

## CASSIUS DIO AND THE CHRONOLOGY OF A.D. 21

In this paper I will argue first that insufficient notice has been given to Dio 57.20.1–22.4 (preserved by Xiphilinus) and that, by having ignored Dio's general chronology and trusting to that provided by Tacitus' *Annals*, we have been led astray in determining the precise chronology of A.D. 21, and, therefore, the movements of Tiberius in that year.

Having established the *bona fides* of Dio's (Xiphilinus') account, I will argue for a revised chronology of A.D. 21, in particular that, although the *princeps* Tiberius left Rome for Campania in January A.D. 21, he returned to the capital about three months later, in April A.D. 21, not in April A.D. 22, as most believe.

From that point, I will argue that the return of Tiberius was connected to the illness of his son Drusus, at the very least in a temporal sense, and that this event occurred before or during May. Integral to this reinterpretation of Tiberius' movements this year is an understanding of the way the Tacitus has treated the consulship of 21.

The short length of Tiberius' sojourn in Campania and his return to Rome in April clearly have important ramifications for the interpretation of the other events of A.D. 21. Although there are many issues that arise from a reinterpretation of Tiberius' movements in A.D. 21, I will focus only on the Gallic Revolt. Tacitus has this event apparently begin and end in the period of Tiberius' absence from Rome in A.D. 21, in a mere three-month period, which cannot have been the case. I will examine the evidence for the tenure of the revolt, then I will explore Tacitus' literary, rather than historical purpose in detailing the role of the emperor in these events.

CASSIUS DIO 57.20.1–22.4 AND THE SYNOPSIS OF EVENTS FROM  
A.D. 21 TO 23

Dio's history covering the events of Tiberius' reign in the period from A.D. 21 to 23 survives only in excerpted form, in the main in one extract made by Xiphilinus (Dio 57.20.1–22.4; cf. 57.22.4a ff.)<sup>1</sup> Most of the incidents recorded by Xiphilinus can be dated by reference to Tacitus, *Annals* 3.31.1–4.13.1, but this cross-dating seems to reveal that Xiphilinus has excerpted Dio's history of this period, particularly that within sections 57.20.3–21.7, in a slipshod fashion. Xiphilinus' account, therefore, has been considered faulty,<sup>2</sup> and little credit has been accorded to the quite precise hints he gives of Tiberius' movements and activities contained within this selection of material.

Let us review the dating of various items recorded by Xiphilinus in this excerpt.

In 57.20.1–2, the joint consulship shared by Tiberius and Drusus is mentioned, which Tacitus, *Annals* 3.31.1 dates to the beginning of A.D. 21.

In 57.20.3–4, Xiphilinus notes the trial and death of (C)lutorius Priscus, which is put firmly at the end of A.D. 21 by Tacitus, *Annals* 3.49.1–51.2.

In 57.21.1, Xiphilinus records Tiberius' return to Rome after the expiry of his consulship in 21. Tacitus reports on the fact of Tiberius' return to the city in 22 (*Ann.* 3.64.1), an event indirectly dated to April A.D. 22 by the *Fasti Praenestini*.

<sup>1</sup> On the extracts and their dating, see *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani Historiarum Romanarum quae supersunt*, ed. U. P. Boissevain (Berlin, 1955–69<sup>2</sup>).

<sup>2</sup> R. S. Rogers, *Studies in the Reign of Tiberius* (Baltimore, 1943), 139, n. 10.

In 57.21.2, Tiberius is stated to have had personal confrontations both with the consuls and with an unspecified praetor. The former incident cannot be paralleled in Tacitus' account,<sup>3</sup> but the latter surely refers to the affair of the praetor Magius Caecilianus, which Tacitus dates to A.D. 21 (*Ann.* 3.37.1–2).<sup>4</sup>

In 57.21.3, Xiphilinus refers to Tiberius' banishment of pantomimes from Rome, dated by Tacitus to A.D. 23, after the death of Drusus the Younger (*Ann.* 4.14.3).

In the same verse (57.21.3), Xiphilinus records that Tiberius honoured many men posthumously with statues and public funerals, and that the emperor allowed a statue to be put up to Sejanus while he was alive; that many statues of Sejanus were then put up; and that eulogies of him were given before the people and the senate. Tacitus tells us that, in the year A.D. 22, Tiberius allowed a statue to be put up to Sejanus in Pompey's theatre and that he personally commended Sejanus to the senate at least twice (*Ann.* 3.72.3–4).<sup>5</sup> Tiberius is also noted by Tacitus to have honoured Sulpicius Quirinius with a public funeral in A.D. 21 (*Ann.* 3.48.1), an honour perhaps repeated for two distinguished men who died in A.D. 22 (*Ann.* 3.75.1–2),<sup>6</sup> but he also gave a public funeral and statue to Lucilius Longus in A.D. 23 (*Tac. Ann.* 4.15.1–2).<sup>7</sup>

In 57.21.5–7, Xiphilinus reports on the measures undertaken to right the Aemilian Portico, an item Tacitus notes was discussed in the senate in A.D. 22 (*Ann.* 3.72.1).

