



### Succession and Empire

History of Ancient Rome | Meeting #11

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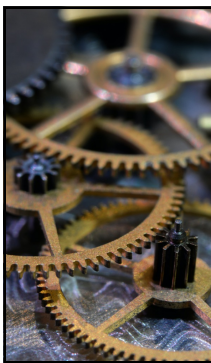
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### Upcoming Dates

- Monday, May 11  
• Position Paper Due
- Thursday, May 21  
• Final Exam
- Sunday, May 3  
• Responses for Week 11 Due

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### Fall 2026 courses in Ancient History



#### History of Ancient Greece

The unfolding and culmination of civilization in Greece, through key transformations of Greek culture and city-states from the Bronze Age up through the Hellenization of the east.  
Thurs 9:00-9:45 p.m.  
Prof. Wilson 3 credits W/Res Intensive

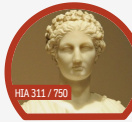
HIA 320 / 720



#### Classical Myth and Society

A comparison of the origins and development of classical mythology and heroic legend as religious beliefs, their relation to other mythologies, and their adaptation in literature and art from Mesopotam and Homer through the present.  
Fri 12-11:55 a.m. (DRAFT)  
Prof. Marinelli 3 credits W/ Intensive

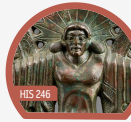
HIA 314 / 714



#### Women in Antiquity

Examination of the image, role, and status of women in Ancient Greek, Ancient Roman, and other societies as seen through the important literary works of antiquity.  
Tues 6:00-6:45 p.m.  
Prof. Wilson 3 credits W/Res Intensive

HIA 311 / 750



#### Civilizations of the Ancient World

A survey of the Mediterranean world, tracing the development of civilization from Mesopotamia and Egypt to ancient Greek, City-States and the dominion of Rome.  
Tues 9:00-9:45 p.m.  
Prof. Wilson 3 credits

HIS 248

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Five things today

- The Death of Augustus
- Tiberius and Caligula
- Claudius and Nero
- The Year of Four Emperors
- Vespasian and the Flavians

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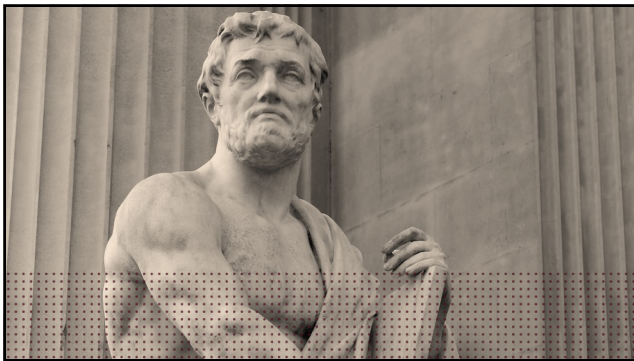
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Quiz #8 | Succession and Empire

- After Tiberius succeeded Augustus, in the words of the Roman historian Tacitus, "the first crime of the new princeps" was the execution of Augustus's
  - daughter Julia
  - grandson/adapted son Agrippa Postumus
  - ex-wife Scribonia
  - uncle Mark Antony
- Highlights of Tiberius's reign include all of the following **EXCEPT**
  - Tiberius laying a trap for his treacherous aide, Sejanus, via a twisted letter read to the Senate
  - wasteful administration and the appointment of incompetent and immoral provincial governors
  - resentment and hostility between Tiberius and his mother, Livia
  - increasing use of the treason law, *maiestas*, to prosecute Tiberius's enemies
- Caligula died as a result of
  - old age after a long and successful reign
  - angry Roman gods smiting him with lightning
  - being viciously stabbed by a guard he'd insulted
  - wounds received leading his legions into battle
- The Year of Four Emperors (69 CE) ended with the surviving, firmly established princeps of
  - Sen. Sulpicius Galba
  - M. Salvius Ottho
  - A. Vitellius
  - T. Flavius Vespasianus
- The tragic siege of Masada (73 CE) was a part of the Romans' war with
  - Jewish rebels in Judea
  - Vindex, a mutinous governor in Gaul
  - the fractious territory of Dacia
  - Boudicca, queen of the Britons

Extra Credit

EC. What do you think are the main reasons Nero's principate turned out the way it did?

