Maria Chiara Scappaticcio

Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium:

Exegetical Surveys on the Direct Transmission of Seneca the Elder's Historiographical Work

Abstract: Working on *P.Herc*. 1067 has revealed it to be the only direct witness to the otherwise unknown Seneca the Elder's *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium*. This paper highlights the importance of philological work on unpublished Latin literary papyri in order to open new perspectives on the study of Latin literature and to write new chapters of it.

An overview of the reconstructable contents is offered through a work of *Quellenforschung* of Imperial historiography and biography. Reading the text of *P.Herc*. 1067 together with the Tiberian chapters from the *Annales* of Tacitus, the historical work of Cassius Dio and the *Lives* of Suetonius is instructive in order to recover possible traits of the plot of a section of the historiographical work by Seneca the Elder.

1 Genesis: *P.Herc*. 1067, Robert Marichal, and the authorship of an *Annaeus*

Recovering new fragments of Latin literature from papyri is not predictable; it is complex and often hard to achieve, but it can lead to unexpected results. When

scraps seem to give voice to new chapters of Latin literature, the appropriate response is extreme scrupulousness and philological scepticism, despite the enthusiastic desire to shout the discovery from the rooftops.[1]

When he realized in the 90's that a certain *Lucius Annaeus* was the author of a work transmitted by a roll coming from the library of the Herculaneum Villa, Robert Marichal shared his idea with Tiziano Dorandi, while working together towards the publication of some of the volumes of the *Chartae Latinae Antiquiores*. Among his projects was an analytical paleographical study of scripts of Latin rolls from the Villa; he was possibly even planning an edition of these *volumina*. Marichal's project remained unachieved because of his death, and it was destined to survive only in binders of notes stored among the shelves of the Archives of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* in Paris.[2] Moreover, the same roll Marichal linked to the *Annaei* family was solidly identified as an *oratio in senatu habita ante principem*, whose author would have been a certain *L. Manlius Torquatus*. Although an edition was never published, the 'case' of *P.Herc*. 1067 was set aside in 1983.[3]

Its elegant capital script made the Latin *P.Herc*. 1067 an item of discussion among paleographers, but papyrologists, philologists, and historians of ancient literature let the text transmitted by such a roll remain unpublished and dormant, together with its *Caesar*, *Augustus* and *Tiberius* and together with the omnipresent *Senatus*, all of them exciting elements of the reconstructable plot.[4] Giving critical thought to just one of these names should have been enough to inspire someone to risk working on this roll.

The assertion / fact / claim that the roll *P.Herc*. 1067 is the only known direct witness of Seneca the Elder's *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium* is recent, and is indelibly linked to the name of PLATINUM.

---

1 Often dealing with unpublished Latin texts with papyrus, the project PLATINUM has reached important results also in such a field, given that otherwise unknown literary Latin texts have been published and deeply analysed.

2 The section concerning Latin texts on papyrus from the Archive of Robert Marichal has been recently explored within the project PLATINUM and specific contributions have been gathered in Scappaticcio (2017). On the unpublished work Robert Marichal did on Latin papyri from Herculanum see Piano (2017a).

3 The only non-paleographical contribution on *P.Herc*. 1067 is represented by Costabile (1984), a paper given an year before in occasion of the 17th International Congress of Papyrology in Naples; see also Del Mastro (2005) 191–192, where further details are given on a mistaken sequence of *cornici* (i.e. frames storing Herculaneum papyri) discussed by Costabile. On such a matter see the exhaustive analysis by Piano (2017b) 163–165; 178–187.

4 *P.Herc*. 1067 cr. 6 pz. II sov. 1 l. 4: *Caes[a]re*; cr. 2 pz. I sov. 2 l. 2: *A]ụ[g]usto*; cr. 5 pz. I sov. 1 l. 3: *Auguste*; cr. 5 pz. II sov. 1 ll. 7–8: *[– – –]ḍestinaṭ[– – – |⁸] . Ṭiberius*.

