

26TH LATIN SUMMER SCHOOL

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Eastern Avenue Building, University of Sydney

LEVEL 3A ii

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Sydney Latin Summer School 2020

Selections from Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*

Welcome to the Sydney Latin Summer School 2020. For this class I have selected five memorable sections from across Suetonius' twelve Caesars that show some of the eccentricities but also the humanity of the emperors: the omens of Tiberius' future greatness and the omens of Nero's future (greatness?), Augustus' will, Caligula's daughter, and the famous scene of the assassination of Julius Caesar. Some of these scenes are obviously exaggerated, revealing more about the Romans' attitudes to such things as astrology, luxury, and the role of the emperor than they perhaps do about the emperors themselves and historical 'truth.' Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus (ca. 69 CE – 130?) was a writer on many subjects, but most of his works are lost except for the *Lives of the Caesars*. He was in a unique position to write on this topic, as he worked in the palace and had access to the imperial archives in the early second century CE. Suetonius' work is more often 'used' than read—historians find him difficult to use, and the Latin is not the elegant Latin of Livy and Tacitus. Sometimes it is criticised for being so condensed as to be illegible! I hope you will find it is worthwhile to read, for the rounded picture we get of these emperors as human beings as well as the tales of fantastic decadence and gory murders. Suetonius' work has been very influential, especially as a model for later biographers, and has been a favourite book of readers for centuries.

You will find that Suetonius' Latin is unusual, and he tends to use technical vocabulary. With this in mind I have supplied more vocabulary than usual. You will only need this supplied material and a lexicon to take part in this class. If you are interested in going further, some of these texts have notes in Josiah Osgood, *A Suetonius Reader* (but it is by no means required that you should have looked at this before the class) and individual commentaries are available for each *Life*. I recommend that you read a translation of Suetonius' *Twelve Caesars*, such as the Penguin edition, if possible.

I have allocated a different *Life* for each day. I hope you will have time to prepare at least the vocabulary before the class, and if possible get an idea of what is going on in each passage before you come. Of course I know you will not always be able to do so, and I hope we have enough time to get through each passage anyway. In addition to the usual grammar, vocabulary, and syntax, I hope to be able to discuss some of the issues that surround Suetonius' text, such as political invective, and why he includes some of the more personal details like eating and daily habits that other authors don't like to use.

Monday

Tiberius 14: The signs of his future greatness

6 Tiberius, the stepson of the emperor Augustus, is staying out of the way on Rhodes. When he
7 comes back to Rome, he is sure that something great will come of him, because of the signs
8 and predictions he had received since childhood.

9 Rediit octauo post secessum anno, magna nec incerta spe futurorum, quam et ostentis et
10 praedictionibus ab initio aetatis conceperat.

11 Praegnans eo Liuia, cum an marem editura esset uariis captaret ominibus, ouum incubanti
12 gallinae subductum nunc sua nunc ministrarum manu per uices usque fouit quoad pullus
13 insigniter cristatus exclusus est. Ac de infante Scribonius mathematicus praeclara spondit,
14 etiam regnaturum quandoque sed sine regio insigni, ignota scilicet tunc adhuc Caesarum
15 potestate. ... adisset Geryonis oraculum, sorte tracta qua monebatur ut de consultationibus in
16 Aponi fontem talos aureos iaceret, euenit ut summum numerum iacti ab eo ostenderent,
17 hodieque sub aqua uisuntur hi tali. Ante paucos uero quam reuocaretur dies aquila numquam
18 antea Rhodi conspecta in culmine domus eius assedit, et pridie quam de reditu certior fieret
19 uestimenta mutanti tunica ardere uisa est. Thrasyllum quoque mathematicum, quem ut
20 sapientiae professorem contubernio admouerat, tum maxime expertus est affirmantem naue
21 prouisa gaudium afferri, cum quidem illum durius et contra praedicta cadentibus rebus ut
22 falsum et secretorum temere conscium, eo ipso momento, dum spatiatum una, praecipitare in
23 mare destinasset.