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### Questions from the Responses

- Did Sallust intentionally focus on the individuals to be blamed, rather than the weaknesses in Roman society/culture, due to his removal from politics?
- How did ordinary people react to Caesar's death?
- Were there strong rumblings of revolt during Augustus's time as Emperor?
- Was Arminius playing along the whole time, just keeping face and always had the thought with him to use the Romans for his own benefit or it was a spur of the moment kinda thing?

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### Questions about whatever



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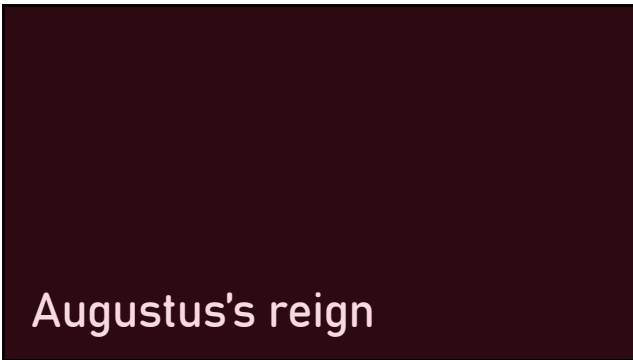
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### Augustus's reign



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**Pax Romana**

- Ends civil wars
- Stabilizes frontiers
- Grows economy
- Champions all of Rome

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Primary Source Reading



Horace  
The Secular Hymn

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Primary Source Reading



Augustus  
Acts of the Divine Augustus

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**Augustan patronage**

- Fosters artists, writers, historians, and poets
  - Using Greek and Hellenistic tools to say Roman things
  - Vergil to write a national epic, the *Aeneid*
  - Livy to write a national history, *Ab Urbe Condita*
  - Other artists and writers include Horace, Propertius, Ovid, Tibullus, Sulpicia
- Creates a climate in which patronage by wealthy Romans is encouraged
- Unofficial minister of propaganda, Maecenas, concerned specifically with imagery and literature
- Enhancement of architecture in Rome, other cities

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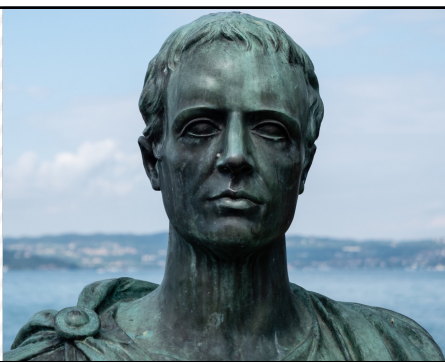
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Primary Source Reading



Catullus  
Selections

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What kinds of problems are created by Augustus's reign?

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### The problem of the legion

- Legitimacy of the princeps depends on the faith and trust of the legions

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### The problem of succession

- No mechanism for creating a princeps
- No one can measure up to Augustus
- Augustus outlives everyone

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### Potential heirs of Augustus

• M. Vipsanius Agrippa	son-in-law	(married to daughter Iulia)	d. 12 BCE
• M. Claudius Marcellus	nephew	(son of Octavia)	d. 23 BCE
• C. and L. Iulius Caesar	grandsons	(sons of Agrippa and Iulia)	d. 4 CE, 2 CE
• Nero Claudius Drusus	stepson	(younger son of Livia)	d. 9 BCE
• Tiberius Claudius Nero	stepson	(elder son of Livia)	—
• M. Agrippa Postumus	grandson	(son of Agrippa and Iulia)	d. 14 CE

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### The principle of adoption

