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GAIUS CAESAR, OR THE IDEAL NON-PRINCEPS: A TIBERIAN ISSUE

ANTONIO PISTELLATO

1. Portraying a prospective leader

Historiographers portraying Gaius Caesar, the adoptive son of Augustus, focus not only on a most prominent member of the imperial family, but also on a potential successor to Augustus himself and a rival to the future emperor Tiberius. Indeed, the heyday of Gaius coincided with Tiberius' debated withdrawal to the Greek island of Rhodes (6 BC).¹ The closest reporting on Gaius in chronological terms and especially interesting is Velleius Paterculus, who published his work in AD 30, during the Principate of Tiberius. While just mentioning his brother Lucius Caesar quite fleetingly,² Velleius devotes much more attention to Gaius. He served him as a soldier during the Eastern mission that Gaius undertook (1 BC – AD 4) holding a proconsular *imperium*.³

¹ See B. Levick, *Latomus* 31 (1972) 779–813; J. Bellemore, *Klio* 89 (2007) 417–53.

² Vell. 2,96; 99,2; 103,3. Basic references on Lucius at V. Gardthausen, *RE* X 1 (1917) 472f.; *PIR*² I 222; W. Eck, *DNP* 6 (1999) 30.

³ Vell. 2,101–102: *Breue ab hoc intercesserat spatium, cum C. Caesar ante aliis prouinciis ad uisendum obitis in Syriam missus, conuento prius Ti. Nerone, cui omnem honorem ut superiori habuit, tam uarie se ibi gessit, ut nec laudaturum magna nec uituperaturum mediocris materia deficiat. Cum rege Parthorum, iuvene excelsissimo, in insula quam amnis Euphrates ambiabat, aequato utriusque partis numero coiit. Quod spectaculum stantis ex diuerso hinc Romani, illinc Parthorum exercitus, cum duo inter se eminentissima imperiorum et hominum coirent capita, perquam clarum et memorabile sub initia stipendiorum meorum tribuno militum mihi uisere contigit: quem militiae gradum ante sub patre tuo, M. Vinici, et P. Silio auspiciatus in Thracia Macedoniaque, mox Achaia Asiaque et omnibus ad Orientem uisis prouinciis et ore atque utroque maris Pontici latere, haud iniucunda tot rerum, locorum, gentium, urbium recordatione perfruor. Prior Parthus apud Gaium in nostra ripa, posterior hic apud regem in hostili epulatus est. Quo tempore M. Lollii, quem ueluti moderatorem iuuentae filii sui Au-*

On the one hand, Velleius stresses Gaius' subordinate position in relation to Tiberius while the latter was in Rhodes, notably on occasion of a meeting on Samos, where Gaius had placed his headquarters.⁴ The rendezvous took place in early 1 BC, during Gaius' tour of Greece on the march toward the East. According to Velleius, Gaius first paid his respects to Tiberius, whom indeed he treated as his superior (see below § 2). On the other hand, Gaius' lack of ability as a commander and a guardian of the Roman commonwealth is frequently pointed out, because of his weak nature and tendency to be led astray by others.⁵

gustus esse uoluerat, perfida et plena subdoli ac uersuti animi consilia, per Parthum indicata Caesari, fama uulgauit. Cuius mors intra paucos dies fortuita an uoluntaria fuerit ignoro. Sed quam hunc decessisse laetati homines, tam paulo post obiisse Censorinum in iisdem prouinciis grauius tulit ciuitas, uirum demerendis hominibus genitum. Armeniam deinde Gaius ingressus prima parte introitus rem prospere gessit; mox in conloquio, cui se temere crediderat, circa Artageram grauius a quodam, nomine Adduo, uulneratus, ex eo ut corpus minus habile, ita animum minus utilem rei publicae habere coepit. Nec defuit conuersatio hominum uitia eius adsentatione alentium (etenim semper magnae fortunae comes adest adulatio), per quae eo ductus erat, ut in ultimo ac remotissimo terrarum orbis angulo consenescere quam Romam regredi mallet. Diu deinde reluctatus inuitusque reuertens in Italiam in urbe Lyciae (Limyra nominant) morbo obiit, cum ante annum ferme L. Caesar frater eius Hispanias petens Massiliae decessisset. The Latin text is that established by W. S. Watt, *Velleius Paterculus. Historiarum ad M. Vinicium Consullem libri duo*, Leipzig 1988, whereas all English translations are taken from F. W. Shipley, *Compendium of Roman History. Res gestae diui Augusti*, London–Cambridge (MA) 1924. On Gaius Caesar's mission to the East cf. V. Gardthausen, *RE* X 1 (1917) 424–28, esp. 426–28; *PIR*² I 216, esp. pp. 167f.; J. E. G. Zetzel, *GRBS* 11 (1970) 259–66; F. E. Romer, *TAPhA* 109 (1979) 199–214; P. Herz, *ZPE* 39 (1980) 285–90; Id., "Gaius Caesar und Artavasdes", in J. Ganzert, *Das Kenotaph für Gaius Caesar in Limyra. Architektur und Bauornamentik*, Tübingen 1984, 118–26; H. Halfmann, *Itinera principum. Geschichte und Typologie der Kaiserreisen im römischen Reich*, Stuttgart 1986, 166–68; W. Eck, *DNP* 6 (1999) 29f.; A. Pistellato, "Banchettare in missione. Due testimonianze oculari di Velleio Patercolo", in R. Bortolin – A. Pistellato (eds.), *Alimentazione e banchetto. Forme e valori della commensalità dalla preistoria alla tarda antichità*, Venezia 2007, 103–14, esp. 103–07; A. Luther, *Gymnasium* 117 (2010) 103–27.

⁴ Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 12. Differently, Dio 55,9,5 claims that the rendezvous occurred on Chios. On the meeting between Tiberius and Gaius cf. Bellemore (above n. 1) 441f.

⁵ Quite conveniently, Velleius inserts some harsh lines dedicated to the death of Marcus Lollius, an advisor of Gaius but "a crafty and deceitful mind" (Vell. 2,102,1), and a fierce enemy of Tiberius. For Velleius, Lollius was one of those having a negative influence on Gaius, and this concurred in affecting Gaius' qualities. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 12f.; E. Groag, *RE* XIII 2 (1927) 1377–87; J.W. Ambrose Jr., *TAPhA* 96 (1965) 1–10; *PIR*² L 311; W. Eck, *DNP* 7 (1999) 430–31; Bellemore (above n. 1) 446–49.

This view is shared by Cassius Dio, who adds slightly negative information.⁶ Dio provides further details on Gaius (and Lucius) Caesar's wicked personality – affected by luxury, insolence and love of flattery. In the very same context, Dio explains both the bestowal on Tiberius of the tribunician power and the assignment of Armenia – prospecting a mission to the East for 6 BC – with the two brothers' excesses. Indeed, a sort of counterbalance was needed in order to preserve steadiness within the *domus Augusta*.⁷ Had Tiberius not gone into voluntary exile in 6 BC, he would have undertaken the Eastern expedition. Gaius Caesar replaced him five years later, despite Augustus' awareness of his practical inexperience. Notwithstanding, it may be worth noting that an earlier source, Flavius Josephus, reports on Gaius participating in a diplomatic meeting at Rome, beside Augustus, in the context of the Roman reorganization of the Judean kingdom in 4 BC.⁸ This proves that, after Tiberius' eclipse, Gaius' background was somehow, if only theoretically, fit to the undertaking of the Eastern operations.

