Excursio per Orientem: eastern subjects in Tacitus' Histories and Annals

Miravalles, Ana Cecilia

Ana Cecilia Miravalles

Excursio per Orientem

Eastern Subjects in Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals*

Master of Arts by Research

University of Durham

- 2004 -

Ana Cecilia Miravalles

Excursio per Orientem. Eastern Subjects in Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals*

Abstract

This study examines Tacitus' treatment of eastern topics in sections of the *Histories* and the *Annals* related to trips from or to Rome. It aims to show that those sections, though involving non-Roman subject matter, are essentially connected with the main subject matter about Roman politics that articulate the narratives of the *Histories* and the *Annals*: the consolidation of the Principate, the legitimacy of the emperors' power, the territorial expansion of the empire and the responses of the Roman institutions to those new realities. Thus the internal structure and the connection with the surrounding narrative of each episode as well as the references to mythical and historical accounts and characters (from remote and recent history), and to ruins, sanctuaries and cult statues are explored. Chapter 1 (Titus' trip and the consultation of the sanctuary of Paphos, *Hist.* 2. 1-4) suggests that the remoteness of the place and of the traditions and Titus' oracle, do not divert the attention, but emphasise the beginning of the Flavian revolt. Chapter 2 examines Vespasian's visits to the sanctuaries in Mount Carmel in Syria and in Alexandria in Egypt (*Hist.* 2. 78 and 4. 81-84). Chapter 3 deals with the account of the siege of Jerusalem and the digression on the Jews (*Hist.* 5.1-13). Chapter 4 is about Germanicus' eastern trip (*Ann.* 2. 56-61). And finally, chapter 5 (*Ann.* 2.47; 3. 60-65; 4. 13-14; 4. 55-56 and 12. 61-63) examines the interventions in the Senate of eastern ambassadors who ask for concessions such as tax remissions, rights of asylum and rights for constructing temples. The argument is made that these sections introduce a further temporal and geographical perspective for the understanding of the main axis of the *Histories* and of the *Annals*.

Table of Contents

Statement of copyright

Acknowledgements

I wrote this dissertation as a part-time overseas student, living and working in Argentina between 2000 and 2004, so I owe a debt of gratitude to many people.

Professor A.J. Woodman, my supervisor, and Professor D.S. Levene have tirelessly supported me all these years. From them I have learned to think and to work in a completely different way with regard to Tacitus, to the Classics and, fundamentally, to the academic practice. They both helped and advised me in every possible way by reading my drafts, by patiently answering all my questions and doubts, and by providing information and bibliography which was unavailable for me. As a consequence, I am absolutely grateful because of their generosity, rigour, and kindness.

In different ways, many other people have helped me to overcome the many difficulties I had during this time. The following scholars generously sent me copies of their articles: E. Keitel, H. Heinen, J. Butrica, J. Rives and the editors of *Rivista Maia*. Also the librarians of the *Facoltà di Lettere, Università degli Studi di Trento* and Adrian Mendez, the librarian of Biblioteca de Humanidades, Universidad Nacional del Sur, Bahía Blanca, helped me in my search of material. Moreover, Professors Ruben Florio, Marta Garelli and Maria del Carmen Cabrero, from Departamento de Humanidades, UNS, constantly stimulated me to continue this project up to its end; Giuseppe Sansoni, and Francisco Nardelli supported me whenever I needed their help and assistance; my English teacher Norma Subiela joined me in this work with her professionalism, her intelligence and, above all, her infinite patience; and, finally, my dearest friend Sandra Rosetti always encouraged me with her unconditional friendship and affection.

The debt to my parents, Elisa Ferrari and Victor Miravalles, to Nicolas Testoni and to my son Alvaro is greater than I can say.

Introduction

Since Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals* deal with the history of the Roman Empire, both are considered crucial for the understanding of the "inner working of Roman political and military power"[1]. Amid this political and military history it is possible, however, to find accounts such as the origins of the remote sanctuary on the island of Paphos, the extraordinary riches of the Pharaohs in Egypt or the methods for the extraction of bitumen in the Dead Sea, i.e. ethnographic and aetiological subjects related to eastern cities, peoples, and cults. This study examines Tacitus' treatment of eastern subjects in a number of sections of the *Histories* and the *Annals*. I aim to show that those sections, in spite of involving non-Roman subjects, are essentially related to those central concerns about Roman politics that articulate the main narrative of the *Histories* and the *Annals*.

The passages have been chosen on the basis of four essential points in common. First, they are concerned with the East. *Oriens* includes not only the provinces that already belonged to the empire but also the bordering regions and peoples outside the empire: Egypt, Syria, Judaea, Asia and Achaea, and also the Pontus, Cappadocia and Armenia. *Oriens* as a geographic area is for Tacitus one of the basic criteria for arranging the materials in his narrative (*Hist.* 1.2.1 *prosperae in Oriente, adversae in Occidente res*); and, accordingly, he alludes to it as "the other side of the world" (*Hist.* 2.1.1 *in diversa parte terrarum*), "the provinces separated by the sea" (*Ann.* 2. 43.1 *permissae ... provinciae quae mari dividuntur*). Second, the passages chosen involve a traveller (from

[1] LEVENE (1997), vii.

or to Rome), that is, they are related either to the presence of an emperor or a prince (Titus, Vespasian and Germanicus) in that area, or to the arrival of eastern ambassadors in Rome; these Roman travellers "look at", "listen to", "visit" eastern sites; and the Roman Senators "listen to" the descriptions of temples, myths and histories evoked by the ambassadors of the Eastern cities. Third, the passages under discussion are concerned with ethnographies and aetiologies of Eastern peoples, and with (remote as well as recent) history as well as oracles for the future. And finally, the sections chosen either are digressions by themselves or somehow constitute digressive passages: the narrative focus abandons for a while the main line of events so as to deal with a remote and even mythical past and with distant and exotic lands and cities.

These temporary exits from the main subject were absolutely formalised in Latin literature: rhetoricians and consequently historians used to adopt digressions or digressive sections because they believed in the effectiveness of myths, legends and descriptions of exotic or unusual phenomena (*digressio*, *egressio*, *excursus*)[2] to please and to retain the attention of the readers. I shall attempt to demonstrate that the importance of these sections is related not only to the pleasurable effect they produce but also to the structural function they play in the whole of the historiographical text: on the one hand, they constitute spatial displacements from the main narrative, since they deal with distant lands and foreign peoples; on the other hand, they are temporal deviations because they allude either to the mythical and remote past (aetiologies), or to recent history, or to the future (oracles).

---

[2] Cic. *De Orat.* 2. 261 *ab re digressio*; Quint. 4.3.12 *Hanc partem παρέκβασιν vocant Graeci, Latini egressum vel egressionem. Sed hae sunt plures, ut dixi, quae per totam causam varios habent excursus, ut laus hominum locorumque, ut descriptio regionum, expositio quarundam rerum gestarum vel etiam fabulosarum.* On historical brilliance in oratorical digressions, Quint. 10.1.33 *licet tamen nobis in digressionibus uti vel historico nonnumquam nitore.* For Tacitus' digressions, see HAHN (1933), 1-3, SYME (1958), 309, SAGE (1991) 890, and WOODMAN (1988), 106-7 and 184-185. With the exception of Hahn, scholars consider digressions as a structural device to allow transitions and also as an instrument for *delectatio*, as a method of entertaining the audience. On digressions in historiographical texts see KRAUS (1994), 179; and MARINCOLA (1999), 307-308.

Now, the main narratives of both the *Histories* and the *Annals* are articulated on the basis of some central problems such as the consolidation of the Principate, the legitimacy of the emperors' power, the territorial expansion of the empire and the responses of the Roman institutions to those new realities. My argument will be that Tacitus' main concerns about Roman domestic and imperial politics not only are present in these tangential sections but they also determine their internal configuration[3], so I shall first explore the internal structure and the connection with the surrounding narrative of each episode, and, second, discuss the references to mythical and historical accounts and characters (from remote and recent history), as well as the mentions of ruins, memorials, sanctuaries and cult statues.

Tacitus adopts specific techniques for handling these particular Eastern subjects. For this reason, so as to understand the development and the use of these techniques, I shall consider, not the chronological order of events described in both texts (first the aftermath of Augustus' death up to the reign of Nero, and, second, the crisis of year 68), but the order in which those texts were written: first, the *Histories*, related to the more recent events of the Flavian dynasty, and then the *Annals*, which are about the Julio-Claudian emperors. In Chapter 1, I suggest that in the account of Titus' interrupted trip and the visit to the sanctuary of Paphos (*Hist.* 2. 1-4), the remoteness of the place and of the traditions evoked as well as Titus' secret oracular consultation, far from diverting the attention, emphasise the impending beginning of the Flavian revolt. In Chapter 2, by examining the two episodes that involve Vespasian in Mount Carmel in Syria and in Alexandria in Egypt (*Hist.* 2. 78 and 4. 81-84) I will make the argument that Tacitus refashions episodes about oracles so as to reverse one of the commonplaces of Flavian propaganda: in fact, he underlines the existence of plans of revolt and also stresses some significant connections between those "exotic cults" and certain Roman traditions and

[3] On the value of formal literary analysis for the understanding of the historical significance of historiographical texts see KRAUS and WOODMAN (1997), 1- 6.

beliefs. In Chapter 3, from the discussion of the account of the siege of Jerusalem and the digression on the Jews (*Hist.*5. 1-13), I claim that Judaea and principally Jerusalem are described as a foil to Rome. While these first three chapters are related to episodes in the *Histories*, the last two chapters concern passages taken from the *Annals*. Chapter 4 is about Germanicus' eastern trip (*Ann.* 2. 56-61). In this section I suggest that this itinerary not only highlights the historical background and the situation in the eastern border of the Roman empire but also hints at connections with the Roman remote and recent past. Finally, in Chapter 5 (*Ann.* 2.47; 3. 60-65; 4. 13-14; 4. 55-56 and 12. 61-63), I examine the interventions in the Senate of eastern ambassadors who ask for concessions such as tax remissions, rights of asylum and rights for constructing temples. Accordingly, I claim that the topics ascribed to them (mythical and historical accounts, description of temples and of landscapes) serve to make the history of the Roman empire in the East present for Tacitus' Roman audience.

Digressions, mythical and aetiological references have often been considered as additional sections in Tacitus' historiographical texts. But they have not always been regarded as passages strongly articulated with the main narrative. What digressions and digressive sections narrate and even explain, are actually further facets of the central historical processes which dominate the *Histories* and the *Annals*. To demonstrate this implication is the basic concern of this work. The realisation that myths, topographical and ethnographical descriptions and historical references play a key role in the definition of the main historiographical subject matter opens a stimulating line of enquiry. Examining the internal structure of each episode and its connections with the main narrative does more than offer explanations about Tacitus' technique and erudition. It also shows how both of them are conscientiously aimed at supporting a complex approach to Roman politics and history as a whole.

1- Titus' Journey

(*Hist.* 2. 1-4)

Book 2 of the *Histories* starts with Titus' interrupted trip: according to Tacitus, he leaves Judaea with the intention of honouring Galba, the new emperor in Rome; in Corinth he hears about Galba's death and then, after many deliberations, he returns to his starting point. On his way back he visits the sanctuary of Paphos in Cyprus and consults the oracle[1]. The account of this trip together with the antiquarian digression on the sanctuary of Paphos will be the specific concern of this chapter. By exploring the structure of the whole episode, in the first section I suggest that there is a correspondence between Titus' circular itinerary and the way the account is articulated, because, in both cases, the centre is constituted by the temple, the statue of the goddess, and the response of the haruspex, that is, the central elements of Titus' consultation. The narrative focus of the *Histories* has moved to the East and some months back from the main temporal axis; the Flavians still seem far away from power, and, consequently, Paphos and its cult are described as remote and exotic places.

But, since Titus' consultation of the oracle is, at the same time, the goal of the circular route, and the reason for the digression to be there, in the second and third part of this chapter, I claim, on the one hand, that Titus - even if he appears here as the protagonist of an apparently insignificant episode - is described as the leading character and, on the other hand, that the digression functions as the pivot of a temporal axis that looks back to the past, through the myth, and ahead to the future, through the response of the oracle. In this way, Tacitus articulates the whole episode as the very beginning of the

[1] On Titus' trip see BÜCHNER (1964), HEUBNER (1968), 12-24, NICOLS (1978), 60-63 and 93-95, CHILVER (1979), 161-166, and ASH (1999), 142.

Flavian revolt, and chooses this as the first of a series of successive oracular and miraculous announcements which had been associated by Flavian propaganda with the accession of the Flavians to power and which Tacitus includes also in his narrative, but with a certain distance.

1.1. The roundabout route

Two things are clear from the first pages of Book 1, where Tacitus examines the general situation of the provinces: one is that the account of the trip will have a privileged place in the general arrangement of the subject matter of the *Histories*. The other one is that Titus' turning back in Corinth reverses Vespasian's initial purpose of demonstrating loyalty to Galba:

> *nec Vespasiano adversus Galbam votum aut animus: quippe Titum filium ad venerationem cultumque eius miserat, ut suo loco memorabimus.* (1. 10. 3)

Yet the first signal of a plan of revolt, namely, the first event of the new dynasty (2.1.1 *Struebat iam fortuna ... initia causasque imperio...*) recorded by Tacitus in the opening of Book 2 is an episode without effective consequences: when Titus is turning back he visits the temple of Paphos on the island of Cyprus.

Because of this turning back, Titus' trip is described as a roundabout route[2]. Inside the general examination of the situation in the East included in sections 1-9 of

[2] The regions involved are mentioned in *Hist.* 2.6.1-2: Judaea, with its centre in Caesarea from where the final actions against Jerusalem continue; Syria, the richest oriental province under the command of Mucianus and his four legions; Corinth, the capital of the province of Achaia; in Greece, the coasts of Greece and Asia Minor; and the islands of Rhodes and Cyprus. On Syria see BOWERSOCK (1973) and REY-COQUAIS (1978); on Cyprus see MITFORD (1980) and (1990). For general remarks about Greece under the Roman domination see ALCOCK (1993), 166-169; and on Tacitus' specific concern with this area see SYME (1958), 504-519, and BOWERSOCK (1993).

Book 2 of the *Histories*, the account of Titus' circular route (2.1.1-2.4.2) is framed by the mention of his departure and his return, in a way that suggests that both movements are linked with Vespasian's political actions (*from* his father and *to* his father):

Titus Vespasianus, e Iudaea incolumi adhuc Galba missus a patre. .. (2.1.1)

Titus aucto animo ad patrem pervectus. (2.4.2)

Moreover, from Judaea, Titus arrives at Corinth, and when he hears about Galba's death, he sails back to Syria again. Similarly, going around these subjects, the text passes through some points more than once: the turning back in Corinth (2.1.3 *Ubi Corinthi...* - 2.2.2 *igitur*), the visit to the island of Cyprus (2.2.2 *Rhodum et Cyprum insulas* - 2.2.2 *adeundi visendique templum Paphiae Veneris*) and the arrival in Syria (2.2.2 *inde Syriam... petebat* - 2.4.2 *ad patrem pervectus*).

Corinth is one of the geographic keys to the subsequent development of the account:

Ubi Corinthi, Achaiae urbe, certos nuntios accepit de interitu Galbae ... (2.1.3)

in fact, at the very moment of the turning back, when Titus learns about Galba's murder the city's name introduces a section (2.1.3-2.2.2) which deals, first, with Titus' deliberations with his friends and, second, with the speculations about the possible consequences of his decision not to continue the trip. At 2.2.2, the word *igitur* explains not only those deliberations (2.2.1 *His ac talibus... spes vicit*), but also the conjecture about Titus' relationship with Queen Berenice, his Jewish lover[3], and resumes the account

[3] On Berenice, her origins and her political career see MACURDY (1935), CROOK (1951), SULLIVAN (1953), ROGERS (1980), and BRAUND (1984). Because of her beauty and riches it

from its starting point in Corinth. The way back to Judaea is described with the enumeration of the steps of the journey:

> *Igitur oram Achaiae et Asiae ac laeva maris praevectus, Rhodum et Cyprum insulas, inde Syriam audentioribus spatiis petebat.* (2.2.2)

Although the enumeration also includes the arrival at the final destination in Syria, the stop in Cyprus - the other geographic key in the account - is resumed in the next sentence:

> *atque illum cupido incessit adeundi visendique templum Paphiae Veneris.* (2.2.2)

and it is extensively developed by means of the antiquarian digression on the temple and the icon of Venus Paphia, the description of Titus' oracular consultation (2.2.2 -2.4.2), and concluded with the mention of Titus' arrival at his father's headquarters (2.4.2). The account of the trip is thus structured around these two points -Corinth and Cyprus- in a way that leads the readers' attention not to the final stage (i.e. the arrival point) but to both main and decisive stops.

This roundabout character of the route is emphasised by means of explanatory sections which contain either alternative options or successive stages before the final goal, and which, for a while, divert the reading from the main line of the account.

---

would seem that also Vespasian was fascinated with this lady: *Hist.* 2. 81.2 *Nec minore animo regina Berenice partis iuvabat, florens aetate formaque et seni quoque Vespasiano magnificentia munerum grata.* Also Suetonius mentions her in *Tit.* 7.1, and adds the further detail of her dismissal from Rome; Quint. 4. 19.1 describes the court that she had in Rome; and also Juvenal comments on her in *Sat.* 6.156-8 *deinde adamas notissimus et Beronices/ in digito factus pretiosior. hunc dedit olim/ barbarus incestae, dedit hunc Agrippa sorori*; Josephus, in *BJ* 2. 309-314 and in 2. 344; 2. 405 depicts her as a heroine, differently from *Antiquities* 20, 145-146, where she is represented more maliciously.

One of these sections is concerned with the reasons for Titus' trip, which are given as two possible alternatives. Thus the departure from Judaea to Rome (*causam profectionis*) is explained, on the one hand, through the justifications ascribed to Titus himself:

> *Titus Vespasianus ... causam profectionis officium erga principem et maturam petendis honoribus iuventam ferebat...* (2.1.1),

namely, his wish to offer the honour due to Galba as the new emperor, as well as his own interest in an official nomination; and, on the other hand, there are explanations based on rumours which suggested that Titus had been adopted by Galba as his successor[4]:

> *sed vulgus fingendi avidum disperserat accitum in adoptionem.* (2.1.1)

The bases for those rumours were Titus' personal skills and virtues, and the favourable responses of oracles and omens which supposedly supported Vespasian's projects. Though these were plausible rumours[5], their content is explicitly refuted by Tacitus through the commonplace of exaggeration (*avidum fingendi; augebat famam; intemperantia civitatis*).

Another section structured on several alternatives deals with Titus' vacillations about the continuation of the journey. In fact, by means of the two conditional sentences some possible different directions are taken into consideration: the continuation of the journey towards its destination in Rome, or the return to Judaea. Also this last option

---

[4] WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 172, explain that rumours were not always created recklessly and without foundation, as in this case. In general on rumours see SHATZMAN (1974), MARINCOLA (1997), 93-94 and GIBSON (1998).

[5] For a larger consideration of these rumours see BÜCHNER (1964), 85.

introduces two additional choices: either Vespasian's support for the successful party or Vespasian's own accession to power:

> *cuncta utrimque perlustrat: si pergeret in Urbem, nullam officii gratiam in alterius honorem suscepti, ac se Vitellio sive Othoni obsidem fore: sin rediret, offensam haud dubiam victoris, sed incertam adhuc victoriam et concedente in partes patre filium excusatum. sin Vespasianus rem publicam susciperet, obliviscendum offensarum de bello agitantibus. His ac talibus inter spem metumque iactatum spes vicit.* (2.1.3 - 2.2.1)

Moreover, it is worth noting that the verb *perlustro*, which introduces the passage, can be used both literally and metaphorically: it means "to travel through or over" (OLD 2.a) and also, in a figured sense, "to run one's mind over, ponder, study" (OLD 2.c). Here Tacitus adopts the term in the last sense but, at the same time, somehow presents Titus' considerations as several possible paths: and, actually, the words *utrimque perlustrat* are translated in English as "consider all the possibilities on either side"[6]. What is more, the verb used by Tacitus at the end of the passage so as to resume its main points suggests the same idea: in fact, *iactatum* means not only "to toss about, to torment" (OLD 8.b) but also "to drive to and fro" (OLD 8.a).

With its introductory formula[7], also the antiquarian digression implies a diversion from the main course of the narrative: after the apologetic expression (in this case, an impersonal statement with a conventional reference to brevity), the content is

---

[6] LEVENE (1997), 59.

[7] The apology of the introductory formula does not seem to be explicitly based on the story's legendary character, but on a criterion of appropriateness, similar to the formulas used in other antiquarian digressions: on the Caelian Hill *Ann.* 4. 65 *Haud fuerit absurdum tradere montem eum antiquitus*; on the Phoenix *Ann.* 6. 28.1 *de quibus congruunt et plura ambigua, sed cognitu non absurda promere libet;* and the digression on the *pomerium Ann.* 12. 24.1 *sed initium condendi, et quod pomerium Romulus posuerit, noscere haud absurdum reor.* On Tacitus' techniques for introductory formulas in antiquarian digressions see HAHN (1933), 97-98.

summarised: the names of the founders of the temple, either the ritual or the place (considering that *ritum* is a conjecture for *situm*)[8], and, finally, the singular cult image of the goddess:

> *Haud fuerit longum initia religionis, templi ritum, formam deae (neque enim alibi sic habetur) paucis disserere.* (2.2.2)

The digression itself contains details such as the bloodless sacrifice, the open-air altar which never gets wet and the description of the non-anthropomorphic idol. The reference to the impossibility of explaining the reasons for its peculiar shape serves to conclude it (2.3.2 *et ratio in obscuro*)[9] and to resume the account of Titus' activities in the temple.

Finally, the oracular consultation is gradually described in two stages before the most relevant point, i.e. the positive response of the priest about the future of the Flavians. The first stage is a question about the end of the journey:

> *de navigatione primum consuluit. postquam pandi viam et mare prosperum accepit...* (2.4.1)

and only afterwards, the second one is about Titus' own future:

> *de se per ambages interrogat caesis conpluribus hostiis. Sostratus (sacerdotis id nomen erat), ... pauca in praesens et solita respondens, petito secreto futura aperit.* (2.4.2)

---

[8] WELLESLEY (1989), 43.

[9] In a digression, the return to the main line must be *aptus et concinnus*: Cic. *De Oratore* 3.203 *et ab re longa digressio, in qua cum fuerit delectatio, tum reditus ad rem aptus et concinnus esse debebit; propositioque quid sis dicturus et ab eo, quod est dictum, seiunctio et reditus ad propositum et iteratio et rationis apta conclusio.* On this see DAVIES (1968).

The reference to the priest's answer offers the clue for understanding the place of this episode in Book 2 because it conveys the existence of a secret and carefully studied plan of revolt, led by Vespasian and Mucianus, which still needed more favourable circumstances to be executed and from which Titus hoped to obtain also a great benefit.

Tacitus may have had several reasons for articulating the account in this roundabout way. From a factual point of view, Titus' trip does not seem to be significant. This is an "interrupted trip", with no practical consequences either for Otho and Vitellius in Rome, or for Vespasian and his *partes* in the East. Moreover, important events happen during Titus' absence, such as the oath of loyalty to Otho and the first actions in the organisation of the revolt (2.6). Yet, though the trip has no practical effects, its significance is related to the attempt to explain the process of the Flavians' accession to power[10]: Titus' trip, as the starting point of the Flavian revolt, was in fact a conventional topic of Flavian propaganda. Yet Tacitus points out that Titus' mediation in the agreement between Mucianus and Vespasian (2.5.2) had happened *before* the trip[11], so he indicates that Vespasian's accession was not spontaneous as his propaganda claimed or forced upon him by his soldiers, but that his actions had been conceived and carefully planned well in advance.

Tacitus' purpose of refashioning the Flavian tradition is evident in his personal treatment of Titus' trip. Tacitus connects the trip not to the development of the War but to the plans of revolt and, consequently, the decision of turning back in Corinth appears as the result of a rational consideration of the political situation. Besides Tacitus introduces references to rumours and speculations about the possibility of Titus' becoming Princeps and by means of the account of the visit to the oracle of Paphos he suggests the existence of plans of rebellion in the East, a very inconvenient aspect for the nice façade of the

[10] BÜCHNER (1964), 89.
[11] BRIESSMANN (1955), 9.

Flavian version. Instead, in his account in the *Bellum Judaicum* 4.497-502, Josephus reflects many of the substantial points of the official version[12]: he mentions the fact that Titus was sent to Rome with the Jewish king Agrippa to ask for instructions to continue the Jewish War and explains Titus' decision as the result of a "divine impulse". On the other hand, Suetonius' text (*Div. Titus* 5.1-3)[13] shows many similarities with Tacitus' account, such as Titus' departure before Galba's death, the general belief that Titus would be adopted; the turning back in Corinth; the visit to the Paphian temple and the results of the consultation of the oracle. But unlike Suetonius, who links the announcement of the oracle with the impending conquest of Jerusalem and with the suspicion that Titus had projects independent from his father, Tacitus underlines Titus' connection with his father's plans, precisely by means of the accent on the roundabout nature of Titus' journey.

1.2. The traveller: Titus

Titus' roundabout route is a trip around the East area of the Empire. This allows Tacitus to depict a larger characterisation of Titus. It is true that other references to Titus in the *Histories* are related to his diplomatic mission with his father and Mucianus (2.79), his command of the War in Judaea, his intervention in favour of his brother Domitian (4. 51-52) and even more to his military capacities, as we shall see in Chapter 3, with the account of Titus' preliminaries of the campaign in Jerusalem (5.1-13). But his portrait in this episode and at the very beginning (both of the revolt, and of Book 2) indicates some

---

[12] Josephus' position is complex, as a Jewish and as Flavian propagandist. In fact, as a direct participant of the events and, afterwards, enjoying a personal contact with Vespasian and Titus, he had consulted Vespasian's memoirs (*Vita* 342) and submitted his historical works for the emperor's approval (359). For a comparison between Tacitus' and Josephus' accounts see BRIESSMANN (1955), 26-27.

[13] Suet. *Div. Titus* 5.1 *etiam de imperii spe confirmatus est. cuius brevi compos et ad perdomandam Iudaeam relictus...*

traits of his personality, his aims and his position in the whole of the events and characters in the *Histories*.

Titus' name articulates the whole account. Despite its apparent subordination to Vespasian (from his father - to his father) mentioned before, it is repeated several times as the syntactic subject (2.1.1 *Titus Vespasianus ... ferebat* - 2.4.1 *Titus, spectata opulentia ... consuluit* - 2.4.2 *Titus, aucto animo ... pervectus*) who explains his reasons or who receives the news of Galba's assassination (*accepit*) or who deliberates with his friends about the convenience of not continuing the trip (*perlustrat*).

This position is due to the fact that, even if it was Vespasian who later became the first Flavian emperor, many references to Titus in the *Histories* suggest that, in the first stages of the Flavian rise, he was considered, instead, the real candidate for the empire: he is Vespasian's partner almost from the outset, sharing with him successive consulships (4.3.4); he enjoys the favour of Mucianus (2.74.1 *Muciani animus nec Vespasiano alienus et in Titum pronior*) who considers him "with all the qualifications to be a ruler" (2.77.1 *capax iam imperii*); he has great military prestige (2.77.1 *clarus*, an adjective employed also in 5.1.1) and celebrated diplomatic skill (2. 52); and causes admiration because of his piety and family loyalty (4.52.2). Moreover, the subtle suggestion about his vices and excesses (2.2.1 *laetam voluptatibus adulescentiam egit, suo quam patris imperio moderatior*[14]) is balanced by his youth, intelligence and beauty[15]:

> *augebat famam ipsius Titi ingenium quantaecumque fortunae capax, decor oris cum quadam maiestate* ... (2.1.2)

[14] On Titus' characterisation see SAGE (1991), 851-1030 and ASH (1999), 127-146.

[15] See DAITZ (1960) for the techniques adopted by Tacitus to make portraits: direct description of character and physical appearance and innuendo (presentation of alternative motives or causes). For general remarks about conventions for portraits in Latin Historiography see RAMBAUD (1970) and MARTIN and WOODMAN (1989), 80-81.

As a result, Titus appears as a "mixed" character[16] whose complexity is suggested by Tacitus' associating him with other figures. In fact, Tacitus connects Titus with other literary personages (his own and other authors'), adding, in this way, further meaning to the actions depicted in the account[17].

In some aspects, the ambiguous rising figure of Titus could be associated with that of Nero, at least the Nero drawn by Tacitus in the *Histories*, not only because the *Histories*' main subject is the account of the crisis which followed Nero's death, but also because personages like Titus, as well as Galba, Otho and Vitellius, are defined and judged through their relationship with, and their greater or lesser resemblance to, Nero: Nero's beauty, youth and political abilities were perceived, according to Tacitus' text, in contrast with Galba's ineptitude and old age (1.7.3). On the other hand, Otho's excesses are linked with his early personal relationship with Nero (1.13.3) and with his supposed celebration of Nero's memory as a means to gain popular support; and his doubts whether to accept or refuse to be saluted as a "new Nero" are adduced by Tacitus as an evidence of his ambiguity (1.78.2)[18]. Also Vitellius is ambiguous because his tendency to vice and frivolity is connected with his admiration and even his loyalty for Nero (2.71.2). Evidently Tacitus is aware of the relevance of the figure of Nero even after his death because his popularity, based on his philhellenism and his supposed attempt to identify himself with Alexander the Great[19], was widespread, specially in the East. Titus is not explicitly compared with Nero but, in his personal description, some of those traits recur: youth, charm and political skills as well as a certain tendency to excesses and pleasures, popularity and interest in the eastern affairs and culture[20].

---

[16] On "mixed" characters in historiography see WOODMAN (1983), 240.
[17] See FOWLER (1997) and HINDS (1998), 31-32. For general considerations about intertextuality see VAN ERP TAALMAN KIP (1994) and LAIRD (1999), 34-43.
[18] Cf. the comment of LEVENE (1997), 258: "Tacitus, while linking Otho to Nero, slightly distances him, and so hints at his ultimate demonstration of his nobility".
[19] SANFORD (1937).
[20] A further connection is the reference to the arrival of the corpse of a "false Nero" in Rome which closes this section about the Eastern affairs in Book 2 of the *Histories*. As Tacitus himself

From a very different point of view, Titus can be connected with Aeneas. In fact, many aspects of Titus' visit to the sanctuary in Paphos recall also the Virgilian account of Aeneas' consultation of the Sibyl[21]. The lexical similarities highlight the connection of the Tacitean protagonist with Aeneas as a young prince who, in the middle of a long and tortuous journey, consults an oracle to discover his future:

At pius Aeneas arces, quibus altus Apollo
praesidet, horrendaeque procul secreta Sibyllae,
antrum immane, petit, magnam cui mentem animumque
Delius inspirat vates aperitque futura

(*Aen.* 6. 9 - 12)

pauca in praesens et solita respondens, petito secreto futura aperit. (2.4.2)

with the attempts of the Sibyl to calm Aeneas' fears, by encouraging him:

Tu ne cede malis, sed contra audentior ito

(*Aen.* 6.95)

inde Syriam audentioribus spatiis petebat. (2.2.2)

---

records, due to the uncertain circumstances of Nero's death, there was a strong belief that he would be still alive, and that he would come back: 2.8.1 *Sub idem tempus Achaia atque Asia falso exterritae, velut Nero adventaret, vario super exitu eius rumore eoque pluribus vivere eum confingentibus credentibusque.* Even for a long time, the belief that a "new Nero" would come from the East, as a *Nero redivivus,* had great acceptance. The episode ends when the corpse of the impostor is brought to Rome: 2.9.2 *corpus, insigne oculis comaque et torvitate vultus, in Asiam atque inde Romam pervectum est.* On the "false Neros" see SYME (1958), 518 and GALLIVAN (1973).

[21] GUERRINI (1986) is convincing when he attempts to demonstrate that the Virgilian plot adopted by Tacitus serves to give an ideological signal: the divine sanction for the future power of the Flavians, even if later SAGE (1991), 910, considering that the lexical similarities are based on common phrases and expressions, says that it is not possible to draw any legitimate direct filiation.

and with her announcement (*ambages*) of a favourable development of the journey:

" ... *via prima salutis,*

quod minime reris, Graia pandetur ab urbe".