The authorship is known thanks to the *subscriptio* that the roll preserves, and it is supported by the historical plot which can be sketchily reconstructed.[5] How the history of ancient literature can benefit from such a discovery is evident, since Seneca the Elder's *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium* has remained concealed behind the biographical draft his son sketched of him and behind the self-professed use made of it as a model by later historiographers.[6] The *Historiae* must have illustrated events involving the *Urbs* at least until the death of Tiberius, given that Suetonius references its version of the death of that emperor;[7] as for the *bella civilia* from which the *Historiae* started, it is debated whether they concerned Caesar and Pompey or the age of the Gracchi.[8]

Considering the work's wide circulation – Martial suggests in more than one epigram that it was well received –[9] and its treatment of fundamental events in the history of the Principate and the Early Imperial Age, which were all later dealt with by historians such as Tacitus, Suetonius, Appian, Florus, and Cassius Dio – the rediscovery should prompt new reflections and perhaps revive old views of *Quellenforschung*. In fact, meticulous investigation of the sources of Imperial historiography reveal traces of Seneca the Elder's *Historiae*. But the scantiness of the

5 On the *subscriptio* of *P.Herc*. 1067 see Piano (2016).

6 Sen. *vita patr*. (*Appendix* - T1). On Seneca's *de vita patris* see the recent contribution by Winterbottom (2013), where further references to previous publications are found. On Seneca the Elder's *Historiae* see Sussman (1978) 138–152; Fairweather (1981) 15–17; on Seneca the Elder's historiography see also *FRHist* I 118–119, with the two only extant fragments (from indirect witness) given at II 982–985 and discussed at III 596–597. Further bibliographical references are found in Scappaticcio (2018) 1074–1082.

7 Suet. *Tib*. 73.2: *Seneca eum scribit intellecta defectione exemptum anulum quasi alicui traditurum parumper tenuisse, dein rursus aptasse digito et compressa sinistra manu iacuisse diu immobilem; subito vocatis ministris ac nemine respondente consurrexisse nec procul a lectulo deficientibus viribus concidisse*, on which see *FRHist* III 596.

8 The possibility that the relevant civil war is that between Caesar and Pompey has been recently discussed by Barbara Levick in *FRHist* I 506 (see also III 596–597 no. 74), and supported by Zecchini (2016) 152–153. As for the possibility that the referenced wars can be identified with the *seditio Gracchana* see Hahn (1964); Zecchini (1977), and later Canfora (2000) 162–167; Id. (2015) 138–202. On this matter see Cornell *supra* 20–23.

9 See Sussman (1978) 145–148 and *infra* 150 n. 29. The relevant contexts are: Mart. 1.61.7–8: *duosque Senecas unicumque Lucanum / facunda loquitur Corduba*; and 4.40.1–2: *atria Pisonum stabant cum stemmate toto / et docti Senecae ter numeranda domus*. See also Mart. 10.72.8–13: *non est hic dominus, sed imperator, / sed iustissimus omnium senator, / per quem de Stygia domo reducta est / siccis rustica Veritas capillis. /Hoc sub principe, si sapis, caveto, / verbis, Roma, prioribus loquaris*. Sussman (1978) 147–148 and *infra* 173–174 observes that the *Veritas* of Martial reflects the idea of *veritas* which emerges from the only *de vita patris* by Seneca the Younger and Sen. *contr*. 1 *praef*. 7–10; on the *veritas* in Seneca the Elder see Mazzoli *infra* 95–98.

portion transmitted by *P.Herc*. 1067 will also prompt cautiousness, and the enthusiasm to interpret the remains of these important *Historiae* is tempered by the physical limits of a roll in which only textual splinters survive. Although hypotheses cannot achieve certainty as far as the detailed reconstruction of the narrated events goes, it is still possible to weave together certain threads into a necessarily patchy plot.

2 Development: Intertwining threads of history from textual splinters. The Tiberian lead

Prudentia, et alia – That the central character of the roll's historical narrative is Tiberius is suggested indirectly by the certain presence of his name and by the possibility that the allusion to a *Caesar* is addressed to him. Further elements also need to be emphasized: 1. the reference to the *prudentia*, a quality which – either real or simulated – was appropriate for the first years of Tiberius' power;[10] 2. the frequent use of *verba dicendi*, both in the first and second person, possibly recurring in dialogues or letters, both genres often associated with (?) Tiberius in portraits by historiographers;[11] 3. the frequent mention of the Senate, which could