Gaius is depicted by Velleius in unfavourable terms at quite an early stage. This is in reference to the operations that he carried out on the Parthian front, which reached their diplomatic pinnacle on occasion of a meeting with the Parthian king Phraataces (Phraates V) on the river Euphrates, between late AD 1 and early 2.⁹ Operations then transferred to Armenia. Very shortly referring to some early achievements (see below § 2), Velleius again describes a negative situation, and firstly points out Gaius' inadequacy in governing. In another meeting, near Artagira (AD 3), he behaved rashly (*temere*), and for this he was ambushed and wounded by an Armenian (named Adduus or Donnes), so that "his body became

⁶ Dio 54,26,1; 27,1; 55,6,4f.; 8,3; 9,1f.; 4f.; 9f.; 10,6; 18.

⁷ Dio 55,9,1f.; 4f.

⁸ Joseph. *AJ* 17,229; *BJ* 2,25. Gaius actually began to participate in the meetings beside Augustus as soon as he came of age. Cf. the information on embassies from Asia, that took place in 5 BC: *IGR* IV 1756 = *Sardis* VII 1, 8 = R. K. Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus*, Cambridge 1984, 104 A–B = H. Freis, *Historische Inschriften zur römischen Kaiserzeit von Augustus bis Konstantin*, Darmstadt 1994², 16 (cf. *SEG* L 1685), 15f.; 30f.; 43f.; 50f.; 57f.; 68f.; 73f.

⁹ See again Dio 55,10,19. A. J. Woodman, *Velleius Paterculus: the Tiberian Narrative (2.94–131)*, Cambridge 1977, 125, maintains that Velleius' opinion on Gaius Caesar, regarding his Syrian operations, is more positive than Dio's, and complains about an over-evaluation by R. Syme, *Danubian Papers*, Bucharest 1971, 48 generalizing Velleius' attitude in terms of a mere adulation toward Tiberius. On Phraataces cf. L. Petersen, *PIR*² P 394; M. Schottky, *DNP* 9 (2000) 960f.

less active, and his mind of less service to the state."¹⁰ As a consequence, he wished to spend his life anywhere in the world other than Rome. A few months later Gaius died because of complications of the wound he had received,¹¹ and his body was transferred to Rome in the Augustan Mausoleum together with that of his brother Lucius, who had died two years earlier in Massalia on his way to Spain.¹²

That Gaius' expedition was a crucial event for Augustan propaganda is clear from prose writers and poets, who frequently focus their attention on it, but also from other sources.¹³ Indeed, while on mission he was honoured with pomp as "new Ares",¹⁴ and as "fighting against the barbarians for the safety of all mankind."¹⁵ The resemblance with the tones of the well-known cenotaph inscription from Pisae celebrating his memory is close.¹⁶

¹⁰ Vell. 2,102,2. Cf. P. von Rohden, *RE* I (1893) 353; A. Stein, *RE* V 2 (1905) 1548; *PIR*² I 104; W. John, *Hermes* 78 (1943) 108f. Dio 55,10a,8, tallies with Velleius' assessment; thus Woodman (above n. 9) 128, supports Velleius. Some details are provided by Flor. 2,32 and Dio 55,10a,6.

¹¹ *CIL* XI 1421, 5290; XIV 2801; *InscrIt* XIII 2, 164f.

¹² *CIL* XI 1420; XIV 2801. Cf. S. Panciera, in H. von Hesberg – S. Panciera, *Das Mausoleum des Augustus: der Bau und seine Inschriften*, München 1994, 98–108.

¹³ As for prose writers: Plin. *nat.* 2,168; 6,141; 160; Plut. *Mor.* 207 D–E; Flor. *epit.* 32; Tac. *ann.* 1,3,3; 3,48,2; 4,40,4; 6,51,1; Suet. *Aug.* 64; 93; *Tib.* 11–13; Gell. 15,7,3. As for poets: Antipat. *AP* 9,59; 297 (cf. perhaps *AP* 7,626); Ov. *ars* 1,177–278. As for iconography, see J. Pollini, *The Portraiture of Gaius and Lucius Caesar*, New York 1987, 41–75. As for inscriptions, cf. *AE* 1920, 43 (Nemausus); 1928, 49f. (Thespiae); V. Ehrenberg – A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius*, Oxford 1976², 115 (Cyprus); *IGR* I 835 (Thasos); IV 1756, esp. 7–17 (Sardis; see above n. 8); *I.Ephesos* 253. As for numismatics see, e.g., *RPC* I 210 (Tarraco), 979 (Cnossus), 1136 (Corinthus), 2148 (Amisus), 2361, 2363, 2365 (Pergamum), 3908–13 (Cyprus).

¹⁴ *IG* II/III² 3250: νέος Ἄρης. Cf. Romer (above n. 3), 201f.

¹⁵ *SEG* XXIII 206 = *AE* 1967, 458, 10–12 (Messene, AD 2): Γάϊον / τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ τὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πάντων σωτηρίας τοῖς βαρβάροις μαχόμενον. Cf. Zetzel (above n. 3); P. Herz, *Klio* 75 (1993) 272–88. See also below n. 30.

¹⁶ *CIL* XI 1421, 7–14: *cum a(nte) [d(iem) II]II Nonas Apriles allatus esset nuntius C(aium) Caesarem Augusti patris patri/ae [po]ntif(ici)s maxsumi custodis imper(i) Romani totiusque orbis terrarum prae/si[dis] filium diui nepotem post consulatum quem ultra finis extremas popu/li [Ro]mani bellum gerens feliciter peregerat bene gesta re publica deuicteis aut / in [fid]em receptis bellicosissimis ac maxsimis gentibus ipsum uolneribus pro re / pu[bli]ca exceptis ex eo casu crudelibus fatis ereptum populo Romano iam designa/tu[m] iustissimum ac simillum parentis sui uirtutibus principem coloniaeque / no[st]rae unicum praesidium. The document is paralleled by another one previously set up in Pisae for Lucius Caesar, who died*

Gaius, when still living and operating in the East, was granted the substance of the ideal ruler. Of course, that was mere etiquette. At the same time, it was a neat statement of the central place of Marcus Agrippa's son in the Augustan settlement.¹⁷ An inescapable testimony of the ideological status quo is provided by the *Res Gestae*, issued after Augustus' death in AD 14, where the crystallization of Gaius and Lucius Caesar's memory is confirmed at the highest level of official propaganda. Chapter 14 entirely focuses on them through an emphatic vocabulary ("my sons, whom still young Fortune tore from me"¹⁸), which aims at stressing their special position and honours obtained with the consensus of all orders in Rome.¹⁹ Gaius alone is recalled in the account of the Eastern affairs.²⁰ His very position would become Velleius' main target.