Talibus ex adyto dictis Cymaea Sibylla

horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit,

obscuris vera involvens.

(*Aen.* 6. 96 - 100)

postquam pandi viam et mare prosperum accepit, de se per ambages interrogat

(2.4.1)

Yet the strongest reference is to the figure of Alexander the Great because of Titus' desire to visit the temple:

cupido incessit adeundi visendique templum Paphiae Veneris ... (2.2.2)

This expression, *cupido adeundi*, recalls one of the central topics of Alexander's encomium, the *pothos* motif[22]. It means "desire of knowledge" (Plut. *Alex* 8.5) and it is connected with the visits paid by Alexander to sanctuaries, as for instance that of Delphi (Plut. *Al.* 14.6). This topic belongs to Alexander's legend and it can be found, for

[22] Other examples of this motif in Tacitus are: *Hist.* 4. 82.1 *Altior inde Vespasiano cupido adeundi sacram sedem...* and *Ann.* 2.54.1 *cupidine veteres locos et fama celebratos noscendi*. On the *pothos* motif in Tacitus see SYME (1958), 770-71 and BORSZAK (1969), 593. On Alexander's encomium cf. Cic. *De Orat.* 2. 340, Livy, 9.16, and Curtius Rufus, 4.7. 8-9. For a general overview of this motif in Rome see WIRTH (1976). Moreover, SPENCER (2002) analyses the appropriation and the consequent process of the "Romanisation" of Alexander's figure by Latin authors. For more about *imitatio Alexandri* see below on pp. 100 - 104.

instance, in Curtius Rufus' text: he uses the expression, first for Alexander's desire to solve the puzzle of Gordium, stimulated by the oracle that promised the domain of Asia for the person who could solve it:

cupido incessit animo sortis eius explendae. (3.1.16),

and, second, for Alexander's desire to visit the temple of Jupiter in Egypt:

Sed ingens cupido animum stimulabat adeundi Iovem. (4.7.8)

With regard to Titus, therefore, the most eloquent connection is the oracle, because Alexander's consultation happens in a context of a certain philhellenism, of heroic deeds and plenty of promising expectations similar to Titus' situation right before the Flavian revolt.

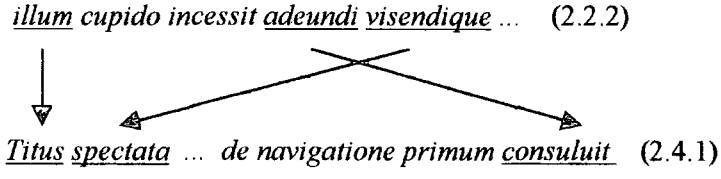
In considering these connections, then, a larger portrait of Titus results: on the one hand, traits such as popularity, prestige, youthful enthusiasm and ambition are emphasised; but, on the other hand, many of the ambiguities and contradictions that the tradition had ascribed to those personages (i.e. Nero, Aeneas, and Alexander) can also be somehow associated with Titus' ambiguities and contradictions and can therefore prevent Tacitus' readers from simplifying him as a character.

1.3. The roundabout

Titus' trip and its account are both structured around a central point, on the island of Cyprus: the sanctuary and the digression which describes it. Accordingly, on the basis of the digressive structure of the account, and considering how Titus' description is reinforced by these allusions, it will be worth examining, first, the ways in which the

temple and the idol are configured in the text. Then, since the account of the myth about the temple and the ritual, and the description of the oracle on Titus' future are both motivated by the mention of the temple and the statue of the goddess, it will be interesting to observe how they both become the key to the temporal displacement to the past and also to the future.

The temple, the statue and the votive offerings are considered from the point of view of Titus' actions, namely, the conventional behaviour of a pilgrim in ancient times[23], because the account of the visit to the temple shows the traveller Titus no longer as a prince concerned with political affairs but as a religious tourist visiting sacred sites (*adeundi visendique - spectata ... consuluit*). Since the word *adeo* means not only "to go to see, visit a place of interest" (OLD 6.b), but also, as a technical term, "to consult an oracle" (OLD 7.c), it is directly related to *consulo*, another of the specific verbs for oracular consultations (OLD 1.d). Similarly, *video* and *specto* are both verbs which imply autopsy and physical contact with sacred places and objects[24], and these words are chiastically arranged around the digression on the temple[25]:



[23] HUNT (1984) overviews the tradition of journeys around the antiquities in the Eastern Mediterranean sea, characterised by a spirit of learned and antiquarian curiosity in the path of the Herodotean *historia*, and where religion plays a significant role. DILLON (1997), xiii-xix, analyses some practical aspects of pilgrimage in ancient Greece for oracle consultation, for initiation in mystery cults and healing.

[24] On "sacred sight-seeing" see RUTHERFORD (2000). He underlines the importance of visual contemplation of statues and temples, because it was a way of establishing a more intimate relationship with the divinity.

[25] I owe this point to Prof. WOODMAN.

The reference to the temple, however, is not restricted exclusively to the perception ascribed to Titus; the temple (which was the most celebrated religious centre on the island of Cyprus[26]) and the statue are the subject matter of the antiquarian digression. Yet, instead of describing the temple in terms of architecture and display of artistic objects, Tacitus builds it up in the text, in the light of its main ritual function[27], that is, the practice of divination.

Several aspects related to the oracular practice are alluded to and thus the temple is identified and characterised by a series of precise references. The first one relates both the building of the temple and the origin of the cult of the goddess to its mythical founders through the use of the word *conditor*[28] and by means of two different versions of the myth ascribed to two different traditions:

> *Conditorem templi regem Aëriam vetus memoria, quidam ipsius deae nomen id perhibent. fama recentior tradit a Cinyra sacratum templum deamque ipsam conceptam mari huc adpulsam.* (2.3.1)

A second point concerns the introduction of the practice of divination in the island by a mythical figure, Tamiras, and the restriction of the access to priesthood, first, to both families connected with the origin of the cult, Cinyras and Tamiras; and then, only to the descendants of Cinyras, the alleged founder of the temple:

> *sed scientiam artemque haruspicum accitam et Cilicem Tamiram intulisse, atque ita pactum ut familiae utriusque posteri caerimoniis praesiderent. mox, ne honore*

[26] There are references to the temple in Hdt. 1. 105. For the modern excavations at the site see HEUBNER (1968), 30-36 and MITFORD (1980) and (1990). Many architectural elements found in the site prove the singular attention the Flavians paid to the sanctuary, for instance the altar dedicated by Titus and Domitian to Venus Paphia.
[27] ELSNER (1996).
[28] On the several meanings of the word *conditor* see MILES (1988). See below on p. 113 n.11.

nullo regium genus peregrinam stirpem antecelleret, ipsa, quam intulerant, scientia hospites cessere: tantum Cinyrades sacerdos consulitur. (2.3.1)

The third aspect is the detailed description of the ritual itself: the choice of the victims to be inspected, the singular attention paid to some special entrails, and the open-air altar which never gets wet[29]:

hostiae, ut quisque vovit, sed mares deliguntur: certissima fides haedorum fibris. sanguinem arae obfundere vetitum: precibus et igne puro altaria adolentur, nec ullis imbribus quamquam in aperto madescunt. (2.3.2)

A further element concerns the statue of the goddess which presides over the ritual of divination in the temple. The singularity of its form is hinted at in the introduction of the digression[30]:

formam deae (neque enim alibi sic habetur) ... (2.2.2),

and afterwards is fully described:

---

[29] Pliny *NH.* 2. 210 *celebre fanum habet Veneris Paphos, in cuius quandam aream non impluit.*

[30] In Latin poetry the appellation *Paphia* for Venus is frequent: Virg. *Georg.* 2.64 *solido Paphiae de robore myrtus*; Ovid *Ars* 3. 181 *Hic Paphiae myrtos*; Lucan 8.458 *Undae diva memor Paphiae, si numina nasci / credimus*; Hor. *Carm.* 1.30.1 *O Venus regina Cnidi Paphique*; Mart. *Ep.* 7.74 *Sive cupis Paphien...* and 9.90.13 *At tu, diva Paphi.* Nevertheless, the most beautiful image of the goddess was sculpted by Praxiteles for the sanctuary of Cnidus and some epigrams from the Greek Anthology allude to it: 16.159 "... the Paphian has descended to Cnydus", and 16. 160: "Paphian Cythrerea came through the waves to Cnydus, wishing to see her own image..." (Transl. W.R PATON, Loeb, *repr.* 1960).

simulacrum deae non effigie humana, continuus orbis latiore initio tenuem in ambitum metae modo exsurgens, et ratio in obscuro. (2.3.2)

Since an efficacious power was usually ascribed to images[31], the specific liturgical function of the icon is illustrated by the reference to Sostratus, the priest of Paphos, who has the chance "to see" the favourable gesture of the goddess:

Sostratus (sacerdotis id nomen erat), ubi laeta et congruentia exta magnisque consultis adnuere deam videt ... (2.4.2)

Even though this cult image is called *simulacrum*, a word which means "statue of a god"[32], it is not a human representation but an an-iconic idol. Such a geometric form indicates the refusal of any appeal to affective involvement, and the non-figurative traits seem to be charged with an unknown significance. The detailed description of the idol and also the alleged impossibility of explaining it, illustrate Tacitus' concern with the ancient debates on the different ways of representing divinities[33].

Finally, the temple is alluded to by means of the attention paid to the votive offerings, in which this temple was extraordinarily rich[34]:

Titus spectata opulentia donisque regum quaeque alia laetum antiquitatibus Graecorum genus incertae vetustati adfingit ... (2.4.1)

---

[31] ELSNER (1996).

[32] Cf. *Ann.* 12.22.1 *interrogatumque Apollinis Clarii simulacrum super nuptiis imperatoris.* On the use of the word *simulacrum* as "statue of a god" in Tacitus' texts see PEARCY (1973), 122-5. Similarly some other Latin authors: Cic. *In Verr.* 2.4.94 *Ibi est ex aere simulacrum ipsius Herculis*; Caes. *BG* 6.16.4 *alii immani magnitudine simulacra habent*; Lucr. 5.75 *simulacraque divom* and Virg. *Aen.* 2.172 *Vix positum castris simulacrum.*

[33] On different ways of representing divinities in Roman culture and literature see ELSNER (1995), 18-19 and FEENEY (1998), 97-104. On Tacitus' descriptions of non-anthropomorphic divinities see TURCAN (1985), and for his treatment of monuments see ROUVERET (1991), 3095.

[34] There is another reference to the riches of Paphos in Paus. 8.24.6.

They were not simply works of art, gifts or tokens[35]. Sculptures, engraved artefacts and inscriptions usually taught the pilgrim about the traditions and the past of the sanctuary because they constituted the material ground upon which the antiquity of the site could be appreciated. Titus "looked at" them (*spectata*) because the treasures in the sanctuary were exposed to be seen[36], and, even if in the text the Paphian treasures are considered mainly from the point of view of their material value (*opulentia*), their very presence guarantees the antiquity not only of the monument but also of the myth which legitimises them[37].

Since they are described from the point of view of their ritual function, the temple and the statue of the goddess articulate two different perspectives about time. The place of the sacred area, the altar and the peculiarity of the sacrifices evoke myths from a remote past, and the long-lasting prestige of the oracle makes the durability of a continued tradition evident. But, at the same time, and because of its deep roots, the oracle and its prophecy strongly stress the good result of the Flavian undertaking.

In this account, the reference to the myth is provided by the mention of the birth of the goddess and of the mythical founders of the sanctuary. Mythical or legendary accounts functioned as a means of legitimacy, and, in some sense as a "documentary" support for the temple, the statue and the priests. In fact, Latin authors usually underlined these connections. For example, in the section consecrated to digressions (4.3. 12-13), Quintilian quotes the account of the theft of the marble statue of Ceres in Sicily in *In Verrem* 2.4.105-109 so as to illustrate his point[38]. In this account, Cicero introduces the story of the origins of Ceres' cult with an apologetic formula:

---

[35] On the relevance of votive offerings in Greek temples see ELSNER (1996).

[36] A guide often accompanied the visitors showing, describing and explaining the provenance of every piece: Cic. *In Verrem* 2.4.132 *Ii qui hospites ad ea quae visenda sunt solent ducere et unum quidque ostendere, quos illi mystagogos vocant.*

[37] There is an interesting discussion on this topic in VASALY (1994), 104. See also HUNT (1984) and ROUVERET (1991), 3061.

[38] VASALY (1993), 104-128, offers a close reading of this passage from a point of view directly related to the subject I am dealing with.

De quo si paulo altius ordiri ac repetere memoriam religionis videbor, ignoscite.

(2. 4.105)

By constantly alluding to the legendary and traditional character of the story (2.4.106 *vetus est haec opinio ...; arbitrantur; ... vocant, dicitur ..., memorantur, ferunt ...*), Cicero makes reference to the material evidence which would support the credibility of his account:

haec opinio, iudices, quae constat ex antiquissimis Graecorum litteris ac monumentis ... (2.4.106)

it includes two different versions of the origin of the goddess as well as a detailed explanation of the rituals, the prodigies and usual supernatural phenomena:

multa saepe prodigia vim eius numenque declarant. (2.4.107)

It is similar in Tacitus' text: the myth that supports the prestige and the sanctity of the sanctuary is the story of Venus who would have been conceived and born in the sea and thrown afterwards on the beach in the same place where the temple is; and, connected with this, is the reference to the sacerdotal lineage derived from one of its mythical founders[39]. Tacitus makes his distance evident with regard to the mythical story. On the one hand, like other Latin authors, Tacitus exhibits a certain mistrust of Greek stories and,

[39] HEUBNER (1968), 37. Ancient authorities offer variants of the story, for instance Pausanias 1.14.7 and 8.5.2. Also Tacitus in *Annals* 3. 62.4 *exim Cypri<i> tribus <de> delubris, quorum vetustissimum Paphiae Veneri auctor Aërias.* Paphos was considered Venus' home with one temple and one hundred altars (Virg. *Aen.* 1. 415-417).

in general, of legendary accounts[40]. As a consequence, when he does not vouch for the historicity of an event, he subsumes his personal authority in the wider authority of the narrative tradition with expressions such as *perhibent, tradit, dicitur*, or leaves the question undecided when something very obscure results from its remoteness (*et ratio in obscuro*)[41]. On the other hand, the temple and the tales related to it are perceived by the audience through Titus' eyes. Thus the digression we read is the history Titus reads and learns by looking at the building and the objects which represent the past traditions of the place. Accordingly, the "viewer" is Roman: Titus is Roman, Tacitus is Roman, the *Histories*' audience is Roman. From this point of view, the myth is there because it is the kind of story audiences expected. The mention of a mythical account to support the appreciation of the material remains belonged to the standard pattern of antiquarian digressions[42]. But the connection with a remote past linked with the "foundation" and with the "consecration" of the sanctuary, places not only the account of Titus' consultation but also the starting point of the Flavian dynasty in a larger temporal perspective from which the announcements for the future seem to be absolutely consistent, and based on a recognised tradition.

The consultation of the oracle is the main purpose of Titus' visit to Paphos (*adeundi visendique*), namely, the circumstance which justifies the very presence of the digression, and, indeed, of the whole account of the trip at the beginning of Book 2. The ritual performed by the priest (whose lineage has been duly illustrated) and the efficacy of the statue (whose origins and aspect have been described in the digression) accord the greatest relevance to the response given to Titus' consultation. Titus' questions are

---

[40] *Ann.* 5. 10 *promptis Graecorum animis ad nova et mira.* Also Livy 28.43.2 *cur ergo, quoniam Graecas fabulas enarrare vacat*; Quint. 2. 4. 19 *nam Graecis historiis plerumque poeticae similis licentia est*; Juv. 10.170-171 *creditur olim/ velificatus Athos et quidquid Graecia mendax/audet in historia.* Petron. 88.8 makes reference to *Graeculi delirantes.* Also Josephus is rather critical in *Against Apio* 1. 22-23. Luc. *De Hist.Conscr.* 10 and 60.

[41] See KRAUS (1994), 206 and WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 172.

[42] See RAWSON (1972) and GABBA (1981) and (1991), 93-147. On past antiquarian fabrications see SYME (1958), 512.

supposed to be, not so much about the navigation (2.4.1 *postquam pandi viam et mare prosperum accepit*), but above all about his own future (2.4.1 *de se per ambages interrogat*). Now, in the field of prophetic and oracular speech, the words *per ambages* are generally used in reference to the answer. Two examples are the ambiguous words of the Sibyl in the *Aeneid* :

> *horrendas canit ambages antroque remugit* (6. 99)

and the unambiguous sign of the head found in the Capitolium in Livy:

> *quae visa species haud per ambages arcem eam imperii caputque rerum fore portendebat; idque ita cecinere vates quique in urbe erant.* (Livy 1.55.6),

Also the announcements of the oracle of Claros given to Germanicus, in Tacitus' *Annals*:

> *et ferebatur Germanico per ambages, ut mos oraculis, maturum exitium cecinisse.* (*Ann.* 2. 54.4)

the prophecy received by Vespasian on Mount Carmel,

> *has ambages et statim exceperat fama et tunc aperiebat ...* (2. 78. 3-4)

and the prophecy evoked at the moment of the fall of Jerusalem

> *pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum litteris contineri, eo ipso tempore fore ut valesceret Oriens profectique Iudaea rerum potirentur. quae ambages Vespasianum ac Titum praedixerant ...* (5.13.2)

are all called *ambages* and related to the answer. In the case of Titus' consultation in Paphos, instead, the word *ambages* has been shifted to the interrogation.

No explicit references to the contents of the answer are given, but three elements demonstrate that the oracle's utterance is depicted as absolutely favourable: the fact that the original response is brief whereas much more detail is given in private; Titus' immediate enthusiasm (2.4.2 *aucto animo*); and, even more, the commencement of the Flavian revolt reported by Tacitus in the final sections of Book 2. Besides, the displacement of the usual ambiguity ascribed to the answers to the consultant emphasises the uncertainty, the doubts of the initial stages of the Flavian revolt, the attempts to keep them hidden until the right moment, and, in short, Tacitus' insinuations about the real development of facts and about the manipulation of history by the propaganda. By means of this detailed description, Tacitus confirms the suggestion he had advanced in *Hist.* 1. 10.3[43] about the strength with which omens and prophecies were ingrained in the audience's conscience. Therefore, on the one hand, he points out how many of those announcements had gained significance *after* the Flavian accession and, on the other hand, he makes his scepticism and distance explicit with regard to omens, presages and to all those supposed "announcements" for the future[44].

1.4. Conclusion

Tacitus' mention of Titus' trip could seem to be merely an anecdote. Yet, on the basis of the preceding considerations, it appears as a significant episode. As we have

---

[43] *Hist.* 1.10.3 *occulta fati et ostentis ac responsis destinatum Vespasiano liberisque eius imperium post fortunam credidimus.* On this passage see DAMON (2003), 122-123.

[44] *Hist.* 2.1.2 *praesaga responsa et inclinatis ad credendum animis loco ominum etiam fortuita.* On the relevance of presages and oracles see CHILVER (1979), 163. On the significance of oracles in the narrative of the Flavian accession by Tacitus see ASH (1999), 141-142 and DAMON (2003), 273-278.

seen, its arrangement concentrates the focus, not only on Titus, but also on the sanctuary and the oracle. By underlining the exoticism of the cult, the antiquity of the practice of divination, and the complexity of the rituals, Tacitus adopts one of the most convincing devices for a "pleasant" reading, at least in the terms that pleasurable reading was conceived in ancient historiography. But, by focusing all these elements on Titus, on his visit to the temple and, above all, on the promising response of the oracle, the relevance of the forthcoming actions of the Flavians is stressed.

2- Two oracles for Vespasian

(*Hist.*2. 78 and 4.81-84)

After the account of Titus' visit to the oracle of Paphos, two other episodes - but now centred on Titus' father, Vespasian -, one in Book 2 and another in Book 4 of the *Histories*, deal with oracles in exotic eastern sanctuaries: the consultation of the oracle of Mount Carmel in Syria (2.78) and the miraculous cures and the visit to the Serapeum in Alexandria, Egypt (4.81-84). This chapter will be about these two sections because, besides the fact that they concern Vespasian and that they are placed one after the other in the succession of omens announcing the Flavian rise in the *Histories*, there are many similarities between them: each one is included in a more comprehensive section; both passages are structured alike; and each oracle functions as a dramatic anticipation of events. As in the previous section, also in these two cases Tacitus refashions two main topics of the Flavian propaganda which were apparently contradictory: the omens foretelling success for the Flavians and the existence of a plan for the Flavian revolt in the East.

The plans for revolt had been, in fact, carefully hidden by the Flavian historians behind the mention of many signs and oracular responses that predicted Vespasian's rise[1]. In the *Bellum Iudaicum* the Jewish historian Josephus refers to his own prophecy on Vespasian's future and mentions that there had been some "further signs" which announced the throne for him (*BJ.* 3. 399-408)[2]. Suetonius enumerates eleven prodigies which illustrate the general belief that the Flavians enjoyed some kind of divine support

---

[1] See above p. 15, on Tacitus' refashioning of Flavian propaganda.

[2] According to NICOLS (1978), 95-99, Flavian propaganda was based on three points: the spontaneous acclamation of Vespasian by his soldiers, his reluctance to accept the power, and his hopes of winning the empire without fighting.

(*Vesp.*5. 1-7). Tacitus criticises the Flavian writers not only explicitly[3] but also through the procedures he adopts: he transfers material, he uses words or ideas from his sources in a different manner or in a different context, and he adopts some of the motifs of Flavian propaganda to enlarge the dramatic representation of the personages or the facts. In fact, as we have seen in his account of Titus' trip, Tacitus indicates the existence of the plans of revolt *before* the trip (2.5.2), he shows Titus and Vespasian as determined, and he transfers the traditional motif of "indecision" to the soldiers[4]. Therefore, by rejecting omens such as Josephus' prediction to Vespasian in Iotapa (*BJ* 3. 392-408), or the exceptional swelling of the Nile in AD 70 (Dio 66.8.1), Tacitus makes a careful selection and concentrates on those events which could be useful to his purposes of focusing on Vespasian's and his sons' actions and attitudes[5].

Yet, in the *Histories*, though ambiguously and even with a certain irony, Tacitus has also made some references not only to the plans (2.6.1 *tarda mole civilis belli, quod longa concordia quietus Oriens tunc primum parabat* and 2. 7.2 *ita boni malique causis diversis, studio pari, bellum omnes cupiebant*), but also to the omens (1.10.3 *occulta fati et ostentis ac responsis destinatum Vespasiano liberisque eius imperium post fortunam*

---

[3] *Hist.* 2.101.1 *scriptores temporum, qui potente rerum Flavia domo monimenta belli huiusce composuerunt, curam pacis et amorem rei publicae, corruptas in adulationem causas, tradidere*.

[4] On Tacitus' handling of Flavian propaganda see BRIESSMANN (1955), 9-10 and 26; and on Tacitus' relationship with the Flavians (Vespasian and Titus) and with Flavian authors (Cluvius Rufus and Pliny the Elder) see TOWNEND (1964).

[5] On Vespasian's reputation: *Hist.* 1. 50.4 *et ambigua de Vespasiano fama, solusque omnium ante se principum in melius mutatus est.* Vespasian's characterisation has been connected with the account of these prodigies and omens from different perspectives: according to SAGE (1991), 908, omens and oracles illustrate Vespasian's passivity and his lack of initiative in the revolt. Likewise, ASH (1999), 134, concludes that Vespasian, who is depicted as a superstitious man, is "strongly detached from the real action"; there is a similar view in GYWN MORGAN (1996); on the other hand DAL SANTO (1981) underlines the close connection between Vespasian and the divinities since his childhood and for all his life. ZUCARELLI (1981) has the conviction that Tacitus presents his Vespasian as a man really predestined by the gods to power. Instead, according to PÖSCHL (1981) in Tacitus' text ambiguity marks Vespasian's characterisation: his fate is not so clear. Besides, for BARZANÒ (1988) the oracle on Mount Carmel could be considered as one of those presages that every Roman commander expected to have before the beginning of a war. Consequently, the account of this prophecy would not be related to a special predestination.

credidimus)[6]. In fact, also in Tacitus' version, though some references indicate that Vespasian himself is leading the plans of revolt, the account of the Flavian rise is marked by oracles and miracles. Considering thus that Tacitus insinuates that plans and omens went together, I shall examine the internal structure of these two episodes (the oracle of M. Carmel and that of Alexandria) and the way they are included in the main narrative of the *Histories*. On this ground, I shall suggest that those extraordinary announcements for Vespasian's imperial future are there not to contradict or to hide but rather to emphasise the starting point and the development of a well-planned action. Likewise, I shall argue that the exoticism ascribed to both sanctuaries and cults paradoxically highlights some political and religious aspects, significant for a Roman audience, which are thus considered from an alternative perspective: one of them is the political and strategic relevance of areas such as Syria and Egypt for the Flavian plan; another one is the deep connection between those two foreign cults and Roman religion, and a final one is the contradiction between the hopes aroused among the Romans by the Flavians and the dramatic final failure of the dynasty with the end of Domitian's tyranny.

2.1. The open secret: the consultation of Mount Carmel

According to Tacitus' version, Vespasian visits the temple on Mount Carmel somewhere between Syria and Judaea in the context of the secret conference with Mucianus, before their final intervention in the Civil War in Italy, that is, at the crucial moment when the Flavian revolt was decided and begun[7]. The visit to this sanctuary is

---

[6] According to LEVENE (1997), 259, amid the portents happening when Otho occupied Rome (*Hist.* 1. 86.1) Tacitus records the statue that turns its head round from West to East, but he does not connect it with the portents usually ascribed to Vespasian's imperial future, as do Plutarch and Suetonius. On Tacitus' irony on omens and signs presaging the future Flavian domination see CHILVER (1979), 83 and 237 and SAGE (1991), 945-946. On oracles and omens as historiographical categories, and Tacitus' frequent denigratory remarks about their authenticity, see PLASS (1988), 75-78.

[7] On the chronology and political aspects of this meeting see NICOLS (1978), 71-72.

directly related to that of Paphos not only because it immediately precedes the commencement of the Flavians' military actions but also because there is a structural connection between both episodes. In fact, to describe this consultation Tacitus follows a series of items parallel to those that serve to articulate the account of Titus' visit to the sanctuary of Paphos: the origins of the cult and of the temple, the shrine with its open-air altar, the singular character of the cult statue and the inspection of the entrails of the victim by the priest. Besides, the effect of anticipation of great events is suggested and, though the accent seems to be placed on "destiny" and "fate" and on the divine support for the Flavian candidate, the words ascribed to the oracle serve to illustrate and even to insinuate emphatically the existence of a clear plan of action. Yet, though this common pattern serves to articulate these episodes, the very similar arrangement of the main items highlights the specificity of the aetiological and historical references of each one. So the examination of the elements of this common structure as they appear in the episode of Mount Carmel, will make a close proximity to Roman traditions evident, behind the peculiar characteristics of the sanctuary and its cult. And this is a significant proximity, because Tacitus highlights it in this stage of the account of Vespasian's undertaking, right before the first steps of his campaign towards Rome.

The first and most striking feature in this section is the geographical and temporal remoteness ascribed to the sanctuary. The passage begins as if it were going to be essentially a geographic description[8], closer to a poetic description due to the use of a

[8] Quint. 4.3.12 and 9. 2. 44 *locorum quoque dilucida et significans descriptio* and Plin. *Ep.* 2.5.5 *nam descriptiones locorum quae in hoc libro frequentiores erunt non historice tantum sed prope poetice prosequi fas est.* Also Tacitus asserts the pleasurable nature of geographic descriptions in *Ann.* 4.33.3 *nam situs gentium... retinent ac redintegrant legentium animum.* But unlike the *Histories*, "the Annals (as extant) show few geographical digressions" (SYME (1958), 449): the description of Capri in *Ann.* 4. 67.2 and the excursus on Byzantium in *Ann.* 12. 63. According to GIUA (1991), 2879-2902, geographical references in Tacitus are not articulated as excursuses but as integral parts of the historical account. On the relevance of geography in historiography, see AVENARIUS (1954), 147 who comments on Lucian *HC* 57: "You need especial discretion in descriptions of mountains, fortifications and rivers to avoid the appearance of a tasteless display of your word power and of indulging your own interests at the expense of the history" (Transl. K. KILBURN, Loeb (1959)). On geo-ethnographic digressions see more below on pp. 57-58.

variant of the formula *est locus*, a formula which serves to point out a specific place because of its celebrity or of its singularity[9]:

est Iudaeam inter Syriamque Carmelus: ita vocant montem deumque. (2.78.3)

Moreover, the specificity of the place is described on the basis of topics that correspond to a general profile of exotic sanctuaries and not so much to a real and accurate description of this specific sanctuary[10]: the identification of the name of the mountain and the divinity, the open-air altar, the ritual warranted by tradition and the absence of a cult image of the divinity, Also, the verbs are used in the present tense (*est* ~ *vocant*) and the *vocant* formula is adopted as well: these two devices are usual, in Latin literature and particularly in historiography, in foreign contexts[11]. Furthermore, this passage seems to make reference to a great distance in space and time because, due to this simultaneous mention of geography and cult, it sounds like a sketch of aetiological and even antiquarian flavour[12]. Particularly, Tacitus uses the verbs *vocant* and *tradidere*, alluding to deeply rooted local traditions and, consequently, the information appears as depending on foreign authorities from which, as usual, he keeps a prudent distance[13].

In addition to the remoteness both of the place and of the traditions which identify it, Tacitus underlines the singularity of the sanctuary by indicating the lack of a temple and a statue:

---

[9] This formula is susceptible of variation: *Aen.* 7. 563 *Est locus Italiae medio sub montibus altis / nobilis et fama multis memoratus in oris.* Other examples in *Aen.* 1.159 *Est in secessu longo locus: insula portum / efficit obiectu laterum*; 2. 21-22 *Est in conspectu Tenedos, notissima fama / insula* and 5. 124 *Est procul in pelago saxum spumantia contra / litora.* According to LAUSBERG (1967) § 819, this formula is frequent either for real or fictitious places.

[10] HORSFALL (1985).

[11] Cf. *Hist.* 3. 47 3 *camaras vocant*; *Ann.* 3. 43. 2 *cruppellarios vocant* and *Agr.* 10.6.1 *insulas quas Orcadas vocant.* On the frequency of this formula in Livy and Tacitus see WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 340.

[12] On aetiologies see SCHECHTER (1975), 349.

[13] On the main traits of antiquarian digressions in the *Histories* see SYME (1958), 310.

nec simulacrum deo aut templum - sic tradidere maiores -: ara tantum et reverentia. (2.78.3)

This way, since there is no statue nor temple, the hill and the open-air altar - "the altar at which people worship"[14]- become the material representation of the god[15]. Yet this absence suggests a link with the Roman mythical past. According to Varro's reconstruction, there had been a pure stage in Roman religion, before foreign influence, when gods were not even conceived as anthropomorphic and when, as a result, people worshipped gods without images. As we have seen, anthropomorphism was a deeply ingrained aspect in Roman religion. So Tacitus carefully describes the cult here as if the origins of the new dynasty were blessed by a religious practice similar to that of the original Romans, recalling a state of original virtue through the absence of temples and statues[16]. Besides, at first sight those *maiores* are the local informants from whom comes the specific information about the sanctuary, namely, the ancestors who had established and perpetuated the cult as guarantors of its legitimacy[17]. Nevertheless, in Tacitus' texts, the word *maiores* alludes almost always to Roman ancestors, their institutions and decisions[18], so, though alluding explicitly to a foreign religious practice, by means of the analogy, Tacitus is perhaps relating this use of the word to Roman ancestral tradition.