---

10 *P.Herc*. 1067 cr. 4 pz. I sov. 2 ll. 5–7: *[– – –]c̣[ ] pr[o]vid[– – – |⁶ – – –]ṃ n[i]hi[l – – – |⁷ – – –]e v[i]r pruḍ[en– – – –]*. On Tiberius' *prudentia* see: Tac. *ann.* 3.69.5: a*tque ille (scil. Tiberius) prudens moderandi, si propria ira non impelleretur, addidit insulam Gyarum immitem et sine cultu hominum esse: darent Iuniae familiae et viro quondam ordinis eiusdem, ut Cythnum potius concederet*; Suet. *Tib.* 21.3 (a letter by August): *adduci tamen nequeo quin existimem, circumspectissimum et prudentissimum principem in tanto praesertim negotio nihil temere fecisse; sed vitiis Tiberi[i] virtutibusque perpensis potiores duxisse virtutes, praesertim cum et rei publicae causa adoptare se eum pro contione iuraverit et epistulis aliquot ut peritissimum rei militaris utque unicum p. R. praesidium prosequatur*; 21.5: *ordinem aestivorum tuorum ego vero mi Tiberi, et inter tot rerum difficultates* καὶ τοσαύτην ἀποθυμείαν τῶν στρατευομένων *non potuisse quemquam prudentius gerere se quam tu gesseris, existimo*; Vell. 2.111.4: *quantis prudentia ducis opportunitatibus furentes eorum vires universas elusimus, fudimus partibus! (...) Qua prudentia hiberna disposita sunt!*; Ps. Aur. Vict. *epit.* 2.3: *(scil. Tiberius) satis prudens in armis satisque fortunatus ante sumptum imperium sub Augusto fuit, ut non immerito reipublicae dominatus ei committeretur*. References to Tiberius' *providentia* can be found in Tac. *ann.* 4.6.4; 4.41.2; Suet. *Tib.* 18.1. On this topic see a deeper examination in Scappaticcio (2018) 1056.

11 As for the *verba dicendi* see: *P.Herc*. 1067 cr. 3 pz. I sov. 1 l. 8: *dixit*; cr. 5 pz. I sov. 5 l. 10: *]dixi[*; cr. 5 pz. II sov. 3 ll. 3–6: *sub ṣign[– – – |⁴ – – –]ce[. . . .]runṭ . [– – – |⁵ – – –]eṇṇi[– – – |⁶ n]arraba[t– . .]ṃ ṛ[– – –]*. As for verbal forms at the first or second (singular or plural) persons, see: *P.Herc*. 1067 cr. 1 pz. I sov. 5 l. 4: *scis*; cr. 3 pz. I sov. 8 col. I ll. 9–10: *] . ẹritis |¹⁰ [– – –]atis*;

even imply the presence of speech by the emperor;[12] 4. the mention of military contexts, as in Gaul or that concerning an unharmed man and some enemies.[13]

Bellum in Gallia – The mention of a *Caesar*, a *bellum* and a *Gall[* in close proximity does not leave any doubt that the narration is focused on a military action in Gaul that would have had a Caesar as a main character.[14] A reference to Gaius Julius Caesar's military campaign in the 50's BC could either involve a specific episode depicted in Caesar's history, whose main stylistic quality was *brevitas*, or it might be an example coming from recent history. The latter hypothesis – although rare, references to Caesar's Gallic campaign do occur in the historiography of the Imperial Age –[15] has been used as a basis to reconstruct a possible reference to Tiberius' intervention in Germany. This echoed Caesar's campaign in Gaul and helped to justify Tiberius' adoption by Augustus in 4 AD.[16]

However, there is another, more contemporary possibility. During the Principate, the Caesarian campaign in Gaul was eclipsed by the reorganization of the province by Octavian Augustus between 27 and 10 BC. If *Caesar* refers to Tiberius, it naturally recalls the mission Tiberius himself promoted in 21 AD in order to repress the revolt inspired by Julius Florus and Julius Sacrovir and defined as a *bellum* by Tacitus in the third book of the *Annales*.[17]

Talking about the Gallic events of 21 AD as a *bellum* means sharing the same senatorial and anti-Tiberian feelings in Tacitus' narration. Tiberius would have preferred such a mission to have been seen simply as an instrument through which to reestablish public order (*ann.* 3.47).

Dies Iunius – Identifying this *bellum* with the Gallic campaign Tiberius wanted in 21 AD is even more plausible because of the nearby reference to *A]u[g]usto*[18] and

---

cr. 5 pz. I sov. 1 l. 1: *nostṛ[*; cr. 5 pz. I sov. 1 l. 4: *ṛepetam*; l. 7: *]nquar*. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1056–1057.

12 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 2 pz. I sov. 6 ll. 9–10: *Ṣena[t– – – –] |¹⁰ [– – –]ẏeṭ [ ] Ṣẹn . [– – –]*; cr. 3 pz. I sov. 3 l. 8: *] Senatu[*. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1057.