2. Rhetoric and politics

It may be argued that Velleius' primary desideratum is to emphasize Gaius Caesar's flaws as a possible but unsuccessful heir of Augustus.²¹ Such a memory is supposed to be rhetorically designed, and politically loaded. Indeed, Velleius' condemnation of Gaius in terms of inadequacy as a leader serves the purpose of highlighting the prominence of Tiberius. Thus, Gaius Caesar entirely lacks the qualities that Velleius attributes to Tiberius. It is patent that such a narrative is perfectly suitable to get rid of any possible doubt surrounding Tiberius' legitima-

in A.D. 2: *CIL* XI 1420. See S. Segenni, *I decreta Pisana: autonomia cittadina e ideologia imperiale nella colonia Obsequens Iulia Pisana*, Bari 2011.

¹⁷ Subsequently, further honours aimed at perpetuating the memory of both Gaius and Lucius Caesar. This served as a model for the official tributes to other prospective but unfortunate heirs to power: Germanicus (died in AD 19: *PIR*² I [1952–66] 221) and Drusus the Younger (died in AD 23: *PIR*² I 219). *R. Gest. diu. Aug.* 14,1; 27,2. Cf. *CIL* XI 1421, 12; *Suet. Tib.* 23; W. D. Lebek, "Come costruire una memoria storica: da Lucio Cesare a Druso Minore", in M. Citroni (ed.), *Memoria e identità. La cultura romana costruisce la sua immagine*, Florence 2003, 39–60.

¹⁸ *R. Gest. diu. Aug.* 14,1: *filios meos, quos iuvenes mihi eripuit fortuna*. Cf. *CIL* XI 1421, 12; *Suet. Tib.* 23.

¹⁹ F. Hurllet, *Les collègues du prince sous Auguste et Tibère. De la légalité républicaine à la légitimité dynastique*, Paris 1997, 123.

²⁰ *R. Gest. diu. Aug.* 27,2.

²¹ Cf. K. Welch, "Velleius and Livia: Making a Portrait", in E. Cowan (ed.), *Velleius Paterculus: Making History*, Swansea 2011, 309–34, esp. 323.

cy as a ruler, which had been disputed under Augustus and was crucially disputed even when Velleius published his work in AD 30.²² This leads us to the contemporary setting of Velleius' work, which deserves proper attention.

It is then worth considering *how* Velleius focuses on Gaius Caesar. The virtues of the son of Agrippa as a commander cut a very poor figure if compared with the enormous amount of qualities that Tiberius is credited with.²³ They concur in arranging both Velleius' portrait of the latter as an emperor – in positive terms – and the historical image of Gaius as a prospective heir of Augustus – in negative terms. Now, it is true that Tiberius held important posts and was granted several honours, especially in the years following Marcus Agrippa's death (12 BC) and preceding his own eclipse.²⁴ In the fateful year 6 BC such distinction culminated with the grant of a five-year tribunician power, but this was somehow an obvious outcome, as at that time Tiberius was the only experienced man in the imperial family.²⁵

Indeed, if we focus on the relation between Gaius and Tiberius, and take into account their meeting at Rhodes, Suetonius' and Dio's accounts differ from Velleius', as they describe the situation as humiliating for Tiberius.²⁶ Dio especially focuses on it in completely opposite terms: it was Tiberius who honoured Gaius before the latter went to Syria. Dio's version affected the establishment of Velleius' text concerning the passage at 2,101,1, where the relative pronoun *cui*, which is found in the *editio princeps* by Beatus Rhenanus (1520) and in the apograph by Bonifacius Amerbach (1516), was corrected by Justus Lipsius (1591) in *qui*. The correction was accepted by Anthony Woodman (1977) on the grounds of two elements: the analogy with Dio, and the fact that Gaius was holding the *maius imperium*, being, thus, technically superior to Tiberius, whose tribunician

²² On the succession affair concerning Gaius and Lucius Caesar see Hurlet (above n. 19) 113–41. On opposition to the legitimacy of Tiberius see Tac. *ann.* 1,53,2; Suet. *Tib.* 59; R. Syme, *The Roman Revolution*, Oxford 1956², 16–18; M. Pani, *Tendenze politiche della successione al principato di Augusto*, Bari 1979, 53–103.

²³ Cf. Vell. 2,93,1; 94,2, 3, 4; 95,2; 97,2, 4; 98,1; 99,2, 4; 100,1, 4; 103,1, 4, 5; 104,2–4; 105,2f.; 106,2f.; 107,2; 109,1; 111,4; 112,1, 5; 113,2; 114,1; 116,1–4; 118,1; 120,4f.; 121,1; 123,2; 124,1; 125,5; 126,2, 4f.; 127,3; 128,1, 3f.; 129,1, 3; 130,2; 131,1.

²⁴ Between 12 and 9 BC Tiberius operated in Pannonia and Dalmatia, and was granted the *ornamenta triumphalia* and an *ouatio ex Pannonia*; in 8 BC operated in Germany; in the following year was saluted *imperator* and designated consul. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 9,4; Dio 54,31,1–3.

²⁵ On the early honours for Gaius and Lucius Caesar see Hurlet (above note 19) 115–27.

²⁶ See Suet. *Tib.* 12,2; Dio 55,9,5 (Xiph. 100,18–30; Exc. V. 177; Zon. 10,35,3–10 B.); 10,19 (Zon. 10,36,1–13 B.; Xiph. 101,32–102,4).

power was about to expire at the time of the meeting.²⁷ But most editors, i.e. Joseph Hellegouarc'h (1982), William S. Watt (1988), and Maria Elefante (1997), preferred to retain the version handed down by the *editio princeps*.

The choice between these two options makes difference. If we consider all sources available, one point is clear: Tiberius actually moved from Rhodes to salute Gaius, who had come to Samos (or Chios) while heading toward the East. Thus, if *cui* is to be preferred, the respectful homage which Velleius says Gaius paid to Tiberius should be rather regarded, at most, as protocol, if not fake. *Qui* would invert the terms of the relation, of course, and make Tiberius' behaviour respectful and coherent with the version presented by Dio. But there is no significant reason to replace the original *cui* of the *editio princeps*, as it perfectly fits the context of Velleius' representation of Gaius as inferior to Tiberius. Elefante pointed it out conveniently: she highlights Velleius' passages at 99,1 and 4, where Tiberius is presented as *uere alterum rei p. lumen et caput*, and legates sent to Rhodes honour his *maiestas*²⁸. Although such presentation may well be altered *ex post*, what matters is that Velleius needs to draw a fluent narrative, where the future *princeps* is just superior to Gaius since the time of his eclipse coinciding with Gaius' peak²⁹.

A further element must be added: Velleius' method and selection of facts. He leaves out a detail concerning what seems to have been a military success of Gaius Caesar in the East in AD 1 during his consulship, which is apparently recorded by two inscriptions. A possible victory in Arabia is celebrated on a Greek inscription from Messene in honour of Publius Cornelius Scipio: "[...] (Gaius Caesar) *was well and had avenged himself upon the barbarians*, having escaped dangers [...]"³⁰ Emphasis on the operations undertaken by Gaius Caesar owes much to the Augustan propaganda, within the framework of the universal power ideology. But some achievement is highlighted here. In the cenotaph inscription from Pisae such ideology appears even more evident: "[...] after the consulship

²⁷ Woodman (above n. 9) 125.

²⁸ Vell. 2,99,1, 4.