Considering these connections with Roman traditions, therefore, the account of the oracle in that particular sanctuary and at that particular moment of Vespasian's actions becomes more significant. Despite the exoticism and remoteness of the sanctuary, in the description of the ritual, the accent falls both on Vespasian's hopes - by means of the

---

[14] This a hendiadys, a typically Tacitean combination of concrete and abstract nouns.
[15] The god Carmelus was identified with the Semitic divinity Baal and since Hellenistic times it had been associated also with Zeus Heliopolitan and worshipped above all by soldiers. For more on this cult see HEUBNER (1968), 275.
[16] On Varro's speculations about this supposed state of "aniconic" innocence see FEENEY (1998), 76.
[17] On the word *maiores* see WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 169.
[18] GINSBURG (1993), 86.

expression *cum spes occultas versaret-* but also on Basilides, the priest, whose name means "son of King". Not only the name but also the words that he pronounces during the inspection of the victims - "quoted" in direct speech[19]- seem to have an anticipatory effect:

> *illic sacrificanti Vespasiano, cum spes occultas versaret animo, Basilides sacerdos inspectis identidem extis 'quidquid est' inquit, 'Vespasiane, quod paras, seu domum exstruere seu prolatare agros sive ampliare servitia, datur tibi magna sedes, ingentes termini, multum hominum'.* (2.78.3)

But they actually hint at the existence of Vespasian's plans through the words of the priest (*quidquid est ... quod paras*). Moreover, in the words that Tacitus ascribes to the priest, he employs the verb *datur*, not in the future as one would have expected from a prophecy, but in the present tense, as if the promises were already fulfilled and as if the power were already granted to Vespasian[20]. Thus the evocation of the prediction seems to confirm retrospectively that there were no obstacles for him to overcome in his way to the empire.

Also from a structural point of view the account of this prediction has a special meaning. Taken in isolation, this oracle seems to belong to the series of favourable supernatural announcements for Vespasian similar to those recorded by the Flavian historians. In fact, the emphasis on "destiny" and "fate" seems to come just from the nearest context of the episode in Book 2. The immediate context is that of those earlier predictions which would have announced the empire and which Vespasian is reminded of by his men:

---

[19] On this passage see GWYN MORGAN (1996) and ASH (1999), 133-134.
[20] For this point see HEUBNER (1968), 276.

Post Muciani orationem ceteri audentius circumsistere hortari, responsa vatum et siderum motus referre. nec erat intactus tali superstitione, ut qui mox rerum dominus Seleucum quendam mathematicum rectorem et praescium palam habuerit. recursabant animo vetera omina ... (2. 78.1-2)

Those answers of soothsayers, the movements of the stars (*responsa vatum et siderum motus*), and also the early omens (*vetera omina*) are qualified as *superstitio*[21]. Around this word two opposite temporal displacements happen[22]: one, towards the future, through the mention of Seleucus, the astrologer who would belong later (*mox*) to Vespasian's imperial court; and the other one, back in time, to his youth. In fact, from those many ancient omens (*omina*)[23], Tacitus records just one, the omen of the cypress, which had been interpreted by the haruspex as an omen of great success[24], contrasting the meaning it had received in his youth with the interpretation assigned to it by Vespasian himself after his first victories in the Jewish War:

... sed primo triumphalia et consulatus et Iudaicae victoriae decus implesse fidem ominis videbatur: ut haec adeptus est, portendi sibi imperium credebat. (2.78.2)

---

[21] On *superstitio* see GRODZINSKY (1974) and BEARD, NORTH and PRICE (1998), 214-221. LEVENE (1993), 9, defines it as "practices not covered by the official cult".

[22] HEUBNER (1968), 253.

[23] *Omina* are natural and ordinary events observed by a haruspex under special circumstances and directed just to one individual and not to the community. According to GRIMAL (1989), they apparently function as causes in the narrative, no matter how incredible they sound. LEVENE (1993), 5, says that they do not tell details about the future, but express divine favour or disfavour.

[24] There are different opinions about the significance of the omen of the cypress: SYME (1958), 193, says that it is "an interlude, after which the action goes gaily forward"; CHILVER (1979), 237, qualifies it as "a curiously insignificant omen"; GYWN MORGAN (1996) compares it with its counterpart, the fall of the tree at the moment of Domitian's death (Suet. *Vesp.* 15.2); and finally ASH (1999), 132, explains it as a portent which illustrates more "Vespasian's psychology than the power of omens".

With the background of the new interpretation given to the omen of the cypress, the oracle of M. Carmel functions as a confirmation, namely as a further step in those successive predictions, just before the description of the actions of the revolt.

However, this episode is included in a much more complex section which is focused on the Flavian plans. Accordingly, this larger section (2.73.1-2.80) deals, firstly with Vespasian's increasing prestige:

> *nam etsi vagis adhuc et incertis auctoribus, erat tamen in ore famaque Vespasianus ac plerumque ad nomen eius Vitellius excitabatur.* (2.73.1)

Secondly, there is Vespasian's process of acknowledgement of his own possibilities and doubts about the war. This process goes from the uncertainty (caused by his age, the irreversible character of the enterprise, the strength of the German forces and the difficulties of the Civil War 2.74-75):

> *sed in tanta mole belli plerumque cunctatio et Vespasianus modo in spem erectus, aliquando adversa reputabat.* (2. 74.2)

to the confirmation of his secret hopes and the elimination of his doubts

> *haud dubia destinatione* ... (2.78.4)

and it ends with the complete removal of his fears

> *mens a metu ad fortunam transierat.* (2.80.1)

Thirdly, the reference to the efforts of his men, including Mucianus' speech to encourage him to go on with his undertaking, adds a further confirmation to Vespasian's hopes. Immediately after the oracle there follows Mucianus' and Vespasian's return to their headquarters (one in Antioch, the other one in Caesarea, 2.78.4); and then Tacitus enumerates the first actions of the Flavian revolt: the recognition of Vespasian as emperor by the Egyptian prefect, Tiberius Alexander, and his legions on 1st July 69 (2.80.1) [25]; Mucianus' speech in Antioch (2.80.2-3); the acclamation of the legions of Judaea and Syria (2.81); the conference in Berytus held to grant Titus the command of the Jewish War; Mucianus' leadership of the Flavian forces in the West and Vespasian's supervision of all the region[26]. Therefore, these two sequences of facts - one which precedes and the other which follows the anecdote of the consultation - show that Tacitus has strategically placed it right *after* the moment when the decision to act was finally taken and just *before* the revolt started:

> *initium ferendi ad Vespasianum imperii....* (2.79.1)

Finally, in the account of the consultation itself, a clear remark about the real effect of the oracle is present:

> *has ambages et statim exceperat fama et tunc aperiebat: nec quidquam magis in ore vulgi. crebriores apud ipsum sermones, quanto sperantibus plura dicuntur.* (2.78.4)

[25] On Tiberius Alexander's career see TURNER (1954).
[26] On Tacitus' handling of these events see BRIESSMANN (1955), 12; for a general historical overview see NICOLS (1978), 71-74.

Tacitus states that, despite the alleged context of privacy and the secrecy of the answer, its contents were immediately and widely known, and that these comments increased Vespasian's hopes. Thus Tacitus insinuates his scepticism with regard to the oracle: the words of the priest "quoted" in direct speech and the emphasis on these talks which appear to be completing the announcement show that, more relevant than the "very" words of the priest, were these comments which actually constituted the real support (and, indeed, the reason) for Vespasian's position as the leader of the forthcoming revolt.

2.2. A display of divine favour: Vespasian in Alexandria.

While the consultation of M. Carmel immediately precedes the beginning of Vespasian's undertaking, the episode of the cures and the dream vision in Alexandria is placed *after* the moment Vespasian receives the news of the victory of Cremona (4.51.1), and also after the confirmation of Titus' loyalty and the sending of corn ships to Rome (4.52.1-2), that is, when the success of his forces appears as confirmed by the facts[27]. Accordingly, in this section I shall examine how the structure of the episode (articulated on the basis of the healings, the dream vision and the digression on Serapis), as well as the words and the allusions suggested, aim to emphasise Vespasian's singular position as the beginner of a new imperial dynasty in Rome who attempts to legitimise a power gained in a Civil War. But also I shall argue that Tacitus somehow undermines the efficacy ascribed to the miracles and to the prophetic answer received in the Serapeum.

---

[27] In Suetonius' account (*Vesp.* 7) the visit to the temple precedes the arrival of the good news of Vitellius' defeat at Cremona. Unlike Tacitus, Suetonius places the oracle of the Serapeum before the episode of the cures and furnishes further details on the ritual, on the identity of the personage 'Basilides' and on the simultaneous arrival in Alexandria of the good news of the victory of Cremona. In fact, LEVENE (1997), 286, says that the episode of the cures suggests divine support before Vespasian is aware of his real power. These divergences between Tacitus and Suetonius have been interpreted in different ways by SCOTT (1934) and by ASH (1999), 135.

The episodes of Alexandria require a pause in the main account of political and military events. They are introduced with the formula *Per eos menses* ... (4.81.1), a narrative formulation which, though apparently indicating a continuation of the main account, suggests the interruption or even the alteration of the main temporal axis[28]. In this context, Vespasian appears as progressively becoming aware of his real power. Unlike the consultation on Mount Carmel (a private consultation in the desert, and made known by means of rumours), the healings have a public character: they are headed with the expression *multa miracula evenere,* a word (*miracula*) that means, in the Tacitean texts, "wonderful or extraordinary phenomena due to supernatural causes and visible to everyone"[29]. Besides, Vespasian performs them before the crowd (4.81.1 *e plebe Alexandrina*; 4.81.3 *erecta quae adstabat multitudine* and 4.81.3 *utrumque qui interfuere nunc quoque memorant*) and receives the prophetic vision in the Serapeum, the main temple of the city. Another aspect of Vespasian's position is the fact that the healings, the dream vision and the digression on Serapis are arranged in the account as successive steps of increasing importance which gradually indicate the connection between Serapis[30] (a Pharaonic and Ptolemaic divinity) and Vespasian.

---

[28] A characteristically Velleian technique, according to WOODMAN (1983), 179.

[29] Cf. *Ann.* 6. 28.1 on the phoenix; *Ann* 13. 41.3, about the black shadow which covers Artaxata; and *Hist.* 2.50.2, on the appearance of an unusual bird which vanished when Otho died. On *miracula* as a standard feature of the description of exotic places see GABBA (1981), THOMAS (1982), 39, HARTOG (1988), 230-238 and KRAUS (1994), 159-160.

[30] Scholars do not agree about the question whether Serapis was a divinity already venerated in Egypt since ancient times, or at least since Alexander's stay in Egypt, or whether it was "invented" and "imposed" by the Ptolemies. Against the general view that attributed the "creation" of the god to the Ptolemies (and recently restated by ARENA (2000) and (2001)), BRADFORD WELLES (1962), 287, demonstrates that it was, indeed, a pre-existing cult. Besides, PREAUX (1984), 417, maintains that there had not been a Ptolemy's "Machiavellian will" to impose the Serapis cult, and even less an "invention" of that divinity by the monarch. Because of its connection with Osiris, Dionysos and Aesculapios (Plutarch *De Iside et Osiride* 28 362 A.), the cult of Serapis was narrowly linked with the regal function, at least since Hellenistic times, so it became a support for the power of the Ptolemies and after its external propagation in many provinces of the Roman Empire, its cult also provided a source of divine legitimacy for Roman emperors (DUNAND (1992), 180, and TAKACS (1995)). Yet the permanency of the sanctuary does not allow one to think of an artificial imposition of the cult. For a large overview on this topic see HEUBNER (1976), 190.

In fact, the first step is the healings. They are supposedly requested of Vespasian by Serapis himself through the ill men[31]:

> *monitu Serapidis dei, quem dedita superstitionibus gens ante alios colit.* (4.81.1)

In contrast, to calm Vespasian's doubts, the doctors conjecture that a human procedure could appear as a miracle to the crowd, and for that reason they give their advice in medical terms and not in terms of supernatural healing:

> *huic non exesam vim luminis et redituram, si pellerentur obstantia: illi elapsos in pravum artus, si salubris vis adhibeatur, posse integrari.* (4.81.2)

Yet the doctors also stress that perhaps the god chose him to do this service as a confirmation of his sovereignty; and that the greatest benefit of his accomplishment was to be recognised as emperor by the people:

> *id fortasse cordi deis et divino ministerio principem electum.* (4.81.2)

Consequently, Vespasian appears as fully convinced of his position:

> *Vespasianus cuncta fortunae suae patere ratus ...* (4.81.3)

Furthermore, in this description of the healings, Vespasian's actions correspond to those usually ascribed to a healing king: to press the ill member with his feet or to wet the blind

[31] On the accomplishment and the meaning of the cures see HENRICHS (1968) and ASH (1999), 135.

eyes with his saliva (4.81.3 *statim conversa ad usum manus, ac caeco reluxit dies*). Finally, at the end of the episode, Tacitus alludes to the eyewitnesses who testify about the healings promoted by Serapis. Whether he had the chance to interrogate an eyewitness or not is impossible to know; but the assertion in the present tense (*nunc ... memorant*) creates a further effect of credibility about the event. Accordingly, Tacitus attempts to distinguish himself from the Flavian historians, stating not only the reliability of his sources of information but also their absence of bias[32]:

> *utrumque qui interfuere nunc quoque memorant, postquam nullum mendacio pretium.* (4. 81.3)

The second step in Vespasian's gradual approach to the image of Serapis is the account of his visit to the Serapeum so as to consult about the fortune of the empire:

> *Altior inde Vespasiano cupido adeundi sacram sedem ut super rebus imperii consuleret.* (4.82.1)

The comparative *altior* - qualifying his desire (*cupido adeundi*)- strengthens the connection even more; and this alleged desire to visit celebrated places (the *pothos* motif), the entrance to the temple without an escort, the consultation on the empire, and the dream vision recall the figure of Alexander the Great[33]. In fact Alexander and,

---

[32] "Autopsy" was sometimes invoked as a source of credibility, even if the information was indeed refashioned from literary sources, as WOODMAN (1988), 4, states. On the topic of "vicarious autopsy" see WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 169.

[33] See above p.20. Tacitus' account of Vespasian's activities in Alexandria would be connected with other relevant aspects of Alexander's biography: Alexander's interest in medicine (Plut. *Al.*8), the consultation of the oracle of Delphi (Plut. *Al.* 14.6-7), supernatural prodigies such as a cypress-wood statue which sweats (*Al.*14. 8), a dream visions of Hercules extending his hand to him (*Al.* 24.5), and his visit to the oracle of Amon in Siwa, Egypt (*Al.*26.11 and 27.5-9; Arrian 3.3.1).. According to HENRICHS (1968), the foundation of the Serapeum was also connected by legendary tradition to Alexander himself. On the figure of Alexander the Great as the basis of

afterwards, many conquerors in Egypt had attempted to manipulate the figure of Serapis so as to legitimise their power there. Thus Tacitus depicts Vespasian's efforts to be accepted as the new emperor following the illustrious footsteps of the Macedonian[34]. Unlike the public performance of the healings, the focus is now centred on Vespasian alone because he appears as the ruler chosen by the divinity: his desire to visit the temple (*altior cupido*); his entering without an escort (*arceri templo cunctos iubet*); the vision (*intentusque numini respexit*)[35]; his enquiry about Basilides' fate (*percunctatus sacerdotes*); and, finally, his own interpretation of the name 'Basilides' (as in 2. 78.3, again "Son of King", i.e. monarchic power) as a sign of his own future sovereignty (*tunc divinam speciem et vim responsi ex nomine Basilidis interpretatus est*)[36]. Finally, in the same way that the ritual procedure of the healings needs to be confirmed by the doctors, the prodigy of seeing the noble Alexandrian needs to be verified by an enquiry (*percunctatur sacerdotes ... percunctatur obvios ... explorat*). Thus the eventual objections are rejected and the "truth" of the answers received in the Serapeum, confirmed.

Finally, the third step can be found in the antiquarian digression. It starts with the words *Origo dei nondum nostris auctoribus celebrata* (4.83.1) and ends with the formula *haec de origine et advectu dei celeberrima* (4.84.3). This structure, ring composition, is one of the devices most frequently employed to enclose a section clearly distinct from the main account. Through the repetition of an exact word, a phrase or an idea, the attention is drawn to the heart of a particularly interesting tangential subject and then back to the main narrative, as if they were concentric circles. Thus additional ideas are incorporated

---

political propaganda, e.g. Antony's, see WOODMAN (1983), 51-80, and, more specifically, on *imitatio Alexandri* see SPENCER (2002), 165-203.

[34] On the connection between Alexander and the cult of Serapis in Alexandria see BRADFORD WELLES (1962).

[35] Suetonius also describes the dream vision (*Vesp.*7.1). On the distance of the dream from Tacitus' central field of vision see PELLING (1997).

[36] On the connection *nomen - omen* see PLASS (1988), 76.

following a coherent movement of thought[37]. In this case, by means of the key words *origo* and *dei* the digression is framed.

The meaning of the expression *origo dei* could be understood, in a wider sense, as the origin of Serapis as a foreign cult. And indeed, two of the versions about its provenance provided by Tacitus could partially confirm this view: when Timotheus, the priest, was interrogated about the significance of Ptolemy's vision, he recognised the city of Sinope in Pontus (Asia Minor) as the place of the statue; and, according to the other version, Ptolemy III might have brought the cult from Seleucia to Syria. But it is also Tacitus who offers a further alternative: the god Serapis could have been brought from Memphis to Alexandria by Ptolemy I.

Yet, even though the expression *origo dei* is broad enough to include the very origin of the divinity, in this passage it means, more precisely, the origin of the cult-statue. According to the story transmitted by Tacitus and ascribed to the Egyptian priests[38] (*Aegyptiorum antistites sic memorant*), Ptolemy's dream vision is about the order received to search for the statue of the divinity *(effigiem[39])* seen in his vision:

> ... *oblatum per quietem decore eximio et maiore quam humana specie iuvenem, qui moneret, ut ... effigiem suam acciret.* (4.83.1)

---

[37] On repetitions as "gates" see KRAUS (1994), 106-107. The fundamental contributions by W.A.A. VAN OTTERLO (1944 and 1948) are illustrated in articles by HAIG GAISSER (1969), and by KEANEY (1969); DAVIES (1968) analyses the introductory and concluding links of the digression to the main theme. For a general consideration of the use of ring composition in historical texts and particularly in the *Annals* see WOODMAN (1972). In her study on digressions in the *Annals,* HAHN (1933) does not define any structural criterion to categorise the digressions.

[38] On the erudition of Egyptian priests cf. Hdt. 2.3.1; 2. 77; 2. 99 and 2.143 and Plutarch, in *De Is et Os.* 354. Also in other circumstances Tacitus refers to Egyptian knowledge, as for instance when he explains the origins of the alphabet (*Ann.* 11. 14.1), or the reading of the hieroglyphic inscription engraved on the stones of Thebes (*Ann.* 2.60.3).

[39] On this specific use of the word *effigies* see PEARCY (1973), 116-122; for other remarks about statues and monuments in Tacitus' texts see ROUVERET (1991).

Furthermore, after having been consulted about the meaning of the vision, Timotheus' answer points out the statues which are connected, in this case, with Jupiter and Proserpina in Sinope:

> *Timotheus, quaesitis qui in Pontum meassent, cognoscit urbem illic Sinopem, nec procul templum vetere inter accolas fama Iovis Ditis: namque et muliebrem effigiem adsistere ...* (4.83.2)

Finally, the admonition of the Delphic oracle also deals with the *simulacrum* which should be brought back to Alexandria:

> *... sors oraculi haud ambigua: irent simulacrumque patrui reveherent, sororis relinquerent.* (4.83.4)

The god appears therefore directly identified with its statue in Ptolemy's vision, in King Scydrothemis' vision of the *numen*, and in the decision, ascribed to "the god himself", to take a ship and travel to Alexandria:

> *deum ipsum adpulsas litori navis sponte conscendisse.* (4.84.3)

In an account such as this one, it could be accepted that the statue was not different from the god himself, because the final section of the account includes the personification, the ascription of superhuman powers to it, and even the breaking of natural laws.

Tacitus' story resembles also other accounts of the transit of cult statues: Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* (28.361F) and Clement of Alexandria (*Protreptikos* 4.48), on the basis of a common narrative structure, refashion some standard *topoi* of similar stories and legends about the transit of cult-images: consultations, obstacles or refusals to release the

statue, the reception of supernatural instructions, the god's words in a loud voice and the miraculous trip[40]. Yet stories like these were not only restricted to a Greek context. Livy too includes a similar anecdote on the statue of Juno: when bringing the statue to Rome, someone -either as an inspiration from the divinity or simply as a joke- asked the goddess whether she wanted to go to Rome: according to the witness she made a gesture of approval; following a more fabulous version, she was heard; and finally, miraculously lighter, the statue could easily be brought to Rome (Livy 5. 22.4-7)[41]. In the same way that the temple of Paphos had been described by its liturgical function, the description of Serapis is not a description of the statue itself but of its supernatural and exotic origins. The validity of the answer to Vespasian's consultation in the Serapeum thus derives not only from the efficacy accorded to the god in the preceding steps of the account (the healings and the dream vision) but also from the power ascribed to the cult statue[42].

Moreover, the digression reinforces Vespasian's position of prestige in a further sense, because in many aspects the narrative of Ptolemy and the origins of Serapis mirrors the account of Vespasian's oracular consultation: both of them have dream visions, they oscillate between superstitious credulity and mistrust, they consult more than one oracle to confirm hopes and divine designs, they request explanations from specialised priests and exhibit their contact with the gods in public assemblies. The concluding reference to the temple functions as a link between the legendary story and the main account of Vespasian's activities in Alexandria (*sacram sedem*):

---

[40] HEUBNER (1976), 185-186.

[41] On the religious meaning of this episode in Livy's narrative see LEVENE (1993), 186-187.

[42] The story presented by Tacitus probably concerned an ancient icon and not the celebrated image of Serapis sculpted by the Greek artist Bryaxis which showed the features of Zeus and which, according to HENRICHS (1968), 63 n 37, was surely sculpted after the institution of the cult. Macrobius describes this representation of Serapis in *Sat.* 1. 20.13-14 and Clement of Alexandria, in *Protreptikos* 4.48.5. On Bryaxis, Pliny *NH* 36.4. On the impossibility of identifying the icon alluded to in Tacitus' text with Bryaxis' sculpture see PREAUX (1984), 418.

templum pro magnitudine urbis exstructum loco, cui nomen Rhacothis: fuerat illic sacellum Serapidi atque Isidi antiquitus sacratum. haec de origine et advectu dei celeberrima. (4.84.3)

Therefore, in the same way that Ptolemy inaugurates his rule in Alexandria under the supernatural protection of Serapis, Tacitus suggests that also for Vespasian, Flavian propaganda had contrived similar support and that, as a consequence, Vespasian could begin his reign likewise, as the heir of the Ptolemies, of Alexander the Great and even of the Pharaohs, resuming a historical continuous line at its final destination, now, in Rome.

The account is nevertheless undermined by the following narrative. The next sections are devoted to Mucianus and Domitian, until the end of Book Four (4.84-86). Mucianus had been portrayed as a foil to Vespasian (1.10.1-2 and 2.5.1-2), as a skilful man, "a diplomat more than a soldier"[43]. In these concluding episodes he appears in an even more vivid contrast because he pretends to manipulate Domitian (4.85.2) and thus to have the control of the whole political situation. On the other hand, Domitian's secret attempts to have his own army to go against his father or against his brother, and, above all his hypocritical appearance as a man concerned with literature and poetry (4.86.2), constitute an image dark enough to contrast sharply with the next portrait of Titus in the first chapter of Book 5. Against the promising account of the miracles and favourable omens of Alexandria accorded to Vespasian, Tacitus draws a critical portrait of Mucianus as the realistic politician and of Domitian as a future tyrant and thus the favourable and optimistic effect of the announcements is weakened[44].

[43] SYME (1958), 598.
[44] For a discussion on the significance of these omens in the narrative see ASH (1999), 140-2.

2.3. Conclusion

The oracles released to Vespasian on Mount Carmel and at Alexandria appear as consecutive steps in the account of the Flavian accession. In both passages, the exoticism is accentuated by the emphasis on the remoteness of the geographic location and of the dating of myths and also by the attribution of the account to external authorities (*maiores - Aegyptiorum antistites*). This procedure makes the authorial distance evident, not only with regard to the reliability of the accounts themselves, but also with regard to the efficacy of those announcements which legitimise the power of the new dynasty. At first sight, it might seem that Tacitus handles oracles and miracles as the Flavian propaganda did but, by considering the way they are refashioned, it can be claimed that they are included in the main narrative so as to insinuate how the plans of revolt had been kept hidden but actively executed from the beginning to gain the empire for the Flavians in Rome and that neither descriptions of oracles nor accounts about miracles could hide the real mechanisms with which power was obtained and confirmed.

3- Titus in Jerusalem

(*Hist.* 5. 1-13)

All through the extant books of the *Histories* the references to the Jewish War announce a central event which is, nevertheless, missing: the capture of Jerusalem. These references are: Vespasian's designation as the commander of the final phase of the Jewish War (1.10.3); the survey of the situation of the legions in Judaea (2.6-8); the handover of the direction of the war to Titus (2.82.2); Titus' authority over Vespasian's army (4.51.2); and, finally, the account of Titus' preliminaries to the siege of Jerusalem (5. 1) and the digression on the Jews which follows it (5. 2-13). This first section of Book 5 of the *Histories* (5.1-13), which deals with the impending fall of Jerusalem and also with the Jews, their lands, their capital, their practices, and their history, will be the subject matter of this chapter.

Unlike the passages discussed before, the digression on the Jews is not centred on an oracular response about the future of the Flavian dynasty. Its two principal parts, 5.2-10.2 and 5.11.3-12.4, are disposed around a central passage, 5.11.1-2. To express this in other words, the main narrative is interrupted after the brief description of Titus's forces in front of Jerusalem (5.1) and it is resumed in 5.11.1-2 with references both to the preparations of the army for the final assault to Jerusalem and to the expectations of the soldiers and of Titus himself[1]. In this central passage, the name of Jerusalem functions as a key stone:

[1] Some scholars consider *Hist.* 5. 11. 1-2 is just a temporary end (BLOCH (2002), 112). Others (LeBONNIEC and HELLEGOUARC'H (1992), 197-201) define section 5.2-10 as an "excursus historio-ethno-géographique" and consider that the following description of the city, the temple, the prodigies and the organisation of the Jewish army belong to the main narrative. Yet they point to the conjunction *At*, at the beginning of 5.14, as the sign which indicates the return to the preceding account of the campaign against the Batavians. Also HEUBNER and FAUTH (1982),

ipsi Tito Roma et opes voluptatesque ante oculos; ac ni statim Hierosolyma concideremt, morari videbantur. (5.11.2)

I shall claim therefore that the textual shape of the digression somehow reflects the shape of the fortress and the city[2], as if the act of reading constituted a real progressive entrance until the core, Jerusalem, is reached. Moreover, I shall argue that this description of the city and its people appears as a foil to Rome, at the very moment of Titus' most relevant military success. And finally, by examining the features that the digression has in common with obituaries and death notices (particularly with those devoted to the destruction of Cremona and to the fire of the Capitol), I shall suggest that, though in this episode there is not an explicit omen, the fall of Jerusalem is foretold in this section (which includes narrative and digression) by means of strategies similar to those which are typical of oracles.

When Tacitus states that only the capture of Jerusalem remains to subject the Jews completely, he clearly points out the difficulties of this last stage of the battle:

Profligaverat bellum Iudaicum Vespasianus, obpugnatione Hierosolymorum reliqua, duro magis et arduo opere ob ingenium montis et pervicaciam superstitionis quam quo satis virium obsessis ad tolerandas necessitates superesset. (2. 4.3)

139, following HOSPERS-JANSEN (1949), consider 5. 10.2 as the closure of this "kultural-ethnographischer Exkurs".

[2] According to Tacitus' description, Jerusalem is supposed to have had a concentric system of walls: 5.8.1 *et primis munimentis urbs, dein ingens templum intimis clausum. ad fores tantum Iudaeo aditus, limine praeter sacerdotes arcebantur* and 5.11.3 *nam duos colles in immensum editos claudebant muri per artem obliqui aut introrsus sinuati....* Josephus, in *BJ* 5.142-155, describes the walls of Jerusalem: "The city was fortified by three walls, except where it was enclosed by impassable ravines, a single rampart there sufficing" (Transl. THACKERAY, 1961). On this point, LEVENE (1997), 289, indicates that Tacitus has probably misunderstood his sources: the walls probably were not concentric. For that reason, BLOCH (2002), 108, considers the Tacitean description of the walls an example of "utopische Geographie".

The capture of Jerusalem is the most difficult task (*duro... et arduo opere*) because of two main reasons: the singular characteristics of its geography (*ob ingenium montis*) and the way of life of the enemies (*pervicaciam superstitionis*). By ascribing such importance to those factors, namely, to geography and ethnography, the clues for the development of the Jewish digression in Book 5 are given.

3.1. The siege

In Book 5, the reference to the year 70 (*Eiusdem anni ...*) opens a narrative section (5.1) about Titus' arrival at the camp with auxiliary forces. Then there is a description of his personal capacities as a general; and, included in a short digressive section, a review of the situation of the Roman army and its allies, in the fashion of a "catalogue of forces"[3]. Yet, at this very moment, with this deployment of forces at the doors of the city, the narration of the impending assault is postponed so as to introduce, instead, the extensive digression which describes Jerusalem, its people and its past.

Jerusalem occupies, indeed, a pivotal position in the digression and this is evident in the way it is structured. It is true that the name of Titus, with the official appellation he would use later, *Caesar Titus*[4], opens and closes the whole passage:

> *Eiusdem anni principio Caesar Titus, ... perdomandae Iudaeae ...* (5.1.1)

> *hanc adversus urbem gentemque Caesar Titus ... aggeribus vineisque certare statuit.* (5.13.4)

---

[3] MARTIN and WOODMAN (1989), 96 indicate that, following Homeric practice, historians use catalogues of forces to emphasise the significance of forthcoming events.
[4] SAGE (1991), 889, points out that this is the first time that this title, *Caesar*, is used of Titus. On Titus' military performance during the siege of Jerusalem see JONES (1992).

Also the justification of the digression - the forthcoming account of the destruction of Jerusalem - frames it at the beginning and at the end[5]:

perdomandae Iudaeae delectus a patre (5.1.1)

hanc adversus urbem gentemque Caesar Titus ... certare statuit (5.13.4)

and the words *Hierosolyma* and *castra* enclose from the outside the first part of the digression (5.2-10) as an *external* border:

haud procul Hierosolymis castra facit. (5.1.2)

Igitur castris, uti diximus, ante moenia Hierosolymorum positis. (5.11.1)

Nevertheless, it is the word *urbs* which clearly articulates the passage. It signals the starting point of the first part of the digression with the conventional introductory formula which justifies the opportunity to interrupt the account[6], with the allusion to the celebrity of the city (Jerusalem, *famosa urbs*[7]), and with the purpose of explaining its whole history from its origins to its final destruction (*primordia - supremum diem*)[8].

---

[5] This account, as I said before, has been lost. Tacitus justifies the digression on the Britons in the *Agricola* 10.1 likewise: *Britanniae situm populosque multis scriptoribus memoratos non in comparationem curae ingeniive referam, sed quia tum primum perdomita est. ita quae priores nondum comperta eloquentia percoluere, rerum fide tradentur.*

[6] Tacitus uses the conventional formula already adopted by Sall. *BJ* 79. 1 *Sed quoniam in has regiones per Leptitanorum negotia uenimus, non indignum videtur* and by Caesar *BG* 6.11.1 *Quoniam ad hunc locum perventum est, non alienum esse videtur.*

[7] Pliny *NH* 5. 70, calls Jerusalem *Hierosolyma, longe clarissima urbium Orientis.*

[8] *Primordium* is a specific word to refer to the origins of a city: *Hist.* 3. 34.1 *Hic exitus Cremonae anno ... a primordio sui.* Also Livy begins his preface 1 *facturusne operae pretium sim si a primordio urbis.*

Sed quoniam famosae urbis supremum diem traditurі sumus, congruens videtur primordia eius aperire. (5.2.1)

Urbs also indicates, after the momentary link with the main narrative in 5.11.1-2, the beginning of the second digressive section (5.11.3 - 5.12.4):

Sed urbem arduam situ opera molesque firmaverant. (5.11.3)

And finally, again, this word indicates the end of the digression because, with the usual retrospective demonstrative *hanc*, it points backwards to the city and its people, as well as to its textual materialisation, the digression:

hanc adversus urbem gentemque ... (5.13.4) .