TI. CLAVDIVS TI.F. TI.N. NERO

*adopted by Imp. Caesar Divi f. Augustus*



TI. CAESAR DIVI AVGVSTI F. AVGVSTVS

*prae-nomen*

*nomen*

*filiation (formal records only)*

*cognomen*

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Primary Source Reading

Tacitus  
The Principle of Adoption



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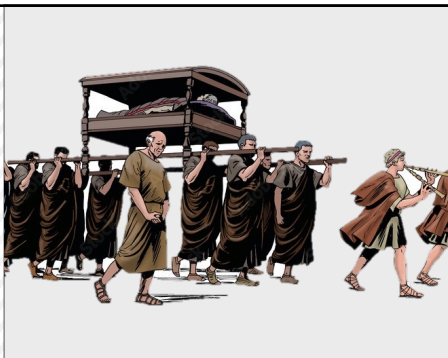
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Primary Source Reading

Tacitus  
The Death of Augustus and the Accession of Tiberius



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**Deification**

- Caesar had been deified
  - Dedicated priests
  - Ongoing prayers and rituals
- Augustus also made a god
- Does not create a precedent

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**The Julio-Claudians**

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**Effects of the death of Augustus**

- Nobility
- Soldiers
- Common people
- Provinces

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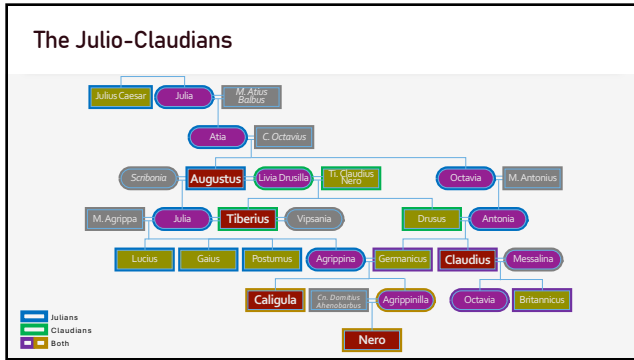
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### Gender and culture

- Strong women a critical part of the early dynasties
- Patronage of the arts
  - Encouraged under Augustus
  - Ebbs under Tiberius and Caligula
  - Resurges under Claudius, Nero, and the Flavians

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### Tiberius

- Excellent administrator
- Gifted but strict general
- Sour disposition
- Unloved by Augustus
  - Given unwelcome tasks
  - Forced to marry twice
- Devoted to his brother Drusus

Ti. Claudius Drusus -> Ti. Caesar Augustus. 14-37

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**Germanicus**

- Son of Antonia and Drusus
  - Antonia = daughter of Octavia and Antony
- Rising star of imperial family
- Feud with Piso
- Visit to Egypt
- Mysterious death

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**Retirement to Capri and Sejanus**

- Tiberius embittered
  - Petty squabbles and conspiracies
  - Increasing paranoia
  - Death of his son
- Sejanus elevated
  - Left in charge in Rome
  - Purge trials

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**Majestas trials**

- Law of treason greatly expanded in scope
  - Defamation of princeps state now considered capital treason
- Class of professional informers
- Death + infamy
- Chilling effect on oratory and literature

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### Arrest of Sejanus

- Exposed via letter read to the Senate
- Executed and cast down the Gemonian stairs
- Mob forms to hunt down allies
- Replaced as Tiberius's henchman by Macro

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### Caligula

- Son of Germanicus
- "Little Boots"
- Rising star of the imperial family
- *Seems to have been relatively normal before near-fatal fever*

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### Weird and alarming actions attributed to Caligula

- "How is it that you still live?"
- Gave Incitatus, his horse, a jeweled collar, a house, and a consulship
- Declared war on Neptune, ordered a march on the English Channel, then had soldiers collect seashells as spoils of war
- Demanded to be worshiped as a living god, often appearing as various deities
- Had a floating bridge built out of ships over the sea at Baiae, just so he could ride his horse across it
- Incestuous relationships with his sisters (on the model of the gods)