²⁹ M. Elefante, *Velleius Paterculus. Ad M. Vinicium consulem libri duo*, Hildesheim – Zürich – New York 1997, 457, also noting the syntax found in the *editio princeps*: *cui... ut superiori* is a perfectly balanced construction with the use of a double dative, which would result affected by the replacement with *qui*.

³⁰ Cf. *SEG XXIII 206 = AE 1967, 458, 12f.* (AD 2–3): [...] (Γάϊον) ὑγιαίνειν τε καὶ κινδύνους ἐκφυγόντα ἀντιτετιμωρῆσθαι τοὺς πολεμίους [...]; transl. by Zetzel (above n. 3) *ad loc.*; T. D. Barnes, *JRS 64* (1974) 21–26, esp. 23; Romer (above n. 3). On the identity of Cornelius Scipio, cf. *AE 1967, ad loc.*

which he had passed successfully *by waging war beyond the farthest boundaries of the Roman people*, having successfully protected the Republic, *and defeated or received into fides the most warlike and greatest nations [...]*.³¹ Reference to military success may well be due not so much to the victory of AD 1 as to a conventional way of memorializing facts related to the general praise of a deceased member of the greatest family in Rome,³² according to the 'orthodoxy' of a celebratory representation. In this sense, the inscription may as well refer to the siege of Artagira in AD 3, which proved successful, if fatal to Gaius.

Although it is true that Velleius focuses on Gaius Caesar's important operations in the East and stresses his own participation in them, he only generically refers to a military achievement of Gaius in Armenia. The very little he says about it is however noteworthy, as he specifies that it was obtained only in the early phase of his campaign.³³ He clearly prefers shortcut, which seems a gentle form of elision. In this sense, Woodman regards the Arabian omission as due not so much to Velleius' "Tiberian bias" as to his aim to write a brief narrative, which happens to involve the selection of facts worthy of record.³⁴ I would argue that such an omission plays the role of a deliberate silence about any successful aspect – however minor it might have been – in Gaius' career as a military leader, or as a leader *tout court*.

This rhetorically serves a *diminutio* strategy in the portrait of Gaius Caesar. As a possible witness of Gaius' Eastern victories, Velleius might have had the opportunity to record the success of a prominent member of the imperial family, but this is not the case. It may actually be inferred that in the Tiberian narrative personal testimony works as an effective medium of historiographical persuasion. This is especially true when it deals with positive elements, as in the case of the account of Tiberius' achievements as a general under Augustus.³⁵ But it also works in negative circumstances, as is the case here: thus, the omission of Gaius Caesar's success(es) is strengthened by Velleius' testimony in order to diminish Gaius' merits.

Similarly, it should be noted that Velleius omits another detail, concerning the end of Gaius' experience in the East, when Augustus gave him permission

³¹ *CIL* XI 1421, 9–11. See above n. 16.

³² Cf. G. Cresci Marrone, *Ecumene augustea. Una politica per il consenso*, Rome 1993, 166f.

³³ Vell. 2,102,2 (*prima parte introitus rem prospere gessit*).

³⁴ Woodman (above n. 9) 124f.; on Velleius' conciseness cf. J. A. Lobur, *TAPhA* 137 (2007) 211–30.

³⁵ Vell. 2,94–123.

to retire into private life, as Dio informs us.³⁶ Velleius' passing over this may be due to an immediate and uncomfortable analogy with Tiberius' retirement to Rhodes. It may also emphasise Gaius' contradictory misbehaviour and isolation after being wounded: "He wished to spend his life in a remote and distant corner of the world rather than return to Rome. Then, in the act of returning to Italy..."³⁷ (2,102,3)

Besides, the insertion of the portrait of Marcus Lollius, an influential adviser of Gaius Caesar, and an overt enemy of Tiberius, within the frame of Gaius' narrative gives us further information about the writing of Velleius³⁸. It certainly implies that Velleius designed his narrative in order to reinforce his disparaging portrait of Gaius in accordance with his aim. By using a subtle indirect technique, he openly criticizes one of the most eminent assistants of Gaius, without directly denigrating Gaius himself. Moreover, this seems to imply a covert disapproval towards Augustus having chosen the wrong man to support Gaius. Such blame, once more indirect, is very interesting. It affects the celebrated memory of Augustus, which has something to do with the place of Tiberius in the imperial establishment:³⁹ it purports the latter's representation as an ideal emperor and, at the same time, partly connects Gaius Caesar's failures with the faults of Augustus. This draws a neat divide between Tiberius and the couple Gaius Caesar-Augustus, the former being on the 'right' side, the latter on the 'wrong'.

Moreover, if we look beyond the portrait of Gaius Caesar and consider it within a wider context, we find that Velleius puts it in a special narrative position. Indeed, it is preceded by the account of the banishment of Julia the Elder and Iullus Antonius in 2 BC, and followed by that of the return of Tiberius to Rome in AD 4, which is celebrated as a U-turn in world history that "brought back to the Republic her defender".⁴⁰ Thus, the disastrous scandal of 2 BC, on the one side,

³⁶ Dio 55,10a,8.

³⁷ Vell. 102,2. For Gaius Caesar's desire to retire from active politics, see U. Schmitzer, *Velleius Paterculus und das Interesse an der Geschichte im Zeitalter des Tiberius*, Heidelberg 2000, 220f., who describes it as a historiographical *topos*.

³⁸ See above n. 5.

³⁹ D. C. A. Shotter, *Latomus* 30 (1971) 1117–23, esp. 1120, connects Lollius' influence over Gaius to Augustus' concern about the place of Tiberius in the Principate. He regards it as a move to control Tiberius during his retirement.

⁴⁰ On Julia the Elder and Iullus Antonius: Vell. 2,100,2–5; on Tiberius' return to Rome: Vell. 2,103, esp. 103,1 *rei publicae sua praesidia reddiderat*. Cf. P. Groebe, *RE* I (1894) 2584f.; K. Fitzler, *RE* X 1 (1917) 896–906; E. Groag, *PIR*² A 800; *PIR*² I 634; V. Nutton, *DNP* 1 (1996) 814; W. Eck, *DNP* 6 (1999) 2.

and the unheroic death of Gaius Caesar in AD 4, on the other, are a perfect narrative prelude and an effective climax to the entrance of Tiberius as the saviour of Rome. Indeed, a good expedient to highlight the role of Tiberius.

What has been said so far provides a good idea of the attention which Velleius paid to designing the portrait of Gaius Caesar. Nonetheless, it is necessary to go further. We learn from Suetonius that Tiberius wrote a *carmen lyricum* known as *Conquestio de morte Luci Caesaris*,⁴¹ which urges us to regard the absence of a similar respectful homage toward Gaius Caesar as, at least, peculiar, if not suspect – even more considering that when Gaius died Tiberius had already come back to Rome. The information from Suetonius seems to confirm the idea of a tension existing between the two men, and perhaps provides us with another useful element concerning Velleius' representation of Gaius. That would be the sign of a long-lasting unpleasant relationship between the son of Agrippa and the successor to Augustus.⁴²

In spite of this, Velleius needs to preserve a general aura of celebration, since the memory of Gaius Caesar – alongside that of his brother Lucius – was officially celebrated under Tiberius,⁴³ together with that of Augustus. It is well known that the senatorial-equestrian centuries which the Roman senate instituted in AD 23 in honour of Germanicus and Drusus Caesar for the *destinatio* electoral process were based upon the model of those designed in memory of Gaius and Lucius Caesar in AD 5.⁴⁴ That is to say: Velleius does not portray Gaius in entirely negative terms, and respects the political and 'dynastic' needs of the time, i.e. the official façade. Of course, this is just another aspect of the contemporary frame of Velleius' agenda.