24

25 *Tiberius* 14

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <i>secessus, -ūs, (m)</i> [secedo] retirement | <i>quando</i> - when | <i>uestimentum, ī (n)</i> clothing |
| <i>concupio</i> understand | <i>scilicet</i> ‘of course’ | <i>tunica, -ae (f)</i> tunic |
| <i>ostentum, -ī, (n)</i> [ostendo] sign, prodigy, portent | <i>Caesarum</i> ‘of the Caesars’ | <i>ārdeō, -sī, -sus, -ēre</i> (intr.) burn, be on fire |
| <i>praegnans, -antis</i> [prae + gen-] pregnant | <i>potestas, -atis (f)</i> (take with ignota) power | <i>contubernium, ī, n.</i> companionship (spec. sharing the same tent on military service) |
| <i>mās, maris</i> (adj.) male | <i>Geryon, -onis (m)</i> a mythical beast | |
| <i>ēdō, -didī, -ditus, -ere</i> to put forth, give birth to, produce, publish | <i>sors, -tis</i> (abl. sorte or sortī), (f) a lot | <i>admoueō, -mōuī, -mōtus, - ēre</i> to move towards, to move to, to admit (into) |
| <i>ōmen, ominis, n.</i> sign, omen, harbinger | <i>trahō, trāxī, tractus, -ere</i> to draw | <i>afferri</i> – from affero, i carry towards |
| <i>gallīna, ae, (f)</i> hen | <i>Aponus, -ī, (m)</i> a warm spring near padua | <i>experior, -pertus, -īri</i> (dep.) to try, test, experiment, endure, prove |
| <i>minister, tra, trum</i> (adj.) serving, subordinate; as substantive, m., a helper | <i>evenit ut</i> – it happened that (+ subjunctive) | <i>sēcrētum, -ī, (n)</i> secret |
| (<i>uicis</i>), only gen. <i>uicis</i> , acc. <i>uicem</i> , abl. <i>uice</i> , pl. nom. <i>uicēs</i> , acc. <i>uicīs</i> or <i>uicēs</i> , dat/abl. <i>uicibus</i> , (f) change, turn (as in to take a turn), alternately. | <i>talus, ī, (m)</i> die (often made of a bone, with four numbers marked on sides) | <i>temere</i> - rashly |
| <i>foueō, fōuī, fōtus, -ēre</i> , to keep warm | <i>uiso, uisi, uisere, uisus</i> i visit, i go to see | <i>consciūs-a-um</i> , knowing; as substantive, a confidant, witness |
| <i>insigniter</i> , adv. extraordinarily, extremely | <i>aquila, -ae, (f)</i> eagle | <i>spatior, -ātus, -ārī, dep.</i> to take a walk |
| <i>crīstātus-a-um</i> , crested | <i>Rhodus, -ī (f)</i> the island of Rhodes | <i>una</i> - together |
| <i>mathematicus, -ī, (m)</i> mathematician; astrologer | <i>culmen, -inis, n.</i> the highest point, the roof, culmination | <i>praecipitō, -āuī, ātus, āre</i> , to cast headlong, throw down (take with illum, acc + infin) |
| <i>spondeō, spopondī,</i> <i>spōnsus, -ēre</i> to promise sacredly, vow, give assurance | <i>assidō, ēdi, ---, -ēre</i> , to take a seat, sit | <i>destinō, āuī, ātus, āre</i> , to determine, decide |
| | <i>prīdiē</i> , adv., on the previous day, the day before | |

Tuesday

Nero 6: The signs of his future

The future emperor Nero is born (his parents are Domitius and Agrippina, the sister of C. Caesar 'Caligula,' at this time the new emperor) and his horoscope suggests he will be trouble for Rome

Ex Antonia maiore patrem Neronis procreavit omni parte uitae detestabilem, siquidem comes

ad Orientem C. Caesaris iuuenis, occiso liberto suo quod potare quantum iubebatur recusarat,

dimissis e cohorte amicorum nihilo modestius uixit, sed et in uiae Appiae uico repentem

puerum citatis iumentis haud ignarus obtruiit et Romae medio foro cuidam equiti R. liberius

iurganti oculum eruit ...