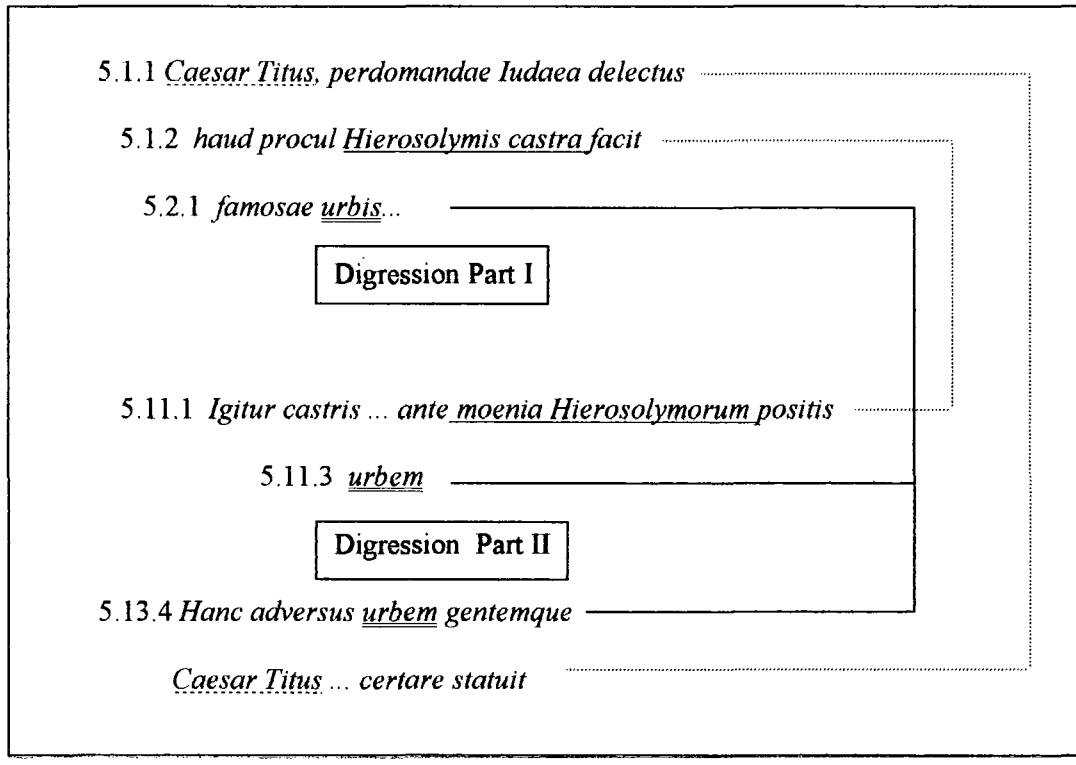


Diagram 1: the structure of *Hist.* 5.1-13

Also the internal subsections - which are those recurrent in geo-ethnographic digressions[9] (origins, cult and ethnography, geography and history) -, are conceived as having the city of Jerusalem as the centre, as we shall see.

In the subsection "origins", five versions of *initia* are dealt with (5.2.2 - 5.3)[10] but, despite the several hypothetical points of provenance (Crete, Egypt, Ethiopia, Assyria, the tribe of Solymi from the South West of Turkey[11]), all the elements in the account lead to one central point: the city and the Temple:

> *Solymos, carminibus Homeri celebratam gentem, conditae urbi Hierosolyma nomen e suo fecisse.* (5.2.2)

> *et continuum sex dierum iter emensi septimo pulsis cultoribus obtinuere terras, in quis urbs et templum dicata.* (5.3.2)

Furthermore, while Josephus presents Moses (*AA* 2.151-175) as an ancient king and as a legislator like Minos, Tacitus depicts Moses as an ambitious leader who rejects the gods

---

[9] Examples of digressions in historiographical texts are Sall. *BJ* 17-19 on Africa; Caesar's digressions in *BG* 4.1-4 on the Suebi, 5. 12-16 on the Britons and 6.11-28 on the Gauls and Germans; and Livy's digression on the Gauls 5.33-35. Tacitus himself had excelled in this area with the excursus on Britannia in the *Agricola* (10-12) and with the *Germania*. On the *Agricola* see OGILVIE (1991). Even though the *Germania* is unanimously recognised as an ethnographic text in its own right, RIVES (2002) argues that despite the accuracy of the information and the quality of the informants, the way to read each "ethnography" is determined by the context. For general remarks on the *Germania* see LUND (1991). On the similarities and differences between this digression (5.1-13) and the *Germania* and the excursus on Britain see BLOCH (2002), 159-170. On geography in excursuses see above on p. 35-36.

[10] LEVY (1946) presents Tacitus as the propagator of an anti-Jewish opinion coming from Egypt; HEINEN (1992) relates all the versions presented by Tacitus to an Egyptian origin, because his main thesis is that Tacitus' anger against the Jews would have its roots in traditions coming from Greek and Alexandrian authors from Ptolemaic Egypt: Manetho, Chaeremon, Lysimachus and Apion. According to COHEN (1988), in *Against Apion*, Josephus argues against the Egyptian origins of the Jewish people and enumerates many Greek authors who have dealt with Jewish history and customs, now lost. The remarks by BOYS-STONES (2001), 60-75, deserve attention because he argues that the attempt to demonstrate the subordinate character of the Jewish theology and culture to Egyptian traditions was a common trait of those Greek authors, and Josephus' refutation of their arguments demonstrates that in the first century AD the discussion about Jewish origins was directly related to their attitude of resistance to Graeco-Roman culture.

[11] LEVENE (1997), 287.

and scorns his *patria*, with traits that could be ascribed really to the figure of an Anti-Aeneas[12].

And, though there is a diversity of theories about the origins of the Jews, their customs constitute a monolithic corpus, absolutely different from the practices of any other people (abstinence of pork, unleavened bread, the Sabbath, the xenophobia, circumcision, burials and, above all, their absolute monotheism). It is worth noting that, despite their apparent exoticism, some descriptive procedures articulate the perception and the refashioning of this "other world" in Roman terms[13]. Those procedures are, for instance, "inversion" - the description of another people's characteristics as the exact reverse of one's own traits[14]:

contemnere deos, exuere patriam, parentes liberos fratres vilia habere. (5.5.2)

"comparison" - the indication of similarities and differences between the unknown and the familiar world:

profana illic omnia quae apud nos sacra (5.4.1);

---

[12] BLOCH (2002), 89. The Romans' attitude of hostility towards the Jews was a topic for authors like Petronius 102.14 and Martial 7.30: for instance they mock the practice of circumcision. Even though WARDY (1979) considers that Tacitus exhibits a strong feeling of rejection, and also ROSEN (1996) thinks that Tacitus' animosity derives from the perception that the Jews (the Jews in Judaea as well as the Jews all over the Empire and, especially, in Rome) were a real danger for the Roman Empire, BLOCH (2002), 129-137, partially rejects this view and demonstrates instead that Tacitus' accent on the apocalyptic hopes of the Jews is aimed at pointing out their fanaticism during the war. The privileges enjoyed by the Jews since the times of Caesar had not changed and only a tax, the *fiscus iudaicus*, had been applied after the victory of 70 so the relationship between the Jewish community and the Roman authorities was calm. Thus Tacitus' hostility is not any stronger than that of other Latin authors and probably his use of language corresponded to the expectations of the conservative circles to which his texts were addressed. On Tacitus' audience, see SINCLAIR (1995), 54-55.

[13] KRAUS and WOODMAN (1997), 39.

[14] In his introductory notes, LEVENE (1997), xviii, considers that the treatment of other races as the reverse of one's own ("inversion") is "the most striking feature of Tacitus' account of Jews". Also BLOCH (2002), 91 n71 and 170-176, discusses the topic of the "inverted world" in this digression.

"analogy" -the introduction of further elements of comparison, better known to the readers:

corpora condere quam cremare e more Aegyptio (5.5.3);

and "transference" - the application of a stock of commonplaces to any people[15]. Josephus' polemical revision of the versions of the Jewish origins stands on a different perspective and, consequently, it illuminates the Roman significance of Tacitus' account. In his *Against Apion* 2. 1-32, Josephus' main interest is to demonstrate that the Jews do not have Egyptian origins and that the connections between them asserted by legendary traditions are false. Instead, Tacitus builds up an image of the Jews on the basis of a common ethnographic topic: they are, like the Romans, migrants recently arrived in their homeland, but their position is geographically and, consequently, historically marginal.

Also in the subsection *situs* (5.6 - 5.8.2), the description moves from the external borders (defined by its boundaries *qua ad orientem - ab occasu*[16]) towards the city and the inner place of the Temple:

Terra finesque (5.6.1) - *limine praeter sacerdotes arcebantur* (5.8.1),

namely, from the outside, all around *Iudaea* and its scattered villages, towards the inside into the capital, Jerusalem. In the capital, the path is from the walls of the city towards the palace and the Temple. And in the Temple, from the external doors (*ad fores*) which only

[15]On "transference" see SYME (1958), 733; and GOODYEAR (1970), 9-10. On the ethical connotations of ethnographic subjects see THOMAS (1982), 2. For the several mechanisms with which a foreign culture is "translated" into Roman categories of thought and judgement and their effect on ethnographic prose see HARTOG (1988), 212-237.

[16] Like Sall. *BJ* 17.4 *finis... ab occidente - ab ortu solis.*

the Jews can cross, to the entrance (*limine*) into the most sacred area which only the priests can enter, as a spiral which closes itself further and further, and which excludes outsiders.

Finally, from its starting point, the subsection *historia* (5. 8.2) describes the attempts by a long series of conquerors to subdue the Jews down to Pompeius, who enters the Temple, and to Titus himself, placed with his army before the doors of the city (5.11.1). Surrounded by two references to Jerusalem's fortress

munimentis urbs (5.8.1) - *ante moenia Hierosolymorum* (5. 11.1)

the linear historical account indicates a movement from the lowest condition as slaves of the Assyrians and the Medes, to the achievement of their autonomy, down to the constitution of the sacerdotal power in the capital and its defensive system in a high and fortified city.

Surprisingly, also in this section *historia,* some features look more Roman than Jewish: the city as the centre to which everything flows (5.5.1 *illuc congerebant* - 5.12.2 *illuc perfugerat*); the reference to a supposed expulsion of kings because of a popular revolt, which is one of the central topics of Roman Republican history, but not true at all of the Jews (5.8.3 *Sibi ipsi reges imposuere; qui mobilitate vulgi expulsi*)[17]; the mention of the factions into which the population was divided during the civil war recalls the terms with which Sallust defines the starting point of the civil wars in Rome:

ita in duas factiones civitas discessit (5.12.4)

---

[17] HEUBNER and FAUTH (1982), 122-123, and BLOCH (2002), 104. In *Ann.* 3. 26-27, Tacitus summarises Roman constitutional history and there the reference to the expulsion of the kings is central (3.27.1). According to LEVENE (1997), 290, Tacitus follows, in the Jewish digression, the standard Roman account for the expulsion of tyrannical rulers.

ita omnia in duas partes abstracta sunt (*Jug.* 41.5);

and, also in this case by means of another Sallustian motif, the ascription of *metus hostilis* to the inhabitants of Jerusalem as the motive for resolving their deep *discordia*, just before the Roman attack[18]:

donec propinquantibus Romanis bellum externum concordiam pareret. (5. 12. 4)

metus hostilis in bonis artibus civitatem retinebat. (*Jug* 41. 2)

While Moses could be seen as an anti-Aeneas because of the inversion of those traits traditionally ascribed to the mythical founder of the Roman lineage, it can be suggested that Jerusalem appears here as an anti-Rome because of the application of the opposite technique: to ascribe identical traits to an essentially different subject (Jerusalem). Jerusalem's past is explained by means of Roman categories and, as a result, this brief account produces a summary of "inverted" Roman history more than a real sketch about the Jewish past.

To sum up, the reading of each subsection proposes a movement "towards" the city, "around" the city, "inside" the city, and thus Jerusalem becomes the heart of the digression, its ideal centre. Due to the analogies and inversions already mentioned, it occupies a position which is analogous but, at the same time, antithetical to that of Rome.

A series of internal references connects the two principal sections of the digression (5.2-10 and 5. 11.3-13.3) in a way that prevents them from being considered isolated. The internal linkage is built by parallels, from general considerations to specific remarks: the subsections *origo* (5.2-3) and *historia* (5.8.2-10) in the first part of the

[18] On *metus hostilis* as an instrument to keep internal *concordia* see EARL (1961), 47-49.

digression determine a temporal axis from mythical to historical times up to the impending fall of the city, which is alluded to again in the second part of the digression both by means of the reference to the founders of the city (5.12.2 *providerant conditores* ...) and to the preliminaries for the fight before the final destruction of Jerusalem (5.13.3). Then, the subsection *mores* (5.4-.5) is alluded to again in the second part (5.5.2 *ut diversitate noscantur; transgressi in morem eorum*... - 5.12.2 ... *ex diversitate morum crebra bella*): the general traits of the Jewish religion described in the first part are resumed both with a general statement about the peculiar character of their practices and with the punctual episode of the refusal to expiate the prodigies (5.4.1 *profana illic omnia quae apud nos sacra* - 5.13.1 *gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa*); and another special feature underlined in the first part, such as the contempt of death is mentioned again in the final remarks of the second part of the digression (5.5.3 *moriendi contemptus* - 5. 13.3 *maior vitae metus quam mortis*). Finally, the subsection *situs* (5.6 - 8.1), devoted to a general description of the country, can be related to the description of the fortress and the topography of the city (i.e. 5.6.1 *rari imbres* - 5.12.1 *piscinae cisternaeque servandis imbribus*).

These two sections are related, not only by these thematic and lexical links, but fundamentally because all these parallels have a keystone placed between the two main and consecutive sections: it is the passage of narrative which constitutes the innermost connection between them:

> *ipsi Tito Roma et opes voluptatesque ante oculos; ac ni statim Hierosolyma conciderent, morari videbantur.* (5.11.2)

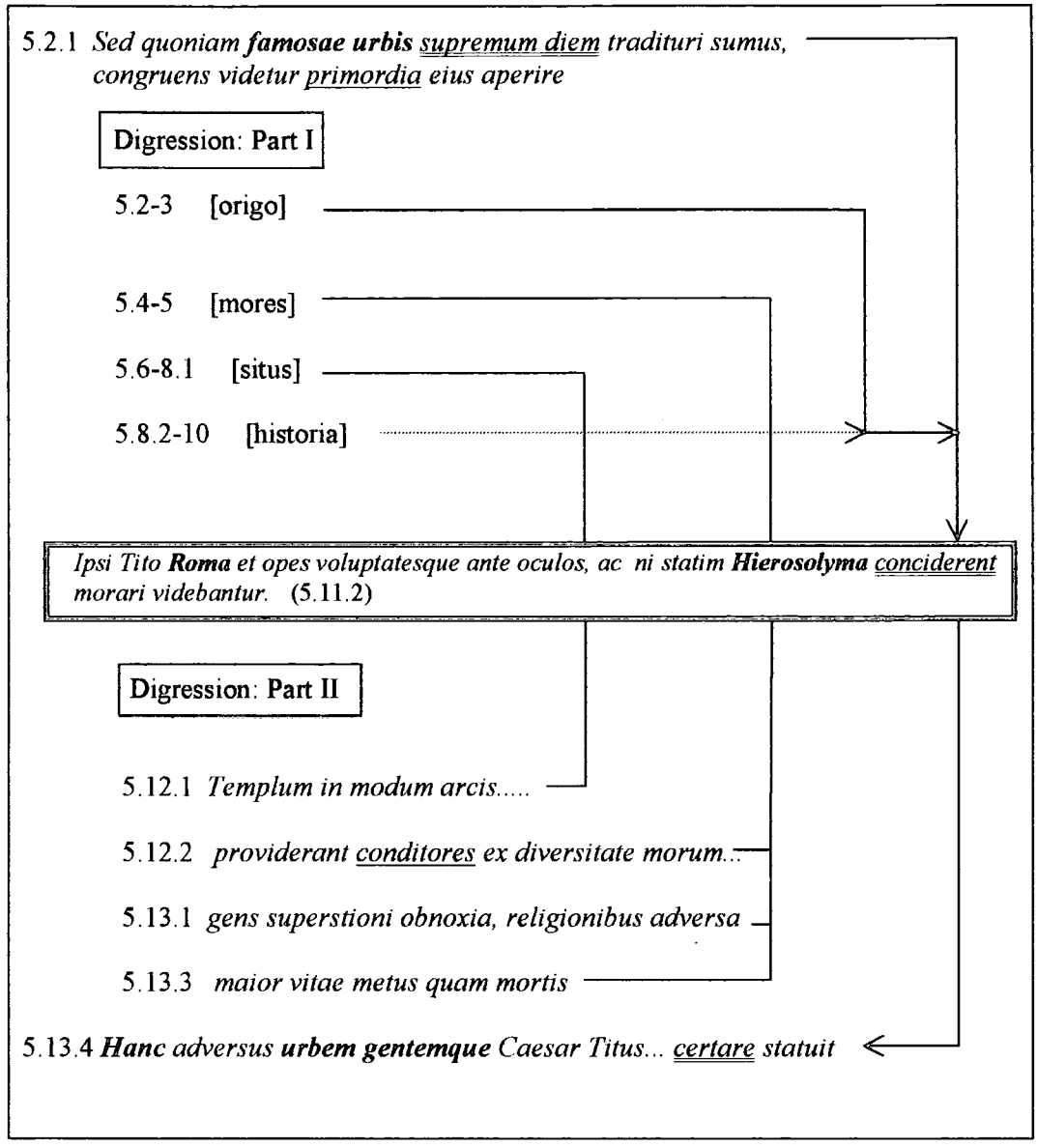


Diagram 2: the position of *Hist.* 5.11.2 in the digression

The names of Titus and Jerusalem are resumed from 5.1 at this transitional point, in 5.11.1-2. Jerusalem is in the centre of the account, not only because the brief return to the main narrative constitutes the quasi centre of the digression, but also because it is the booty to be gained, and furthermore the pledge of Titus' victory over the Jews. All the digression deals with Jerusalem's origins, the development of its history and even with its ruins foreseen in the introductory formula. But, at this point, the city is placed in the

foreground, not in its own present but in a prospective sense: the verb *concido* announces what will happen. In the core of the digression, this mention constitutes a further step in the development of the account because the hypothetical clause (*ac ni statim ... conciderent)* prefigures the future fall of Jerusalem and, mainly, the future triumph of the Flavians and Titus' accession to power in Rome.

The city of Jerusalem, its fortress and its wealth have been described. But, despite standing outside the walls of Jerusalem, Titus does not have Jerusalem in mind, but Rome with its pleasures and riches (*ante oculos*)[19]. For Titus, the *praemium* is not Jerusalem itself but Rome. Rome is the power itself, announced from the beginning, by oracles, not only to Vespasian but also to his sons, Titus and Domitian. Thus Rome would be, in Titus' vision, a metonymy of the empire. The hypothetical clause has a negative form, *ac ni statim conciderent*: in order to fulfil his dream, he must destroy Jerusalem's riches and pleasures, he must destroy Jerusalem to reach Rome. Jerusalem is the obstacle for Titus to reach Rome, so he must get rid of it. This is why the account stops just before the assault: the digression is replete with what must be besieged. The dimension of the obstacle and the effort to overcome are materialised in the text, and not just by their being mentioned. The obstacle, Jerusalem, is built in the text by means of the extensive digression: before reading the final assault on the city and its centre, the reader must also besiege it from the outside, he must cross its walls and overcome the obstacle; he must penetrate inside the circles of the digression.

---

[19] The expression *ante oculos* connects Titus' vision with the ancient definitions of φαντασια: He can see the image of Rome, as if it were really visible. Quint. 6.2.29 *Quas φαντασιας Graeci vocant (nos sane visiones appellamus) per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo ut eas cerneres oculis ac praesentes habere videamur.* In his *Rhetoric* 1370a 27 Aristotle says that "if... imagination (φαντασια) is a weakened sensation, then both the man who remembers and the man who hopes will be attended by an imagination of what he remembers or hopes". Also Lucretius in 4. 978 *per multos itaque illa dies eadem obversantur / ante oculos, etiam vigilantes ut videantur / cernere saltantis et mollia membra moventis.*

3.2. The death notice

The destruction of Jerusalem is prefigured not only through the internal structure of the digression: references to "death" and "hell" inside the digression, as well as in other passages of the *Histories*, are also present. In fact, the reading of the digression is proposed from the beginning as a complete overview of Jerusalem's history, from its start to its impending end:

> *Sed quoniam famosae urbis supremum diem traditurі sumus, congruens videtur primordia eius aperire.* (5.2.1)

Therefore, even though the digression is placed before the (now lost) account of the final fall of Jerusalem at the hands of Titus[20], the reference to its "last day", to its "death" (*supremus dies*), is present throughout all the passage like a dark shadow. Accordingly, death is strongly evoked by means of several devices inside the digression.

One of them is related to the geographic description. In section 5. 8.1 Jerusalem is briefly described as the Jewish capital of Judaea[21], with its great constructions, and immense riches[22]:

> *Hierosolyma genti caput. illic immensae opulentiae templum, et primis munimentis urbs, dein ingens templum intimis clausum.* (5.8.1)

The contrast with the sections which immediately precede it becomes even more impressive. In those two earlier chapters (5. 6-7), the focus is placed on the area of the

---

[20] CHILVER and TOWNEND (1985), 97.
[21] The Roman capital of Judaea was, instead, Caesarea. Cf. *Hist.* 2. 78.4.
[22] In his *Bellum Iudaicum*, Josephus describes the walls, the towers, the temple and the quarters of the city (5.136-247).

Dead Sea and, particularly, on the ruins of Sodom and Gomorra, ancient cities destroyed long before. From the many geographic descriptions of that area[23], Tacitus has chosen such geographic features as the taste of the water, the fetid smell of the air and the immobility:

> *lacus immenso ambitu, specie maris, sapore corruptior, gravitate odoris accolis pestifer, neque vento impellitur ...* (5.6.2)

all of which underline the impossibility for birds and fish to live:

> *neque pisces aut suetas aquis volucres patitur.* (5.6.2)

and for the land to produce fruits:

> *... terramque ipsam specie torridam vim frugiferam perdidisse.* (5.7.1)

because of the poisoned soil and its surrounding atmosphere:

> *ego sicut inclutas quondam urbes igne caelesti flagrasse concesserim, ita halitu lacus infici terram, conrumpi superfusum spiritum, eoque fetus segetum et autumni putrescere reor solo caeloque iuxta gravi.* (5.7.2)

---

[23] Also Pliny the Elder describes the area in *NH* 5. 72 *Asphaltites nihil praeter bitumen gignit, unde et nomen. nullum corpus animalium recipit.* Josephus' description has many similarities with Tacitus' account: "Its waters are, as I said, bitter and unproductive, but owing to their buoyancy send up to the surface the very heaviest of objects cast into them" (*BJ* 4. 476-485). He also mentions the changes in the colour of the water, the floating bitumen, the techniques employed for its extraction, and its uses for navigation and medicine.

Certainly, many of these traits could derive from standard geographical descriptions of the area. But one of these traits is particularly endowed with a significance which surpasses the circumscribed consideration of geography and climate. By taking into account such a detail as the lack of birds, Tacitus builds up a landscape as the opposite of the Virgilian *locus amoenus* that Aeneas finds when he arrives in Italy:

> *Atque hic Aeneas ingentem ex aequore lucum*
> *prospicit. Hunc inter fluvio Tiberinus amoeno*
> *verticibus rapidis et multa flavus harena*
> *in mare prorumpit; variae circumque supraque*
> *adsuetae ripis volucres et fluminis alveo*
> *aethera mulcebant cantu lucoque volabant*
>
> (*Aen.* 7. 29 - 34).

Virgil describes an area near the Tiber, where birds can live and fly, and waters flow and forests grow. This exuberant nature is explicitly evoked with the words *adsuetas volucres* in the Jewish digression and thus the contrast is absolute between the welcoming landscape of the would-be Rome, and the inhospitable geographic area of Jerusalem; and by this means, the imminence of the foundation of Rome -explicitly recognised as his homeland by Aeneas at the beginning in 7.122 *hic domus, haec patria est-*, is opposed to the impending destruction of Jerusalem.

But the absence of birds also provides a key to relating the description of the Dead Sea area to the landscape of the "underworld" by means of the reference to the lake

Avernus at Cumae, a place without birds because of its lethal and pestilential vapours[24]. Besides, Avernus was one of the names of world of the dead:

Spelunca alta fuit vastoque immanis hiatu
scrupea, tuta lacu nigro nemorumque tenebris
quam super haud ullae poterant impune volantes
tendere iter pinnis: talis sese halitus atris
faucibus effundens supera ad convexa ferebat
[Unde locum Grai dixerunt nomine Aornum]

(*Aen.* 6. 237 - 242)

When Virgil describes the cavern, the dark lake and the gloomy forest, he also mentions the pestilential exhalations which prevent birds from flying over its mouth. But the connection between the Jewish digression and the Virgilian underworld is not only this one. Also the adjectives which describe both the scarcity of vegetation of this desert and the emptiness in the core of the temple of Jerusalem, are the same that qualify the infernal residence at the very beginning of Aeneas' journey:

atra et inania velut in cinerem vanescunt (5.7.1)
vacuam sedem et inania arcana (5.9.1)

perque domos Ditis vacuas et inania regna

(*Aen.* 6. 269).

[24] Lucr. 6. 740-741 *quod Averna vocantur nomine, id ab re / inpositumst,quia sunt avibus contraria cunctis.* In 6.818-823 he describes the fatal effects on the birds which fly over those poisonous exhalations but rejects the idea that those places are gates to the underworld.

Furthermore, the phrase which describes the location of the ruins of Sodom and Gomorra is modelled on the Virgilian Fields of Sorrow[25]:

> *Haud procul inde campi, quos ferunt olim uberes magnisque urbibus habitatos fulminum iactu arsisse; sed manere vestigia ...* (5.7.1)

> *Nec procul hinc partem fusi monstrantur in omnem*
> *lugentes campi.*
>
> (*Aen.* 6.440 - 1).

The deadly nature of the region is thus accentuated by the reference to one of the darkest and most impressive areas of the Virgilian Hell. By recalling the dramatic ambience of Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, the tension and dark expectancy is transposed into the description of the area of the Dead Sea and it is even accentuated by the addition of disruptive traits which transform the landscape into an area impossible for human beings to live.

The other device that underlines the strong presence of death inside this passage derives from its position in the *Histories*. From the beginning of the *Histories* the account of the fall of Jerusalem is announced as a significant military action (2.4.3 *obpugnatione Hierosolymorum reliqua*). But, before the account of the siege of Jerusalem, there are two passages in the preceding book of the *Histories*: the siege and destruction of Cremona (*Hist.* 3. 26-34), and the assault on the Capitol in Rome (3. 72). In both cases, after the destruction there is an "obituary", that is, a short digressive passage which has all the features of the usual death notices devoted to illustrious personalities[26]. In the same way that the origins, virtues and main characteristics of a personage were described like a final

[25] E. Norden noticed this connection in 1913, according to HEUBNER and FAUTH (1982) 102.
[26] For references to "death notices" for cities see POMEROY (1991), 255-257. According to SYME (1958a), Tacitus' obituaries are usually dedicated to senators of consular rank.

portrait in the obituary, also the destruction of a city (Cremona or Jerusalem) or of its symbolic centre (the Capitol in Rome) was the opportunity for a depiction of the city and its inhabitants including origins, a historical sketch and the clues for understanding the final crisis. Consequently, the obituaries of Cremona and the Capitol underline the impending atmosphere of death which pervades the Jewish digression, even though, unlike the preceding cases, the death notice of Jerusalem comes *before* the account of its destruction.

For instance, in the excursus on Cremona the purpose of condensing its whole history is made explicit:

> *Hic exitus Cremonae anno ducentesimo octogesimo sexto a primordio suo.* (3. 34.1)

its topics are the foundation of the city (3.34.1 *condita erat T. Sempronio* ...), the constantly increasing number of inhabitants (3.34.1 *igitur numero colonorum* ...), the geography - particularly the reference to the fecundity of the country (3.34.1 *opportunitate fluminum, ubere agri*) -, the contacts with other peoples (3. 34.1 *adnexu conubiisque gentium*), and the growth of the city in population and wealth as a consequence of those factors (3.34.1 *adolevit floruitque*). But the most significant aspect is that Tacitus employs the same words to describe the emptiness of the temple in each city:

> *in vacuas domos et inania templa.* (3.33.2)

inde vulgatum nulla intus deum effigie vacuam sedem et inania arcana (5.9.1)[27].

But, while in Cremona this emptiness is a consequence of the assault *after* the ravages, the emptiness described by Tacitus in the Temple of Jerusalem *precedes* the attack, as if it were symbolically abandoned even before its material destruction. By anticipating the emptiness, Tacitus anticipates the effect of death, similar to that of the anticipation of the obituary to the destruction of the city.

Also the account of the burning of the Capitol could be added to this category of "destroyed cities" because of the perception of the temple as the symbolic centre of Rome. After the vivid description of the irruption of the Vitellian soldiers inside the building, there is, also in this case, a historical excursus on the Temple from the foundation of the city up to the very moment of the fire: the history of its construction by the kings and its successive embellishments during the Republic and the Principate are contained inside a frame signalled by the words *Capitolium* and *aedes* and two other terms connected with fire, *conflagravit* and *cremabatur*:

Sic Capitolium clausis foribus indefensum et indireptum conflagravit. (3.71. 4)

Ea tunc aedes cremabatur. (3. 72.3)

The fire of Cremona and the destruction of the Capitol and also the (missing) account of the fall of Jerusalem are connected with the topic of *capta urbs*, and its main referent in Latin literature: the destruction of Troy in the *Aeneid.* It usually includes the vivid description of personages lamenting over their fate, the collapse of religious and

[27] WELLESLEY (1972), 123.

profane buildings, and scenes of death and horrible fate (Quint. 8.3.67-70)[28]. Yet the description of the siege of Jerusalem in the digression concerns only the first stage of the Roman attack (5.11.1-3 and 5. 13. 3-4), so the topos is developed here only partially: men, women and children prepare themselves for the battle and for death:

> *multitudinem obsessorum omnis aetatis, virile ac muliebre secus sexcenta milia fuisse accepimus: arma cunctis, qui ferre possent ...* (5. 13.3)

The topic, nevertheless, was so formalised that the subsequent final scene, the destruction of the city, even if missing, could easily be imagined and even foreseen. The evocation of the Virgilian destruction of Troy provides the standard pattern, but the detail of the prodigies strengthens the connection even more: Troy is abandoned by its gods before its end:

> *Excessere omnes adytis arisque relictis*
> *di, quibus imperium hoc steterat; succurritis urbi*
> *incensae.*
>
> (*Aen.* 2. 351 - 3)

It is similar in the Tacitean account of the prodigy of the voice that announces that God abandons Jerusalem:

> *apertae repente delubri fores et audita maior humana vox, excedere deos; simul ingens motus excedentium.* (5. 13.1)

[28] On these connections between Virgil and Tacitus see BAXTER (1971) and HENRY (1991). On the topic of "*capta urbs*" in Latin literature the standard text is PAUL (1982). On the popularity of this *topos* and its development in *Ann* 4. 57-67 see WOODMAN (1972).