But such an aura lacks strength. Gaius Caesar is awarded special status on occasion of the meeting with the Parthian king Phraataces. Despite this, such a prominence is somehow shared with the Roman army, and is part of the magnificence of the situation: "This spectacle of the Roman army arrayed on one side,

⁴¹ Suet. *Tib.* 70.

⁴² See G. Zecchini, *Il Carmen de bello Actiaco. Storiografia e lotta politica in età augustea*, Stuttgart 1987, 67.

⁴³ Cf. again *CIL* XI 1421 = *InscrIt* VII 1, 7 = *ILS* 140 = *AE* 1991, 21 = *AE* 2000, 37, and G. Rowe, *Princes and Political Cultures: The New Tiberian Senatorial Decrees*, Ann Arbor 2002, 115–18. Celebration of the memory of princes of the imperial family is dealt with by Lebek (above n. 17). For posthumous coinage celebrating Gaius and Lucius Caesar see R. Wolters, *Chiron* 32 (2002) 297–323.

⁴⁴ See A. Frascchetti, *AION(archeol)* 6 (1984) 151–89, esp. 184–88.

the Parthian on the other, while these two eminent leaders not only of the empires they represented but also of mankind thus met in conference." (2,101,2)

While on duty, Gaius probably had in mind to acquire Julius Caesar's military reputation, perhaps in accordance with an *imitatio Alexandri* which might fit the aim of his mother Julia the Elder to legitimate the development of a prominent 'dynastic' line within the imperial family.⁴⁵ (see below § 3) If this is true, Velleius somehow needs to demonstrate Gaius' ineptitude, that is to show repeatedly how much Tiberius, rather than Gaius, was the ideal emperor, and the better option for Augustus. The connection between the wound that Gaius received in battle in Armenia and his uselessness toward the commonwealth overturns the well-known multicultural and panegyric *topos* of the identity between physical integrity and disposition to command⁴⁶ – thus to *utilitas publica*⁴⁷ – into a negative identity. No surprise, then, that Tiberius is depicted by Velleius as physically forceful. After all, Suetonius tells us the same.⁴⁸

This, beside the fact that Velleius blames Gaius Caesar's misbehaviour before being wounded, determines a patent anti-leader portrait. In this sense, the pre-eminence which Velleius assigns to Tiberius over Gaius during the former's

⁴⁵ On Gaius Caesar's *imitatio Alexandri* cf. D. Sidari, *AIV* 138 (1979–80) 275–302, 284–302, and Ead., "Seiano e Gaio. Rivalità o accordo?", in F. Broilo (ed.), *Xenia. Scritti in onore di Pietro Treves*, Rome 1980, 191–205, esp. 23–29. On his participation in Julia's political designs cf. Zecchini (above n. 42) 59–81; Id., *QLF* 5 (1990) 191–205, esp. 203; B. Levick, *Tiberius the Politician*, London 1999², 41–42; F. Rohr Vio, *Le voci del dissenso*, Padua 2000, 239; Luther (above n. 3) *ad loc.*

⁴⁶ Examples come from a variety of sources, ancient, medieval and modern. Cf. e.g. the Bible (see Exod. 2,2; 1 Sam. 9,2; 16,12; 2 Sam. 14,25. Cf. 1 Kings 5,9–11); Ibn Baṭṭūṭa writing on the sultanate of Delhi (H. A. R. Gibb, *The Travels of Ibn Baṭṭūṭa. A.D. 1325–1354*, Translated with Revisions and Notes from the Arabic Text edited by C. Defrémery – B. R. Sanguinetti, Vol. III, New Delhi 1999, 643); Sharaf ad-Din Ali Yazdi writing on the Turco-Mongol conqueror Tamerlane (M. Bernardini [ed.], *Ghiyāṣoddīn 'Alī di Yazd. Le gesta di Tamerlano*, Milan 2009, *passim*). Cf. also Men. rhet. 371,14–17; Sidon. *epist.* 1,2; R. Combès, *Imperator. Recherches sur l'emploi et la signification du titre d'Imperator dans la Rome républicaine*, Paris 1966, 288–98; E. A. Judge, "Veni. Vidi. Vici, and the Inscription of Cornelius Gallus", in *Akten des VI. Internationalen Kongresses für Griechische und Lateinische Epigraphik, München 1972*, München 1973, 571–73; F. Del Chicca, *AFLFC* 43 (1985) 79–113; E. R. Curtius, *Letteratura europea e Medio Evo latino*, ed. by R. Antonelli, Scandicci 1995 [Bern 1948] 203–05; M. Lolli, *Latomus* 58 (1999) 620–25.

⁴⁷ See, e.g., G. Longo, *Labeo* 18 (1972) 7–71.

⁴⁸ Vell. 2,94,2, awards Tiberius *forma* and *celsitudo corporis*. Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 68; C. Kuntze, *Zur Darstellung des Kaisers Tiberius und seiner Zeit bei Velleius Paterculus*, Frankfurt am Main – Bern – New York 1995, 42–45.

retirement to Rhodes is entirely focused on *dignitas* and prestige, and legitimates the rise of Tiberius in opposition to Gaius. This also explains why Velleius, when describing Tiberius' reasons for abandoning Rome in 6 BC,⁴⁹ points out that the relationship between Tiberius and Augustus was privileged. According to Velleius, it was the love and respect of Tiberius for his father-in-law and stepfather that made Tiberius not want to put himself against the advancement of Gaius and Lucius Caesar, "in order that his own glory might not stand in the way of the young men at the beginning of their careers."⁵⁰

Interestingly enough, in mentioning the adoption of Tiberius by Augustus in AD 4 Velleius points out that the *princeps* insisted upon carrying out "what he had wished to do after the death of Lucius but while Gaius was still living, and had been prevented from doing by the strong opposition from Nero himself."⁵¹ This sounds as if Gaius Caesar had been left out of the 'dynastic' programme since the return of Tiberius to Rome,⁵² and underlines the eminence of Tiberius as not depending at all on Lucius' and especially Gaius' death. Here, Suetonius tells us a different story. Indeed, he points out Tiberius' subordination even on occasion of the adoption by Augustus, who wanted Germanicus to be adopted by Tiberius in turn, Germanicus actually becoming the future heir apparent.⁵³ Of course, from Velleius' point of view, Tiberius was tested and reliable enough to take over absolute power; indeed Augustus would have chosen him as his successor had Tiberius not shown his refusal (*recusatio*).⁵⁴ The point seems to allude to a sort of favour Tiberius would have done for Augustus, had he accepted the

⁴⁹ Bellemore (above n. 1) 428–32, puts Tiberius' official statements on his stepping-aside between 5 and 3 B.C.

⁵⁰ Vell. 2,99,2: *ne fulgor suus orientium iuvenum obstaret initiis*. Cf. Hurlet (above n. 19) 111f.; Bellemore (above n. 1) 428–32, 434.