Nero natus est Anti post VIII. mensem quam Tiberius excessit, XVIII. Kal. Ian. tantum quod

exoriente sole, paene ut radiis prius quam terra contingeretur. de genitura eius statim multa et

formidulosa multis coiectantibus praesagio fuit etiam Domitii patris uox inter gratulationes

amicorum negantis quicquam ex se et Agrippina nisi detestabile et malo publico nasci

potuisse. eiusdem futurae infelicitatis signum euidens die lustrico extitit, nam C. Caesar,

rogante sorore ut infanti quod uellet nomen daret, intuens Claudium patrum suum, a quo

mox principe Nero adoptatus est, eius se dixit dare, neque ipse serio sed per iocum et

aspernante Agrippina, quod tum Claudius inter ludibria aulae erat.

19 Nero 6

detestabilis, -e: detestable
siquidem: if only (here 'for example')
comes, -itis (m & f): companion, attendant
libertus, -i (m): freedman
recuso, -are: decline, refuse (to)
uicus, -i (m): street, area, neighbourhood
repens, -entis: sudden, -ly
citatus-a-um: speedy, quick
iumentum, -i (n): horse
ignarus-a-um: ignorant, stupid (NOT
ignauus, lazy!)
obtero, -truii, -tritus, -ere: crush, trample
equiti R.=eques Romanus
iurgo, -are: quarrel, brawl, scold
eruo, ui, utus, ere: cast forth, throw out,
destroy, bring out
post VIII. mensem quam: in the 9th month
after
excedo, -cessi, -cessus, -ere: die
XVIII. Kal. Ian.: On the 18th day before the
Kalends of January (i.e. Dec. 15)
exorior, -ortus, -iri: rise, appear
contingo, -tigi, -tactus, -ere: touch
genitura 'birth' (from *gigno, genui,*
genitus, -ere)
formidulosus-a-um: producing fear,
terrible, dreadful

coiectans (=coniecto, -are) predict,
foretell
praesagium, -i (n): presentiment,
prediction, telling of the future
gratulatio, -onis (f): a congratulation
euidens, -entis: evident, clear
infelicitas, -atis (f): bad luck, misfortune
(the quality of being *infelix*)
dies lustricus: the day when a newborn
child was purified and named
exto=exsto: stand out, be obvious, exist
infans, -ntis: not being able to speak
=*infant* (*in + fari*)
intueor, -itus, -eri: look carefully at (*in +*
tueor)
patruus, -i (m): uncle on the father's side
(but here talking about Claudius,
not Nero's *patruus* but Agrippina
and Caligula's)
princeps, -ipis (m): 'first (among equals)'
= emperor
serio (adv): seriously
per iocum: as a joke (*iocus, -i* (m))
aspernor, -atus, -ari: spurn, refuse, reject
ludibrium, -i (n): mockery, derision,
laughing stock
aula, -ae (f): the palace, the emperor's
residence, the emperor's 'court'

Wednesday

Calig. 25: Caligula's marriages and his daughter

2
3
4
5
6 Matrimonia contraxerit turpius an dimiserit an tenuerit non est facile discernere. Liuiam
7 Orestillam C. Pisoni nubentem, cum ad officium et ipse uenisset, ad se deduci imperauit
8 intraque paucos dies repudiatam biennio post relegauit, quod repetisse usum prioris mariti
9 tempore medio uidebatur. Alii tradunt adhibitum cenae nuptiali mandasse ad Pisonem contra
10 accumbentem, "Noli uxorem meam premere," statimque e conuiuio abduxisse secum ac
11 proximo die edixisse: matrimonium sibi repertum exemplo Romuli et Augusti. Lolliam
12 Paulinam C. Memmio consulari exercitus regenti nuptam, facta mentione auiae eius ut
13 quondam pulcherrimae, subito ex prouincia euocauit ac perductam a marito coniunxit sibi
14 breuique missam fecit interdicto cuiusquam in perpetuum coitu. Caesoniam neque facie
15 insigni neque aetate integra matremque iam ex alio uiro trium filiarum, sed luxuriae ac
16 lasciuiae perditae, et ardentius et constantius amauit, ut saepe chlamyde peltaque et galea
17 ornatam ac iuxta adequitantem militibus ostenderit, amicis uero etiam nudam. Quam enixam
18 uxorio nomine dignatus est, uno atque eodem die professus et maritum se eius et patrem
19 infantis ex ea natae.