The destruction of Jerusalem is thus announced by recalling the destruction of Troy in the *Aeneid*. Tacitus also echoes the prodigies with which Aeneas' victory over Turnus was foretold in Book 8 of the *Aeneid*:

> *Namque improviso vibratus ab aethere fulgor*
> *cum sonitu venit et ruere omnia visa repente*
> *Tyrrhenusque tubae mugire per aethera clangor.*
> *Suspiciunt; iterum atque iterum fragor increpat ingens:*
> *arma inter nubem caeli in regione serena*
> *per sudum rutilare vident et pulsa tonare*
>
> (*Aen.* 8. 524 - 529)

> *Evenerant prodigia, quae neque hostiis neque votis piare fas habet gens superstitioni obnoxia, religionibus adversa. visae per caelum concurrere acies, rutilantia arma et subito nubium igne conlucere templum. apertae repente delubri fores et audita maior humana vox, excedere deos; simul ingens motus excedentium.* (5.13.1 - 2)

Thus the prodigies described by Tacitus announce not only the Jewish defeat but also the Roman victory. Josephus too (*BJ* 6. 289-300) describes a series of prodigious events occurring before the final destruction of Jerusalem: the appearance of a star like a sword for a year; the altar and the sanctuary illuminated in the night; a monstrous birth in the temple; the inexplicable opening of the gates of the temple; the appearance of armies in heaven and the hearing of loud voices. But, in his narrative, each phenomenon deserves a long description; all those extraordinary events do not precede the final attack immediately but happen over a long period of time (such as the voices heard four years

before the war (6.301) or the star over the city for a whole year). Tacitus, instead, records few prodigious phenomena but which happen suddenly and spectacularly. The source for describing these prodigies is Flavian propaganda but filtered through the *Aeneid*, a text which is absolutely distant from the Jews and the account of their defeat but which offers the clearest pattern to describe the Jewish defeat in Roman terms and values.

With regard to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra, Tacitus advances two explanations: a fire caused by a thunderbolt and the very nature of the place which prevents life (5. 7. 2). He states his preference for the latter one because it accentuates the deadly nature of the area but he mentions the fire twice in this passage as the cause of the destruction:

fulminum iactu arsisse (5.7.1) - *igne caelesti flagrasse* (5.7.2)

anticipating the prodigious fire from Heaven which announced the final fate of Jerusalem at the beginning moment of the siege:

subito nubium igne conlucere templum. (5. 13.1)

By describing the contrast between the past wealth and the present state of ruin and devastation of those ancient cities, the forthcoming condition of Jerusalem after its destruction by Titus is prefigured[29]; and by offering both natural and supernatural explanations for the end of those cities, the ethnographic and geographical description can be coherently linked with the account of the extraordinary events which might have preceded the fall of Jerusalem. Jerusalem's image after its last day is thus metonymically described: Sodom and Gomorra had been populous but had been devastated; before the

[29] BLOCH (2002), 100.

description of Jerusalem in 5.8, its riches, forces, and even its exuberant and courageous population, are signalled by the fate of those "destroyed" cities.

Besides, in this text, the fate of Jerusalem seems to be sealed because its history appears as forming part of a more comprehensive and "necessary" process in the course of history: the mention of the successive domination of the Assyrians, the Medes, the Macedonians and, finally, the Romans:

> *dum Assyrios penes Medosque et Persas Oriens fuit, ... postquam Macedones praepolluere ... Romanorum primus Cn. Pompeius Iudaeos domuit ...* (5.8.2 - 9.1)

recalls the ancient theory of the succession of universal empires which would have finished, in its pro-Roman version, with the final domination of the Romans all over the world[30]. Besides, by means of the reference to the misinterpretation of the omens in 5. 13 and above all, of the ancient prophecy that announced a universal power which would come from the East[31], Tacitus stresses, with even more emphasis, the perception that the defeat of Jerusalem was inevitable, from the point of view of the historical facts, because of the several reasons argued in the digression; and from a literary point of view, because it was the dramatic end such a scene demanded[32].

---

[30] See SWAIN (1940) and MENDELS' refutation in (1981). The connection of this topic with the Tacitean text is underlined by LeBONNIEC and HELLEGOUARC'H (1992), 192. For more on this subject see below on p. 123-124.

[31] According to HEUBNER and FAUTH (1982), 152, the ancient prophecy, recorded also by Josephus and Suetonius, was related to Jewish messianic hopes inspired in the Bible and in the Sibylline books. Yet POTTER (1994), 75-77, is sceptical about the presence of a Sibylline tradition in the Jewish context before Hellenistic times.

[32] Josephus' speech in *BJ* 5.362-419 before the fall of the city is very illustrative of this conception. His arguments are based on the fact that it is not legitimate to scorn the power that rules all over the world (5.366); now God is on the Roman side (367 and 412); mixing flattery and threats he insists that the Jews are fighting not only against the Romans but also against God (5.378); then he reviews the Jewish history to demonstrate their successive military failures and the Romans' respect for their holy places. On this speech see PAUL (1993).

3.3. Conclusion

Unlike the preceding sections discussed in this study, in this episode neither itineraries articulated in steps nor travels by land or by sea are present, nor descriptions of sanctuaries, statues or rituals such as sacrifices or oracular consultations. Titus does not play the role of a learned traveller because the purpose of his presence in Judaea is not to venerate the city and its sanctuary or to learn about them, but to pull them down. The analysis of the structure of the passage has shown that Tacitus portrays Jerusalem at the core of the digression. Moreover, through the references to and the connections with the surrounding narrative, he places Jerusalem in a position that leads the reader to understand, on the one hand, that the city is the "victim" that Titus needs to accede to power: it is the very city which needs to be destroyed, namely, "sacrificed"; and, on the other hand, that the announcement of the destruction of the city is the omen which foretells the Flavians' success.

The account of Titus' actions in Jerusalem and the digression on the Jews constitute, in the extant books of the *Histories*, the last section about the arrival of an imperial visitor in significant Eastern sites. Inside the description of the crisis that followed the death of Nero, Tacitus has gradually traced the rise of the Flavians to power by making reference to the first stages of the revolt and also to the omens which would have announced the "divine support" for them. Thus this section on the Jews not only belongs to this general development but also helps to build up the climax before the success of the Flavian undertaking.

4- Germanicus' Eastern Trip

(*Ann.* 2. 53-61)

With regard to the treatment of Eastern subjects, there is an evident difference between the *Histories* and the *Annals*. In the *Histories* eastern antiquarian subjects are related to the account of the Flavian accession because the very process that brings Vespasian and his sons to power begins, precisely, in the East. Accordingly, there is not only a structural similarity between the three episodes already discussed but also a certain cohesion derived from the succession of events in which they are included. In the *Annals*, instead, Tacitus' main concern is to expound how the politics of the Julio-Claudian emperors (Tiberius, Claudius and Nero) attempted to annihilate the old Republican values under the façade of deep respect for the traditional institutions. As a result, the antiquarian sections are mainly devoted to Roman subjects, and the treatment of eastern affairs is related to the control of the eastern border of the Empire, to the relationship with the Parthians and to the operations of the Roman army in that area. Yet, in this context, it is possible to identify two cases where Tacitus connects travellers (from and to Rome) with eastern cities, sites and sanctuaries in sections that can be qualified as "digressive": on the one hand, Germanicus' trip to Greece, Armenia and Egypt; and, on the other hand, the arrival of the ambassadors from Greek cities before the Roman Senate.

This chapter thus centres on *Annals* 2.53-61, a passage which deals with the trip that Germanicus made through the eastern provinces of the empire between 18 and 19 AD[1], some months before his death in Antioch. According to Tacitus' account, after his

[1] Since the traditional ordering of the text was contested by STEUP (1869), the chronology of this section poses some problems, analysed by KOESTERMANN (1958), 351 n.47 and by WEINGÄRTNER (1969), 64-67. To indicate the presence of an anomaly, GINSBURG (1977), 76-77, observes that "nowhere else in the Annals Tacitus devotes an entire year's narrative to events

campaign in Germany and the celebration of his triumph, Germanicus travels around Greece, Asia Minor, Rhodes, Syria, Armenia and Egypt with the purpose of pacifying the region. In fact, the situation in Syria, Judaea and Armenia seemed to be so complex that Tiberius and the Senate had judged the presence of a man like Germanicus necessary. Even more, because of the exceptional nature of the situation, the Senators had conferred on Germanicus more powers than those which were usually granted to the Roman representatives in the provinces:

> *Igitur haec et de Armenia ... apud patres disseruit, nec posse motum Orientem nisi Germanici sapientia componi; ... tunc decreto patrum permissae Germanico provinciae, quae mari dividuntur, maiusque imperium, quoquo adisset, quam iis qui sorte aut missu principis obtinerent.* (2.43.1)

The trip seems indeed to have been accorded a strong political relevance. Nevertheless, from the first pages of Book 2 of the *Annals* Tacitus insinuates that Tiberius had other reasons for putting Germanicus in charge of the affairs in the East:

> *Ceterum Tiberio haud ingratum accidit turbari res Orientis, ut ea specie Germanicum suetis legionibus abstraheret novisque provinciis impositum dolo simul et casibus obiectaret.* (2.5.1)

---

outside Rome". Steup suggested, in fact, the transposition of chapters 59-61 after chap. 67 on the grounds that the events described in sections 62-67 belong to year 18, while those of 59-61, to the year 19. He proposed this change on the basis of the fact that the account of year 18 is completely unbalanced in the text: the alteration would have been due to a simple change of the order of the pages in the manuscript. This transposition was accepted, for instance, by the Loeb editor, and supported recently by BARNES (1998) with strong arguments. Nevertheless, many scholars and editors did not accept it as, for instance, SYME (1958); and some others, such as KOESTERMANN (1958), 331-375, or GOODYEAR (1981), 393-396, consider that the events of chapters 62-67 belong to the year 19 and not to 18, so the chronological gap is due to Tacitus' wish to arrange his contents thematically; others, such as FURNEAUX (1884), 325, or more recently, WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 132-134, admit that the arguments that support the transposition are convincing, but deal with the text in its traditional arrangement.

From Tacitus' words it seems that jealousy and treachery prompted not only Tiberius' orders (and actually his attempts to get rid of Germanicus) but also Germanicus' determination to achieve military glory. Yet, in the account of the trip (2.53-61), besides showing Germanicus as indifferent to intrigues, Tacitus depicts him, twice, as a man indifferent to his political commitments: his interest in solving troubles in the province of Asia seems to be completely subordinated to his wish to visit interesting sites (2.54.1), and the concern with the province of Egypt appears just as a pretext for a journey to see ruins and antiquities (2.59).

This episode deals with references to cities, ruins and sanctuaries as well as myths and history. As a result, in the first section of this chapter, I shall suggest that Germanicus' mission in the East is essentially described as the itinerary of a learned traveller and, consequently, this is the point of view from which Germanicus' political activities are considered. In the second section, I shall argue that the account of Germanicus' trip around the East delineates an itinerary from the past to the future, not only because it connects aetiologies, myths and references to the recent history with the oracle that foretells Germanicus' death, but also because the historical characters evoked in this episode (Augustus and Antony, Scipio Africanus and Alexander the Great) suggest an even more complex interplay of parallels, associations and counterfactual reflections with regard to Germanicus as a personage and also with regard to the historical process of expansion and consolidation of the Roman Empire in the East.

4.1. The itinerary

Tacitus explicitly characterises Germanicus' trip as a tourist pilgrimage twice in this episode. In the first reference, his desire "to know" is his main motivation to go to the furthest region of the Pontus and the province of Asia:

Tum extrema Asiae Perinthumque ac Byzantium, Thracias urbes mox Propontidis angustias et os Ponticum intrat, cupidine veteres locos et fama celebratos noscendi; pariterque provincias internis certaminibus aut magistratuum iniuriis fessas refovebat. (2.54.1)

In the second, his interest to see the Egyptian antiquities leads him to undertake the navigation of the Nile:

Germanicus Aegyptum proficiscitur cognoscendae antiquitatis. (2.59.1)

In fact, it is true that in Tacitus' account the cities visited by Germanicus (Nicopolis, Athens, Ilium, Rhodes and Alexandria) coincide with many of the significant steps that signalled the conventional itinerary of a Roman learned traveller through the eastern area of the Mediterranean Sea[2]. Through this widely spread practice of travelling, rich Romans had the possibility of exhibiting a learned curiosity mixed with a display of public

[2] On ancient travelling, see NICOLET (1988), 35. For Germanicus' trip, two literary antecedents are found in Livy and Lucan. Livy's description of Aemilius Paullus' travel around Greece (45. 27.5-28.6) has many points of contact with Germanicus' itinerary: the purpose of visiting the most celebrated sites: 45.27.5 *ad... visendaque <quae> nobilitata fama maiora auribus accepta sunt, quam oculis noscuntur*; 45.27.11 *multa tamen visenda habentis...* The sites that Aemilius Paullus visits are connected with the Greek heroes of the Trojan War: 45.27.9 *a Calchide Aulidem traicit, trium milium spatio distantem, portum inclutum statione quondam mille navium Agamemnoniae classis, Dianaeque templum, ubi navibus cursum ad Troiam filia victima aris admota rex ille regum petit.* Moreover, about the present condition of the ruins Livy underlines the contrast between the ancient riches and splendour and the current state of devastation: 45.28.3 *nunc vestigiis revolsorum donorum, tum donis dives erat.* On Aemilius' journey see JAEGER (1997), 1-5. On the other hand, Lucan describes Caesar's navigation around Thracia and Greece up to the eastern border of Europe (9.957-960) and, after his visit to Troy, his trip to Egypt round Rhodes. Also Caesar is ascribed an interest in places of literary and cultural significance, connected with the Homeric poems: *Phar.* 9. 961 *Sigeasque petit famae mirator harenas* and exhorted by the guide "to see" the ruins of Troy: *Phar.* 9. 979 *'Herceas' monstrator ait, 'non respicis aras?'.* Finally, Pliny refers to accounts about travels around the East: *Ep.*8.20.2 *quae si tulisset Achaia Aegyptos Asia aliave quaelibet miraculorum ferax commendatrixque terra, audita perlecta lustrata haberemus.*

devotion and piety by visiting ancient sites or sanctuaries for sacred sight-seeing and oracular consultation[3].

Yet it is also true that epigraphic and numismatic documentation proves that, in his account in the *Annals*, Tacitus does not mention all the steps of Germanicus' real trip: he avoids those in which Germanicus and his wife Agrippina received honours (statues, attribution of their names to the cities, coinage, etc), and also other significant episodes such as the visit to the Apeion, Germanicus' refusal of the divine acclamations that the population of Alexandria offered to him[4] and the terrible famine in that city, episodes which are mentioned, instead, by Suetonius (*Tib.* 52.2) and Pliny the Elder (*NH* 8. 155)[5]. Thus, at first sight, it seems clear that Tacitus' selection was a consequence of his purpose to describe Germanicus' trip as a tourist voyage.

But labelling Germanicus' trip merely as a journey "to know" antiquities limits the possibility of understanding the specific meaning that Tacitus ascribes to Germanicus' presence in the places he visits. Germanicus' trip *is* actually narrated as a tourist pilgrimage, but the exploration of the technique adopted by Tacitus in this episode shows that, through Germanicus, myth and history, Graeco-Roman past and Roman present, and the furthest border of the Empire and Rome are connected. As a result, the discussion of the stages of Tacitus' account of Germanicus' trip might illustrate how tourist and political matters are deeply and specifically related[6].

---

[3] On learned travels to the Eastern area of the Empire see HUNT (1984) and SWAIN (1996), 66. DILLON (1997), 60-98, deals with two different categories of pilgrimages: healing sanctuaries and oracles, and panhellenic festivals. In this sense Pausanias was no doubt the best example of a traveller turned pilgrim who was not searching for a historical past any longer but for a sanctified present-past. He travelled through Greece describing monuments and afterwards he wrote a *periegesis* in ten books. On Pausanias see ELSNER (1992), 3-29.

[4] GOODYEAR (1981), 373-376, includes the texts of the edicts with which those honours were offered to Germanicus and his wife.

[5] QUESTA (1957) explains these exclusions as the result of Tacitus' attempt to show Germanicus in his function of Roman magistrate. For the historical background of Germanicus' trip see MAGIE (1950), 497, and 1356-58.

[6] This selective mention and short description of places are reminiscent of the design of Roman maps, illustrated *tabulae* painted on walls and maps which were included in books of wide circulation; rivers, cities, coasts, and mountains, were drawn and placed according to a rather precise system of measures and distances, and furnished the precise pattern for the imaginary

The first stage is Nicopolis, after the sailing through the Adriatic and the Ionian Seas:

> *Sed eum honorem Germanicus iniit apud urbem Achaiae Nicopolim, quo venerat per Illyricam oram, viso fratre Druso in Delmatia agente, Hadriatici ac mox Ionii maris adversam navigationem perpessus.* (2. 53.1)

The position of the name Nicopolis in the syntactic construction underlines its importance, not only as the city where Germanicus begins the exercise of his official functions but also as the starting point of the account[7]. Besides, it introduces the detailed description of his visit to the site of the battle of Actium, the Gulf, the memorial built by Augustus and the remains of Antony's quarters[8]:

> *simul sinus Actiaca victoria inclutos et sacratas ab Augusto manubias castraque Antonii cum recordatione maiorum suorum adiit. namque ei, ut memoravi, avunculus Augustus, avus Antonius erant, magnaque illic imago tristium laetorumque.* (2.53.2)

---

construction of itineraries in foreign lands. One of the most famous was the map of Agrippa displayed in the *porticus Vipsania* (Plin *NH* 3. 16). On ancient cartographic representations see NICOLET (1988), 139-176. Moreover, ROUVERET (1991), 3078-3083, observes that in Tacitus' account, all the places visited by Germanicus are linked either with Roman conquest or with the preceding empires, and thus the name of each place functions as a "place of memory".

[7] Nicopolis, founded by Octavian in 31, was placed in the isthmus of Preveza, opposite Actium in the mouth of the Ambracian Gulf. After the transfer of population from other cities of the region to the new settlement (Paus. 5.23.3; 7.18.8.) it became the main regional administrative centre, and had constructions such as the Theatre, the Stadium, the Odeon, and public baths.

[8] Ancient references to the monument in Suet. *Aug.* 18.2, Prop. 4.6 and -even if indirect- in *Aen.* 3. 287-8 (WEST (1994)). According to Strabo 7.7.6, there were ten ships of Antonius' fleet placed at the foot of the hill in the sacred precinct of Actian Apollo. For a description of the triumphal monument of Augustus see MURRAY and PETSAS (1989), 85-86: the podium fronted by a lower terrace, a continuous line of rams, the inscription, the stoa and the view to the place of Octavian's tent and to the city, the living monument of his victory.

The recollection (*recordatio*) of the battle has concrete bases: the city, the *manubiae* and the *castra*. As a result, Actium is evoked through the description of Germanicus' personal experience of the site, first, because of his kinship with Augustus and Antony; and second, because of the words *magna imago tristium laetorumque* which define the connection between monument, vision and memory. Germanicus' contemplation of the site is, actually, a means by which the past realities are brought into materiality in the present. The grandeur of the monument does not recall Augustus' victory only, but also recalls the complex political process from the civil wars up to the consolidation of the Principate[9]. So this first stage of the journey evokes the most relevant event of recent Roman history, namely the foundational moment of the new regime, and the contradictory forces which brought it about[10]. The second stage of the trip is Athens. In this case, because of its singular political status in the Roman Empire, Tacitus highlights Germanicus' decision to enter the city with just one *lictor*. This was considered a respectful gesture, acknowledged by the Greeks with a flattering reception:

> ... *Athenas, foederique sociae et vetustae urbis datum ut uno lictore uteretur. excepere Graeci quaesitissimis honoribus,vetera suorum facta dictaque praeferentes quo plus dignationis adulatio haberet.* (2.53.3)

---

[9] Germanicus' reactions to the sight of the monuments at Actium could be compared with those experienced by Aeneas in the first book of *Aeneid* (1.453-493), when he contemplates the images of the Trojan war depicted on the door of Dido's palace in Carthage. For an extensive discussion about the experience of "seeing" a monument see JAEGER (1997), 15-29. The use of the word *imago* poses a lexical question related to the ancient theories of knowledge and perception; *imago* is not simply a reflection but a reminder: a φαντασια through which absent things are reconstructed in mind (Quint. 6.2.29). See above, p. 60 n19. On *enargeia* in ancient rhetorical theory see CALAME (1991) and, specifically, on the role of vision in historical narrative see DAVIDSON (1991) and WALKER (1997).

[10] Cf. Horace *Carm.* 1. 37 and the commentary by NISBET and HUBBARD (1970), 407-421, on Actium and the defeat of Cleopatra. On *Epod.*9 see WATSON (1987) who indicates that Horace writes his epode immediately after the battle as a propagandistic text, before the "myth of Actium" was invented. He darkens the enemy primarily in ethical terms as an artifice to mask the victory in a civil war. Also LOUPIAC (1997) comments on *Ep.* 9. Finally, on the battle of Actium see WOODMAN (1983), 218.

This way, Tacitus emphasises Germanicus' attitude towards the ancient prestige of the Athenian empire[11].

The next stops of the journey are only enumerated: Euboea and Lesbos -where Germanicus' daughter Julia was born-, and then Perinthus, Byzantium and other unspecified ancient and celebrated sites, cities and harbours in the most distant areas of the Black Sea:

> *tum extrema Asia Perinthumque ac Byzantium, Thracias urbes, mox Propontidis angustias et os Ponticum intrat, cupidine veteres locos et fama celebratos noscendi.* (2.54.1)

The following two stages on his way back (*in regressu*) are, instead, considered in more detail. Tacitus seems to dismiss the reference to the visit to Ilium and the ancient site of Troy simply with an ablative absolute:

> *adito Ilio quaeque ibi varietate fortunae et nostri origine veneranda.* (2.54.2)

Yet a strong emphasis is present in the subordinated syntactical construction in two key aspects. One is the reference to *nostri origine veneranda*. Through the double reference to Germanicus' attitude of reverence to the site[12] and to the Trojan descent, Tacitus recalls

---

[11] The reminders of the ancient *areté* appeared now connected with Roman power: the Agora and the Acropolis as places dedicated to imperial cult, the fifteen public altars dedicated to Augustus in the central area of the city; the new Roman Agora filled with ornamental elements of Periclean times, the reuse of other ancient monuments and temples, and new constructions such as the Odeon of Agrippa (15 BC), recent inscriptions engraved with ancient letters: all these were the symptoms of a classicism begun in Augustan times which was giving the city a new "ancient" appearance, namely the result of an intentional process of transforming the city into a living museum. But, according to ALCOCK (1993), 163, 182 and 197, this was the demonstration that the past could keep a city alive. For more on this subject see ZANKER (1992), 305-307 and SWAIN (1996), 75. On the emperors' relationship with Athens see OLIVER (1981).

[12] Suet. *Clau.* 3.2 emphasises Germanicus' reverential attitude in this place. Germanicus' alleged epigram on Hector's tomb is in *Anth. Lat* 1.2 and the Greek version at *Anth. Pal.* 9.387. Yet many doubts have been expressed about the identity of the author.

not so much the contemporary Ilium but rather the idealised Virgilian Troy, namely the birthplace of Aeneas[13]. This was a significant allusion because the origins of Rome and the mythical ancestors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty were, supposedly, Trojan. The other aspect, *varietate fortunae*, is related to Ilium's history, namely, to the vicissitudes that the city had experienced across the years. Ilium was traditionally connected with the site of the Homeric Troy, so its inhabitants claimed to descend directly from Homer's Trojans and many illustrious visitors had arrived before to venerate the site. According to the tradition the most relevant visit to Troy was Alexander's because the sacrifices he offered at the graves of Achilles and Patroclus had been considered gestures which had the purpose of presenting his attack on Persia as a Hellenic crusade (Plut. *Alex.* 15. 7-9). Since then, a visit to the Troy visited and honoured by Alexander actually symbolised the "acceptance" of an imperial destiny, as was later demonstrated by the visits paid by Roman generals such as Scipio, Sulla, Caesar, and Augustus[14]. Therefore Tacitus' reference to Germanicus' visit to Troy has plenty of significance because of the reference to the Trojan origins of Rome and also because of the connection with those illustrious preceding visitors. This is not the first time that Germanicus appears as a character respectful of ancestors and traditions in the *Annals* (2.7.2-3) but, in this case, the accent is placed on the Trojan descent, namely, on the alleged prestigious roots of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and of the Romans.

---

[13] On the Trojan origins of Rome see *Aen.* 1. 1-7 and 4. 340; besides, see the reference to Hector as the link between the old and the new city in *Aen.* 2. 268-295. Similar remarks about the value of Troy as the cradle of Rome can be found in Hor. *Carm.* 3.3. 61 and in Prop. 4.1.87 *Troia cades et Troica Roma resurges.* On the significance of Ilium as a symbolic site see SAGE (2000).

[14] According to KRAUS (1994a), the Ilians exploited all these connections to their own benefit and obtained many privileges and concessions (domain, freedom and immunity) from Roman power.

Nevertheless, in spite of the significance of Ilium, Tacitus subordinates its mention to the main sentence which deals, not with the remote past, but with the future, that is, with the visit to the oracle of Apollo in Colophon[15]:

> *relegit Asiam adpellitque Colophona ut Clarii Apollinis oraculo uteretur.* (2.54.3)

The description of this oracle follows the same structural pattern of the oracles in the *Histories*. It is articulated in a digressive passage (2.54.3-4) and its peculiarities are duly enumerated: the priests who are always men (*non femina illic*), the method of the consultation (*sacerdos numerum modo consultantium et nomina audit*), the descent to the cavern (*tum in specum degressus, hausta fontis arcani aqua*) and the versified responses (*ignarus plerumque litterarum et carminum edit responsa versibus compositis super rebus, quas quis mente concepit*). Yet, despite the similarity of this description to those of the oracles of Paphos, Carmel and the Serapeum in Alexandria in the *Histories*, an essential difference stands out because, while all those other predictions were favourable to the consultant - be he Titus or Vespasian -, the oracle of Claros predicts, instead, Germanicus' misfortune. So, in the closure of this digressive passage, Tacitus gives the key to the account of the trip, namely, the announcement of Germanicus' death:

> *et ferebatur Germanico per ambages, ut mos oraculis, maturum exitium cecinisse.* (2.53.4)

---

[15] This big temple and the oracle had attracted many pilgrims since Hellenistic times (Pausanias 7.3.1). The site was explored by Louis Robert between 1950 and 1961. For a survey of the excavations restarted in 1988 see DE LA GRENIERE. (1990) and (1998). DILLON (1997), 93, describes some further aspects of this oracular centre. On Tacitus' knowledge of this oracle see SYME (1958), 469-70. Another further reference occurs at *Ann.* 12.22.1 when Agrippina accuses Lollia of having consulted this oracle on Claudius' wedding: *interrogatumque Apollinis Clarii simulacrum super nuptiis imperatoris.*

But the forecast is obliquely introduced, first, because the content of the oracle's prophecy is ascribed to a rumour (*ferebatur)*; second, because the expression *ut mos oraculis* states the usual ambiguity of the oracular responses; and finally, because the word *maturus* adds a further facet of uncertainty. In fact, it can mean "occurring at the proper time" (OLD 7) or "occurring *before* the *proper* time" (OLD 9) [16]. Thus Tacitus insinuates Germanicus' near death by means of an oracle which is less impressive, perhaps, than the ominous episode in the Apeion at Memphis - recorded by Pliny the Elder[17] - but which subtly reminds the reader of the end of the story almost from the beginning of the account.

For a while, the account of the trip abandons the sequence of the itinerary so as to focus on two main aspects of the opposition between Piso and Germanicus. On the one hand, the description of Piso's activities counterbalances the preceding section about Germanicus' presence in Athens by means of the reference to his violent entrance into the city (*turbido incessu*) and his aggressive speech (*oratione saeva increpat* 2.55.1-2) conveyed in *oratio obliqua*. In this speech, as a pretext and justification for his attack against Germanicus, Piso criticises Athens and the Athenians: he revisits their recent past, their disloyalty to Roman power, and he demonstrates his personal resentment against the Areopagus (2.55.1-2). For him, *vetera* are not the glorious deeds of the "old" classical city of which Germanicus was reminded during his visit to Athens (*vetera suorum facta dictaque* 2. 53.3), but rather the actions of a more recent past. Thus, now, the word *vetus* would not be a source of pride for the city but a reason for shame. The criticism of Athens, the "favourite" Greek city of the Roman emperors, the denial of its glory and

---

[16] Besides, editors discuss whether the right word was *exitium* (as transmitted) or *exitum*: HEUBNER (1994), 76, reads *exitium*; KOESTERMANN (1965), 353 and GOODYEAR (1981), 360, instead read *maturum exitum*. Now, *exitium* means "ruin", "destruction", "fall", but not necessarily death; *exitus* means not only "outcome" but also "death" so possibly is used in this sense, as by Germanicus of himself in 2.71.1: *praematuro exitu*.

[17] Plin. *NH* 8. 155. According to KOESTERMANN (1965), 368, the omission would be due to a structural reason: the episode of the Apeion would add a further dark note to Tiberius' criticism of Germanicus' behaviour. WEINGÄRTNER (1969), 142-146, considers that Tacitus avoids the mention so as to keep Germanicus far away from the accusation of worshipping barbarian divinities and participating in foreign rituals. Instead the oracle of Apollo in Claros linked Germanicus with Hellenistic cults.

nobility, and, furthermore, the mention of its intervention in the Roman civil wars contrast with the former idealised image sketched before in connection with Germanicus' presence in the city.

On the other hand, after a quick voyage through the Cyclades and shortcuts across the sea, Piso overtakes Germanicus at the island of Rhodes. The subsequent account of their stay in the quarters of Cyrrus in Syria appears as a period of increasing enmity between them and between their wives (2.55.5-6).

The description of Germanicus' tour is momentarily resumed with his arrival in Armenia. The mention of this remote land deserves a geo-ethnographic sketch which justifies the reference to Germanicus' political activities in that region. Accordingly, Tacitus defines the geographical situation of Armenia between the Roman frontiers and the Parthian lands (*situ terrarum*) as *ambigua,* as well as the character of the Armenian people (*hominum ingeniis*)[18]. And from this ambiguity derives the explanation for their continuous state of war (*saepius discordes sunt*). The connection between this general description of the Armenians and Germanicus is the fact that some Armenian customs, such as hunting and banqueting, had been adopted by the son of the king of Pontus so as to be recognised as the new ruler of Armenia. Now, the crowning of this king is Germanicus' main political activity after his entrance in Artaxata, the Armenian capital (2.56.3)[19].

Germanicus' itinerary seems to be interrupted again in 2.57-58. Tacitus alludes to his rivalry with Piso[20] during their stay in Cyrrus, Syria, by means of anecdotes based

---

[18] On the ethical dimension of ethnographical descriptions see THOMAS (1982), 2 and 126. A similar statement about the Armenians recurs in *Ann.* 13. 34.2 when the campaigns of Domitius Corbulo - in Nero's reign- are carried out: *ad hoc Armenii ambigua fide utraque arma invitabant, situ terrarum, similitudine morum Parthis propiores conubiisque permixti ac libertate ignota illuc magis [ad servitium] inclinantes.* On this subject see SYME (1958), 395-396, GILMARTIN (1973) and KEITEL (1978).

[19] On this historical episode see MAGIE (1950), 498, and KOESTERMANN (1958), 342. According to GOWING (1990), Tacitus subordinates the treatment of client-king matters to the treatment of general imperial subjects in order to criticise Julio-Claudian foreign policy.

[20] On Piso's friendship with Tiberius and his presence in the East see SHOTTER (1968) and (1974).

first, on their criticisms (2.57.3 *postremo paucis familiarium adhibitis sermo coeptus a Caesare, qualem ira et dissimulatio gignit, responsum a Pisone precibus contumacibus*) and then, on their mutual manifest hatred (2. 57.4 *discesserunt apertis odiis*). As an example, when the Nabatean king[21] during a banquet offers a golden crown to Germanicus, Piso denounces Germanicus' love of luxury (2.57.4 *multa in luxum addidit*), his lack of *Romanitas*, and his monarchic ambitions. Conversely, Germanicus responds to the requests of the delegates of the Parthian king by expelling Vonones from Syria, who was the heir of the Parthian kingdom and also Piso's ally and friend (2.58.2 *datum id non modo precibus Artabani, sed contumeliae Pisonis*).