⁵¹ Vell. 2,103,3: *quod post Lucii mortem adhuc Gaio uiuo facere uoluerat atque eo uehementer repugnante Nerone erat inhibitus*.

⁵² Cf. Bellemore (above n. 1), 449f. Hurlet (above n. 19) 112f., points out that Tiberius actually wanted to live as a private citizen after returning to Rome. That is why he moved from the *Carinae* to a new house on the Esquiline.

⁵³ Suet. *Tib.* 15,2; *Cal.* 1,1, 4; Dio 55,13,2. On Tiberius' adoption see also Suet. *Tib.* 23, referring to Augustus' will. Cf. H. U. Instinsky, *Hermes* 44 (1966) 324–43, esp. 327–30; B. Levick, *CR* 22 (1972) 309–11.

⁵⁴ On *recusatio* as a standard formula being used by heirs apparent about to take over power, see J. Béranger, *Recherches sur l'aspect idéologique du principat*, Basel 1953, 137f., 152f., 159.

succession at that time. This would have spared Rome from the risk of Gaius Caesar's succession.

Such an imbalance, which I tried to point out, so clearly – and cleverly – unfavourable to Gaius Caesar, is developed according to a precise epideictic scheme, Tiberius being the positive pole, and Gaius the negative pole, representing what may be called the ideal Non-*princeps*. From a stylistic point of view, this is certainly in accordance with the rhetorical principle of antinomy between Good and Evil⁵⁵.

3. One *domus*, divergent family lines, and contemporary historiography

For Velleius, with Gaius' death Rome simply escaped the unfortunate destiny of being ruled by an inadequate emperor. The reverse of such a medal consisted in strengthening and re-legitimizing the place of Tiberius and his family, even and especially in the perspective of the complex issue of the succession to Tiberius himself. This involved the family lines of the Julio-Claudian house. Therefore, it may be inferred that in many respects the portrait of Gaius Caesar lays within the framework of Velleius' tightly contemporary purpose. In other terms, Velleius portrays Gaius in a contemporary way. This implies that his historiography is not to be interpreted as just a matter of plain flattery.⁵⁶ It certainly is, and to a significant extent, but it also shows a political shade which in turn reflects a political and 'dynastic' background.

Barbara Levick's doubts on a real separation between family branches, namely 'Julians' and 'Claudians', within the *domus Augusta*⁵⁷ cannot be overlooked. Nonetheless, it seems that actual division existed in terms of 'priority'. Accession to absolute power being the ultimate goal for the members of the family and their cavaliers almost throughout the Principate of Augustus, it is to be noted that Gaius and Lucius Caesar were the sons of Julia the Elder, and Tiberius the son of Livia. Divergent family traditions and backgrounds were involved. The relationship between Julia, the daughter of Augustus, and her husband Tiberius shows that a main motive of contrast was not as much a matter of blood

⁵⁵ See, e.g., R. Nicolai, *La storiografia nell'educazione antica*, Pisa 1992.

⁵⁶ Cf., for Velleius as a mere flatterer, I. Lana, *Velleio Patercolo o della propaganda*, Turin 1952; Syme (above n. 9). On the relationship between Velleius and Tiberius see, more recently, K. Christ, *Historia* 50 (2001) 180–92.

⁵⁷ B. Levick, *G&R* 22 (1975) 29–38. Differently D. C. A. Shotter, *Latomus* 30 (1971) 1117–23.

as a matter of primacy of blood. Julia regarded Tiberius, Tacitus says, as *impar* even before his Rhodian eclipse.⁵⁸ Both 'Julians' and 'Claudians' were prominent families, but once joined under the Augustan initiative, and thus forming a unified body, there still existed a difference which could not be settled. If we believe Tacitus, Julia knew it full well and stressed her main concern, i.e. that of her own sons, in view of an eventual scenario of succession.

In this respect, the manoeuvres for the eligibility of her son Gaius Caesar to the consulship of 5 BC, which she may have fostered,⁵⁹ might stand as a symptom of inner *Spannung*, on account either of their possible consequences or premises. Moreover, Gaius and Lucius became *principes iuuentutis* in 5 and 2 BC respectively as a reaction to Tiberius' departure, and not as its cause.⁶⁰ After having been prominent in Augustus' family network after the death in 23 BC of the first presumable heir, Marcellus (the nephew of Augustus and first husband of Julia the Elder), Tiberius' position – alongside that of his brother Drusus the Elder – changed when Gaius Caesar was born three years later (20 BC). Indeed, if Plutarch says that Marcellus and Tiberius came second after Agrippa in Augustus' consideration, the birth of Gaius Caesar and, subsequently, that of his brother Lucius in 17 BC made the family of Agrippa and Julia the Elder absolutely paramount.⁶¹

Ann Kuttner, in her reading of the Boscoreale cups as an honorary initiative in memory of Drusus the Elder who died in 9 BC, argued that the couple Tiberius-Drusus was pre-eminent until the retirement of Tiberius in 6 B.C., so that Augustus would have been forced to choose Gaius and Lucius Caesar to succeed him.⁶² It must nonetheless be noted that before his death, Marcellus was Augustus' favourite – though never designated as successor nor adopted, very likely on

⁵⁸ Tac. *ann.* 1,53,1. Julia married Tiberius in 11 BC. For *impar* referring to *genus* cf. *ThLL*, s.v., 519, ll. 43–77.

⁵⁹ Levick (above n. 44) 37–39.

⁶⁰ B. A. Buxton – R. Hannah, "OGIS 458, the Augustan Calendar, and the Succession", in C. Deroux (ed.), *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History* 12, Bruxelles 2005, 290–306.

⁶¹ Plut. *Ant.* 87,2: τὴν δὲ δευτέραν τῶν Λιβίας παίδων ἐχόντων. Cf. A. L. Kuttner, *Dynasty and Empire in the Age of Augustus: the Case of the Boscoreale Cups*, Berkeley 1995, 172–75. On Marcus Agrippa see R. Hanslik, *RE* IX A 1 (1961) 1226–75; D. Kienast, *DNP* 1 (1996) 294–96, esp. 295; on Marcellus cf. A. Gaheis, *RE* III 2 (1899) 2764–70; *PIR*² C 925; W. Eck, *DNP* 3 (1997) 18.

⁶² Kuttner (above n. 61) 182–83. On Drusus the Elder cf. A. Stein, *RE* III 2 (1899) 2703–19; *PIR*² C 857; D. Kienast, *DNP* 3 (1997) 15f.

account of his untimely death –,⁶³ and this highlights the role of Julia the Elder. Once again, we deal with a matter of primacy of family blood. The position of Tiberius and Drusus the Elder may well have been prominent between 23 and 20 BC, but what happened in 21, when Julia married Agrippa, and particularly from 20 onwards shows that it was secondary in Augustus' designs. While Kuttner thinks that the marriage of Tiberius to Julia in 12 BC, after Agrippa's death, made Tiberius the heir apparent of Augustus just as he would have been after Marcellus' death,⁶⁴ she does not seem to consider one key-aspect, i.e. that the newly married couple had no children, except for one who unfortunately died in infancy.⁶⁵ Julia, instead, bore five children to Agrippa: Gaius and Lucius Caesar, Agrippa Postumus, Julia the Younger and Agrippina the Elder. Tiberius actually had a son, Drusus the Younger, by his beloved former wife Vipsania Agrippina the year before his second marriage (13 BC).⁶⁶ Despite their common Julio-Claudian 'royalty', what happened in subsequent years shows that they both acted as separate players within the *domus Augusta*.