- 20 infantem autem, Iuliam Drusillam appellatum, per omnium dearum templa circumferens
- 21 Mineruae gremio imposuit alendamque et instituendam commendauit. nec ullo firmiore
- 22 indicio sui seminis esse credebat quam feritate, quae illi quoque tanta iam tunc erat ut infestis
- 23 digitis ora et oculos simul ludentium infantium incesset.

contraho, traxi, tractus, -ere I enter into a contract (about)

turpis, e unseemly, shameful

nubo, nupsi, nuptum, -ere I get married

relego, -are I send out of the way (banish, exile)

repeto, iui, itus, ere I look for again, I ask for again, I go back to

adhibeo, ui, itus, ere invite (to dinner, to a party)

accumbo, cubui, cubitum, ere to recline at table

premo, pressi, essus, ere I press, pursue, try to have sex with

edico, dixi, dictus, ere I publish, pronounce, order, proclaim

auia, -ae grandmother

coitus sexual intercourse

perditus-a-um 'lost' 'abandoned' completely ruined

chlamys, -idis a Greek kind of cloak

pelta, ae (f) a light shield

galea, ae (f) helmet

adequito, -aui, -, -are (ad + equus) ride (a horse)

enitor, -nixus or -nisus, -i I give birth to a child

infans, -ntis: not being able to speak
=infant

gremium, -i (n): lap, bosom

impono, -posui, -positus, -ere: to place upon, set, impose

alo, alui, altus/alitus, -ere: feed, nourish, support

instituo, -ui, -utus, -ere: train, instruct

firmus-a-um: strong, trustworthy, definite

semen, -inis (n): seed, offspring

feritas, -atis (f): savagery, wildness

infestis digitis: 'with unsafe/dangerous fingers'

ludo, -si, -sus, -ere: play

incedo, -cessi, -cessus, -ere: attack

Thursday

Augustus' will

Aug. 101 Augustus has been emperor for decades and has finally died. His will is brought out to be read.

Testamentum L. Planco C. Silio cons. III Non. Apriles ante annum et quattuor menses quam

decederet factum ab eo ac duobus codicibus partim ipsius partim libertorum Polybi et

Hilarionis manu scriptum depositumque apud se uirgines Vestales cum tribus signatis aequae

uoluminibus protulerunt, quae omnia in senatu aperta atque recitata sunt. heredes instituit

primos Tiberium ex parte dimidia et sextante, Liuiam ex parte tertia, quos et ferre nomen

suum iussit, secundos Drusum Tiberi filium ex triente, ex partibus reliquis Germanicum

liberosque eius tres sexus uiriliter, tertio gradu propinquos amicosque compluris. legauit

populo R. quadringenties, tribubus tricenas quinquies sestertium, praetorianis militibus singula

milia nummorum, cohortibus urbanis quingenos, legionaris trecenos nummos. quam summam

repraesentari iussit, nam et confiscatam semper repositamque habuerat.

reliqua legata uarie dedit perduxitque quaedam ad uicenas sestertia, quibus soluendis annum

diem finiit, excusata rei familiaris mediocritate nec plus peruenturum ad heredes suos quam

milies et quingenties professus, quamuis uiginti proximis annis quaterdecenas milies ex

testamentis amicorum percepisset, quod paene omne cum duobus paternis patrimoniis

ceterisque hereditatibus in rem p. absumpsisset. Iulias filiam neptemque, si quid iis accidisset, uetuit sepulcro suo inferri.