13 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 4 strato 1 l. 4–6: *incolumem [– – –] |⁵ cum hostẹs e . . [– – –] |⁶ . ḷụ . . . gerer[. . . . .]ạm [*. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1058.

14 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 6 pz. II sov. 1+2 ll. 4–5: *] . Caes[a]re [. .]or[|⁵]um[ ] bello Gall[*. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1061–1062.

15 See: Cic. *Att.* 1.19.2; *fam.* 7.18.1; *prov.* 19; 32; 35–36; 47; Quint. *inst.* 3.8.20; Suet. *Iul.* 56.1; 69.1; Sen. *benef.* 5.15.5; Front. *ep.* 9 (224.12 van den Hout).

16 See Lucarini (2018).

17 Tac. *ann.* 3.40–47; see e.g. 3.41.3: *consultus super eo Tiberius aspernatus est indicium aluitque dubitatione bellum*. The lines of Suet. *Tib.* 49 are instructive, as well. See also Vell. 1.129.3.

18 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 2 pz. I sov. 2 l. 2.

because in a previous section – almost a meter and a half before in the length of the roll – the text mentions an event that happened between 17 and 20 AD. In fact, this contains a dating formula referring to the Kalends, Nones, or Ides of June in an undefined year, which provides an additional chronological parameter.[19] This could be the seventh day before the Kalends of June of 17 AD, when Germanicus triumphantly ended his mission along the Elbe River,[20] or the fifth day before the Kalends of June of 20 AD, when Drusus, Tiberius' son, triumphed in the Illyricum.[21] The latter hypothesis is strengthened by the nearby reference to a *Cn[ae-*,[22] perhaps neither Gnaeus Lentulus the Augur[23] nor Gnaeus Sentius,[24] but rather Gnaeus Calpurnius Piso, suspected of having poisoned Germanicus, accused of high treason and victim of a well-known trial that took place in the spring of 20 AD.[25]

Haterius – The name Haterius stands out in the onomastic record of the Herculaneum roll. Is this Haterius Agrippa, consul in 22 AD, a disliked (?) character, described by Tacitus as sexually perverse[26] and as the opponent of Cultorius Priscus, who was accused of having composed verses on the death of Germanicus?[27] Or is this Quintus Haterius, the father of Haterius Agrippa?

---

19 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 1 pz. II sov. 2 l. 8: *I]un*; this is possibly an abbreviated form standing for the name of the month. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1058–1061.

20 See Tac. *ann.* 2.41.2: *C. Caelio L. Pomponio consulibus Germanicus Caesar a.d. VII Kal. Iunias triumphavit de Cheruscis C‹h›attisque et Angrivariis quaeque aliae nationes usque ad Albim colunt.*

21 Between the half of the 1st century BC and the end of Tiberian age, only three events are said in the *Fasti Ostienses* and *Amiternini* to have taken place in June-July. In addition to the above mentioned two episodes, another one must be added, that is the wearing of the virile toga by Nero Caesar, son of Germanicus, on the seventh day of the Ides of June in 20 AD.

22 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 1 pz.

23 Gnaeus Lentulus Augur is mentioned speaking of the trial against Libon, started in 16 AD (Tac. *ann.* 1.27), and of the process (trial?) for concussion (?) against the proconsul of Asia Junius Silanus, in 22 AD (2.32). See Tac. *ann.* 3.68; 4.29; 44. On this character, see also Suet. *Tib.* 49.

24 Gnaeus Sentius is mentioned in Tac. *ann.* 2.74; 3.7 because he made the poisoner Martina be sent away from Rome, in 19 AD.

25 On Piso's trial and suicide see: Tac. *ann.* 3.1–19; Suet. *Tib.* 52; D.C. 57.18.10. On the Senate's Decree concerning Gnaeus Piso see the *editio princeps* by Caballos *et all.* (1996) and the increased version by Eck *et all.* (1996). Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1060–1061.