Beth Severy assumed that Augustus did not establish a succession plan until the adulthood of Gaius Caesar in 5 BC and of Lucius in 2 BC, which coincided with Augustus' title of *Pater Patriae*.⁶⁷ In her opinion, however, he never really wanted to choose a single heir as long as there were more powerful men in the house he dominated: hence Ernst Kornemann's model of the couples system which has been revived by Frédéric Hurlet – Marcellus-Tiberius, Tiberius-Drusus the Elder, Gaius-Lucius Caesar, Tiberius-Agrippa Postumus –, where one controlled the other.⁶⁸ It is very likely that Augustus developed his 'monarchy' over

⁶³ B. Severy, *Augustus and the Family at the Birth of the Roman Empire*, New York – London 2003, 68f.

⁶⁴ Kuttner (above n. 61), 186.

⁶⁵ Suet. *Tib.* 7,3.

⁶⁶ Cf. Severy (above n. 63) 67. Had he lived enough, Agrippa might have certainly acted as tutor of his children until their coming of age (cf. 71f.). For Agrippa Postumus, cf. D. Kienast, *DNP* 1 (1996) 296; for Julia the Younger, *PIR*² I 635; W. Eck, *DNP* 6 (1999) 3; for Agrippina the Elder, *PFOS* 812; D. Kienast, *DNP* 1 (1996) 297f.; for Vipsania, *PFOS* 811; D. Kienast, *DNP* 1 (1996) 297.

⁶⁷ Cf. M. Spannagel, *Exemplaria Principis. Untersuchungen zu Entstehung und Ausstattung des Augustusforums*, Heidelberg 1999, 35–40, who elaborates on the contemporary, highly significant dedication of the temple of Mars Ultor involving Gaius and Lucius Caesar.

⁶⁸ E. Kornemann, *Doppelprinzipat und Reichsteilung im Imperium Romanum*, Leipzig – Berlin 1930; Severy (above n. 63) 70, 72 (cf. 72–77 on Augustan coins struck between 19 and 13 BC as part of the development of the *domus principis* ideology), 158–87. See also Sidari

the years, but it seems certain that the process had already come to an end with the adoption of Gaius and Lucius Caesar in 17 BC, a crucial year in the Augustan Principate in ideological terms, as it also coincided with the celebration of the *Ludi Saeculares*.⁶⁹ Moreover, in the previous year Augustus enacted his marriage laws, which constituted another pivotal event in the ideological definition of his Principate.⁷⁰ In such a context, the *kallitekno*s Julia the Elder was of course a model of Roman matron, in addition to her privileged position as daughter of Augustus.⁷¹ Suetonius tells us how Augustus held the children in special consideration, which implies their early prominence – since the adoption in 17 BC.⁷² The marriage between Julia and Tiberius in 12 did not change this, as proved by the adoption of Tiberius and Agrippa Postumus only after Gaius Caesar's death in AD 4.⁷³ Tiberius' withdrawal to Rhodes in itself provides us with further proof of Gaius' primacy: Julia was perfectly within a succession plan as the daughter of Augustus who had given birth to two sons being close to come of age, and indeed her banishment in 2 BC did not change things.⁷⁴ The mother of Tiberius, and wife of Augustus Livia Drusilla could do nothing to support his son at this stage.⁷⁵ Tiberius must have been humiliated by his wife (cf. the *impar* affair above) and frustrated by Gaius' position. Things changed once he was the only one left.

Under the Tiberian Principate, events somehow repeated themselves. The deaths of Germanicus (AD 19), whom Tiberius had adopted in AD 4, and his son Drusus the Younger (AD 23) generated confusion within the *domus Augusta*. When Velleius published his work in AD 30, the house had just experienced the

(above n. 44) 275–84; Hurlet (above n. 19).

⁶⁹ Cf. P. Southern, *Augustus*, New York – London 1998, 137, 153; and Spannagel 1999, 79–85 on the possibility that the adoption influenced Augustus' urban architecture programme.

⁷⁰ *Leges Iuliae de adulteriis coercendis* and *de maritandis ordinibus*: Dio 54,16,1f.; Dig. 4,4,37 (Tryphoninus), 48,2,3 (Paulus), 48,5 (Ulpianus et al.).

⁷¹ For Julia as *kallitekno*s see I. Priene, 225. Cf. K. Galinsky, *Philologus* 125 (1981) 126–44; A. L. Morelli, "Il ruolo della *mater* come simbolo di continuità nella moneta romana", in M. G. Angeli Bertinelli – A. Donati (eds.), *Misurare il tempo, misurare lo spazio. Atti del colloquio AIEGL-Borghesi 2005*, Faenza 2006, 55–77; M. Kajava, *Arctos* 42 (2008) 69–76, esp. 69–71.

⁷² Suet. *Aug.* 64, 93; *Tib.* 11–13.

⁷³ *CIL* I², p. 68.

⁷⁴ On Julia the Younger's banishment see B. Levick, *Latomus* 35 (1976) 301–39; W. K. Lacey, *Antichthon* 14 (1980) 127–42.

⁷⁵ General references at L. Ollendorff, *RE* XIII 1 (1926) 900–24; *PIR*² L 301; H. Stegmann, *DNP* 7 (1999) 366f.

death of Livia (29)⁷⁶ and the banishment (soon after) of Agrippina the Elder, widow of Germanicus and mother of six children, of whom three were sons (Nero and Drusus Caesar, and Caligula) and three daughters (Agrippina the Younger, Julia Drusilla, and Julia Livilla). The two elder sons, Nero and Drusus, followed Agrippina in exile, the former immediately alongside his mother in 29 as *hostis publicus*, the latter in 30.⁷⁷ Drusus the Younger had left one living child, Tiberius Gemellus (born in A.D. 19 or 20) and one daughter, Julia.⁷⁸ At this stage, the only mature and powerful man in Rome was an 'upstart', Sejanus the praetorian prefect of equestrian origin from the Etruscan city of Volsinii, whom Velleius praises with exceptional emphasis near the end of his work.⁷⁹ Sejanus was about to be accepted into the imperial family, if Jane Bellemore is right in arguing that he married Livilla, perhaps the former wife of Gaius Caesar and widow of Drusus the Younger, early in AD 31 when he entered upon his office as consul.⁸⁰ That would make Sejanus a perfect tutor for Tiberius Gemellus, and potentially a prospective *princeps*.⁸¹ On the other side of the *domus principis*, among the sons of

⁷⁶ Vell. 2,130,4; Tac. *ann.* 5,1f.; Dio 58,2,1–6.