In 57.22.1–4, Xiphilinus describes the death of Tiberius' son Drusus, which occurred in A.D. 23 (*Tac. Ann.* 4.8.1–11.3).

Thus, according to this pattern of dating, Xiphilinus has first described events of A.D. 21, then of 22, then back again to 21, forward to 23, then he has produced a mixture of items from 21, 22, and 23, but the majority of these are events of 22. He continues with a reference to the Aemilian Portico, dated also to 22, but he concludes with the death of Drusus, which occurred in September A.D. 23.

If this catalogue were to be taken as absolute in its extent, it would seem that Xiphilinus' account is largely useless in chronological terms. It is wrong, however, to lay the blame for this arrangement on Xiphilinus, since we cannot assume that he toyed with Dio's text and so produced a worthless reflection of the original. Xiphilinus in fact was more likely to have presented his material in the order in which Dio did, albeit in an abbreviated fashion,<sup>8</sup> so any seemingly intrusive or anachronistic material recorded by Xiphilinus probably stems entirely from Dio's own depiction of these years. In addition, the procedure used to date Xiphilinus' anecdotes, a general comparison with Tacitus' account, is unsophisticated, and it relies upon the assumption that Dio presented his account of the years 21 to 23 in *exactly* the same sequence as Tacitus and without including any diachronic analysis. This supposition cannot be proven and seems highly improbable.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>3</sup> B. Levick, *Tiberius the Politician* (London, 1976), 180, follows Boissevain in dating the incident to A.D. 22.

<sup>4</sup> R. S. Rogers, *Criminal Trials and Criminal Legislation under Tiberius* (Middletown, 1935), 61, like many others, has not made this connection, but see E. J. Weinrib, 'The prosecution of Roman magistrates', *Phoenix* 22 (1968), 48; R. A. Bauman, *Impietas in Principem* (München, 1974), 63; Levick (n. 3), 181.

<sup>5</sup> See e.g. D. Hennig, *L. Aelius Sejanus* (München, 1975), 22, 24–5.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>7</sup> The items concerning stage performers and honours to Longus, linked by Xiphilinus, also appear together in *Tac. Ann.* 4.14.3 and 4.15.1–2, but under A.D. 23 (cf. Dio 57.21.3).

<sup>8</sup> F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford, 1964), 2; P. A. Brunt, 'On historical fragments and epitomes', *CQ* 30 (1980), 490; cf. E. Täubler, 'Zur Beurteilung der constantinischen Excerpte', *BZ* 25 (1925), 33–40.

<sup>9</sup> J. Edmondson, *Dio: The Julio-Claudians* (London, 1992), 32–46; in general, see R. Syme,

Although Xiphilinus' task in taking extracts from Dio's history was to reduce in volume what Dio had written, in his record covering the years A.D. 21 to 23, the epitomator does not always give just the 'bare bones' of Dio's history, but sometimes he supplies what we might consider superfluous and irrelevant material. For example, in discussing the architect who was commissioned to stabilize the Aemilian Portico in A.D. 22, Xiphilinus describes this engineering feat, but he also tells why Tiberius banished the architect, and why some time later the emperor had the man put to death (Dio 57.21.5–7).<sup>10</sup> In this particular extract, Xiphilinus has recorded the original, historical setting used by Dio alongside anecdotal material about the later career of the architect, but it is possible that Xiphilinus sometimes recorded only Dio's extraneous comments, while ignoring the original material to which these background comments were attached.<sup>11</sup>

On the assumption that Xiphilinus has handed down a faithful and sequential, but perhaps an idiosyncratically selected series of extracts from Dio's original account, I would like to reassess the material given to us by Xiphilinus in 57.20.1–22.4 for its chronological consistency. I will demonstrate that the material from 57.20.1–21.3 derives from Dio's account of A.D. 21; that Xiphilinus bridges the years between 21 and 22 in 57.21.3, then records events of 22 in 57.21.3–7; and finally, that he concludes in 57.22.1–4 with material deriving from Dio's account of 23. Most of Xiphilinus' excerpt, on this revised reckoning, follows a rough chronological sequence, and, therefore, can be used to reconstruct the 'history' of these years.