26 Tac. *ann.* 6.4.4.

27 Tac. *ann.* 3.49.

Quintus Haterius garnered the attention of Tacitus because of his repeated flattering,[28] and his obituary is recorded in the *Annales*.[29] Quintus Haterius notably was an illustrious orator; he died in 26 AD, but he was long-lived enough to experience the Principate of Augustus and the first years of the Reign of Tiberius. He is one of the characters frequently appearing in Seneca the Elder's *Controversiae* and *Suasoriae*,[30] and he interacts with both the Caesars.[31]

The elderly orator is depicted conversing with Tiberius also in Suetonius' life of the emperor, at a moment in Tiberius' life not clearly reconstructable but surely prior to his retirement to Capri.[32] This episode does not have any parallel in the narratives of Tacitus and Cassius Dio, but it shares some details with the context where Haterius is mentioned in the Herculaneum roll.[33] In fact, in both Suetonius' biography and in the narrative of the Herculaneum roll the senate is identifiable as the backdrop (Suet.: *curia*; *senator* ~ *P.Herc.* 1067: ṣena[t–; ṣẹn . [); the verb *rogo* occurs (Suet.: *rogo* ~ *P.Herc.* 1067: rogaḅ[]); and an Haterius is mentioned (Suet.: *Q. Haterio* ~ *P.Herc.* 1067: Ha`t´[eri–).

In Suetonius' biography, Haterius is also involved in an episode which would have highlighted Tiberius' *civilitas* during the first years of his empire. Suetonius reports that he pardoned an unnamed *consularis* who threw himself down on his

---

28 On the episode of 22 AD, see Tac. *ann.* 3.57.2: *at Q. Haterius cum eius diei Senatus consulta aureis litteris figenda in curia censuisset, deridericulo fuit, senex foedissimae adulationis tantum infamia usurus*; on the episodes of 14 AD, see Tac. *ann.* 1.13.3–6.

29 Tac. *ann.* 4.61.1.

30 Sen. *contr.* 1.6.12; 4, *praef.* 6–7; 7.1.4; 7.1.24; 7.2.5; 7.8.3; 9.3.13; 9.4.16; 9.6.8; 9.6.11; 9.6.13; 9.6.16; 10.5.24; *suas.* 2.14; 6.1; 7.1. See also Sen. *epist.* 40.10: *nam Q. Hateri cursus, suis temporibus oratoris celeberrimi, longe abesse ab homine sano volo: numquam dubitavit, numquam intermisit; semel incipiebat, semel desinebat.*

31 On Augustus see Sen. *contr.* 4 *praef.* 7: *declamabat autem Haterius admisso populo ex tempore: solus omnium Romanorum, quos modo ipse cognovi, in Latinam linguam transtulit Graecam facultatem. Tanta erat illi velocitas orationis ut vitium fieret. Itaque divus Augustus optime dixit: 'Haterius noster sufflaminandus est.' Adeo non currere sed decurrere videbatur. Nec verborum illi tantum copia sed etiam rerum erat: quotiens velles eandem rem et quamdiu velles diceret, aliis totiens figuris, aliis tractationibus, ita ut regi posset nec consumi.* On Tiberius see Sen. *suas.* 3.7: *apud Caesarem cum mentio esset de ingenio Hateri, consuetudine prolapsus dixit (*scil. *Gallio): 'et ille erat plena deo'.*

32 Suet. *Tib.* 29.1: *dissentiens in curia a Q. Haterio: 'ignoscas', inquit, 'rogo, si quid adversus te liberius sicut senator dixero'.*

33 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 2 pz. I sov. 6 ll. 4–10: *rogaḅ[– – –] |⁵ uṭ Ha`t´[eri– – – –] |⁶ vạṛ[– – –] |⁷ [– – –] |⁸ [– – –] |⁹ [– – –] ṣena[t– – – –] |¹⁰ [– – –]ṿeṭ [ ] ṣẹn . [– – –].*

knees.[34] In the *Annales* (1.13.6) such a *consularis* is named as Haterius, and the possibility arises that this episode – although differently employed by Suetonius and Tacitus in order to illustrate various aspects of the emperor's nature – can be ascribed to a common source.[35]

Poculum – In the *editio princeps* of *P.Herc.* 1067 it was emphasised that one of the clearest textual sections is characterized by sinister tones, in particular an allusion to a slow-acting drink, which suggests poisoning.[36]

Poisoning is a common theme in declamation,[37] and it is more characteristic of historical episodes in the Tiberian than the Augustan period. For instance, suspected poisonings involved the death of Germanicus – by Piso –[38] and Martina and Agrippa's sons,[39] while a real poisoning killed Quirinius – by Lepida;[40] and a simulated poisoning occurred to Agrippina, who was given an apple by the emperor.[41] Moreover, self-poisonings are known during the reign of Tiberius, a few even taking place in the Senate.[42]

---

34 Suet. *Tib*. 27.1: *adulationes adeo aversatus est, ut neminem senatorum aut officii aut negotii causa ad lecticam suam admiserit, consularem vero satisfacientem sibi ac per genua orare conantem ita suffugerit, ut caderet supinus*; see Rietra (1928) 20.