Tib. 23 Tiberius, stepson of Augustus, is mentioned in Augustus' will, but only as a second, or third, choice...

Inlatum deinde Augusti testamentum, non admissis signatoribus nisi senatorii ordinis, ceteris extra curiam signa agnoscentibus, recitauit per libertum. testamenti initium fuit: "Quoniam atrox fortuna Gaium et Lucium filios mihi eripuit, Tiberius Caesar mihi ex parte dimidia et sextant heres esto", quo et ipso aucta suspicio est opinantium successorem ascitum eum necessitate magis quam iudicio, quando ita praefari non abstinerit.

testamentum, -i (n) a will

decedo I die

codex, -icis (m) (a variant of 'caudex') a notebook, esp. one formed of wooden tablets

profero bring out, display

aperiō I open

hērēs, -ēdis (m) heir

sexus, -us (m.) sex, gender

complures several, many

lego, -are I bequeath, I leave (to someone) (in a will)

soluo I pay

mediocritas, -atis (f) 'moderateness' of amount, of means/wealth

patrimonium, -i (n.) inheritance

absūmō I spend

atrox, -ōcis terrible, violent, savage

eripio snatch, seize, take away (unfairly)

esto "let him be" (3rd person future imperative of *sum*)

auctus-a-um increased

opinor, -ari I think, I have the opinion

asciscō, -iscere, -tūī, tūm to take (a person) to oneself as an ally, associate, etc.

Friday

The assassination of Julius Caesar, *Iul.* 81.4-82

Julius Caesar decides whether to go to the Senate today, in spite of the warnings of omens and Spurinna's prediction that he should beware the Ides of March. He goes out at almost the fifth hour, but he cannot get good omens, and tells Spurinna he was wrong about the Ides of March. But it turns out Spurinna was right: the Ides have come, but they have not yet gone.

1 Ob haec simul et ob infirmam ualitudinem diu cunctatus an se contineret et quae apud
 2 senatum proposuerat agere differret, tandem Decimo Bruto adhortante ne frequentis ac iam
 3 dudum opperientis destitueret, quinta fere hora progressus est libellumque insidiarum
 4 indicem ab obuio quodam porrectum libellis ceteris quos sinistra manu tenebat quasi mox
 5 lecturus commiscuit. dein pluribus hostiis caesis, cum litare non posset, introiit curiam spreta
 6 religione Spurinnamque irridens et ut falsum arguens quod sine ulla sua noxa Idus Martiae
 7 adessent, quamquam is uenisse quidem eas diceret sed non praeterisse.

8 [82] Assidentem conspirati specie officii circumsteterunt, ilicoque Cimber Tillius, qui primas
 9 partes susceperat, quasi aliquid rogaturus propius accessit renuentique et gestu in aliud
 10 tempus differenti ab utroque umero togam adprehendit, deinde clamantem, "ista quidem uis
 11 est!", alter e Cascais auersum uulnerat paulum infra iugulum. Caesar Cascae brachium
 12 adreptum graphio traiecit conatusque prosilire alio uulnere tardatus est, utque animaduertit
 13 undique se strictis pugionibus peti, toga caput obuoluit, simul sinistra manu sinum ad ima
 14 crura deduxit quo honestius caderet etiam inferiore corporis parte uelata. atque ita tribus et
 15 uiginti plagis confossus est, uno modo ad primum ictum gemitu sine uoce edito, etsi
 16 tradiderunt quidam Marco Bruto irruenti dixisse, "καὶ σὸ τέκνον?". exanimis diffugientibus
 17 cunctis aliquamdiu iacuit, donec lecticae impositum dependente brachio tres seruoli domum
 18 rettulerunt. Nec in tot uulneribus, ut Antistius medicus existimabat, letale ullum repertum est,
 19 nisi quod secundo loco in pectore acceperat.