#### THE INTEGRITY OF XIPHILINUS' ACCOUNT

In section 57.20.1–2, Xiphilinus has initiated the extract concerning the period from 21 to 23 with notice of the fact that Tiberius held a consulship with Drusus, in this way dating the reference firmly to the beginning of 21.<sup>12</sup> Xiphilinus, we should note, has included material at this point concerning all those who had previously held consulships with Tiberius (in 13 B.C., 7 B.C., and A.D. 18, respectively), and he adds a line about the joint consulship of Tiberius and Sejanus, which these men were not to hold until A.D. 31.<sup>13</sup> Perversely, Xiphilinus has ignored all the incidents associated with Drusus' tenure of office in A.D. 21, which were surely to be found in Dio's original,<sup>14</sup> yet he has preserved an element of padding concerning all Tiberius' fellow consuls, perhaps because it contained the interesting idea of the violent end met by all these men.<sup>15</sup> The consulship held by Tiberius and Drusus, nevertheless, gives a

*Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), 688–92; among others J. Ginsburg, *Tradition and Theme in the Annals of Tacitus* (New York, 1981), 80–3.

<sup>10</sup> The lengthy depiction of events centred on the Aemilian portico suggests that Dio's account harks back to a source vitally interested in architectural achievements, perhaps T. Claudius Balbillus, son of Thrasyllus, an intimate of Tiberius' court (J. J. Wilkes, 'Julio-Claudian historians', *Classical World* 65 [1972], 191). Tacitus probably did not use this source (cf. *Ann.* 13.31.1).

<sup>11</sup> Brunt (n. 8), 491–2.

<sup>12</sup> E. Koestermann, *Annalen* (Heidelberg, 1963), ad 3.31.1; A. J. Woodman and R. H. Martin, *The Annals of Tacitus: Book 3* (Cambridge, 1996), ad 31.1.

<sup>13</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* 3.31.1 notes only a reference to the consulship of 18, which Tiberius shared with Germanicus, and he does this only to draw attention to Germanicus (Ginsburg [n. 9], 23–7), not to comment on the fatal influence of holding consular office with Tiberius.

<sup>14</sup> On the activities of the consulship of Drusus (and Tiberius), see Tacitus, *Ann.* 3.31.2–36.4. Dio almost certainly gave more detail on the consulship than Xiphilinus preserves, as we can guess from the in-depth material recorded by Xiphilinus about a later consulship, that of Tiberius and Sejanus in A.D. 31 (Dio 58.5.1–7).

<sup>15</sup> Brunt (n. 8), 491.

temporal framework to Xiphilinus' excerpt from Dio's account of the year A.D. 21, which was a feature no doubt inherited from the original, and it serves to orient the reader in terms of the rest of the extracted material.

Xiphilinus next refers to the prosecution, conviction, and death of Caius (C)lutorius Priscus (Dio 57.20.3–4), which, as noted, Tacitus, *Annals* 3.49.1–51.2 also records but which he specifically assigns to the close of the year A.D. 21 (*fine anni*). Although Xiphilinus' placement of this incident seems to locate it too early in the year, I will suggest some ways in which the affair of Priscus may have been dealt with by Dio in a chronological setting different from that assigned to it by Tacitus.

It is quite possible that Dio mentioned the affair of Priscus in a forward-looking reference associated with his description of Tiberius' and Drusus' consulship, since Dio seems to have included a range of material related to all the consulships held by Tiberius.<sup>16</sup> Sejanus, the last-mentioned colleague of Tiberius (57.20.2), was executed in A.D. 31, having been condemned by the senate while Tiberius was out of the city. These last two points are those picked up in the notice of the death of Priscus (57.20.3): namely, that Tiberius was out of Rome (*ἐκδημούντος δὲ Τιβερίου*), and that Priscus was executed at the behest of the senate. Dio, therefore, may have associated Sejanus and Priscus in his account, then described Priscus' demise as one of the problems to be anticipated because of Tiberius' absence from the city.<sup>17</sup>

Equally likely, however, is a link between Priscus and Drusus, the consul of A.D. 21. Since Priscus' offence concerned Drusus intimately (Priscus' basing a poem on the presupposition of Drusus' death), Dio may have connected these two men when he described some incident concerning Drusus' activities as consul, or he may have noted Drusus' illness and its aftermath, and this prompted him to discuss the prosecution and death of Priscus.

From this brief survey, we can see that it is easy to explain Dio's location of Priscus' death early in the year, hence Xiphilinus' apparently erroneous placement of the incident, but even if Dio did place the Priscus incident at the close of his account of the year and Xiphilinus was responsible for placing it earlier in the year, this local rearrangement does not imply that he tampered with *all* of the events of A.D. 21.<sup>18</sup> Since we do not have the full text of Dio, we cannot be sure that Xiphilinus did not simply follow Dio in digressing to deal with Priscus, and the incident should not be assumed to be the concluding element of Xiphilinus' summary of the events of A.D. 21.