35 Gascou (1984) 270; see also the analytic parallelism between Tac. *ann.* 1.13.7 and Suet. *Tib*. 27.1 on Quintus Haterius (269–270; 396–397). Further details on this possible Haterius mentioned in *P.Herc.* 1067 see Scappaticcio (2018) 1065–1068. Lucarini (2018) 89 has recently supposed that the presence of Q. Haterius shall support a possible discussion in the Senate on Tiberius' adoption by Augustus.

36 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 3 pz. I sov. 8 col. II ll. 4–17: *sepạ[– – –] |⁵ lenṭi [– – –] |⁶ subiba[– – –] |⁷ potur[– – –] |⁸ ṣ[i]mụḷ[– – – |⁹]asçẹ[– – –] |¹⁰ ṃetu . [– – – |¹¹]f . [– – – |¹²] . . [|¹³ –]rcire qu[– – – |¹⁴] . tum lu[– – – |¹⁵]ç[|¹⁶ .]aςṭụṛ[|¹⁷ –]gare[– – –]*. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1068–1070.

37 Poisoning is a frequent declamatory theme in the rhetorical work of Seneca the Elder; for instance, the fourth and sixth *controversiae* of the sixth book respectively concern a *potio ex parte mortifera* (Sen. *contr.* 6.4) and an *adultera venefica* (6.6), while the sixth *controversia* from the ninth book concerns a *filia conscia in veneno privigni* (9.6).

38 See Tac. *ann.* 2.69.3; 3.12.4; 3.13.2; 3.14.1.

39 See Tac. *ann.* 3.7.2 and 3.19.3.

40 Tac. *ann.* 3.23.2.

41 Tac. *ann.* 4.54.1 and Suet. *Tib*. 53.1.

42 Suet. *Tib*. 61.4; see also the self-poisoning of Vibullius Agrippa (Tac. *ann.* 6.40.1).

According to the *Annales'* account of the death of Drusus in 23 AD, Drusus himself is said to have received back the same cup (*ann.* 4.10.2: *potionem*; 3: *poculum*) he meant to administer to his father.[43] The *Annales* also stages the homicide of Artabanus, king of Parthia, who, although prevented by fear (Tac. *ann.* 6, 32, 1: *metu*), wished to take revenge on those who had sent a delegation from his country to Rome and gave slow-acting poison to the eunuch Abdus.[44] According to the sources whose material was absorbed in Suetonius' *Life*, the poison possibly administered to Tiberius by Gaius in 37 AD was slow and lethal too.[45] Whether the suicide of the orator and poet Mamercus Scaurus in 34 AD was caused by poison is impossible to say.[46] Mamercus Scaurus had also been accused of attacking Agamemnon in some of his verses. Is there an *Agamem]non* behind the unexpectedly accented monosyllable *]non* in *P.Herc.* 1067?[47]

Much uncertainty remains about these episodes. On the one hand, if the *poculum* refers to the poisoning of Drusus in 21 AD, this implies that the narrative of events was lengthy and detailed, since almost two meters of roll intervened between it and the earlier reference to the Gallic *bellum* of Tiberius in 21 AD. On the other hand, if the *poculum* refers to the murder of Abderus, almost ten years must have been covered by the same length of roll. Of course, it is also possible that the event recorded here has nothing to do with these two episodes and left no further traces in imperial historiography.

Augustus – Two columns after this episode is the word *Auguste*. More than thirty years ago, this was the crucial evidence in favor of reconstructing an *oratio in Senatu habita ante principem*. The vocative, as well as the verb form and pronoun in the first person undoubtedly imply direct address to the *princeps*.[48]

---

43 Tac. *ann.* 4.10–11 (10.3: *atque illo ignaro et iuveniliter hauriente auctam suspicionem, tamquam metu et pudore sibimet inrogaret mortem quam patri struxerat*); see also Suet. *Tib.* 62.1.