⁷⁷ Tac. *ann.* 5,3,2 (cf. 6,25,2); 6,23,2. Suet. *Tib.* 53f., 65; *Cal.* 7. Dio 58,3,6–9. Cf. M. Pani, *Comitia e senato: sulla trasformazione della procedura elettorale a Roma nell'età di Tiberio*, Bari 1974, 113f.; Id., *QS* 5 (1977) 135–46, esp. 135–37. As for Nero, cf. V. Gardthausen, *RE* X 1 (1917) 473–75; *PIR*² I 223; W. Eck, *DNP* (1999) 30f.; for Drusus, V. Gardthausen, *RE* X 1 (1917) 434f.; *PIR*² I 220; W. Eck, *DNP* 3 (1997) 826f.; for Caligula, M. Gelzer, *RE* X 1 (1917) 381–423; *PIR*² I 217; W. Eck, *DNP* 2 (1997) 937–39; for Agrippina the Younger, *PIR*² I 641; W. Eck, *DNP* 1 (1996) 298; for Julia Drusilla, *PIR*² I 664; W. Eck, *DNP* 6 (1999) 5; for Julia Livilla, *PIR*² I 674; R. Hanslik, *DNP* 1 (1999) 368.

⁷⁸ Suet. *Cal.* 15,2; Dio 59,8,1. As for Tiberius Gemellus, whose twin brother Germanicus (?) died in 23, cf. V. Gardthausen, *RE* X 1 (1917) 536f.; *PIR*² I 226; for Julia, *PIR*² I 636; *PFOS* 422.

⁷⁹ Vell. 2,127f. Basic references at P. von Rohden, *RE* I (1893) 529–31; *PIR*² A 255; W. Eck, *DNP* 1 (1996) 173f. See also below n. 81.

⁸⁰ J. Bellemore, *ZPE* 109 (1995) 255–66. Differently Dio 58,3,9. See M.-P. Arnaud-Lindet, *RD* 58 (1980) 411–22. Cf. also G. V. Sumner, *Phoenix* 19 (1965) 134–45, esp. 144; Sidari (above n. 44) 199. General references about Livilla at L. Ollendorff, *RE* XIII 1 (1926) 924–27; *PIR*² L 303; R. Hanslik – H. Stegmann, *DNP* 7 (1999) 368.

⁸¹ Severy (above n. 63) 71, notes this possibility in the case of Marcus Agrippa if Augustus had died before the adulthood of Gaius and Lucius Caesar. Cf. earlier A. Garzetti, *L'impero da Tiberio agli Antonini*, Bologna 1960, 56; H. W. Bird, *Latomus* 28 (1969) 61–98, esp. 84–87. On Sejanus' ideological programme see A. Birley, "Sejanus: His Fall", in N. Sekunda (ed.), *Corolla Cosmo Rodewald*, Gdansk 2007, 121–50; A. Pistellato, "Seiano, Servio Tullio e la Fortuna. Note a *CIL* VI 10213", in G. Cresci Marrone – A. Pistellato (eds.), *Studi in ricordo di Fulvio-mario Broilo, Atti del Convegno di studi, Venezia 14–15 ottobre 2005*, Padova 2007, 487–512;

Germanicus, Caligula (born in AD 12) was the sole one left,⁸² though protected by his grandmother Antonia, the widow of Drusus the Elder and mother of Germanicus.⁸³

Such was the situation of the house in the turbulent years between the second half of the Twenties and the beginning of the Thirties AD.⁸⁴ The Julio-Claudian *domus* was torn in family lines disputing for succession again. In this respect it must be noted that the entire line starting from Julia the Elder now risked to be the loser in the game, to the advantage of Tiberius, whose – and whose family's – legitimacy had been repeatedly called into question by Agrippina the Elder and her supporters.⁸⁵ Without any experienced candidates ready to succeed him – his direct grandson Tiberius Gemellus being only a child, and his adopted grandson Caligula still being a teenager – Tiberius may have been in doubt whether to choose his own line or Germanicus' in view of the accession to power. As noted, indeed, Augustus' will would have privileged the latter, whereas Tiberius would have very much preferred his own family to continue holding power in Rome. Apart from the fact that Tiberius had been formally adopted by Augustus, and Germanicus had been formally adopted by Tiberius as well – both being practically members of the same large *domus* –, the difference here between form and substance must be stressed.

In historiographical terms, Velleius may be regarded as a witness to such a state of affairs. This is reflected by Velleius' sharp treatment of the players within the imperial house, dead or alive. He draws a sort of family tree including the 'wrong' members of the *domus principis*, i.e. all those not related to Tiberius' family directly in terms of blood. Julia the Elder is obviously harshly blamed together with her lover Iullus Antonius, as well as Agrippa Postumus; Germanicus is only very briefly described if one considers his prestige, whereas Agrippina

E. Champlin, *Chiron* 42 (2012) 361–88.

⁸² Suet. *Cal.* 8,1.

⁸³ Cf. N. Kokkinos, *Antonia Augusta. Portrait of a Great Roman Lady*, London – New York 1992, 25. Further references at P. von Rohden, *RE* I 2 (1894) 2640f.; *PIR*² A 885; H. Stegmann, *DNP* 1 (1996) 800f.

⁸⁴ Cf. O. Devillers – F. Hurlet, "La portée des impostures dans les Annales de Tacite: la légitimité impériale à l'épreuve", in M. A. Giua (ed.), *Ripensando Tacito (e Ronald Syme). Storia e storiografia. Atti del Convegno Internazionale (Firenze, 30 novembre – 1 dicembre 2006)*, Pisa 2007, 133–51, esp. 147–49.

⁸⁵ Cf. the information, either explicit or implicit, provided by Tac. *ann.* 1,33,3; 41,2; 69; 2,43,5f.; 71,4; 75,1; 3,4,1; 4,12,2f.; 13,3; 17,1–3; 52,2f.; 54,1f.; 60,2f.; 67,3f.; 68,1; 6,51; Suet. *Tib.* 52f. See Pani (above n. 22), 71ff.

the Elder is not even mentioned, though severely alluded to.⁸⁶ Antonia, interestingly enough, is never quoted. The memory of Gaius Caesar in itself is therefore designed in accordance with the atmosphere of AD 30. Separation between two blood lines formally unified for the 'dynastic' sake was clearly perceived in Rome, as the events of the Twenties AD show. In this sense, Gaius Caesar had been an eminent member of just the wrong family branch, the one which in AD 30 might seem succumbent, at least before the rise of Caligula. Velleius knew it perfectly when he published his work.

Since Velleius wishes to support Tiberius' legitimacy, i.e. the legitimacy of his family, he needs to focus on the best way to support Tiberius' pre-eminence. In this sense, to develop the memory of relatives who failed as successors of Augustus would have been a most obvious choice. I hope to have shown this through the case of Gaius Caesar. When Velleius published his work, such a state of affairs was in progress, but he had a clear view of what to write and how to write it. The memory of the deceased members of the imperial family – or politically deceased like Agrippina the Elder and her elder sons – that he constructs serves a specific purpose, which varies depending on the side of the *domus* an individual belonged to. Within such a context, the portrait of Gaius Caesar provides us with a sound picture of Velleius as a contemporary historiographer, and a sophisticated connoisseur of the Roman *status quo*.

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⁸⁶ Julia the Elder and Iullus Antonius: Vell. 2,100,3–5; Agrippa Postumus: Vell. 2,104,1 and 112,7; Germanicus: 2,125,1–3; Agrippina the Elder: Vell. 2,130,4.

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