Xiphilinus links the material in 57.20.3–4 (about Priscus) to what follows in 57.21.1 by means of the phrase, *καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο*, 'and after this', but this term implying a precise, sequential connection between 57.20.3–4 and 57.21.1 may be misleading if understood in this way. In structural terms, Xiphilinus (or Dio) perhaps intended the phrase, *καὶ μετὰ τοῦτο*, to bring the reader back to the period of Tiberius' consulship

<sup>16</sup> Dio/Xiphilinus also gives an anachronistic presentation of incidents under A.D. 11 (56.25.2–8), where first the epitomator records campaigns in Germany with a special note of the celebration of Augustus' birthday (23 September) (56.25.2–3), then switches back to affairs in the city, a scene that must be located at the start of the same year (56.25.4). This arrangement of events probably goes back to one of Dio's digressions.

<sup>17</sup> Right at the start of his account of A.D. 21, Tacitus hints of problems to come with Tiberius' later, long-term departure from Rome (*Ann.* 3.31.2), and note the comment by Suetonius that Tiberius neglected state affairs after he withdrew to Capri (*Tib.* 41). Dio may have elaborated on a theme of this type.

<sup>18</sup> Millar (n.8), 201, notes that Xiphilinus occasionally used his discretion to alter the sequence of events in a year.

after the digression about Priscus,<sup>19</sup> since the term picks up and links the two references to the consulship, that in 57.20.1, ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ Τιβέριος τὴν ὑπατον ἀρχὴν ἦρξε ('when Tiberius entered his consulship') and that in 57.21.1, ἐξελεύσεως αὐτῷ τῆς ὑπατείας ('when his consulship ended').<sup>20</sup> On this basis, the material reported in 57.21.1 need not have occurred after the Priscus incident late in the year (57.20.3–4) but only after a description of some of the events associated with Tiberius' consulship (a description that included a discussion of the relationship between Tiberius' holding the consulship and the affair of Priscus).

In 57.21.1 Xiphilinus makes a clear statement that Tiberius returned to Rome when the tenure of his consulship came to an end. It has been assumed that Xiphilinus' statement is loosely describing Tiberius' return to Rome after the *year* of his consulship had expired (perhaps because Xiphilinus has earlier mentioned the affair of Priscus), and thus 57.21.1 has been related to Tacitus' notice of Tiberius' return in A.D. 22 (*Ann.* 3.64.1).<sup>21</sup> The phrasing used by Xiphilinus, however, is unequivocal, ἐξελεύσεως αὐτῷ τῆς ὑπατείας ἔς τε τὴν Ῥώμην ἦλθε, that Tiberius came back to Rome after the actual period of his consulship had expired,<sup>22</sup> so presumably some time during A.D. 21, after the first three months of the year.<sup>23</sup>

In 57.21.2 Xiphilinus details a dispute between an unnamed praetor and Tiberius, but in the course of this anecdote, it is reported that the praetor had been accused of treason (ὡς καὶ ἀσεβὲς τι ἐς αὐτὸν εἰρηκῶς ἢ καὶ πεποικῶς).<sup>24</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* 3.37.1–2 obliquely refers to this episode when he reports that the praetor Magius Caecilianus, previously charged with *maiestas* but exonerated, was the focus of a successful prosecution for *calumnia* brought against his attackers during A.D. 21. Tacitus and Xiphilinus date the *maiestas* case to A.D. 21, since both, in dealing with the related episodes, note that the year in question was that of Magius Caecilianus' praetorship. So, according to Dio, Tiberius returned to Rome in A.D. 21 and perhaps soon afterwards supported a *maiestas* accusation against the praetor Magius Caecilianus.

Xiphilinus follows this reference to Magius Caecilianus with one to the banishment of pantomimes from Rome (Dio 57.21.3), an incident similar to one placed by Tacitus in A.D. 23, after the death of Drusus (*Ann.* 4.14.3; cf. Velleius Paterculus 2.126.2). If

<sup>19</sup> Many phrases used by Xiphilinus consist of 'verbal quotations' from Dio's account (Brunt [n. 8], 489), so Xiphilinus may have copied the term straight from Dio's original setting of the Priscus affair, without his noting the original incident in its entirety. A similarly inappropriate temporal connection is made by Zonarus in Dio 55.9.10, where he reports that only a year intervened between Augustus' twelfth and thirteenth consulship, whereas three years divided the two events.

<sup>20</sup> Xiphilinus uses a related technique in 57.21.5 where, after a small digression into the growing power and importance of Sejanus (57.21.4), he picks up the thread of the 'history' again by using the loose temporal phrase, κατὰ δὲ τὸν χρόνον. In terms of his use of temporal phrases, however, Xiphilinus is sometimes suspect. Later in this same extract, he erroneously claims that Tiberius punished those who were responsible for his son's death, some *immediately* and some later (57.22.4: τοὺς μὲν εὐθὺς τοὺς δὲ μετὰ ταῦτα). From Tacitus, however, we learn that Tiberius did not discover that his son had been poisoned until eight years after the event (*Ann.* 4.8.1), so Xiphilinus' use of the word εὐθὺς is erroneous in this context.