44 Tac. *ann.* 6.32.2: *ut Abdum specie amicitiae vocatum ad epulas lento veneno inligaret, Sinnacen dissimulatione ac donis, simul per negotia moraretur.*

45 Suet. *Tib.* 73.2: *sunt qui putent venenum ei a Gaio datum lentum atque tabificum.*

46 Mamercus Scaurus was accused to have committed adultery with Livilla and to have injured Agamemnon in some of his verses. The latter episode is narrated in detail by D.C. 58.24.3–4: in the tragedy whose title was *Atreus* Mamercus Scaurus would have done 'like Euripides' (*Phoen.* 393), suggesting a servant to tolerate the tyrant's madness; so then, Tiberius wanted Mamercus become 'an Aiax', obliging him to kill himself. See Tac. *ann.* 6.29.3 and Svet. *Tib.* 61.3 (*quod in tragoedia Agamemnonem probris lacessisset*).

47 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 3 pz. I sov. 8 col. I l. 2.

48 *P.Herc.* 1067 cr. 5 pz. I sov. 1 col. I ll. 1–11: *[– – –] nostṛ[– – –]² – – – l]ọngius a proρ[osito |³ – – –]ḍaṃ Auguste |⁴ [– – –] uṭ ṛepetam et |⁵ [– – – –]ṛebrum eorum |⁶ [– – –]arum [ ] qui ter |⁷ [– – –]nquar sic uṭ . [– – – |⁸ – – –]oga . [i]gnaruṃ |⁹ [– – –] ạmararu[– – – |¹⁰ – – –] . . iṇes*

In these lines there is a possible reference to senators (*nostṛ[*); something (or someone) 'dense' or 'full' appears on the scene; there is an allusion to 'leaving' (if l. 7 can be integrated as *li]nquar* or *reli]nquar*); the unconsciousness or ignorance of someone who had to be interrogated is mentioned; something is bitter.

Whether the *princeps* addressed as *Augustus* is Octavian or Tiberius is impossible to say. In fact, this title was assigned to Tiberius by his predecessor.[49] Tiberius had an ambivalent relationship with the title, and he only used it in his correspondence with foreign dynasties,[50] though it is also documented in inscriptions and on coins.[51]

It remains possible to imagine either Augustus or Tiberius as the emperor being addressed. It is also conceivable that the address took place through the medium of a letter, such as the one written by the king of Parthian Artaban to Tiberius, according to the Suetonian *Life*.[52]

Adoptio – Further along is the suggestive word *adoptio*. It is impossible to say whether this is the *adoptio* of Germanicus forced on Tiberius by his predecessor,[53] of Tiberius's maternal grandfather into the *gens* Livia,[54] or of Tiberius himself.[55]

Furthermore, *adoptio* is a theme of declamation, along with *stuprum*, which also appears in the roll's narrative (*-st]ụpṛatạ mụlịẹ[re*).[56] The presence of these

ṣolo[– – – |ᴵᴵ – – –] . . . . [; col. II ll. 2–7: [. . . . .]ṣc̣[– – – |³ . . . . .]u[.] . c[– – –] |⁴ pọtụisset [– – –] |⁵ [a]ḍoptioṇ[– – –] |⁶ [e]xp̣robạụ[– – –] |⁷ [. . . . .]ọr . [. Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1071–1072.

49 Suet. *Aug*. 101.2: *heredes instituit primos Tiberium ex parte dimidia et sextante, Liviam ex parte tertia, quos et ferre nomen suum iussit*; see Ov. *fast*. 1.608: *tanti cognominis (*scil. *Augusti) heres*.

50 Suet. *Tib*. 26, 2: *ac ne 'Augusti' quidem nomen, quanquam hereditarium, nullis nisi ad reges ac dynastas epistulis addidit*; D.C. 57.8.1–2: τὸ τοῦ Αὐγούστου (*scil*. πρόσρημα) οὐκ ἐπέθετο μέν (οὐδὲ γὰρ ψηφισθῆναί ποτε εἴασε), λεγόμενον δ'ἀκούων καὶ γραφόμενον ἀναγιγνώσκων ἔφερε· καὶ ὁσάκις γε βασιλεῦσί τισιν ἐπέστελλε, καὶ ἐκεῖνο προσενέγραφε. Τὸ δ'ὅλον Καῖσαρ.

51 See Scott (1932); on the honorific titles of Tiberius see also Baar (1990) 162–165 and Yavetz (1999) 40, where further bibliographical references are found.

52 Suet. *Tib*. 66.2: *quin et Artabani Parthorum regis laceratus est litteris parricidia et caedes et ignaviam et luxuriam obicientis monentisque, ut voluntaria morte maximo iustissimoque civium odio quam primum satis faceret*.