After this pause, Germanicus' visit to Egypt is the last stage of the account of the trip. Germanicus seems to have two purposes: that of visiting Egyptian antiquities (*cognoscendae antiquitatis*) and that of solving the more urgent troubles in that province (*cura provinciae*). But his concern with regard to Egyptian political matters is described by Tacitus as a "pretext" (*praetendebatur*). In fact, Tacitus alludes to Germanicus' opening public of granaries and intervening in prices (2.59.1 *levavitque apertis horreis pretia frugum multaque in vulgus grata usurpavit*)[22], but also to Germanicus' excessive and demagogic attitudes such as showing himself in Alexandria as a civilian without any escort and dressed in Greek clothes (2.59.1 *sine milite incedere, pedibus intectis et pari cum Graecis amictu*). So as to underline Germanicus' insincerity Tacitus comments on Tiberius' criticisms and somehow justifies them in a short digressive section which explains Augustus' reasons for forbidding the entrance of Knights and Senators in Egypt (2.59.3 *Nam Augustus...*), namely, to prevent an ambitious leader from occupying Egypt

[21] According to GOODYEAR (1981), 369-370, it was usual for foreign kings to offer golden gifts to Roman representatives.

[22] Perhaps Tacitus was attempting to contrast the pro-Germanicus propaganda with a more sceptical image of the prince, suggesting that the famine adduced by Suetonius *Tib.*52.2 as the main reason for visiting Alexandria was an exaggeration.

and from interrupting the provision of corn for Italy[23]. Furthermore, although Germanicus' preoccupation seems to be ascribed to Egypt as a whole, his political concern is only alluded to at the initial stage of the trip, namely during his stay in Alexandria[24]. That is why Tacitus restates Germanicus' tourist interest as the main reason for his trip:

> *Sed Germanicus, nondum comperto profectionem eam incusari, Nilo subvehebatur* ... (2.60.1)

In these final sections devoted to Germanicus' travel along the Nile, Tacitus skilfully adopts the technique of describing successively each place. The first step is Canopus[25] with the reference to its foundation (*condidere*), the introduction of the antiquarian material by means of the conventional formula *qua tempestate*; and the careful avoidance

[23] On the special legal status of Egypt see HENNIG (1972). He analyses the extension of the word *Oriens* and concludes that since Egypt was not included in this category, Germanicus did not have special powers for entering without authorisation. Moreover it is worth observing that Augustus' fears were confirmed by Vespasian when he used his power in Egypt and the port of Alexandria against Vitellius, before his accession to power (*Hist.* 4.52.2).

[24] Alexandria was, in fact, the living monument of Alexander the Great and of the Ptolemaic monarchy. Founded just three centuries before, it was felt to be a new city. According to Suet. *Aug.* 18.1, in Alexandria, Augustus reveres Alexander's tomb, but he refuses to visit the tombs of the Ptolemies: *regem se voluisse ait videre, non mortuos.* According to Strabo (17.1.10) monuments and temples such as the Gymnasium, the Court, the *Caesarion*, the *Paneion*, the Main Street, the Hippodrome, the beacon on the island of Pharos, public gardens, palaces, the Museum and the *Semà* -where supposedly the tomb of Alexander was placed- were the pride of the city. In addition, it was an exquisite centre of leisure and pleasure for those Romans who could afford them and its port concentrated the most significant volume of commerce in the Mediterranean Sea. The population of the city was estimated at 600.000 persons (DELIA (1988)). After Caesar and Augustus, Alexandria was rather the reminder of the recent defeat of Antonius, the booty grabbed from the hands of Cleopatra. It was also, and above all, a current menace for Rome: in fact, from Antonius' to Nero's times, many projects circulated, which suggested the possibility of dividing the Roman Empire or the alternative of transferring the capital from Rome to Alexandria. For a review of Republican and Early Principate projects to transfer the capital to Alexandria see CEAUSESCU (1976) and WOODMAN (1992).

[25] There are other references to this temple in Hdt. 2. 113.3 and in Strabo 17. 1. 18.

of any Egyptian note[26] by underlining the connection between the name of the place and the Greek heroes of the Trojan War:

> *condidere id Spartani ob sepultum illic rectorem navis Canopum, qua tempestate Menelaus Graeciam repetens diversum ad mare terramque Libyam deiectus.* (2.60.1)

The next stop is the temple consecrated to Hercules in the Nile's most westerly mouth. Also in this case, the aetiological information, ascribed to local informants (*perhibent*)[27], relates local traditions and toponymy to the name of that Greek divinity:

> *inde proximum amnis os dicatum Herculi, quem indigenae ortum apud se et antiquissimum perhibent eosque, qui postea pari virtute fuerint, in cognomentum eius adscitos.* (2.60.2)

The third mention is the description of the ruins of Thebes and the account of the reading of a hieroglyphic inscription about the ancient wealth of Egypt[28]:

> *mox visit veterum Thebarum magna vestigia.* (2.60.2)

---

[26] Also Pliny *NH* 5.128, mentions this connection between Canopus and Menelaus. According to WEINGÄRTNER (1969), 138, the accent is placed on its Spartan founders because of the association with the heroes of the Trojan War (2. 60.1).

[27] In *Hist.* 2.3 the verb *perhibeo* is used to compare different versions of the name of the founder of the Temple in Cyprus, in *Hist.* 4.84, to refer to the origins of the god Serapis; and in *Ann.* 11. 14.2, to explain the origins of the alphabet.

[28] According to BERARD (1991), these Egyptian monuments are significant not only because they are reminders of the past but also because they have a strong relevance for the understanding of the current image of the Roman empire.

Tacitus ascribes the translation of the inscription to an Egyptian priest (2.60.3), and thus makes its contents explicit. It deals with the population, the army and the extension of the Egyptian empire in the times of Pharaoh Rhamses and also with the explanations for that earlier wealth (2.60.3 *priorem opulentiam*): the geographical expansion (2.60.3 *Libya ...tenuisse*), the organisation of the system of tributes (2.60.4 *indicta gentibus tributa*) and the consequent abundance of riches such as gold and silver, arms and horses, grain and products. The wealth of the ancient empire of Egypt is, therefore, compared and even equalled to the current wealth and power of Parthia and Rome:

haud minus magnifica quam nunc vi Parthorum aut potentia Romana iubentur.

(2. 60.4)

The other sites visited in Egypt by Germanicus are enumerated in section 2.61 where the criterion is not that of topographical order but of relevance[29]:

aliis quoque miraculis intendit animum quorum praecipua fuere ... (2.61.1)

Tacitus considers them *miracula*[30], astonishing marvels which attract attention because of the antiquity, the size, the oddity, or the extraordinary skill employed in their construction, or, also, simply because of the physical extremes that the landscapes where

---

[29] Like a "disordered itinerary", according to KOESTERMANN (1965), 370 and WEINGÄRTNER (1969), 136. Something similar happens, for instance, with the Nile Mosaic of Palestrina and its representation of Egypt: the spectator needs to assemble details in a conceptual order which is not the order of a conventional map; images privilege an informational and conceptual function over cartographic exactitude. Such an order would have impressed ancient readers and spectators, because itineraries following the routes of the Empire with the indication of stages and distances were largely known; besides, as in Greek *periploi*, geographical accounts such as those of Pliny were constructed on the basis of a topographical order which followed the lines of coasts and roads. On problems posed by linear descriptions see LEACH (1988), 94 and FOWLER (1991).

[30] The word *miraculum* is here adopted in a slightly different sense from that used in *Hist.* 4. 80. See above, p. 43 n.29.

they are placed impose on the travellers: the heat, the desert, the distance, or the remoteness from the ideal centre of the empire. So the Colossus of Memnon near Thebes is admirable because of the sound of the sculpted stones under the sun[31]:

> ... *Memnonis saxea effigies, ubi radiis solis icta est, vocalem sonum reddens.*
>
> (2. 61.1)

the pyramids in Gizah constitute the paradigmatic monument of the Egyptian past because of their location and their shape:

> *disiectasque inter et vix pervias arenas instar montium eductae pyramides certamine et opibus regum* (2.61.1),

and the lake of Moeris in Fayum in the desert recalls the annual rises of the river and the development of sophisticated techniques for keeping the water in the desert:

> *lacusque effossa humo, superfluentis Nili receptacula.* (2.61.1)

Finally, the cataracts[32], Syene and Elephantine, the most southerly point of the Egyptian journey (2. 61.2), signal the geographical extreme because of the remoteness of their position and of the peculiarities of the landscapes:

---

[31] There are further references to the Colossi in Juvenal 15.5, in Pliny 36.7.11, and in Strabo 17.1.46.

[32] The cataracts above Elephantine and Syene had always attracted attention because it was impossible to calculate their height, despite the many attempts made since remote times (Hdt. 2.28. 4-5). According to ROMM (1992), 155, the inquiry about the headwaters of the Nile, linked with Alexander's campaign in Egypt, had always been a goal for generals and emperors.

Exim ventum Elephantinen ac Syenen, claustra olim Romani imperii, quod nunc rubrum ad mare patescit. (2.61.2)

Also, Germanicus' arrival at the first cataract in Elephantine offers the opportunity for a comment about the former borders of the Roman empire by means of the contrast *olim ~ nunc*[33]. Again Tacitus uses the word *claustra*, as he had done before in 2. 59.3. Yet the word *claustra* indicates here (in 2. 61.2) the furthest boundary of the empire, whereas in 2.59.3 it means "gateway". With this double use of both meanings of the word *claustra*, both at the starting point and at the final stage of the trip, the territory of Egypt is defined inside the text not by the mention of its natural borders but rather by the reference to the economic and political enclaves of the presence of the Roman empire: the port of Alexandria as the key to the access to the Egyptian resources of grain; and the cataract of Elephantine as one of the former southerly boundaries that had been extended only a short time before Tacitus' own writing.

This evidence demonstrates that some aspects related to significant current concerns in Tacitus' time are present in the account of Germanicus' trip: the extent of the Roman empire up to the Red Sea, the problematic incorporation of Parthia, and also the relevance of the system of tributes from the provinces as a key feature of the administrative organisation of the Roman provinces.

---

[33] The geographical region alluded to with the expression *nunc rubrum ad mare patescit* and, consequently, the date of composition of the *Annals* have been widely discussed: SYME (1958), 470 and 768-770, upholds the year 116 as the date of composition. According to BOWERSOCK (1975), 520, the evidence suggests a *terminus post* in 106 and a *terminus ante* in 116, which means that the earlier books of *Annals* were written in the time of Trajan. Against this position MARTIN and WOODMAN (1989), 103, even though maintaining the belief that it was written no later than 114, say that "the precise dates of composition of the *Annals* are not known". On the other hand, with regard to the area alluded to in the Tacitean text, BOWERSOCK (1993) sums up the main points of the long discussions: in this article, as he had done in (1975) on the basis of epigraphic evidence, he demonstrates that the reference is to the coast of the Red Sea on the North West of the Saudi Arabian peninsula, and not to the Persian Gulf, as SYME (1958), 768-770, and BEAUJEU (1960) had thought. For a general overview see SAGE (1991), 957.

Finally, if the whole passage is read in its traditional order[34], in 2.62.1 the verb *transigo* sums up Germanicus' trip and all the preceding account, before the narration of other contemporary events is resumed:

> *Dum ea aestas Germanico plures per provincias transigitur, haud leve decus Drusus....* (2. 62.1)

Tacitus has therefore narrated Germanicus' route as a route around the Eastern Mediterranean Sea. In addition, because of the sites mentioned and the relevance accorded to them, the itinerary is described also as a route across time, from Troy to Actium and up to Colophon, even though it is not presented chronologically. In fact, the procedure of describing each place on Germanicus' travels, either by naming the main Greek centres in Hellenistic and Roman times or by pointing out sites related to the Roman history from its origins to its more recent events and conflicts up to the constitution of the Principate (Actium, Troy or Alexandria), configure an alternative itinerary inside the temporal axis of the *Annals* which ends with the mention of the oracle and its prophecy, and which connects all those allusions to the past, with the future, that is, with Germanicus' imminent death.

4.2. Cicerones

The description of Germanicus' trip constitutes a route along time not only through the mention of Germanicus' pilgrimage around historical sites and sanctuaries, as we have seen, but also by means of oblique allusions to or explicit mentions of four

[34] Unless we accept the transposition proposed by STEUP (1869), mentioned above p.77 n.1.

historical characters: Augustus, Antony, Scipio Africanus and Alexander the Great. The discussion of these references, on the one hand, shows the further complexity of Germanicus as a character inside the *Annals* by means of the association with those personages - at least, as they are depicted by Tacitus himself of by other authors in their texts-, and, on the other hand, highlights the presence of a much more complex temporal perspective inside the account of the trip.

The names of Augustus and Antonius appear together twice in this account but in both cases, because of the opposition they represent, a strong tension results[35]. The first time is in the reference to Germanicus' visit to Nicopolis and the site of Actium:

> *simul sinus Actiaca victoria inclutos et sacratas ab Augusto manubias castraque Antonii cum recordatione maiorum suorum adiit. Namque ei, ut memoravi, avunculus Augustus, avus Antonius erant, magnaque illic imago tristium laetorumque.* (2.53.2.)

Actium recalls, at the same time, Augustus' victory and the affirmation of the Principate[36], as well as Antony's defeat and the shadows of the civil wars in Rome[37]. The second time that both names are together is in Piso's speech in Athens (2.55.1-2):

> *hos enim esse Mithridatis adversus Sullam, Antonii adversus divum Augustum socios.* (2.55.1)

---

[35] So QUESTA's (1957), 296, observation that this connection would evidence Tacitus' sympathy to the propagandistic motifs of Germanicus' family, needs to be reconsidered.

[36] Augustan poetry had elaborated a standard image of Augustus as a victorious *Princeps*: e.g. Virg. *Aen.* 6.791-797; Prop. 3.11.65; Hor. *Epod.* 9.2.

[37] On the conditions of civil strife in several passages of the *Annals* and the *Histories* see CHRIST (1978) and KEITEL (1984).

By portraying them as rivals and by insinuating a parallel between Antonius and foreign enemies of Rome such as Mithridates or the Athenians, not only is a negative image of Antony built but also an explicit reference is given to the depth of the civil strife that ended with the battle of Actium.

For that reason the simultaneous evocation of both personages is not without ambiguity. Besides his link of kinship with them (they are respectively great-uncle and grandfather), Germanicus is related to both personages in different ways. Augustus is a strong presence in the first two books of the *Annals*, and Germanicus, who had been adopted by Tiberius because of Augustus' will (1.3.5), venerates (1.42.3) and exhibits a personal attachment to the figure of his great-uncle in his last speech (2.71.4). So through the mention of Actium the figure of Augustus is evoked from the starting point of the account of the trip and thus its influence on Germanicus' portrait is remarkable: Actium is the site of Augustus' victory (2. 53.1 *sinus Actiaca victoria inclutos*) and consequently, of the beginning of his Principate; and, in this account, it is also the starting point of both Germanicus' trip and consulship. Thus Augustus appears to be the ideal support to Germanicus' new magistracy. Nevertheless, even in the same episode of the visit to Actium, Germanicus is also associated with the figure of Antony because of his sympathy for his defeated relative (2.53.2 *magna illic imago tristiumque*). Also Germanicus' presence in Alexandria and his behaviour there not only openly break Augustus' decree which prohibits the entrance to Egypt without permission, but also explicitly evoke Antonius because of his concern with the Eastern provinces (Plut. *Ant.* 36. 3-4), his fascination with Hellenistic culture and his efforts to assimilate it, and his popularity gained in Alexandria in demagogic ways (Plut. *Ant.* 28-29). Tacitus also points out other features such as Germanicus' entrance in Athens with just one *lictor* (Plut. *Ant.* 33. 6-7),

his carrying out of several military campaigns in Armenia and his adoption of Greek clothes, which confirm even more the association[38].

This emphasis on Germanicus' double descent from Augustus and Antony thus underlines his complexity as a personage: on the one hand, he appears as the heir of the Principate and of Augustus' projects and ideals for the Roman empire; but, on the other hand, he is likened to Antony because of his fascination for the eastern world, and also because of his autonomous political attitude in Egypt. Consequently, through those paradoxical associations Germanicus is defeated, in fact, by an aporia, namely the impossibility of reconciling two completely different conceptions about life and power[39].

Scipio Africanus is the third character evoked in this passage. In fact, Tacitus calls Germanicus' behaviour and dressing in Alexandria *Scipionis aemulatio*[40]:

> *sine milite incedere, pedibus intectis et pari cum Graecis amictu P. Scipionis aemulatione, quem eadem factitavisse apud Siciliam quamvis flagrante adhuc Poenorum bello accepimus.* (2.59.1)

---

[38] Virg. *Aen.* 8.685-713 *Hinc ope barbarica variisque Antonius armis/ victor ab Aurorae populis et litore rubro.* In Horace *Epod.* 9, Antonius is shown as a contemptible servant of Cleopatra (11-16), roaming with no direction, defeated, dressed in a *lugubre sagum* (27-28). Also Propertius in 2. 16.37-40 shows Antony as a general who follows an infamous love and who runs away; and in 3. 9. 54-56, Antony commits suicide. For a discussion of these aspects of the poems see GRIFFIN (1977). For general remarks on Antonius' image, see ZANKER (1992), 80-89, and particularly on Plutarch's Antonius see PELLING (1988).

[39] According to WOODMAN (1992), a similar "ironical" notion can be found in Nero, Germanicus' grandson (*Ann.* 15. 36-37), who proclaimed himself a follower of Augustus, but in his later days adopted an "Antonian" lifestyle.

[40] WEINGÄRTNER (1969), 99-108, tries to demonstrate that the *aemulatio* of Scipio in Tacitus' text is not an apologetic device to favour Germanicus, but it functions as an indirect procedure to criticise the infractions committed by Germanicus, if we consider the role of defender of Roman customs (analogous to Cato) ascribed in this passage to Tiberius; the reason would have been to avoid mentioning the more recent example of Antonius.

With the use of the verb *accepimus*, Tacitus makes reference to a Livian passage[41] (29.19.3-20.2), in which many criticisms denied by Livy (29.20.1 *partim vera partim mixta eoque similia veris*) are formulated against P. Scipio Africanus: his movements in Sicily without authorisation (29.19.6 *Scipionem quod de provincia decessisset iniussu*), the wearing of Greek clothes (29.19.11 *pallio crepidisque inambulare in gymnasio*), and the neglect of the purpose of the trip (29.19.13 *Carthaginem atque Hannibalem excidisse de memoria*). Nevertheless, Livy shapes Scipio as a double-edged figure: he appears as a hero, compared to Alexander the Great, but at the same time with plenty of skilful ability to manipulate the construction of his own myth:

> *his miraculis nunquam ab ipso elusa fides est.* (26.19.8)

> *multa alia eiusdem generis, alia vera, alia adsimulata admirationis humanae in eo iuvene excesserant modum.* (26. 19.9)

Through the evocation of the traditional prestige of Scipio, Tacitus somehow attenuates the negative aspect of Germanicus' infractions of Roman traditional customs[42], and relates Germanicus to one of the most admired figures of the Roman republic[43].

Yet, amid the personages evoked in the account of Germanicus' trip, the strongest figure - though not explicitly named - is Alexander the Great[44]. The *pothos* motif, which

---

[41] WALBANK (1967) suggests that Livy echoes Polybius in some aspects such as the interpretation of the divine element: Scipio, like Hannibal, did not have to depend on fortune and divine intervention but worked out his plans with foresight.

[42] QUESTA (1957), 310-313.

[43] These epithets are taken from PELLING (1993), 74.

[44] QUESTA (1957), 315-316, considers that Germanicus lived in a real atmosphere of *imitatio Alexandri* and that Alexander's deeds are his true models in his lifetime and not at the moment of the historical arrangement of his biography; also AALDERS (1961) maintains that Germanicus attempted to imitate Alexander's actions, and that, on this basis, Tacitus strongly emphasises the comparison. Moreover BORZSAK (1969) argues that Tacitus' idealised image of Germanicus is supported by the image of Alexander, and the connections are widely spread throughout Tacitus' works. On the other hand, SYME (1958), 770-771, underlines Tacitus' purpose of suggesting, through the reference to Alexander, a clear allusion to Trajan's conquests (AD.117), and does not

is the most typical trait of the *imitatio Alexandri*[45] -the desire for knowledge, the desire to cross all the boundaries, the desire to revere ancestors in Troy, the desire to reach the edges of the world (Plut. *Alex.* 15.7)-, is strongly recalled by Germanicus' wish to "know" ancient sites:

> *cupidine veteres locos et fama celebratos noscendi.* (2.54.1)

> *Aegyptum proficiscitur cognoscendae antiquitatis.* (2.59.1)

Other motives usually related to Alexander appear in the account of Germanicus' trip: the sacrifices and libations in honour of Achilles (Plut. *Alex.* 15.7); the arrival of Germanicus in the Red Sea (2.61. 2 *mare rubrum*), which connects his trip not only with Alexander's arrival at the extreme edge of the empire (Plut. *Alex.* 62.2), but also with the expeditions of those Roman generals who emulated Alexander with their temerity such as Pompeius Magnus (Sall. *Hist.* 3.88.2) or Marcus Antonius (Plin. *NH* 7.95-97)[46]; and the consultation of the oracle of Apollo in Colophon, which echoes the visit paid by Alexander to the oracle of Delphi (Plut. *Alex.* 14. 6).

In Latin literature and historiography, references to Alexander were frequent and his biography was a usual subject in rhetorical training because, since it was considered a model both for all the virtues or for all the excesses, it offered arguments for *controversiae*, *suasoriae* and *syncrisis*[47]. Because it had been transformed in myth and

---

believe that Germanicus attempted to imitate Alexander. Neither does GOODYEAR (1981), 356 and 376, think that Germanicus visited historical places to emulate Alexander, because he had culture and autonomy enough to decide; his "model" could have been Caesar.

[45] On the influential motif of the *pothos* of Alexander see above p.20 n.22 and p.46 n.34.

[46] For an overview of the Roman presence in that area see BOWERSOCK (1975).

[47] Another significant example is Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni fortuna aut virtute.* On Alexander's "madness" cf. Sen. *Ep.* 91. 17 and 94.62-63; on rhetorical controversies and paradoxes cf. Sen. *Suas.* 1.1 and Gell. *NA* 13.4.1; about *syncrisis* see Cic. *De Rep.* 6.22, Sall. *Hist.* 3.88.2, and above all, Livy's digression in 9.16-17. On Alexander's image in Latin historiography see KRAUS and WOODMAN (1997), 85.

oversimplified by philosophers, rhetoricians, biographers, and historians, Alexander's figure became a stereotype whose several (and often contradictory) facets suggested many divergent identifications: mirrored on Alexander's, the imperial conquests could be explained as the result of the talent and virtues of Roman people, or as a perverse consequence of their vices. The *imitatio Alexandri* had been widely employed as an instrument of "imperialist" propaganda, as well as a pattern for many literary and iconographic representations during the Principate and the Empire. Since the beginning, Roman conquests had been announced like the steps to a universal empire, so Roman generals were frequently associated - or they associated themselves- with the memory of the exploits of Alexander the Great[48]. The case of Pompeius (called *Magnus* as well) is quite eloquent because not only was his life supposed to have been lived as a close following of Alexander's steps, but also his biographers and historians underlined the parallels in their accounts[49]: the avidity for glory, the conquest and exploration of unknown lands, the search for the most remote limits.

As a consequence, Tacitus' use of *imitatio Alexandri* does not limit itself to the *pothos* motif. Other characters such as Scipio, Caesar and Augustus were associated with the *imitatio Alexandri*, even if such associations did not always activate positive parallels[50]. With regard to Augustus, a legend maintained that he had been conceived by a snake (Suet. *Aug.* 94, 4-5); he had visited Alexander's tomb in Alexandria after the victory of Actium (Suet. *Aug.* 18.1), and he had used a ring with the image of Alexander (Suet. *Aug.* 50.1). Even Tiberius alluded to this connection in his *laudatio funebris* of

[48] WIRTH (1976) and NICOLET (1988), 39. On Antony's imitation of Alexander, WOODMAN (1983), 214-215. Moreover, SPENCER (2002), 165-168, argues that Alexander occupied a central position in Roman political ideology.
[49] Cf. Cic. *De republica* 6.22, or *Pro Archia* 24; also Sall. *Hist.* 3.88, and Plut. *Pomp.* 24. On Pompey and other Roman figures who imitate Alexander see PANITSCHEK (1990) and GRAZZINI (2000).
[50] ASH (1999), 198 n.4.

Augustus[51]. On the other hand, Antonius' life recalled the evocation of Alexander's with his desire for conquests, and above all, with his fascination with Greek-Hellenistic and Egyptian culture[52]. Finally, Scipio was compared with Alexander because of his youth and his capacity for excelling; also in his biography are included a snake and a divine birth; he is, as well as Alexander, precocious, and magnanimous; the divine visions and the reverential visit paid to the temple of Jupiter complete the allusions[53]. Therefore, Germanicus' connection with those Roman characters is also related to the figure and the exploits that tradition had ascribed to Alexander. Their own specific links with Alexander define even more Germanicus' characterisation as a young prince, as a learned traveller fascinated with the East, and, mainly, as the heir of a Roman tradition of prestigious conquerors and rulers.

Yet, to balance his portrait of Germanicus, Tacitus refers to another aspect of Alexander's biography. The counterfactual analysis was one of the favourite topics in rhetorical training induced by Alexander's early death (*R. Her.* 4.31)[54]: what would have happened if he had lived longer? what would have happened if he had tried to conquer Rome? Counterfactual analyses provided an appropriate frame to make historical expectations, perspectives, and justifications explicit. A good example is Livy's

---

[51] METTE (1960). Furthermore, BUCHHEIT (1981) points out that Alexander's figure was usually evoked when Augustus was praised.

[52] On Plutarch's *Antony* 6.3; 37.5 and 54.8, see PELLING, (1988), 220, with his specific references to the conquest of Parthia as his chance to be a new Alexander on p. 251 and to the use of Greek dress and to Antony's respect for the dead Brutus imitating Alexander's treatment of Darius on p.173.

[53] Scipio is compared with Alexander in several passages in Livy: 26 19.1-9, about his precocity; on magnanimity, 26. 50. 13; *imitatio Alexandri* is explicit in 35. 14. 5-12. Also Aulus Gellius, *NA* 3.4.1. draws this parallel explicitly.

[54] MORELLO (2002) mentions a counterfactual tradition associated with an hypothetical invasion by Alexander of Italy. On this digression see LUCE (1965); recently SPENCER (2002) 41-53, has considered the digression a key statement on government and the nature of power which provides a vision of Alexander that can prove useful for Roman self-definition.

digression on Alexander (9.17.2-19.17): what would have happened to Roman history if Alexander had fought against the Romans?

> *quinam eventus Romanis rebus, si cum Alexandro foret bellatum, futurus fuerit?* (9.17.2)

Also Tacitus provides his own counterfactual interpretation about Germanicus, some few chapters after the end of the account of the trip. Just after Germanicus' death, Tacitus ascribes a comparison between Germanicus and Alexander (*synkrisis*) to some anonymous personages:

> *et erant qui formam aetatem genus mortis, ob propinquitatem etiam locorum, in quibus interiit, magni Alexandri fatis adaequarent.* (2. 73.1)

In this parallel, the similarities between both characters (beauty, youth and the kind of death they both suffer) are fortuitous (*magni Alexandri fatis adaequarent*), whereas Germanicus' difference and superiority over Alexander is based, according to these people, on his actions, namely, on his real and hypothetical future conduct:

> *Sed hunc mitem erga amicos, modicum voluptatum, uno matrimonio, certis liberis egisse.* (2. 73. 2)

> *ceteris bonis artibus praestitisset.* (2. 73.3)

Moreover, unlike Livy's main question (what would have happened in the case of an invasion in Italy), the question is, in Tacitus' text, what would have happened if Germanicus had been a sole ruler like Alexander (2. 73.3)?

> *quod si solus arbiter rerum, si iure et nomine regio fuisset, tanto promptius adsecuturum gloriam militiae, quantum clementia, temperantia, ceteris bonis artibus praestitisset.* (2.73.3)

According to the structure of this kind of analysis, an answer to such a question is present: if his death had not arrived so early, if Germanicus had been an autocrat, he would have obtained glory faster than Alexander because he had superior personal virtues. So, in the perspective of those anonymous speakers in the *Annals*, Germanicus' military glory would have been a result of his virtues. Thus the comparison and the counterfactual analysis are built on this opposition between Alexander's fate and Germanicus' capacities (*fatum/bonae artes*). Nevertheless, even though this analysis underlines Germanicus' superiority over Alexander because of his "virtues", it also highlights a central point of coincidence between both characters: they die before they have the chance to rule their empires[55]. Therefore, if in the account of the trip the *imitatio Alexandri* pointed out those aspects which linked Germanicus with a Roman tradition of successful generals in the East, in the reference to the oracle about Germanicus' death, the forthcoming comparison with Alexander is somehow anticipated and, consequently, the limits of Germanicus as a personage inside the *Annals*, are delineated.

As I have attempted to demonstrate, Tacitus handles Alexander's image - both in the *Histories* and in the *Annals* - in episodes connected with the expansion of the Roman Empire in the East. In the passages discussed (Titus in chapter 1, Vespasian in chapter 2

[55] SPENCER (2002), 49.

and Germanicus in this chapter), the *pothos* motif is strongly present. Titus and Vespasian have in common the "desire" to visit a sanctuary for a consultation about their future. In the case of Titus, besides, the connection derives from the similarity of his situation as a young prince who visits the oracle in the middle of his journey. With regard to Vespasian, another significant point is the association with Serapis, the divinity adopted by Alexander as a symbol of his power in Egypt. By means of these connections, the increasing prestige of both Flavian candidates is suggested by Tacitus, but also the failure and the tragic end of the reign of Domitian. In the case of Germanicus, despite the "desire" to "know" and to visit a temple, despite the parallel condition of youth, rising power and fascination for the East -and particularly for Egypt-, his wish "to know" conveys also the announcement of his death. Consequently, Alexander's early death is the most obvious connection, underlined even more by means of the counterfactual comparison in *Annals* 2.73.

On the whole, by means of the allusions to these historical characters, Germanicus' characterisation becomes much more complex, on the one hand, because his connections with some of them are explicitly evoked, and, on the other hand, because comparisons and ethical judgements about the personages, their conduct and their public image, inevitably arise. Moreover, the reference to these particular personages helps to depict not only Germanicus as character, but also the account of the trip: through the historical events they recall, the deeds accomplished, and also the troubles they face, the sites visited by Germanicus become even more significant because of this background. Finally, due to the singularity of the personages alluded to - and particularly, Alexander the Great - Tacitus introduces a large and comprehensive temporal perspective because it looks both back to the past (the Hellenistic and the Roman recent past, through Alexander, Scipio, August and Antony) and ahead to the future (by means of the counterfactual analysis).

4.3. Conclusion

Through the articulation of the successive stages of his trip and through the evocation of historical characters such as Antony and Augustus, Scipio Africanus and Alexander the Great, the main temporal axis of Tacitus' narrative is crossed by another temporal perspective. Actually, Germanicus visits those places that were the key symbols of the Roman presence in the East and which constitute the landmarks of an ideal journey to the roots of Roman identity: the Trojan origins, the foundation of the Principate, the attempts to legitimise the imperial domination through the analogy with the Pharaohs. This was an identity affirmed, often problematically, on the basis of an alleged continuity from the Greek and Hellenistic past. Also in this text from the *Annals*, from Troy to Actium and further to the oracle about Germanicus' death a link has been traced from the Roman past to the future.

5- Greek ambassadors in the Roman Senate

(*Ann.* 2. 47.3; 3. 60-65; 4.13-14; 4.55-56 and 12.61-63)

In Tacitus' texts, references to landscapes, temples and oracles and also aetiologies and ethnographies are present not only in sections which deal with the presence of a Roman emperor or prince in the East but also in some passages of the *Annals* which deal with embassies from eastern cities which submit their requests to the emperor and the Senate at Rome (2. 47; 3. 60-65; 4. 13-14; 4.55-56 and 12.61-63).

Initially, the account of the ambassadors' interventions seems to be subservient to a more general subject, the emperor's relationship with the Senate[1]. Tacitus himself makes this situation explicit:

> *Sed Tiberius, vim principatus sibi firmans,imaginem antiquitatis senatui praebebat, postulata provinciarum ad disquisitionem patrum mittendo.* (3.60.1)

and, to a certain extent, he handles the presentations of the cities from this point of view: the Senate and the Emperor appear as playing an intermediary role in their quarrels[2]. Moreover, according to the Senatorial practice, each case is considered separately[3], so the ambassadors - *legati* - are depicted as attempting to negotiate and to obtain responses

---

[1] On Tacitus' handling of Senatorial affairs in his narrative see GINSBURG (1977), 87-95. That Tacitus has chosen just a very few examples of eastern legations is evident from the fact that in the *Annals* there are no such cases at all in many years.