<sup>21</sup> Most noticeably, Boissvain (n. 1), ad loc., whose dating has been followed by, for example, RE 10.1 507 (Gardthausen); Koestermann (n. 12), ad loc.; Levick (n. 3), 181; R. J. A. Talbert, *The Senate of Imperial Rome* (Princeton, 1984), 175.

<sup>22</sup> That the term ἡ ὑπατεία describes only the actual tenure of the consulship can be seen elsewhere, in Dio 58.8.3, where ἐν τῇ ὑπατείᾳ refers to a time within the months from January to May 31, when Sejanus was actually holding the office of consul.

<sup>23</sup> Tiberius' consulship of A.D. 21 was three months long, according to Suetonius, *Tiberius* 26.2.

<sup>24</sup> There is a textual problem at this point, but ἀσεβὲς is the preferred reading.

both are referring to the same events, Xiphilinus' allusion is clearly anachronistic, yet there may have occurred any number of incidents in A.D. 21 to allow Dio to mention pantomimes or to digress to discuss them. For example, he might have mentioned pantomimes with reference to Drusus' consulship. Earlier in his account of Tiberius' reign, Dio has noted that Drusus particularly favoured theatrical performers and that it was he who had been their patron and protector in the face of stern measures introduced by Tiberius in A.D. 15 (57.14.10). It was perhaps because of a strong link between Drusus and performers that, after mentioning some incident involving Drusus in 21, Dio also referred to the fact that his death in 23 finally allowed Tiberius a free hand to banish *histriones* from Rome.<sup>25</sup> Whatever Dio's original context for discussing pantomimes, Xiphilinus' allusion to them in 57.21.3 need not be pressed as a specific and unassailable criterion to date this material to A.D. 23, since Dio could easily have made a comparable forward-reference in his own description of 21.

If we accept that all of Xiphilinus' excerpt (57.20.1–21.3) comes from Dio's account of the affairs of 21, we can see that, in 57.21.3, Xiphilinus has brought together material linked thematically to enable him to move smoothly from events of A.D. 21 to those of the following year. The statement that Tiberius honoured many men with public funerals and with posthumous statues (57.21.3) was perhaps merely a generalization from the public funeral allocated to Sulpicius Quirinius in A.D. 21 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.48.1–2), but we should note that similar honours were no doubt given to other prominent men, two in particular who died in 22 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.75.1–2).

Because of the theme already established in 57.21.3, linked by Tiberius' awarding statues to public figures, Xiphilinus easily introduces material about Sejanus (57.21.3–4), who was singled out by Tiberius in the same fashion, with a statue to honour him erected in Pompey's Theatre (ἐν τῷ θεάτρῳ) in A.D. 22, as Tacitus verifies (*Ann.* 3.72.2–3). Xiphilinus' account also reflects the public tributes made to Sejanus by Tiberius in A.D. 22 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.72.3–4: *laudibus Seianum extulit* . . .).<sup>26</sup> Thus, in 57.21.3 Xiphilinus has made a clear transition from events of 21 to those of 22.

The Aemilian portico is the topic of Dio (Xiphilinus) 57.21.5–7 (στοὰ μεγίστη ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ), a subject Tacitus tells us was discussed in the senate in A.D. 22 when Lepidus asked for permission to shore up and to decorate the Aemilian Basilica (*Ann.* 3.72.1: . . . *ut basilicam Pauli, Aemilia monimenta* . . . *firmaret ornaretque*.) Xiphilinus has included a fairly detailed description of the actual processes involved in righting the portico, which he claims had suffered the effects of subsidence, and he records, as we have noted, the subsequent career of the architect who had been assigned the contract for repairs.<sup>27</sup>

Xiphilinus concludes the excerpt dealing with events of A.D. 21 to 23 with a reference to the death of Drusus (57.22.1–4). He records that Sejanus brought about Drusus' death through poisoning, having intrigued with Drusus' wife Livia and the household attendants. In discussing both the murder and the vengeance exacted from Drusus' murderers, however, Xiphilinus has gone beyond the immediate context of A.D. 23 and has introduced material that could only have come to light after the death of Sejanus in

<sup>25</sup> There is no clear notice under A.D. 23 of Tiberius' banishment of stage-performers, suggesting that Dio did not deal with this incident in its correct temporal position perhaps because he had already mentioned it among the events of 21.

<sup>26</sup> . . . πολλοὶ δὲ καὶ ἔπαινοι καὶ παρὰ τῷ δήμῳ καὶ παρὰ τῇ βουλῇ . . .

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Petronius, *Sat.* 51; Plin. *HN* 36.195, who alleges the destruction only of the workshop of the Tiberian architect/artisan, and he seems sceptical even about this.