Julius Caesar 81-82

contineō, -tinuī, -tentus, -ēre stay home

cunctor I delay

an - whether ...

differō- to postpone, defer

frequentis many (people)

dūdum (in the phrase *iam dūdum*) for a long time

opperior, pertus, ī, dep. wait, attend

dēstituō, -uī, -ūtus, -ere abandon, forsake, leave, put away, set down

quinta hora ‘the fifth hour’ (counting from dawn)

ferē (adv) almost

insidiae, -ārum (f) trap, ambush

index, -icis (m/f) one who points out, a sign, an informer

obuius-a-um in the way

porrigō, -rēxī, -rēctus, -ere hold out, offer

dein (=deinde) then, next

sinister-tra-trum left

commisceō, -miscuī, -mīxtus, -ēre mix together

lecturus = fut. Ppl of *lego*, I read

hostia, -ae (f) sacrificial animal

caedo I kill

litō, -āuī, -ātus, -āre obtain favourable omens

curia, -ae (f) the senate house

sperno, sprēui, sprētus, -ere despise, reject, spurn, scorn

religiō, -ōnis (f) devoutness, fear of the gods, sense of duty

Spurinna, a proper name, the person who predicted the Ides of March would be the dangerous day

irrīdeō, rīsī, rīsus, ēre laugh at

noxa, ae (f) harm, injury

Idus Martiae – the Ides of March (15th) (n.b. *Idus* is plural) ‘*eas*’ also refers to the Ides

is (refers to *Spurinna*, subject of *diceret*)

praetereō, īī, itus, īre pass by

assidō, ēdi, ---, -ēre, to take a seat, sit

cōnspīrātus-a-um conspiring

officium, -ī (n) service, business, duty

circumstō, -stetī, ---, -āre stand around, surround,

ilicō in that very spot, instantly, directly

propius ‘more closely, nearer’ (compar. adv.)

Cimber Tillius – a proper name

renuō, uī, ---, -ere reject, refuse, deny

**renuenti* and *differenti* are datives of reference – this clause is independent of the rest of the sentence. Reference to *Caesar*

gestus, -ūs (m) carriage, bearing, gesture

adprehendō, dī, sus, ere seize, take hold of,

uis, -- (f) strength, force, violence, hostility

Casca - a name (the name of two different people)

paulum infrā a little below

iugulum, ī (m) throat, neck

brachium, ī (n) arm

adripiō, -ipuī, -eptus, -ere snatch, seize, grasp

trāiciō I pierce

graphium, ī (n) stylus for writing

prōsiliō, -uī, --, -īre leap forward, spring forth, rush, hasten

tardō I prevent

animaduerto I realise

pugiō, -ōnis (m) a short dagger

strictis (from *stringo*) drawn

peti –pass. Infin. ‘peto’ I attack

obuoluō, -uī, -ūtus, ēre cover, enfold, wrap around

īmus-a-um lowest, deepest, last

crūs, -ūris (n) leg

sinus - the fold of the toga

‘*quo honestius caderet*’ quo + comparative + subjunctive expressing purpose

uēlō, āui, ātus, āre cover up, veil

plāga, ae (f) blow, stroke, wound

cōnfōdiō, -fōdī, -fossus, -ere to dig up, transfix, stab, pierce

ictus, -ūs (m) wound, stab, cut

gemitus, -ūs (m) sigh, groan

trādō I pass down, I say, I tell (the story)...

irruō, -ruī, ---, -ere rush on, attack, seize

dixisse (supply ‘se’) that he said

καὶ σὺ τέκνον; you, too, (my) child?

exanimis, e dead, lifeless

cunctus-a-um all

diffugiō, fūgī, ---, -ere disperse, scatter, fly off in different directions

iaceō I lie (down)

lectīca, -ae (f) litter, sedan, portable sofa

seruolus, -ī (m) dim. of *seruus*, a young slave

referō I bring back

Antistius a proper name

medicus, ī (m) a medical man, physician

existimo I think

lētālīs, e deadly, fatal, lethal

reperiō, repperī, repertus, -īre to find, find out, discover, get, obtain