[2] On the relationships between eastern cities and the Roman emperor see ROBERT (1977). He observes that, when cities quarrelled between themselves, they usually invoked Roman authority (Emperor or Senate) against the rival city. Also WALLACE-HADRILL (1990) analyses the system of Greek honours and the relations between the cities.

[3] MILLAR (1966) recalls that, despite the different status of the provinces (e.g. Asia was a public province, Achaea an Imperial province (*Ann.*1. 76.2)), each city could send embassies directly to the Senate or to the Emperor. For general remarks on provincial administration see ALCOCK (1993), 16.

about a limited range of demands: the settlement of jurisdictions (*Ann.*4.43.1 *de iure templi Dianae Limnatidis*), the confirmation of rights of asylum[4] (3.60.1 *asyla statuendi* and 4.14.1 *vetustum asyli ius, ut firmaretur petentibus*), the request for authorisation to build temples[5] (4.55.1 *ambigentes quanam in civitate templum statueretur* and 4.34.4 *Segestani aedem Veneris ... restaurari postulavere*), and the exemption from the payment of tribute[6] (2.47.2 *et quantum aerario aut fisco pendebant, in quinquennium remisit*; 2.47.3 *levari idem in tempus tributis*; 4.13.1 *subveniretur remissione tributi in triennium*; 12. 61.1 *de immunitate Cois tribuenda*; and 12.63.3 *ita tributa in quinquennium remissa*).

Yet, though expounded so as to justify the legitimacy of the ambassadors' requests, the origins of cities, sanctuaries and worship, as well as some episodes about the history of the Roman presence in that area, are extensively treated in these sections of the *Annals*, and consequently they seem to have an entity which cannot be simply subordinated to the problem of the relationship between the Emperor and the Senate. It is true that Tacitus, by extensively dealing with such secondary subjects, ironically depicts the Senators as pusillanimous, and the emperors as ready to accept or even to expound the most fabulous versions of myths when they participate in the debates on behalf of eastern cities -i.e. Tiberius accepts the myth told by Segestans (4.43.4), Nero evokes Ilium's origins (12. 58.1) and Claudius, the mythical settlers of Cos (12. 61.1). But, despite the irony, Tacitus carefully presents those mythical or geographical references which constitute the core of the arguments ascribed to the representatives of the cities. Furthermore, on the basis that those delegations were constituted by the most conspicuous

---

[4] Suetonius wrongly states (*Tib.* 37.3) that this right was abolished. On asylum see SINN (1992) and RIGSBY (1996). On *Annals* 3.60-63, see MAGIE (1950), 503 and 1361, BELLONI (1984), HERRMANN (1989), and WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 429-446, who provide a general overview of the whole question.

[5] On the construction of new temples in honour of Tiberius see MAGIE (1950) 501.

[6] Achaia and Macedon, provinces under direct imperial jurisdiction, had to pay fixed taxes (*Ann.* 1. 76.2). For general remarks on taxation see MILLAR (1977), 231-248 and CORBIER (1991).

men of the ruling élites of the Greek cities[7], he presents the ambassadors as repositories of erudite knowledge (*Ann.*3.61.1 *memorantes non, ut vulgus crederet ...*), somehow embodying their cities and defending their interests. And the contents of their interventions are, in general, related to the natural conditions of the landscape and to the historical antecedents of their cities, either "ancient origins", that is, the accounts related to the remote past (3. 60.2 *vetustae superstitiones* and 4.55.1 *de vetustate generis*), or "services rendered to the Romans" (3.60.2 *merita in populum Romanum* and 4.55.1 *studio in populum Romanum*).

In the first section of this chapter, then, I shall consider those "ancient traditions" which are linked to landscape, myths and monuments. In the second section, I shall discuss the references to the relationship with the Romans, and the connections between the words endorsed by the ambassadors and the current arguments which justified the empire as a "necessity" in Tacitus' time. I shall suggest that the reports ascribed to these "foreign" representatives are more than a mere device to illustrate the servility and pusillanimity of the Roman senators. They are expounded before the Senate and the Emperor in the very centre of the Empire, and Tacitus records them in the *Annals* with the

---

[7] On the participation of the ruling élites of the Greek cities in Roman foreign policy see Plutarch, *Praecepta Gerendae Reipublicae,* 805 B - 808 C; 813 E10 with the extensive discussion by SWAIN (1996), 162-183. Plutarch explains how ruling élites in the Greek cities have accepted Roman rule, supporting the "boots of the Romans over their heads" and trying to maintain social "order" and "concord" by mitigating and hiding their conflicts, demonstrating their capacity for government in the city so as to ensure the favour and the support of the Roman governors, but avoiding at the same time Rome's direct intervention in the internal matters of the city. Dio's Kingship orations are an example of an "erudite" ambassador who flatters and informs the emperor, not only through praise (like the analogy with Alexander), but also through critical warnings and exhortations (MOLES (1990)). Also VEYNE (1999), sketches the Greek point of view about the Roman domination on the basis of three texts: Plutarch's essay *Praecepta Gerendae Reipublicae,* Aelius Aristides and another speech of Dio Chrysostom's, *On the Statues.* He contradicts BOWIE (1970) about the Greek neglect of history in the Second Sophistic as a form of escapism, and maintains instead that historiographical production was important in Hellenistic times, and that, even in imperial times, the evocation of the past had a strong power of mobilisation, because the Greeks had not lost their feelings of autonomy and patriotic pride. Note also ALCOCK (1994), who underlines the relevance of the heroes' cult for the legitimacy of the élites and as the basis for civic prestige, symbolic protection and identity for the community.

aim to depict them - both ambassadors and accounts - as the living reminders of the Roman expansion in the East.

5.1. Nature, myths and monuments: the distant past

The cities whose representatives are said to be participating in these debates are generically designated *Asiae urbes* (2. 47.1) or *Graecas ... urbes* (3. 60.1)[8]. When, at two different moments, the interventions are described in particular, the allusion is to "some cities" which spontaneously renounce their rights (3.60.2 *quaedam quod falso usurpaverant sponte omisere*) and to "the other cities" which are admitted in a session before the Senate (3.63.1 *Auditae aliarum quoque civitatium legationes*). In other cases also the names of many cities are given: Ephesus (the capital of the province of Asia), Magnesia, Aphrodisias, Stratonicea, Hierocaesarea, Cyprus, Pergamum, Smyrna, Sardis, Miletus, Crete, Cibyra, Aegium, Samos, Cos, Sparta, Messenia, Segeste, Hypaepa, Tralles, Laodicea, Ilium, Halicarnassus and Byzantium. These Greek cities are portrayed in the text as "distant" and even "foreign" places because, on the one hand, they are introduced through the indirect speech ascribed to the ambassadors and, on the other hand, the past evoked by many of them, even if prestigious and indisputable, seems to be remote and elusive (3. 63.2 *ceteros obscuris ob vetustatem initiis niti*). To emphasise the singularity of these lands, Tacitus presents the legates underlining some of the exceptional natural advantages of their territories. One of them is related to the "stability" of the territory: if the argument of Halicarnassus to apply for the construction of the temple in honour of Tiberius is the non-existence of earthquakes for a long time:

quod <H>alicarnasii mille et ducentos per annos nullo motu terrae nutavisse

[8] For the use of the denomination of *Asiae urbes* see SEAGER and TUPLIN (1980).

sedes suas ... adseveraverant (4.55.2),

this can be an acceptable argument for them due to the fact that these cataclysms were indeed very frequent in Asia Minor. As a case in point, twelve Asian cities ask Tiberius for the remission of taxes[9] because the earthquake of year AD 17 had been the most terrible of them:

Eodem anno duodecim celebres Asiae urbes conlapsae nocturno motu terrae, quo improvisior graviorque pestis fuit. (2.47.1)

In this account, not only the presence of the number itself (*duodecim*) but also the reference to the importance of the cities and the enumeration of their names - in a decreasing order according to the damages suffered - adds gravity to the description of the catastrophe[10]:

asperrima in Sardianos lues. ... Magnetes a Sipylo proximi damno... (2. 47.2-3)

But the point most frequently adduced is related to the prosperity of the territory. While attempting to obtain the privilege to build a temple in honour of Tiberius, the Sardians allude to the wealth of their country, to their most important river, to the mildness of the climate and to the fecundity of their lands:

---

[9] For further details about these cities see MAGIE (1950), 499-500 and 1358-9.

[10] GABBA (1981) indicates in passing that great natural disasters such as earthquakes played a significant role in ancient historiography and quotes two passages from Thucydides where earthquakes are considered signals of war. Besides the fact that popular beliefs connected earthquakes with the divine world, Pliny also considers that they usually were an announcement of misfortune; and indicates this one as the worst catastrophe in Tiberius' time (*NH* 2. 200).

> *ubertatemque fluminum suorum, temperiem caeli ac ditis circum terras memorabant.* (4.55.4)

On the other hand, in the case of Byzantium, the geographical description constitutes a digression (12.63.1 *Namque....*) which alludes both to the position of the city in the most remote corner of Europe and to the choice of the location according to an indication of the Delphic oracle. In fact, the wealth of the Byzantine territory is explained on the basis of the contrast with those "poor lands" chosen by the Chalcedonians (*sedem caecorum terris adversam*) who, even though having arrived earlier and appreciated the quality of the land (*praevisa locorum utilitate*), had settled in the worst area (*peiora*):

> *quippe Byzantium fertili solo, fecundo mari, quia vis piscium immensa Pontum erumpens et obliquis subter undas saxis exterrita omisso alterius litoris flexu hos ad portus defertur.* (12.63.2)

Yet most of the arguments expounded before the Senate by the ambassadors are based on references to the mythical and remote past. In these texts Tacitus designates the accounts about the remote past *de vetustate generis* (4.55.1) and *vetusta superstitio* (3.60.2). Both expressions imply references to the remote past, to the very moment of the establishment of temples and cults (3.62.4 *Cyprii tribus <de> delubris quorum vetustissimum Paphiae Veneri auctor Aerias*; 3. 63.3 *oraculum Apollinis cuius imperio Stratonicidi Veneri templum dicaverint*; 4. 43.2 *veterem inter Herculis posteros divisionem Peloponnesi protulere suoque regi Denthaliatem agrum, in quo id delubrum, cessisse*) and to the foundation of Greek cities and settlements on the coasts of Asia Minor (4. 14. 1 *qua tempestate Graeci conditis per Asiam urbibus*; 4.55.3 *novas ut conderet sedes*; 12. 62.1

vetustissimos insulae cultores; and 12.63.1 *ubi conderent urbem*)[11]. These references are not only suggested by means of the use of specific words such as *auctor*, *dicare* or *condere* but also explained in more detailed accounts. For instance, the Ephesians (3.61.1-2) ascribe the sanctity of their sanctuary to the active presence of three deities (Apollo, who finds asylum in his own birth place; Liber/Dionysos, who forgives the supplicant Amazons; and finally Hercules, who concedes the temple to the city); and also to the further action of three human powers: Persians, Macedonians and Romans[12]. On the other hand, the Cyprians (3.62.4) recall the consecration of three temples by three legendary personages, eponymous heroes of the island linked not only with the foundation of temples but also with the settlement of population[13]: Aerias establishes a temple for Venus Paphia[14]; his son Amathus consecrates another temple for Venus; and Teucer, son of Telamon, dedicates another one to Jupiter. Also the Messenians recall the mythical account of the division of the Peloponnese between the Heraclides, the ascription of the area where the temple was built to them, and the acknowledgement of that right by the Macedonians and the Roman authorities in Greece after the fall of Corinth (146BC)[15]:

veterem inter Herculis posteros divisionem Peloponnesi protulere. (4.43.3)

A further example of this use of past stories to justify requests is the intervention of the Segestans who recall the story of the origins of the temple and the city so as to ask for the reconstruction of the temple of Venus on mount Eryx. The ambassadors implicitly

---

[11] Useful distinctions in the use of the word *conditor* are discussed by MILES (1988) who argues that in Hellenistic times the word could mean either the establishment of a new community from a mother country, or the ascription of a new constitution or of a new name to an existing community, or could also be used as an honorific title.
[12] For a discussion on this point see WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 435-7.
[13] WOODMAN and MARTIN (1996), 442-3.
[14] There is a more detailed account in *Hist.* 2.3.1.
[15] MARTIN and WOODMAN (1989), 202.

flatter Tiberius because of his alleged consanguinity both with the goddess and with the founders of the Julio-Claudian dynasty:

> *et Segestani aedem Veneris montem apud Erycum, vetustate dilapsam, restaurari postulavere, nota memorantes de origine eius et laeta Tiberio; suscepit <que> curam libens ut consanguineus.* (4.43.4)

This way, Tacitus evokes a story which is well known to his Roman audience because of its familiarity with the *Aeneid*, namely, that Aeneas founded Segesta in Sicily, like a new Troy, and consecrated the temple to Venus Idalia on Mount Eryx before the continuation of his journey to Italy (*Aen.* 5. 746-762)[16]. A peculiar case is that of Cos, because the "ambassador" before the Senate is the emperor Claudius himself. In fact, so as to ask for immunity for the island, he adduces as an argument the settlement of the island by the giant Coeus and the Argives, and the introduction of the art of medicine by the god Aesculapius at the very moment of his arrival on the island (12. 61.1). Finally, another example is related to the remote (but not necessarily mythical) past: the ambassadors from Samos date the establishment of the sanctuary of Juno back to the time when the Greeks colonised Asia Minor by founding cities (4.14.1).

The past alluded to by the *legati* is, therefore, based on thumbnail sketches of aetiologies and local histories[17]. Tacitus' references are connected with a large corpus of myths and stories constituted by different versions of the origins of temples or cities which often circulated, but which were frequently altered because of political motivations

[16] KOESTERMANN (1965), 148.
[17] In general on this topic see STRASBURGER (1972). On the importance of cultural history derived from the Herodotean tradition see MURRAY (1972).

or rhetorical demands[18]. In fact, due to the non-existence of official canonical versions, the longer persistence or larger diffusion of some stories was based not on the reliability of the testimony (absent when it was about the remote past), but rather on a widespread consensus[19]. As a consequence, by ascribing the reliability of the stories to the ambassadors, Tacitus ascribes this margin of variation to them and seizes the opportunity to display a variety of exotic stories and accounts in the main line of the *Annals*.

Yet Tacitus introduces more than simple accounts of the remote past of Greek sanctuaries and cities. References in which mythical and historical times are related and even considered as a continuous line, are also present in these texts. One is the case of the Sardians who, before the Senate, read (*recitavere*) an Etruscan "document" which proved the consanguinity and the common origins of the Lydians and the Etruscans:

> *Sardiani decretum Etruriae recitavere ut consanguinei: nam Tyrrhenum Lydumque Atye rege genitos ob multitudinem divi<sis>se gentem.* (4.55.3)

In this way the mythical eponymous kings of Etruria and Lydia, and the remote process of dividing peoples and territories, are connected with the settlement of population in the Peloponnese, and these distant events appear to be recorded in a later written document supposedly produced in "historical" times.

Another example is the case of the Ephesians, when they ask for the right of asylum for the temple of Diana:

---

[18] For that reason, Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*On Thucydides*, 6-7) advises understanding and indulgence because, if sometimes those stories are full of incredible things, that is due to the resistance in those communities to alter the versions received from their ancestors or, in other cases, because of the desire to beautify them with mythological digressions.

[19] On the popularity of local history see GABBA (1981), 60. Moreover, WISEMAN (1994), 37-48, considers two examples: a story invented on the basis of a misinterpreted monument, and another one that circulated because the monument that "proved" the "falsity" of the story had disappeared.

Auctam hinc concessu Herculis cum Lydia poteretur, caerimoniam templo neque Persarum dicione deminutum ius; post Macedonas, dein nos servavisse.

(3. 61.2)

In fact, they seamlessly relate Hercules to the Persians, to the Macedonians, and finally to the Romans (3.61). In this passage Hercules - a mythical civilising hero - seems to be introduced as a "historical" personage, and from him, the legitimacy of his concession and consequently of his authority flows to the successive historical powers which actually dominated in the East.

Such connections would be against the tendency of Roman and Greek historians to demarcate and separate mythical from historical time. As a consequence, one question arises: why are such ambiguous references that connect mythical with historical time present in Tacitus' text? Perhaps the treatment of such points by other authors can explain Tacitus' motivation. On the one hand, Polybius (9.2.1) advocates the separation of genealogical and foundational accounts from history because they have ceased to have any significance[20]. Moreover, in his *Origines*, Cato carefully omits references to the early history of the Roman republic and criticises those that "tell lies about their origins"[21]. Also Varro, in *De gente Populi Romani,* separates in his periodisation the "obscure" and "mythical" ages from the historical epoch, because they were not available for inquiry[22]. On the other hand, Dionysius of Halicarnassus deals with the most ancient tales about the origins of Rome on the basis of a distinction between myth and history inherited from Herodotus and Thucydides. In exactly the same way that Herodotus and Thucydides handled myth inside their histories, Dionysius submits the remote stories he intends to

[20] On Polybius' historiography and the basis of "pragmatic" history see SACKS (1981).
[21] *HRR* F31 *Sed ipsi unde oriundi sunt, exacta memoria inliterati mendacesque sunt et vera minus meminere*. For a summary of Cato's *Origines*' contents see CHASSIGNET (1987); and specifically about this problem of the credibility of ancient tales see MARINCOLA (1997), 285.
[22] For a discussion of Varro's fragments see FOX (1996), 236-256.

include in his historical account to a process of rationalisation, because he thinks they have a core of truth; so he fashions mythical figures as if they had been real, and tells the myths as if they were history, in a rationalised account[23]. Also Dio maintains that myths hide a truth, and that the most incredible marvels can acquire a philosophical or spiritual significance[24]. Moreover, Livy is aware of the qualitative difference between the early books and the books regarding more recent history because the narrative of the events preceding the foundation of the city contains plenty of expressions of doubt, archaic language, and frequent comparisons between past and present[25]. Yet in his preface he recognises that the origins of cities are usually illustrated with supernatural events which add relevance and greatness to the accounts:

> *datur haec venia antiquitati ut miscendo humana divinis primordia urbium augustiora faciat.* (Praef. 7)[26]

Thus, on the one hand, Tacitus keeps his distance from the stories he tells by attributing their contents to the foreign ambassadors. But, on the other hand, these ideas (the rationalisation of the accounts regarding the "mythical" past, the possibility of finding a core of truth in fantastic tales about the origins of temples and cities, and the consensus about the fact that, despite the credibility of minor anecdotes, stories confirm the prestige and the power of famous cities and sanctuaries) were not unknown to Tacitus' Roman

---

[23] For a commentary about Dionysius of Halicarnassus' treatment of mythical subjects in *Ant. Rom.* praef. see GABBA (1991), 129-132. Moreover, FOX (1996), analyses this subject on pp. 49-95, and on p. 78 he calls this procedure a "bizarre rationalisation of the myth". On the other hand, VON LEYDEN (1950) describes Hecataeus' techniques to transform myths into plausible stories, and consequently into historical evidence, due to his perception of time as continuity; and argues that historians like Herodotus and Thucydides, though having surpassed their predecessor, sustained essentially a common conception of history as an unbroken continuity. SCHULTZE (2000) analyses Dionysius' criteria for the evaluation of the evidence: the testimony of credible authorities, reasoned argument and probability.

[24] For a commentary on Dio's speeches see MOLES (1990).

[25] See FOX (1996), 98, and MARINCOLA (1997), 117-127.

[26] On Livy's preface see WALSH (1955) and MOLES (1993).

audience, and provided him with the opportunity to introduce some "less serious" subjects. Moreover, a further explanation can be suggested: it is the attempt to record some of the arguments which justified the Roman presence in the East (kingship with eastern peoples) or some of the connections drawn between Greek and Roman culture such as the links postulated between Hercules and Augustus[27], or between Hercules and Trajan[28].

A similar distance concerns the references to monuments, namely to visible remains by means of which the historical past is recalled. Of course the most obvious testimonies are the temples themselves. Now it is the permanency of the building that ensures the durability of the memory of mythical or historical events to which it is related[29], and hence different requests can be made by alluding to the temple itself. Thus the cities that needed their rights of asylum to be confirmed, underlined the contrast between the current situation of their temples as refuge for criminals and debtors (*complebantur templa* 3.60.1) and the illustrious past of the sanctuaries. For instance, in favour of the temple of Diana in Ephesus, the representatives mention the sacred wood consecrated in the place of the birth of Apollo and Diana, the altar where the Amazons found refuge and the later great importance of the temple thanks to a concession by Hercules (3.61).

On the other hand, the Segestans recall the story of Aeneas and the consecration of their temple so as to ask for its reconstruction on account of its merits as a very ancient construction:

---

[27] Specially because of his victory over Antony (Virg. *Aen.* 8, 190). In Augustan times the connection was between Aeneas, Hercules and Augustus. For the "construction" of Augustus' image see GALINSKY (1996), 222-24.

[28] On Trajanic propaganda see MOLES (1990), 323.

[29] On this connection between monuments and history see IMMERWAHR (1960).

aedem Veneris vetustate dilapsam restaurari postulavere, nota memorantes de origine eius et laeta Tiberio. (4.43.4)

Finally, the ambassadors of Halicarnassus demand the right to build a new temple: they mention their existing temples as a proof of the quality of their terrain which can therefore offer the ground (literally) for a new long-lasting temple:

quod Halicarnasii ... vivo.. in saxo fundamenta templi adseveraverant. (4.55.2)

The temples are the "testimony" adduced for the requests, but the ambassadors also refer to other more specific physical testimonies. The verb *manere* is used in two of these cases, one by the ambassadors of Ephesus alluding to the olive tree where Latona gave birth to Diana and Apollo (3. 61.1 *oleae quae tum etiam maneat*); and the other by the ambassadors of Messenia, with regard to the engraved inscriptions which prove the ascription of the place to the Messenian king when the Peloponnese was divided between the Heraclides (4.43.2 *monimentaque eius rei sculpta saxis et aere prisco manere*). It is worth noting that Varro links this word with "memory" and "monument"[30]. In Tacitus' texts, the mention of physical remains functions as a source of "authority" when he needs to justify the inclusion of a mythical account[31]. The ambassadors' allusions to myths (unlike those ascribed to the emperors mentioned above) seem to lack the fabulous element, and they even seem to have an effect of "verisimilitude", due to the evocation of the authority of "historical records" such as the decree of the Amphictyonies adduced by

---

[30] *De Lingua Latina* 6. 49 *meminisse a memoria cum id quod remansit in mente in id quod rursus movetur, quae a manendo ut manimoria potest esse dicta.* For a commentary on this text see JAEGER (1997), 15.

[31] See MARINCOLA (1997), 101-3. For a more general point of view see WARDMAN (1960): he explains that myths are used in historical writing so as to legitimise a digression or an element to "be sifted to arrive at the truth about earlier times". Also GABBA (1981), 54, makes reference to the erudite citation of sources or testimonies.

Samos' representatives to assess their rights for the sanctuary of Juno (4.14.1), or the chronicles and poems recalled by the Spartans or the inscriptions on stone and bronze evoked by the Messenians to dispute their rights to control the temple of Diana (4.43.1 *annalium memoria vatumque carminibus*)[32].

The ambassadors need to allude to their "evidence" to construct convincing arguments so as to support their requests. And Tacitus uses the words ascribed to the ambassadors as the supporting material for his narrative. The temples and the physical testimonies are "visible" in the text because they are "said". The only possibility for them to "be" there is through the words of the ambassadors, through the "listening" of the senators and also through the reading of Tacitus' text. Only through the account of their origins or of the deeds accomplished in those places, is it possible to represent them as monuments. What is more, with their "physical" presence inside the text, they produce an encounter with different temporal experiences because they transfer the viewer-listener to a "monumental space", and take him back to the past, a past which is qualitatively different from the past that the *Annals* evokes in its main narrative.

5.2. The relationship with the Romans: the recent past and the Empire

The most successful requests, however, are those which allude to the relationship with the Romans, and more specifically to the services rendered to them. In these cases, the mention of official written documents, especially if they were many and reliable (4.43.3 *pluris sibi ac locupletiores*)[33], served to validate the requests because they were

---

[32] On the importance of inscriptions as guarantors of fame see IMMERWAHR (1960). On the other hand, BERARD (1991), 3036, recalls that inscriptions are the very expression of law, as in this case, where the limits of a contested territory must be fixed.

[33] MARTIN and WOODMAN (1989), 202.

the documents that had actually regulated the concession of benefits since the time of the Republic[34]: *beneficia, decreta, pacta, constituta, postulata, iura.*

Still, sometimes, the ambassadors display more extensive descriptions of their alliances with the Romans. An example is the case of Smyrna (4.56. 1-3) whose representatives recall a series of episodes in favour of the Romans: the sending of ships during the wars against Antiochus and during the Social War; the consecration of a temple in honour of Rome in the time of Cato's consulship (195 BC); and the exceptional offer of clothes to the Roman army at a moment of great cold and lack of resources during a war. This apparently insignificant episode is full of symbolic value because that offer would imply reciprocity. In fact, by "touching on" Romans' weaknesses with the allusion to the times when they were still not the main power and by evoking a moment of shortage, their loyalty should be recognised. Lastly, the Byzantines recall the alliance formed with the Romans to fight against common enemies such as Pseudo Philippus, Antioch, Perseus and Aristonicus; then they evoke the help rendered to Antony, Sulla, Lucullus, Pompey, and, more recently, to the Julio-Claudian Emperors (12.62).

The arguments ascribed by Tacitus to the Greek ambassadors also have another common feature: they are based on some of those ideas that served to justify Roman rule in the Eastern Mediterranean; and those principles had been widely accepted because they were based on the consensus derived from the absorption of the forms and content of Roman political and legal discourse by the ruling élites in the eastern provinces. Furthermore, Tacitus' allusion to the eastern cities' relationships with Rome in terms of loyalty or disloyalty was based on a strong historiographical tradition. Sallust points out some arguments in *Bell. Iug.* 13-14 through Adherbal's intervention in the Senate: Roman domination was justified and accepted as a reward granted to loyalty, services and material support. In his speech he points out the Roman involvement with foreign kings

[34] See MILLAR (1973), 57. More specifically, BELLONI (1984), 176-8, considers the documents handed in and produced in the debate of 3. 60-63.

in terms of kinship (14.1), the provision of armies, money and protection from the Romans (14.1), the Romans as guarantors of "justice" (14.7, 14.16 and 14.25), Roman enemies as their allies' enemies (14.10), a strong relationship through generations as suggested by Adherbal's grandfather, Massinissa (14.18)[35]. Simultaneously with those arguments, Sallust indicates how Jugurtha's money bought the good will of Roman senators[36]. Livy's references to the Rhodians' intervention in the Macedonian wars in favour of the Romans make the strength of those relationships evident (31.15 and 33.20). Their requests for a privileged treatment from the Romans are significant in these contexts because of their exceptional services (37.54 and particularly 44.14-15). The counterface of those constant contacts is Livy's portrait of the King of Bithynia, Prusias: first, he doubts whether to adhere to the Romans because of the letters sent to him by Antiochus and Scipio[37] (37.25.4-14); and later, he hands in Hannibal to the Romans so as to please the Roman legate Flamininus. Livy offers a double explanation of Prusias' motivation: on the one hand, Flamininus' reproaches, and on the other hand, Prusias' desire to please the Roman authority. Fear as well as servility are combined as motivations[38].

But the loyalty adduced by the ambassadors was not only loyalty to the Roman people. The accounts of the ambassadors also abound in names of individuals such as Scipio and Sulla, who had expelled Antiochus and Mithridates (3.62.2); Caesar and Augustus (3.62.2); and also republican generals such as Perpena or Isauricus (3.62.3), Antony (4.43.1), M. Porcius Cato (4.56.1-2), Lucullus and Pompey (12.62.1). Thus

[35] On Massinissa as a Roman military ally and his ties of friendship see WALSH (1965).
[36] See KRAUS (1999).
[37] See McDONALD (1957). Livy depicts Prusias hesitating between Scipio's flattery and subtle threats and Antiochus' arguments: the Romans had come to Asia to seize their kingdoms and to kill them; that the Romans had explicit ambitions to become the only dominant power of the world; and that far from respecting the friendship they were apparently offering to him, they would defeat and subject Prusias, and Antiochus himself if he was left alone.
[38] See CARAWAN (1988).

another aspect of Roman recent history is outlined because they have all participated in the imperial Roman expansion to the East.

The ambassadors could adduce their loyalty to the Roman people and the assistance given to the most important Roman generals during their campaigns in the East because they have a further basis for recognising and accepting Roman domination. The ambassadors refer to Lydian, Persian and Macedonian power as a source of legitimacy:

> *Auctam hinc concessu Herculis, cum Lydia poteretur, caerimoniam templo neque Persarum dicione deminutum ius; post Macedonas, dein nos servavisse.*
>
> (3. 61.2)

What is more, at the end of the list, and changing the focus, the Romans appear. Surprisingly, the Romans are referred to as "we" (*nos*) because the point of view slides from the cities to the Roman point of view of which Tacitus is the spokesman. The formulation of the antecedents to ask for the right of asylum becomes an enumeration of successive empires. In the closing section of this passage, the topic recurs in the words ascribed to the ambassadors from Sardis, Miletus and Crete:

> *Propiora Sardianos: Alexandri victoris id donum. neque minus Milesios Dareo rege niti;... petere et Cretenses simulacro divi Augusti.* (3. 63.3.)

The two first kings, Alexander and Darius, had conceded privileges to Sardis and Miletus respectively; Tiberius' generosity is now flattered by means of the request of the ambassadors from Crete who ask for asylum for a statue of Augustus, Tiberius' adoptive father. Thus, in the whole of the account, the enumeration is not of empires but of princes (Alexander, Darius and Augustus) and the effect is that of an apparently unbroken line of continuity.

In the argument of the ambassadors, therefore, the remote and mythical past is connected with the recent past on a thread based on hegemonic political formations. Such an enumeration could be read in terms of a linear history of progress or decadence, or as a history that alternates recurrent cycles of greatness and ruin: from a philo-Roman point of view the succession of empires articulates the plot of universal history[39] and puts in evidence the "unavoidable" and "necessary" character of the Roman hegemony, as well as the absolute uselessness of any effort to oppose that advance. The argument of the succession of empires, nevertheless, would deny the glorification of Rome, accentuating its recent character with regard to the old eastern empires and its unquestionable subjection to Greek cultural hegemony[40]. From the Roman perspective it was of vital importance to underline the positive side of this topic. Thus when Tacitus emphasises the servility of the Greek ambassadors and of the élites they represented, the argument of the inevitability of the conquest and the acceptance of that situation is strongly supported.

5.4. Conclusion

The ambassadors evoke their cities' mythical or remote past, and sometimes connect it with the more recent history in a continuous line. These evocations are supported by the reference to testimonies such as temples, woods, inscriptions or "documents" of different kinds. The more recent past is directly related to the Romans and more specifically focused on those episodes which underline the "friendship" and

[39] Polybius 1.3.6 conceives history as an organic process of expansion in which one stage leads to the next toward the universal domination of the Romans. WALBANK (1963) considers that Polybius has encountered the theory of the four empires at Rome and that there are some contradictions between the general development and the closer reading of singular episodes. Resuming the point, DEROW (1979) indicates that Polybius' history is an account of the successive development of the "orders/obedience syndrome".

[40] On this subject see GABBA (1974). With regard to the topos of the succession of the empires MENDELS (1981) argues against SWAIN (1940) that it turned into a propagandistic topos in the times of Roman interventions in the areas which belonged to those empires.

even the affirmation of the necessary character of their domination. Accordingly, the ambassadors and, through them, the cities are portrayed not only by the evocation of their remote past, of their monuments and written documents, but also the enumeration of the actions that prove their submission to the Romans. They have come to Rome not only to evoke their past. They have come to Rome so as to remind the Romans how they had *gone* to the east before. In fact in these debates they are introduced as the vivid monuments of the Roman presence in the East. But monuments have not only the function of evoking the past but also that of being an admonition for the future[41]. They are monuments, visible and acceptable for a Roman audience because the past recalled, the myths alluded to, and the main historical exploits evoked not only flatter the Roman identity but they concern the very process of the constitution of the Empire.