A.D. 31.<sup>28</sup> Xiphilinus adds that Tiberius was held responsible for Drusus' demise because he attended to public business during this period, but he makes an immediate denial of Tiberius' involvement in his son's death on the grounds that Tiberius always attended to public business at times of crisis, was devoted to his only legitimate son, and that he punished those responsible, so implicitly would not have murdered him. These further comments concerning Drusus' death perhaps stemmed directly from Dio's account, since Dio would certainly have discussed the death of Drusus in A.D. 23 with the hindsight gained in A.D. 31 (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 4.8.1). In addition, Dio has earlier in his account expressed an interest in relations between Tiberius and his son (sometimes strained, as he notes in 57.13.1–3), and he reports that Tiberius attended to public duties even after the death of his grandson in A.D. 15 (Dio 57.14.6).

Up to this point, therefore, the extracted material on Drusus' death probably maintained a close link with Dio's original (57.22.1–4), but the handiwork of Xiphilinus is evident in the very last lines of the excerpt, where he seems to have decided to summarize Dio's account. Because of this, Xiphilinus has included a minor error, in that he states that Tiberius punished some of Drusus' murderers in A.D. 23, although punishment was actually meted out only after the fall of Sejanus eight years later.<sup>29</sup>

This analysis demonstrates that Xiphilinus seems to have kept roughly to a chronological sequence in 57.20.1–22.4, and that the inclusion of anachronistic or non-sequential material probably derived from Dio's account (apart from the slight mistake concerning events of 23 found in 57.22.4, the concluding lines of the extract). Dio must have digressed occasionally to portray the events of A.D. 21 to 23 against a wider canvass (for example, listing and perhaps describing all the fellow-consuls of Tiberius; noting details about the restorer of the Aemilian Portico; the aftermath of the death of Drusus; and so on), and Xiphilinus, his excerptor, seems to have kept some of these parts of the original. If we ignore the slight anomalies (placement of the trial of Clutorius Priscus too early in A.D. 21, prior to the trial of Magius Caecilianus, and the anticipatory reference to the banishment of pantomimes under A.D. 21 instead of 23), the account of Xiphilinus is not incompatible with events as recorded by Tacitus in the *Annals* and should be fully utilized to provide more precision for the movements of Tiberius in A.D. 21.

#### TIBERIUS' RETURN TO ROME IN A.D. 21

Since we have established the credibility of Xiphilinus' account, we should now accept that Tiberius returned to Rome during A.D. 21, after he had resigned from his consulship, as we find reported in Dio 57.21.1. What we need to determine at this point is in what month Tiberius actually returned to the city, since this date will help us with the relative chronology of the other events of that year. Once we have established this date approximately, we will consider a possible motive for Tiberius' return at this time, then we will examine the way in which Tacitus has treated this section of the consular year.

<sup>28</sup> Dio/Xiphilinus refers twice to the punch-up between Sejanus and Drusus, first under A.D. 15 (57.14.9), then again under A.D. 23 (57.23.1), where Tacitus also locates the incident (*Ann.* 4.3.2), called *recens* by the latter. One of the two references must be anachronistic.

<sup>29</sup> Excerptors often summarized material at the conclusion of an extract rather than simply taking an excerpt from the original (Millar [n. 8], 1–2; Brunt [n. 8], 484).

*The date of Tiberius' return*

According to Dio 57.21.1, as we have noted, Tiberius came back to Rome at the end of his term of office (ἐξελθούσης αὐτῷ τῆς ὑπατείας ἐς τε τὴν 'Ρώμην ἦλθε'), although Dio does not indicate the length of Tiberius' consulship precisely, nor how long Tiberius remained in Campania after he resigned from office. Suetonius, however, gives more precision. He gives a firm length of tenure to the consulship itself, and he provides some indirect evidence for the fact that Tiberius did not delay his return from Campania much over the period of the consulship. In *Tiberius* 26.2, while commenting on the consulships held by Tiberius after A.D. 14, Suetonius relates as follows:

Nec amplius quam mox tres consulatus, unum paucis diebus, alterum tribus mensibus, tertium absens usque in Idus Maias gessit.

Not only does Suetonius specify the three-month length of Tiberius' consular term in A.D. 21,<sup>30</sup> but he more importantly also distinguishes the conditions under which the emperor held his final two consulships, that of 21 and that of 31 (*tertium absens*). Although in a very literal sense Tiberius was *absens* during the consulship of 21, Suetonius does not characterize the consulship of 21 in these terms, and it is only for the consulship of 31 that he claims that the emperor was away from the city (cf. Suet. *Tib.* 65.1). Suetonius implies, therefore, that Tiberius was not away from the city in A.D. 21 for a lengthy period, despite being technically out of the city for the duration of his consulship; that he was not *absens* for a period much over these three months. This timetable advanced by Suetonius is matched by the records of the Arval Brothers for A.D. 21, which seem to demonstrate that Tiberius was back in Rome before the end of May.<sup>31</sup>

