

Emperor nero



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

There are thousands of leaders and rulers who reigned centuries ago but their influence has never faded in the historic mind of people. What makes a leader famous is mostly his or her achievements and failures. From Winston Churchill to Martin Luther, Nelson Mandela in South Africa to Adolph Hitler, the famous world dictator it is clear that throughout history, humanity has experienced rulers and leaders of both humane and inhumane character. Among these rulers is Emperor Nero. Though not well known by young scholars, his footprints are still fresh in historical domain. This paper explores the life and reign of Emperor Nero. To achieve this objective the research comprehensively covers his biography, reign, achievements and failures.

Early life

Nero reigned as the Roman Emperor between 54 and 68 AD, during which he did all that was within and outside his domain of power. He was born in 37AD to Gnaeus Domitius who was a grandson to Augustus and to Agrippina the Younger. Nero experienced a very unstable life especially during his childhood. His family was sent to exile by Emperor Caius Galigula before seizing every single fortune of the family. He was also to experience a single parenthood upbringing after his father passed on when he was only three years of age. The family survived under poor conditions but these conditions immediately changed after Nero's mother got married to Emperor Claudius a time when Nero was being trained by Seneca the elder philosopher of all times. Without having a clue of what was to befall him in future him, Emperor Claudius got convinced by Agrippina to adopt Nero as one of his son

in 50AD. This move implied that Nero would be a viable heir of Claudius throne even before his own son. As a way of accomplishing her mission, Agrippina murdered Claudius, wickedly giving Nero the opportunity to rule as Emperor at the age of seventeen in 57AD, becoming the youngest emperor at that time in the world.

Nero's Reign

Having played a crucial role in ensuring that her son became the Roman Emperor, Agrippina was very influential in Nero's early years of ruling. However, this could not continue for long before Nero developed a bitter attitude towards her mother. She ordered her removal from the imperial residence leaving many people dumbfounded and perplexed. During this time, the emperor was mainly ruled by Seneca the tutor and Burrus the prefect. Many historical and political analysts argue that it was during early reign of Nero that he showed people to be a mild and generous person with special emphasis to the less fortunate in the society.

After getting married to Octavia, Nero never had satisfaction. He therefore decided to have an affair with Claudia Acte who was his former slave. This was highly condemned especially by Agrippina who proposed that Octavia be divorced because of Nero's unfaithfulness. Nevertheless, the move was averted by Seneca who argued that Agrippina was interfering with personal affairs of the Emperor. Just before she was thrown out of imperial residence, she had pressured 15 years old Britannicus to overthrow Nero since he was the legal heir. However, Britannicus mysteriously died before he was declared an adult and Nero claimed that he succumbed to epilepsy an idea

that was refuted by those who argued that Nero had poisoned him to safeguard his throne.

Although Emperor Nero had little tangible achievements, he is remembered by his cunning ruling which involved elimination of his enemies especially the allies of Agrippina and Seneca who was implicated in fraud. Nero never learnt from his mistakes. He later in 58 AD fell in love with Poppaea Sabina who later became Otho's wife. To ensure that marriage with Poppaea took place without political interference Nero considered permanently eliminating his mother in 59AD after he ordered her murder.

Achievements and failures of Emperor Nero

Emperor Nero is highly remembered for what he did and happened during his reign as the Roman Emperor. Although he was very weak in certain areas, Nero was a great performer and an artist. He participated in several entertainment occasions presenting songs, poems and dancing. Additionally, he secured several victories during his reign one which being the signing of the 60 AD treaty with the Parthian Government. He also led his people in defending their territory from external intrusion. He also restored order after the Jewish war that took place between 66 AD and 70 AD. As a ruler, Nero was considered to handle administrative matters effectively with an open mind with the Senate having enjoyed the manner in which state affairs were handled at any given moment. He never supported corruption and misconduct of government with sacking and demotion of those who failed to adhere to it being the order of the day. He even demoted Seneca after being implicated in corruption. Many people also enjoyed his rule by favoring the

lower class. As a way of improving their living standards, Nero reduced taxes making food and other essentials more affordable.

Despite the fact that Emperor Nero's achievements were commendable, he also had his downfall. His marital unfaithfulness was not only a disgrace to the whole emperor but also destroyed his family. His pervert sexual behavior led to breaking of his marriage after Octavia chose to divorce him. Another failure of Nero was his inhuman character which dominated his life. He ordered the murder of many people including his family members like Agrippina his mother, Octavia his wife and his nephew whom he was suspected to have poisoned. He persecuted Christians who argued that he used public resources for entertainment and pleasure at the expense of improving their lives. Nero ordered most of these executions to avoid any resistance especially from those opposed to his rule. He was selfish and wished the world belonged to him. The cause of the Great Roman Fire which destroyed property in several districts has never been unraveled. However, many people believed that Nero was behind the cause.

Like other rulers in the world, Emperor Nero had his version of leadership which aimed at satisfying his passions and lust. Having risen from a humble family, Nero was one of the kind that could not understand his childhood. The murder of his mother and wife, persecution of the church and total disregard to humanity shows how cruel he was. He however realized several achievements some of which remain the cornerstones of Rome today. He can be considered as a good leader based on his achievements and as a bad leader for his failure. Although he was powerful and inhuman, he could rule forever. He committed suicide in 68 AD marking the end of his reign.