[41] JAEGER (1997), 17.

Conclusion

In this study I have attempted to explore some of the ways in which Tacitus handles topics related to the East in the *Histories* and in the *Annals*. I hope to have demonstrated that the treatment of such apparently insignificant and subsidiary sections derives from his complex conception of historiographical practice based on his conscientious work on the internal structure of the text and on its articulation inside the main narrative.

Throughout the discussion I have pointed out that each section implies a pause in the main narrative and contains either a digression or a digressive passage which deals with more specific subject matter related to origins, geography, ethnography or worship. Ring composition is frequently adopted to shape some of these passages as a unity. Other sections are, instead, structured as the successive stages of an itinerary. This gives them an internal rhythm (either that of a trip by sea or by land, or that of a ritual visit to a temple, or that of the successive interventions in a senatorial debate) which is essentially different from that of the main narrative. Both travellers and Senators imply "Roman eyes", and "Roman ears" which, inside the text, frame the inclusion of elements extraneous to the main narrative. And, besides, the sections are included in a more comprehensive frame through specific formal elements such as introductory and concluding formulas, pronouns, cross-references and temporal or explanatory conjunctions. The evidence that the structure in these passages has been carefully worked out confirms that Tacitus articulates his works as a whole; that his selection of materials depends not so much on the availability of his sources but rather on his purpose of focusing on some precise subjects or problems; and that these sections devoted to eastern subjects, despite their specificity and apparent distance from the main account, are never

disconnected. In fact, although topics such as wonders or incredible phenomena, traces of mythical stories, and also precise references to recent history have a peculiar tone and structure, they are linked, by means of oblique or explicit allusions, with the main narrative of either the *Histories* or the *Annals*, or with other texts. Because of the subjects they deal with and the way they are structured, these sections lead to two displacements of the narrative focus: one to the area of the eastern Mediterranean and the other to a more distant past (mythical as well as historical). On the one hand, spatial displacements are arranged as itineraries round Greece, Asia Minor and Egypt. On the other hand, the temporal displacements are related to the mythical and historical past by means of aetiological accounts and the evocation of different historical or legendary personages.

Tacitus tells his readers about myths, oracles and even prodigies; he extensively expounds - or briefly sketches out - geographical and ethnographical descriptions; and depicts sanctuaries, statues and memorials. Yet he always keeps a prudent but clear distance, either by attributing the stories to other voices or by subtly suggesting his scepticism with regard to supernatural events. Tacitus adopts these devices to provide his readers with a pleasurable reading according to the aesthetic patterns accepted in his time but without contradicting the specific ethical and political concern which holds his historiographical work. In fact, this study has also sought to demonstrate that the ideological and political axes which structure the *Histories* and the *Annals* are also central in these passages: no matter how distant the foreign lands are, they are always somehow alluding to the Roman presence in the East; the association with relevant historical or literary figures connected with the expansion in the East illuminates the complexity of the personages involved in these sections and also of the historical processes they are leading. In addition, a deep concern with regard to traditional Roman values is present: the myths evoked, no matter how remote they seem to be, are always linked with Roman traditions, confirming or interrogating them; aniconic or non-human representations are related to Roman "original" religion and thus, in these contexts, to the alleged birth of a new

dynasty; no matter how different foreign peoples are, they can be read and described in or against Roman terms; and the exoticism of the sanctuaries, rituals and consultations underlines the value of responses directly connected with the future of the Roman imperial consultants. Thus some central issues such as the territorial extension of the Roman empire and the legitimacy of its conquests, the relationship between the Roman institutions (emperor, Senate, legates, quaestors, and prefects) and the provinces of the Eastern Mediterranean are not only the core of the whole narrative but the real plot of these sections devoted to the East.

Rome is therefore the centre which organises the texts because the central subject matter of the *Histories* and the *Annals* is directly related to the history of the Roman empire. Rome is the location of the imperial power and also the milieu for the reception of the texts. It is, indeed, the point of observation towards the East because in each section, through their attitudes and reactions towards places, monuments and stories, both the dominant characters and the authorial interventions in first person represent the "eyes" and the "ears" of the Roman audience to which the texts are addressed. Rome as the geographic and symbolic centre of the empire is the starting point and, at the same time, the final destination of the displacements implied in the trips discussed in these passages devoted to the East. So are the main accounts of the *Histories* and the *Annals*. From this central point of view which merges trips and digressive passages together, temporal and spatial limits can be explored, and the issues which are dominant throughout the texts can be better understood.

Bibliography

AALDERS, P. (1961), "Germanicus und Alexander der Grosse", *Historia* 10, 382-384.

ALCOCK, S. (1993), *Graecia Capta. The Landscapes of Roman Greece* (Cambridge).

---------- (1994), "The Heroic Past in a Hellenistic Present", *EMC* 38, 221-234.

ARENA, A. (2000), "La figura di Serapide nelle testimonianze degli autori latini e greci di età romana", *Latomus* 59, 57-68.

---------- (2001), "Romanità e culto di Serapide", *Latomus* 60, 297-313.

ASH, R. (1999), *Ordering Anarchy* (Ann Arbor).

AVENARIUS, G. (1954), *Lukians Schrift zur Geschichtsschreibung* (Frankfurt).

BARNES, T.D. (1998), "Tacitus and the *Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone Patre*", *Phoenix* 52, 125-148.

BARZANÒ, A. (1988), "Note per una reinterpretazione di Tac. *Hist.* 2, 78", *Aevum* 62, 102-105.

BAXTER, R. T.S. (1971), "Virgil's influence in Book 3 of the *Histories*", *CPh* 66, 93-107.

---------- (1972), "Virgil's influence on Tacitus in Books 1 and 2 of the *Annals*", *CPh* 67, 246-269.

BEARD, M., NORTH, J. and PRICE, S.R.F. (1998), *Religions of Rome* (Cambridge).

BEAUJEU, J. (1960), "Le *mare rubrum* de Tacite et le problème de la chronologie des Arabes", *REL* 38, 200-235.

BELLONI, G.G. (1984), "Asylia e santuari greci dell'Asia Minore ai tempi di Tiberio", in M. SORDI (ed.), *I santuari e la guerra nel mondo classico*, 164-180.

BERARD, F. (1991), "Tacite et les inscriptions", *ANRW* 2.33.4, 3007-3050.

BLOCH, R. (2002), *Antike Vorstellungen vom Judentum. Der Judenexkurs des Tacitus im*

Rahmen der griechisch-römischen Ethnographie, Historia Einzelschriften 160 (Stuttgart).

BORZSÁK, St. (1969), "Das Germanicusbild des Tacitus", *Latomus* 28, 588-600.

BOWERSOCK, G.W. (1973), "Syria under Vespasian", *JRS* 63, 133-140.

---------- (1975), "The Greek-Nabataean Bilingual Inscription at Ruwafa, Saudi Arabia", in J. BINGEN, G. CAMBIER and G. NACHTERGAEL (eds.), *Le monde grec: Hommages à Claire Préaux* (Bruxelles), 513-522.

---------- (1993), "Tacitus and the province of Asia", in T. J. LUCE and A.J. WOODMAN (eds.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton), 3- 10.

BOWIE, E. L. (1970), "Greeks and the Past in the Second Sophistic", *P&P* 46, 3-41.

BOYS-STONES, G.R. (2001), *Post-Hellenistic Philosophy* (Oxford).

BRADFORD WELLES, C. (1962), "The discovery of Sarapis and the foundation of Alexandria", *Historia* 11, 271-298.

BRAUND, D.C. (1984), "Berenice in Rome", *Historia* 33, 120-123.

BRIESSMANN, A. (1955), *Tacitus und das Flavische Geschichtsbild* (Wiesbaden).

BROWN, T. S. (1965), "Herodotus speculates about Egypt", *AJPh* 86, 60-76.

BUCHHEIT, V. (1981), "Alexanderideologie beim frühen Horaz", *Chiron* 11, 131-137.

BÜCHNER, K. (1964), "Die Reise des Titus", in *Studien zur römischen Literatur IV*, (Wiesbaden), 83-98.

CALAME, C. (1991), "Quand dire c'est faire voir: l'évidence dans la rhétorique antique", *Etudes de Lettres*, Université de Lausanne 4, 3-22.

CANTER, H.V. (1931), "Digressio in the Orations of Cicero", *AJPh* 52, 351-361.

CARAWAN, E. (1988), "Graecia Liberata and the role of Flamininus in Livy's Fourth Decade", *TAPhA* 118, 209-252.

CEAUSESCU, P. (1976), "Altera Roma: histoire d'une folie politique", *Historia* 27, 79-108.

CHASSIGNET, M. (1987), "Caton et l'imperialisme romain au II^{e} siècle av. J.-C. d'après

les *Origines*", *Latomus* 46, 285-300.

CHILVER, G.E.F. (1979), *A Historical Commentary on Tacitus ' Histories I and II* (Oxford).

---------- and TOWNEND, G.B. (1985), *A Historical Commentary on Tacitus' Histories IV and V* (Oxford).

CHRIST, K. (1978), "Tacitus und der Principat", *Historia* 29, 449-487.

COHEN, S.J.D. (1988), "History and Historiography in the *Against Apion* of Josephus", *History and Theory* 27, 1-11.

CORBIER, M. (1991), "City, territory and taxation" in J. RICH and A.WALLACE - HADRILL (eds.), *City and Country in the Ancient World* (London).

CROOK, J. (1951), "Titus and Berenice", *AJPh* 72, 162-175.

DAITZ, S.G. (1960), "Tacitus' Technique of Character Portrayal", *AJPh* 81, 30-52.

DAL SANTO, A. (1981), "De principe Vespasiano in urbe Alexandrea infirmos sanante ut nobis auctor est Tacitus (Hist. IV 81 ss)", in *Atti del Congresso Studi Vespasianei* (Rieti), 335-340.

DAMON, C. (2003), *Tacitus. Histories Book I* (Cambridge).

DAVIDSON, J. (1991), "The gaze in Polybius' Histories", *JRS* 81, 10-24.

DAVIES, J.C. (1968), "Reditus ad rem aptus et concinnus esse debebit. Some comments on Cicero's use of Digressio", *Latomus* 27, 894-903.

DE LA GRENIERE, J. (1990), "Le sanctuaire d'Apollon à Claros", *REG* 103, 95-110.

---------- (1998), "Lectures de Claros archaique", *REG* 111, 391-402.

DELIA, D. (1988), "The population of Roman Alexandria", *TAPhA* 118, 275-292.

DEROW, P.S. (1979), "Polybius, Rome and the East", *JRS* 69 (1979), 1-15.

DILLON, M. (1997), *Pilgrims and Pilgrimage in Ancient Greece* (London).

DUNAND, F. (1992), "La fabrique des dieux", in C. JACOB and F. de POLIGNAC (eds.), *Alexandrie IIIe Siècle av. J.-C.* (Paris), 171-184.

EARL, D.C. (1961), *The Political Thought of Sallust* (Cambridge).

ELSNER, J. (1992), "Pausanias: a Greek Pilgrim in the Roman World", *P&P* 135, 3-29.

---------- (1995), *Art and the Roman Viewer* (Cambridge).

---------- (1996), "Image and Ritual. Reflections on the Religious Appreciation of Classical Art", *CQ* 46, 515- 531.

FEENEY, D. (1998), *Literature and Religion at Rome. Cultures, Contexts and Beliefs* (Cambridge).

FEHLING, D. (1994), "The art of Herodotus and the margins of the world" in Z.VON MARTELS (ed.), *Tavel Fact and Travel Fiction* (Leiden-New York), 1-15.

FOWLER, D.P. (1991), "Narrate and describe: the problem of ekphrasis", *JRS* 81, 25-35.

---------- (1997), "On the shoulders of Giants: Intertextuality and Classical Studies", *Materiali e Discussioni* 39, 13-34.

FOX, M. (1996), *Roman Historical Myths* (Oxford).

FURNEAUX, H. (1884), *The Annals of Tacitus. Vol. I, books I-IV* (Oxford).

GABBA, E. (1974), "Storiografia greca e Imperialismo Romano, (III-I sec aC)", *RSI* 86, 625-642.

---------- (1981), "True history and false history in Classical Antiquity", *JRS* 71, 50-62.

---------- (1991), *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome* (Berkeley).

GALINSKY, K. (1996), *Augustan culture* (Princeton).

GALLIVAN, P.A. (1973), "The false Neros: a re-examination", *Historia* 22, 364-365.

GIBSON, B.J. (1998), "Rumours as causes of events in Tacitus", *MD* 40, 111-129.

GILMARTIN, K. (1973), "Corbulo's Campaigns in the East", *Historia* 22, 583-626.

GINSBURG, J. (1977), *Tradition and Theme in the Annals of Tacitus* (Berkeley).

---------- (1993), "*In maiores certamina*: Past and Present in the *Annals*", in T.J. LUCE and A. J. WOODMAN (eds.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton), 86-103.

GIUA, M.A. (1991), "Paesaggio, natura, ambiente in Tacito", *ANRW* 2.33.4, 2879-2902.

GONZALEZ, J. (1999), "Tacitus, Germanicus, Piso and the *Tabula Siarensis*", *AJPh*

120, 123-142.

GOODYEAR, F.R.D. (1970), *Tacitus*, Greece and Rome, New Surveys in the Classics 4, (Oxford).

---------- (1981), *The Annals of Tacitus. Books 1-6. Vol II* (Cambridge).

GOWING, A.M. (1990), "Tacitus and the Client Kings", *TAPhA* 120, 315-331.

GRAZZINI, S. (2000), "La *συγκρισις* fra Pompeo ed Alessandro nel *Somnium Scipionis*: a proposito di Cicerone, *De republica* VI 22", *MH* 57, 220-236.

GRIFFIN, J. (1977), "Propertius and Antony", *JRS* 67, 17-26.

GRIMAL, P. (1989), "Tacite et les presages", *REL* 67, 170-178.

GRODZYNSKI, D. (1974), "Superstitio", *REA* 76, 36-60.

GUERRINI, R. (1986), "Tito al santuario Paphio e il ricordo di Enea (Tac. *Hist.* II, 4)", *Atene e Roma* 31, 28-34.

GYWN MORGAN, M. (1996), "Vespasian and the omens in Tacitus *Histories* 2. 78", *Phoenix* 50 , 41-55.

HAHN, E. (1933), *Die Exkurse in den Annalen des Tacitus* (Bonn-Leipzig).

HAIG GAISSER, J. (1969), "A Structural Analysis of the Digressions in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*", *HSCPh* 73, 1-43.

HARTOG, F. (1988), *The Mirror of Herodotus: the representation of the other in the writing of History* (Berkeley).

HEINEN, H. (1992), "Ägyptische Grundlagen des antiken Antijudaismus", *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 2, 124-149.

HENNIG, D. (1972), "Zur Ägyptenreise des Germanicus", *Chiron* 2, 350-365.

HENRICHS, A. (1968), "Vespasian's visit to Alexandria", *ZPE* 3, 51-80.

HENRY, E. (1991), "Virgilian elements in Tacitus", *ANRW* 2.33.4, 2987-3005.

HERRMANN, P. (1989), "Rom und die Asylie griechischer Heiligtümer", *Chiron* 19, 127-158.

HEUBNER, H. (1968), *P. Cornelius Tacitus. Die Historien. Band II* (Heidelberg).

---------- (1976), *P. Cornelius Tacitus. Die Historien. Band IV* (Heidelberg).

---------- and FAUTH, W. (1982), *P. Cornelius Tacitus. Die Historien. Band V* (Heidelberg).

---------- (1994), *Annals* (Teubner).

HINDS, S. (1998), *Allusion and Intertext* (Cambridge).

HORSFALL, N. (1985), "Illusion and Reality in Latin Topographical Writing", *G&R* 32, 197-208.

HOSPERS-JANSEN, M. (1949), *Tacitus over de Joden. Hist. 5, 2-13 (with an extensive summary in English)* (Groningen-Batavia).

HUNT, E.D. (1984), "Travel, tourism and piety in the Roman Empire", *EMC* 28, 391-417.

IMMERWAHR, H. (1960), "Ergon: history as a monument", *AJPh* 81, 261-290.

JAEGER, M. (1997), *Livy's Written Rome* (Ann Arbor).

JONES, B.W. (1985), "Titus in the East", *RhM* 128, 346-352.

---------- (1992), "The Reckless Titus" in C. DEROUX (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* VI (Bruxelles), 408-420.

KEANEY, J. (1969), "Ring composition in Aristotles's *Athenaion Politeia*", *AJPh* 90, 406-423.

KEITEL, E. (1978), "The Role of Parthia and Armenia in Tacitus Annals 11 and 12", *AJPh* 99, 462-473.

---------- (1984), "Principate and Civil War in the *Annals* of Tacitus", *AJPh* 105, 306-325.

KOESTERMANN, E. (1958), "Die mission des Germanicus im Orient", *Historia* 7, 331-375.

---------- (1965), *Cornelius Tacitus: Annalen, Band I, Buch 1-3*

(Heidelberg).

KRAUS, C. S. (1994), *Livy. Ab urbe condita. Book VI* (Cambridge).

---------- (1994a), "'No Second Troy': Topoi and Refoundation in Livy, Book V", *TAPhA* 124, 267-289.

---------- (ed.) (1999), *The Limits of Historiography* (Oxford); and her article: "Jugurthine disorder", 217-247.

---------- and WOODMAN, A.J. (1997), *Latin Historians*, Greece and Rome New Surveys in the Classics n° 27 (Oxford).

LAIRD, A. (1999), *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power. Speech Presentation and Latin Literature* (Oxford).

LAUSBERG, H. (1967), *Manual de Retórica Literaria* (Madrid).

LEACH, E. W. (1988), *The Rhetoric of Space. Literary and Artistic Representations of Landscape in Republican and Augustan Rome* (Princeton).

LeBONNIEC, H. and HELLEGOUARC'H, J. (1992), *Tacite. Histoires, livres IV-V* (Paris).

LEVENE, D.S. (1993), *Religion in Livy* (Leiden).

---------- (1997), *Tacitus. The Histories* (Oxford).

LEVY, I. (1946), "Tacite et l'origine du peuple juif", *Latomus* 5, 331-340.

LOUPIAC, A. (1997), "La trilogie d'Actium et l'epode IX d'Horace. Document historique ou *carmen symposiacum*?", *REL* 75, 129-140.

LUCE, T. J. (1965), "The dating of Livy's First Decade", *TAPhA* 96, 209-240.

----------and WOODMAN A.J. (eds.) (1993), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton).

LUND, A. (1991), "Zur Gesamtinterpretation der 'Germania' des Tacitus", *ANRW*, 2.33.3, 1958-1988.

MACURDY, G.H. (1935), "Julia Berenice", *AJPh* 56, 246-253.

MAGIE, D. (1950), *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton).

MARINCOLA, J. (1997), *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge).

---------- (1999), "Genre, convention, and innovation in Graeco-Roman historiography", in C. KRAUS (ed.), *The limits of historiography* (Oxford), 281-324.

MARTIN, R.H. and WOODMAN, A.J. (1989), *Tacitus. Annals Book IV* (Cambridge).

McDONALD, A.H. (1957), "The style of Livy", *JRS* 47, 155-172.

MENDELS, D. (1981), "The five empires: a note on a propagandistic topos", *AJPh* 102, 330-337.

METTE, H.J. (1960), "'Roma' (Augustus) und Alexander", *Hermes* 88, 458-462.

MILES, G. (1988), "Maiores, Conditores and Livy's perspective on the Past", *TAPhA* 118, 185-208.

MILLAR, F. (1966), "The Emperor, the Senate and the Provinces", *JRS* 56, 156-166.

---------- (1973), "Triumvirate and Principate", *JRS* 63, 50-57.

---------- (1977), *The Emperor in the Roman World* (London).

MITFORD, T.B. (1980), "Roman Cyprus", *ANRW* 2.7.2, 1285-1384.

---------- (1990), "The Cults of Roman Cyprus", *ANRW* 2. 18. 3, 2176-2211.

MOLES, J. (1990), "The kingship orations of Dio Chrysostom", *Papers of the Leeds International Latin Seminar*, 297-375.

---------- (1993), "Livy's preface", *PCPS* 39, 141-168.

MORELLO, R (2002), "Livy's Alexander Digression (9. 17-19): Counterfactuals and Apologetics", *JRS* 92, 62-85.

MURRAY, O. (1972), "Herodotus and Hellenistic culture", *CQ*, 22, 200-213.

MURRAY, W.M. and PETSAS, P.M. (1989), *Octavian's Campsite Memorial for the Actian War* (Philadelphia).

NICOLET, C. (1988), *L'inventaire du monde. Géographie et politique aux origines de l'Empire romain* (Paris).

NICOLS, J. (1978), *Vespasian and the Partes Flavianae* (Wiesbaden).

NISBET, R.G.M. and HUBBARD, M. (1970), *A Commentary on Horace: Odes. Book I* (Oxford).

OGILVIE, R.M. (1991), "An interim report on Tacitus' Agricola", *ANRW* 2.33.3, 1714-1740.

OLIVER, J.H.(1981), "Roman Emperors and Athens", *Historia* 30, 412-423.

PANITSCHEK, P. (1990), "Zur Darstellung der Alexander- und Achaemenidennachfolge als politische Programme in kaiserzeitlichen Quellen", *Klio* 72, 457-472.

PAUL, G.M. (1982), "*Urbs Capta*: sketch of an ancient literary motif", *Phoenix* 36, 144-155.

---------- (1993), "The presentation of Titus in the *Jewish War* of Josephus: Two Aspects", *Phoenix* 47, 56-66.

PEARCY, L. (1973), *Tacitus' use of species, imago, effigies and simulacrum* (Diss. Bryn Mawr).

PELLING, C. (1988), *Plutarch. Life of Antony* (Cambridge).

--------- ------- (1993), "Tacitus and Germanicus", in T.J. LUCE and A. J. WOODMAN (eds.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton), 59-85.

---------- (1997), "Tragical Dreamer: some dreams in the Roman Historians". *G&R* 44, 8-25.

PLASS, P. (1988), *Wit and the Writing of History. The Rhetoric of Historiography in Imperial Rome* (Wisconsin).

POMEROY, A. (1991), *The Appropriate Comment. Death Notices in the Ancient Historians* (Frankfurt & New York).

POTTER, D. (1994), *Prophets & Emperors* (Cambridge,MA).

PÖSCHL, V. (1981), "Vespasiano in Tacito" , in *Atti del Congresso Studi Vespasianei* (Rieti), 515-522.

PREAUX, C. (1984), *El mundo helenístico* (Barcelona).

QUESTA, C. (1957), "Il viaggio di Germanico in Oriente e Tacito", *Maia* 4, 291-321.

RAMBAUD, M. (1970), "Le portrait dans l'historiographie romaine", *LEC* 38, 417-447.

RAWSON, E. (1972), "Cicero the Historian and Cicero the Antiquarian", *JRS* 62, 33-45.

REY-COQUAIS, J. P. (1978), "Syrie Romaine, de Pompée à Dioclétien", *JRS* 68, 44-73.

RIGSBY, K.J. (1996), *Asylia. Territorial Inviolability in the Hellenistic World* (Berkeley-Los Angeles).

RIVES, J. (2002), "Structure and History in the *Germania* of Tacitus", in J.F. MILLER, C. DAMON and K.S. MYERS (eds.), *Vertis in Usum: Studies in honor of Edward Courtney* (München-Leipzig), 164-173.

ROBERT, L. (1977), "La titulature de Nicée et de Nicomédie: la gloire et la haine", *HSCPh* 81, 1-39.

ROGERS, P. (1980), "Titus, Berenice and Mucianus", *Historia* 29, 86-95.

ROMM, J. (1992), *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought* (Princeton).

ROSEN, K. (1996), " Das Historiker als Prophet: Tacitus und die Juden", *Gymnasium* 103, 107-126.

ROSS, D. O. Jr. (1973), "The Tacitean Germanicus", *YCIS* 23, 209-27.

ROUVERET, A. (1991), "Tacite et les monuments", *ANRW* 2.33.4, 3051-3099.

RUTHERFORD, I. (2000),"Theoria and darsan: pilgrimage and vision in Greece and India", *CQ* 50, 136-146.

RUTLAND, L. W (1987), "The Tacitean Germanicus: Suggestions for a Re-evaluation", *RhM* 130, 153-64.

SACKS, K. (1981), *Polybius and the Writing of History* (Berkeley-Los Angeles).

SAGE, M. M. (1991), "Tacitus' Historical Works: a Survey and Appraisal", *ANRW* 2.33.2, 851- 1030.

---------- (2000), "Roman visitors to Ilium in the Roman Imperial and Late Antique Period: the symbolic functions of a landscape", *Studia Troica* 10, 210-233.

SANFORD, E. (1937), "Nero and the East", *HSCPh* 48, 75-103.

SCHECHTER, S. (1975), "The Aition and Virgil's Georgics", *TAPhA* 105, 347-391.

SCHULTZE, C. (1986), "Dionysius of Halicarnassus and his audience", in I.S. MOXON *et al* (eds.) *Past Perspectives* (Cambridge).

---------- (2000), "Authority, originality and competence in the *Roman Archaeology* of Dionysius of Halicarnassus", *Histos* 4.

SCOTT, K. (1934), "The role of Basilides in the Events of AD 69", *JRS* 34, 138-14.

SHATZMAN. I. (1974), "Tacitean Rumours", *Latomus* 33, 549-578.

SHOTTER, D. C.A. (1968), "Tacitus, Tiberius and Germanicus", *Historia* 17, 194-214.

---------- (1974), "Cnaeus Calpurnius Piso, legate of Syria", *Historia* 23, 229-245.

SINCLAIR, P. (1995), *Tacitus the Sententious Historian. A Sociology of Rhetoric in Annales 1-6* (Pennsylvania State University Press).

SINN, U. (1992), "Greek sanctuaries as places of refuge" in N. MARINATOS and R.HÄGG (eds), *Greek sanctuaries* (London).

SPENCER, D. (2002), *The Roman Alexander. Reading a Cultural Myth* (Exeter).

STARR, R.J. (1981), "Cross-references in Roman Prose", *AJPh* 102, 431-437.

STEELE, R.B. (1904), "The Historical Attitude of Livy", *AJPh* 25, 15-44.

STEUP, J. (1869), "Ein Umstellung im zweiten Buche der Annalen des Tacitus", *RhM* 24, 72-89.

STRASBURGER, H. (1972^2 = 1966), *Die Wesensbestimmung der Geschichte durch die antike Geschichtsschreibung* (Wiesbaden).

SULLIVAN, P.B. (1953), "A Note on the Flavian Accession", *CJ* 49, 67.

SYME, R. (1958), *Tacitus* (Oxford).

---------- (1958a), "Obituaries in Tacitus", *AJPh* 79, 18-31.

SWAIN, J.W. (1940), "The Theory of the four monarchies; opposition history under the Roman Empire", *CPh* 35, 1-21.

SWAIN, S. (1996), *Hellenism and Empire. Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek World AD 50-250* (Oxford).

TAKACS, S. (1995), "Alexandria in Rome", *HSCPh* 97, 263-276.

TANNER, R.G. (1969), "Tacitus and the Principate", *G&R* 14, 95-99.

THOMAS, R. (1982), *Lands and Peoples in Roman Poetry. The Ethnographical Tradition* (Cambridge).

TOWNEND, G.B. (1964), "Cluvius Rufus in the Histories of Tacitus", *AJPh* 85, 337-377.

TURCAN, R. (1985), "Tacite et les arts plastiques dans les *Histoires*", *Latomus* 64, 784-804.

TURNER, E.G. (1954), "Tiberius Iulius Alexander", *JRS* 44, 54-64.

VAN ERP TAALMAN KIP, A.M. (1994), "Intertextuality and Theocritus 13", in I.F. DE JONG and J.P. SULLIVAN (eds.), *Modern Critical Theory and Classical Literature* (Leiden- New York- Köln), 153-169.

VAN OTTERLO, W.A.A, (1944), "Untersuchungen über Begriff, Anwendung, und Entstehung der griechischen Ringkomposition", *Medeleelingen der Nederlandsche Akademie Van Wetenshappen* 1-6, 131-176.

---------- (1948), *Die Ringcompositie als Opbouwprincipe in de Epische Gedichte van Homerus* (Amsterdam).

VASALY, A. (1993), *Representations: Images of the World in Ciceronian Oratory* (Berkeley).

VEYNE, P. (1999), "L'identité grecque devant Rome l'Empereur", *REG* 112, 510-567.

VON LEYDEN, W. (1950), "Spatium historicum", *DurhamUJ* 11, 89-104.

VON MARTELS, Z. (ed.) (1994), *Travel fact and travel fiction* (Leiden-New York).

WALBANK, F. W. (1963), "Polybius and Rome's Eastern Policy", *JRS* 53, 1-13.

---------- (1967),"The Scipionic Legend", *PCPS* 13, 54-69.

WALKER, A. (1997), "Enargeia and Spectator in Greek Historiography", *TAPhA* 123, 353-377.

WALLACE-HADRILL,A. (1990), "Roman Arches and Greek Honours: the language of

power at Rome", *PCPhS* 36, 143-181.

WALSH, P.G. (1955), "Livy's Preface and the Distortion of History", *AJPh* 76, 369-383.

---------- (1965), "Massinissa", *JRS* 55, 149-160.

WARDMAN, A.E. (1960), "Myth in Greek historiography", *Historia* 9, 403-413.

WARDY, B. (1979), "Jewish Religion in Pagan Literature during the Late Republic and Early Empire", *ANRW* 2. 19.1, 592-644.

WATSON, L. (1987), "Epode 9 or the art of falsehood", in M. WHITHBY, P. HARDIE (eds.), *Homo Viator. Classical Essays for John Bramble* (Bristol), 119-129.

WEINGÄRTNER, D.G. (1969), *Die Ägyptenreise des Germanicus* (Bonn).

WELLESLEY, K. (1965), Review of "Karl Büchner: 'Die Reise des Titus'. Studien zu römischen literatur. Band 4. Tacitus und Ausklang", *Gnomon* 37, 701-705.

---------- (1972), *Cornelius Tacitus: The Histories Book iii* (Sydney).

---------- (1989), *Cornelius Tacitus II - 1 Historiae* (Teubner) (Leipzig).

WEST, D. (1994), "In the Wake of Aeneas ('Aeneid' 3.274-88, 3. 500-5, 8.200-3)", *CQ* 4 41, 57-61.

WEST, S. (1985), "Herodotus' Epigraphical Interests", *CQ* 35, 278-305.

WIRTH, G. (1976), "Alexander und Rom", *Entretiens sur l'Antiquité Classique* 22, (Vandoeuvres-Genève), 181-219.

WISEMAN, T.P. (1994), *Historiography and Imagination* (Exeter).

WOODMAN, A.J. (1972), "Structure and content of Ann. 4.57-67", *CQ* 22, 150-158.

---------- (1983), *Velleius Paterculus. The Caesarian and Augustan Narrative. (2.41-93)* (Cambridge).

---------- (1988), *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (London).

---------- (1992), "Nero's Alien Capital: Tacitus as Paradoxographer (*Annals* 15. 36-7)", in A.J.WOODMAN and J. POWELL (eds.), *Author and Audience in Latin Literature* (Cambridge).

---------- (1995), "*praecipuum munus annalium*: The Construction, Convention

and Context of Tacitus *Annals* 3. 65.1", *MH* 52, 111-126; repr. in *Tacitus Reviewed,* 86-103.

---------- (1998), *Tacitus Reviewed* (Oxford).

---------- and MARTIN, R. H. (1996), *The Annals of Tacitus. Book 3* (Cambridge).

ZANKER, P. (1992), *Augusto y el poder de las imágenes* (Madrid).

ZUCCARELLI, U. (1981), "Vespasiano nell'opera di Tacito", in *Atti del Congresso Studi Vespasianei* (Rieti) 551-569.