The evidence of our sources indicates that the emperor left the city for Campania close to the beginning of the year (Tac. *Ann.* 3.31.1), perhaps near in time to the Ides of January after he had participated in the official celebrations to inaugurate the year and his fourth consulship (cf. *CIL* 6.32340).<sup>32</sup> Tiberius remained in Campania for three months or so while holding the consulship, and then he resigned from office at about the time that he returned to the capital, perhaps in April.<sup>33</sup> Tacitus provides additional information on the manner of Tiberius' return to Rome this year, in that he suggests that the emperor's return was linked to the end of the Gallic revolt, and that Tiberius was welcomed back to the capital by offerings, prayers and awards voted to him by the senate (*Ann.* 3.47.3):

decrevere patres vota pro reditu eius supplicationesque et alia decora. solus Dolabella Cornelius, dum anteire ceteros parat, absurdam in adulationem progressus, censuit ut ovans e Campania urbem introiret.

Although Tacitus specifies that Tiberius responded by letter to the senate on the occasion of Dolabella's motion and that he rejected the idea that he return to Rome

<sup>30</sup> Accepted, for example, by R. Syme, *Roman Papers* III, ed. A. R. Birley (Oxford, 1984), 1431.

<sup>31</sup> These show suffect consuls in place by the end of May (*CIL* 6.02023 = 32339). Woodman and Martin (n. 12), *ad* 31.1, suggest that Tiberius and Drusus resigned simultaneously after three months in office. See further below.

<sup>32</sup> M. Beard, 'Writing and ritual', *PBSR* 53 (1985), 149. On the celebrations usual to welcome incoming consuls, see Talbert (n. 21), 200–1.

<sup>33</sup> There was often a resumption of political life in April/May after a short break (Talbert [n. 21], 209–10).



celebrating an ovation (*Ann.* 3.47.4), the inference to be drawn from this passage is that, although Tiberius was still in Campania at the time of the senatorial vote, he did return to Rome in a very public fashion after the termination of the Gallic revolt,<sup>34</sup> only just not in the manner proposed by Dolabella.

*A possible reason for Tiberius' return*

The records of the Arval Brothers note the attendance of 'Caesar' at one of their gatherings late in the month of May A.D. 21 (*CIL* 6.2023b),<sup>35</sup> but this notice to 'Caesar' has been understood as referring to Drusus, not to his father, since Tiberius was believed to be out of the city for the whole of the year. In the absence of any other clear signs in the inscription to identify this 'Caesar' as Drusus, and given the fact that Tiberius was almost certainly in Rome at this time, it seems reasonable to assume that the 'Caesar' inscribed on the records of the Arval Brothers was in fact Tiberius, not Drusus, and that the emperor was attending to business in that month.

Likewise from this same record of the meetings of the Arval Brethren, there is notice that someone, whose name is missing from the inscription, has been under scrutiny for his health (. . . *qui valet*/. . .). Editors have restored this unknown man's name as Sulla Felix, based on the appearance of the word *felicem* in the line of the inscription immediately above *qui valet*-, but this restoration seems highly speculative, particularly in the light of the general emphasis of the records of the Arval Brothers, which focus heavily on the well-being of the emperor and his family.<sup>36</sup> Sulla Felix should be ignored in this context, and we should consider the other evidence from A.D. 21, that the well-being of both Tiberius and Drusus was of concern in this year.

In the case of Tiberius, Tacitus notes that the emperor retired to Campania at the beginning of A.D. 21 officially for reasons of health, *firmandae valitudini* (*Ann.* 3.31.2). The Arval Brothers are quite likely to have celebrated Tiberius' return to the city from Campania,<sup>37</sup> particularly if his health had previously been of concern, and the senate, as noted, decreed public offerings for the emperor's return to the city (Tac. *Ann.*

<sup>34</sup> A terminal date for the revolt before the onset of summer A.D. 21 is also suggested by Tiberius' intention of going to Gaul (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.2). If he planned to go that year, he would have preferred to go in summer and so he must have given notice to the senate relatively early in the year, as he did on the next recorded occasion he made such a plan, in A.D. 23 (Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.2). Note that Tiberius abandoned a projected provincial tour in A.D. 14 because of the onset of winter (Tac. *Ann.* 1.47.3).

<sup>35</sup> The first part of the inscription, incomplete and broken off on the right-hand left side, reads:

IVM . AD  
FELICEM  
QVI . VALET  
ESSE . NON  
DA . DIAE . DI///  
IN EIVS . LO  
NVS . SV///  
ADFUERVNT  
VALERIAN  
CAESAR  
ANI/////

MESSALI///

<sup>36</sup> On Tiberius, see *CIL* 6.2027. References to the imperial family are often found; for example, from later in Tiberius' reign, mention is made both of the birthday of Livia, Tiberius' mother, and of some other aspect of her status (*CIL* 6.2024f; cf. 2026). On this, see Beard (n. 32), 116–17.