53 Tac. *ann*. 1.3.5; Suet. *Tib*. 15.2; *Cal*. 4.1; see Baar (1990) 117.

54 Tac. *ann*. 5.1.1; 6.51.1; see Suet. *Tib*. 3.1; 52.1.

55 Tiberius' adoption by Augustus in 4 AD has been supported by Lucarini (2018). See Tac. *ann*. 1.7.7; Suet. *Aug*. 65.1; on which Baar (1990) 59.

56 *P.Herc*. 1067 cr. 2 pz. I sov. 4 l. 5 (in the marginale). Further details in Scappaticcio (2018) 1064–1065.

particular themes is further evidence of Senecan paternity, and it helps to characterise a specific type of 'rhetorical historiography'.[57]

3 Perspectives: the *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium* and Imperial historiography

The text recovered from *P.Herc*. 1067 seems to give pronounced attention to narrative details. Was this work complete in the one surviving roll or did it spread across several *volumina*? The authorship of the work is certain thanks to the presence of *Lucius Annaeus* in the *subscriptio*. These considerations lead to the conclusion that the work is the *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium*.

The possibility that the historical characters mentioned are characters in anecdotes or *exempla* in a rhetorical work can be excluded by the evidence of the *subscriptio* and by the quantity of text – the roll had to measure almost thirteen meters in total. This is far more than the quantity of text known to be in the full version of the *Oratorum et rhetorum sententiae, divisiones, colores*.

The text's narrative detail and possible interest in anecdote is complemented by dialogic (or epistolary) sections, all focusing on historical characters of the imperial family. Similar elements can be traced back to the historiography of Seneca the Elder.

The highly fragmentary plot can be filled out by parallels from later historiography concerned with the Late Republic and early empire. The historiographical work found in *P.Herc*. 1067 seems to have shared with some later historiographical works a basically annalistic setting, as in Tacitus' *Annales*. Tiberius seems to emerge as a common denominator of all the episodes found in the roll.

The recovery of a new manuscript witness narrating some details of the reign of Tiberius – or the final period (?) of the Principate of Augustus – creates a dialogue with the first six books of the *Annales* of Tacitus, the biography of Suetonius, and Cassius Dio's *Histories*. The *Historiae* now known from *P.Herc*. 1067 must have been in circulation before Tacitus, before Suetonius, before Appian, and before Cassius Dio. It is conceivable that it influenced these later historians

---

[57] On such a topic Migliario (2007) stands as reference work.

and represented one of their sources.[58] It has long been known that the relationship between Tacitus and Suetonius is complex, since both drew on Seneca the Elder's historiography, as well as the works of Aufidius Bassus and Servilius Nonianus. It was also established that Seneca's *Historiae* were characterized by a slanderous tone against the emperor, too.[59] Moreover, it has also been questioned whether the father's historiographical work was a model for his son, who cites historiographical *exempla* in his works,[60] as well as a model for Pliny the Elder, whose sources for historiographical *exempla* deserve further investigation.[61]

Regardless of whether the surviving fragmentary columns of text from the original roll of *P.Herc.* 1067 can be connected to the reign of Tiberius (or the Principate of Augustus), whether the narration of Seneca the Elder was accurate in historiographical detail, and whether the *Historiae ab initio bellorum civilium* explored the history of Rome since the *seditio Gracchana* or since the civil wars between Caesar and Pompey, it is clear that the surviving roll would have not been the only one bearing the text of this historiographical work. Perhaps it would be fruitless to hunt for the rest of Seneca the Elder's *Historiae* in the surviving rolls from the Library of the Herculaneum Villa, but such a story of discovery nurtures the hope that more new chapters of Latin literature might one day be written and it encourages more work on unpublished Latin fragments.

---

58 Questa (1963²) stands as reference work; a specific section is dedicated to the sources of the first six books of the *Annales* (125–173). More recently, on the sources of Tacitus see Devillers (2003); on Seneca the Elder as one of the possible sources of Tacitus see Devillers *infra* 249–252.
59 Questa (1963²) 171–173; Gascou (1984) 265.
60 What Castiglioni (1928) 456 affirms about Seneca the Elder's historiographical work is instructive: "un'opera, ricca di dettaglio, costituente il patrimonio letterario della famiglia".
61 Further details in Scappaticcio (2018).