10, etc.)
<b>enclosing order:</b>	where two words which agree with each other, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> at the beginning and the end of a longer phrase or sentence. Enclosing order often consists of four words, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> chiasmus or in a balance, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> (43.1; 65.1, 6; 67.1–2; 69.8)
<b>homoioteleuton:</b>	repetition of the same sound at the end of words (65.1, 6; 67.1–2; 69.8)
<b>juxtaposition:</b>	two or more words placed next to each other for emphasis (41.9–10; 58.1, 2–3; 69.8)
<b>litotes (or meiosis):</b>	an understatement, consisting of two negatives to express a positive, e.g. 'not bad' = 'quite good' (26.3; 64.9; 67.5)
<b>metaphor:</b>	a word used not in its original sense, but resembling it, e.g. 'not with love' (25.5; 58.4; 59.2)
<b>poetic words and phrases</b>	Tacitus sometimes uses words or phrases which are found in poetry (58.3*)
<b>polyptoton:</b>	the repetition of a word with the same root, but in a different form, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> (43.3, 6; 64.12)
<b>sarcasm:</b>	a feature, though not really stylistic (41.2, 11)
<b>sibilance:</b>	use of the letter <i>s</i> , making a hissing sound and often expressing contempt (67.2–3)
<b>superlative:</b>	Tacitus often uses the superlative adjective or adverb, e.g. <i>maxime</i> (64.1, 2; 64.1*)
<b>tacking on:</b>	extra phrases or clauses added after the apparent conclusion of a sentence (26.1; 42.9)
<b>variatio:</b>	variation in the way two or more identical words are used, e.g. <i>non solum... sed etiam...</i> synonyms (26.5–6; 41.13–14; 43.2; 52.5, 6–7; 53.2, etc.)
<b>zeugma:</b>	the use of two words to express one composite idea (41.13; 42.8; 53.2, 7; 59.4; 65.10, etc.)

INSPECTION COPY

**COPYRIGHT  
PROTECTED**