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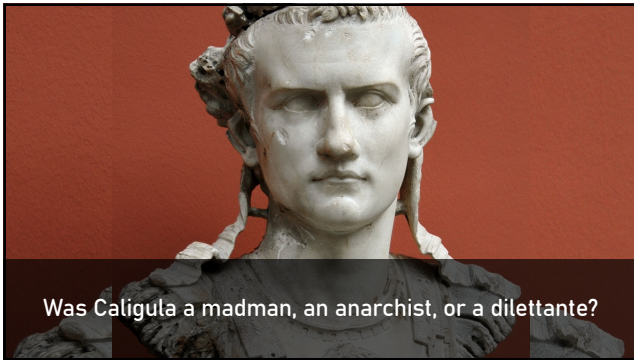
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### Claudius

- Uncle of Caligula, brother of Germanicus
- Clubfooted, hard of hearing, stammer
  - Exaggerated ailments and reputation as an idiot to survive
- Scholar and dice-player
- Praetorian guard find him hiding behind a curtain after Caligula's death
  - Proclaim him Caligula's successor
  - Senate forced to comply

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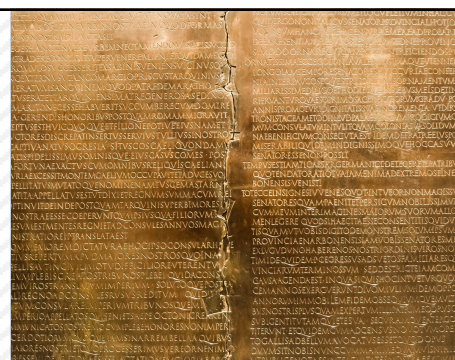
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**Primary Source Reading**

### Claudius

#### A Speech on Incorporating the Gauls



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**Nero**

- Claudius's great-nephew and stepson
- Indulged, not trained in statesmanship
- Made heir instead of Claudius's more capable son Britannicus

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Primary Source Reading

Seneca  
The Pumpkinification of Claudius (Divi Claudii Apocolocyntosis)



*Citrullus colocynthis* (colocynth or wild gourd)

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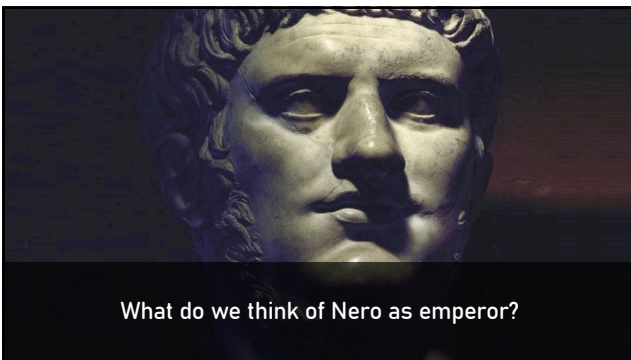
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What do we think of Nero as emperor?

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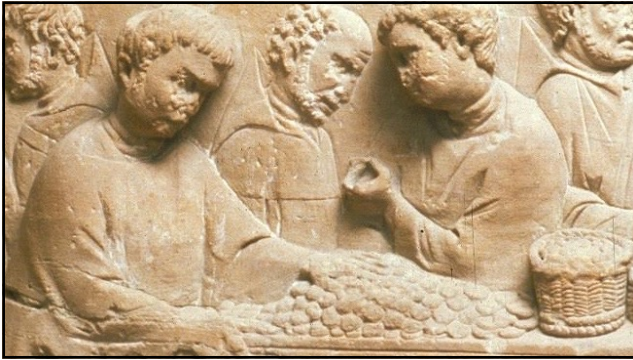
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**The end of Nero**

- Great fire of Rome turns many against him
- Provinces rebel
- Nero commits suicide as armies march on Rome

