

Contents

1. Preface and acknowledgements	1
2. Introduction	5
2.1 Tacitus: life and career	8
2.2 Tacitus' times: the political system of the principate	10
2.3 Tacitus' <i>oeuvre</i> : <i>opera minora</i> and <i>maiora</i>	15
2.4 Tacitus' style (as an instrument of thought)	26
2.5 Tacitus' Nero-narrative: Rocky-Horror-Picture Show and Broadway on the Tiber	28
2.6 Thrasea Paetus and the so-called 'Stoic opposition'	32
3. Latin text with study questions and vocabulary aid	39
4. Commentary	75
Section 1: <i>Annals</i> 15.20–23	77
(i) 20.1–22.1: The Meeting of the Senate	78
(ii) 22.2: Review of striking prodigies that occurred in AD 62	110
(iii) 23.1–4: Start of Tacitus' account of AD 63: the birth and death of Nero's daughter by Sabina Poppaea, Claudia Augusta	119
Section 2: <i>Annals</i> 15.33–45 (AD 64)	137
(i) 33.1–34.1: Nero's coming-out party as stage performer	138
(ii) 34.2–35.3: A look at the kind of creatures that populate Nero's court – and the killing of an alleged rival	149
(iii) 36: Nero considers, but then reconsiders, going on tour to Egypt	158
(iv) 37: To show his love for Rome, Nero celebrates a huge public orgy that segues into a mock-wedding with his freedman Pythagoras	169

(v)	38–41: The fire of Rome	181
(vi)	42–43: Reconstructing the Capital: Nero's New Palace	218
(vii)	44: Appeasing the Gods, and Christians as Scapegoats	233
(viii)	45: Raising of Funds for Buildings	245
5.	Bibliography	253
6.	Visual aids	263
6.1	Map of Italy	265
6.2	Map of Rome	266
6.3	Family Tree of Nero and Junius Silanus	267
6.4	Inside the <i>Domus Aurea</i>	268