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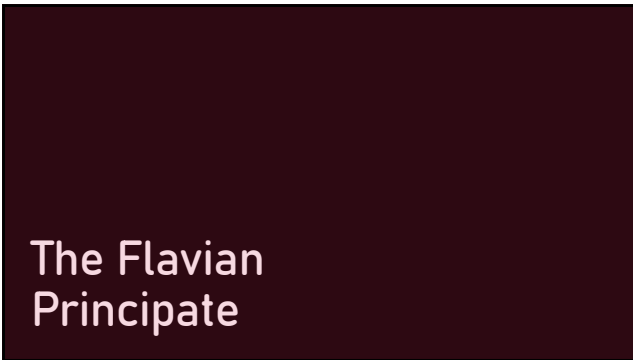
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**The Flavian Principate**

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### The Year of Four Emperors (69 CE)



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### The "secret of the empire"

"Welcome as the death of Nero had been in the first burst of joy, yet it had not only roused various emotions in Rome, among the Senators, the people, or the soldiery of the capital, it had also excited all the legions and their generals; for now had been divulged that secret of the empire, that emperors could be made elsewhere than at Rome."  
—TACITUS

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Primary Source Reading

Tacitus  
The Legions  
Proclaim  
Vespasian  
Emperor



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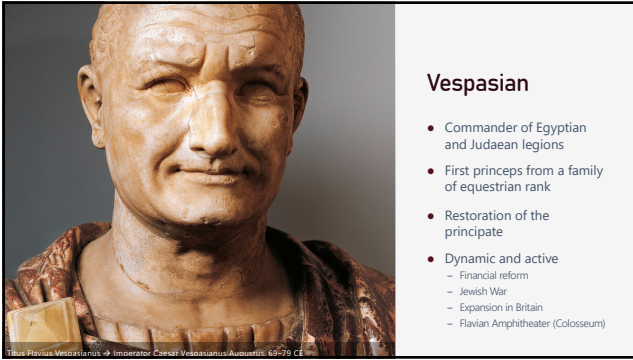
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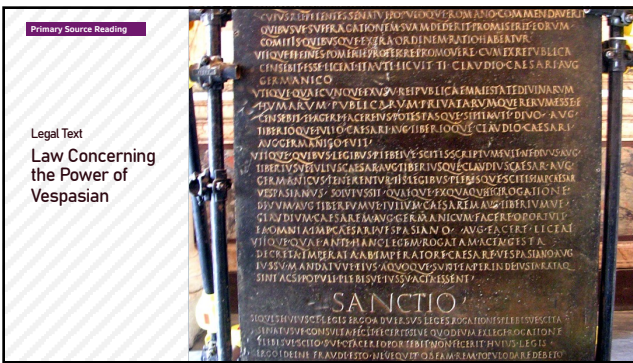
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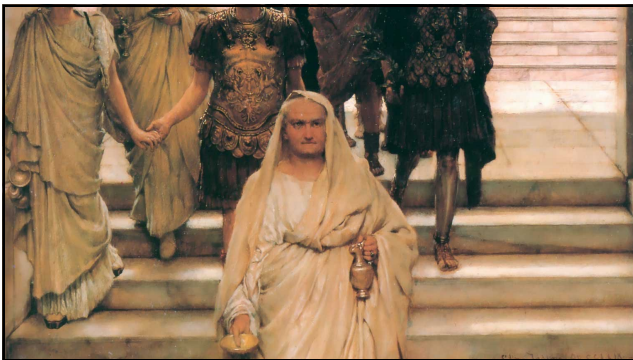
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**Titus**

- Elder son of Vespasian
- Warrior
- Expansionist
- Eruption of Vesuvius
- Dies of fever after brief barely two years in office

Titus Caesar Vespasianus → Emperor Titus Caesar Vespasianus Augustus, 79–81 CE

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Primary Source Reading

Josephus  
The Roman Army in the First Century CE



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**Domitian**

- Younger brother of Titus
- Authoritarian and ruthless
  - Alienated nobility
  - More popular with troops
- Negative reputation in later Roman histories

Titus Flavius Domitianus Imperator Caesar Domitianus Augustus, 81-96 CE

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Primary Source Reading

Suetonius  
How Domitian Attempted to Amuse the Populace




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