<sup>37</sup> They likewise record Gaius' return to the city in A.D. 38 (*CIL* 6.2028c).

3.47.3). Thus the references to *felicem* and to health, *qui valet*-, may well conceal prayers made by the Arval Brothers in May for the safe return, in good health, of the emperor.

On the other hand, although Tiberius gave out officially that he was leaving the city in A.D. 21 for health reasons, there was no obvious concern that he was seriously ill. Whoever was the subject of the Arval Brothers' *qui valet*-, however, seems to have been too ill to attend the annual celebrations of the goddess in May A.D. 21 and needed someone to substitute for him (*in eius loc[o]* . . .). It is likely, therefore, that the Arval records at this point are referring to the life-threatening illness of Drusus, whose health was in fact very precarious at some point during A.D. 21, so much so that he nearly died (Tac. *Ann.* 3.49.1; Dio 57.20.3–4).<sup>38</sup> Since the records of the *Fratres Arvales* concerned themselves with such matters, it seems highly likely that the following details were recorded for May A.D. 21: that Drusus had been seriously ill but by good fortune was on the mend;<sup>39</sup> that his presence at the sacrifices in honour of the Dea Dia was compromised and his place was taken by another; and that the emperor participated in the sacrifice on this same occasion.<sup>40</sup> On this basis, it seems that Drusus was very ill in the earlier part of the year but that he was convalescing by the end of May.

There is no hint, however, that Drusus' health was suspect during the first months of the year when he was convening the senate in Tiberius' absence. In this period, Tiberius was seemingly untroubled by affairs in Rome, and he was content to remain in Campania and to allow his son to enjoy his 'principate'. A little later, at the time when Tiberius made an official statement to the senate concerning the end of the Gallic Revolt, the emperor noted that Drusus could have travelled to Gaul while the military action had been in progress in the north (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.2), but such a trip for Drusus would surely have been out of the question, had his illness been evident in this period. In addition, in this same report, Tiberius stressed the importance of the role Drusus was playing as *princeps* in Rome at this time, a claim the emperor would not have made had Drusus been incapacitated by a near-mortal illness.

Even at the time of the end of the Gallic revolt, therefore, all indications point to the fact that Tiberius was in no hurry to leave Campania to get back to Rome, even though he could well have been able to capitalize personally on the popularity that would follow from Rome's military successes in the aftermath of the Gallic revolt.<sup>41</sup> Tiberius in fact gives the impression that he considered Drusus to have had matters well in hand

<sup>38</sup> The duration and severity of the illness are indicated by the antics of the poet Clutorius Priscus who had time enough to consider Drusus' life forfeit, and so to have composed a poem in anticipation of his death.

<sup>39</sup> The records of the *Fratres Arvales* suggest a terminus to the period of Drusus' sickness, as it would have been unlikely for the Brethren to have stressed his illness, had his life still been in the balance (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.49.1–2; Dio 57.20.3), assuming, of course, that the records of the Arvals were inscribed immediately after their meetings.

<sup>40</sup> Tiberius' high profile, attending the ceremony of the Arval Brethren while his son may have been on death's door, is compatible with his behaviour during times of family crisis. In A.D. 23, when Drusus became mortally ill and actually died, Tiberius assiduously attended to his duties in the capital (Tac. *Ann.* 4.8.2; cf. Dio 57.14.6). This earned him the reputation of caring little for his son (denied by Dio/Xiphilinus 57.22.3; cf. Joseph. *AJ* 18.146) and all his other relatives (e.g. Suet. *Tib.* 50–4).

<sup>41</sup> We should note that, in his letter to the senate, Tiberius very carefully couples Drusus to himself as a fellow *princeps* in the oversight of the empire, suggesting that he wanted the senate to believe that Drusus had had a significant role to play in the planning of events in Gaul. Tiberius perhaps wanted the senate to give some kudos to Drusus for Gallic successes, and if he had been fishing for senatorial compliments to be given to his son, this perhaps explains his dismissive comments when he himself was offered an ovation (*Ann.* 3.47.4).

at this time, and he even makes the further point that he himself is contemplating travelling to the province of Gaul. It seems unlikely that Tiberius would have gone north to Gaul, leaving Drusus ill in Rome and Rome without clear leadership. Drusus must, therefore, have become ill just after Tiberius made his announcement to the senate concerning the Gallic revolt.

As we know, Tiberius was back in Rome shortly after this, in April, or in May at the very latest, as the records of the *Fratres Arvales* demonstrate. This co-incidence in attitude and timing suggests that Tiberius cut short his retreat in Campania, and that he did so because of this previously unsuspected crisis affecting his son. Since Livia's illness in A.D. 22 brought Tiberius hurriedly to the city from Campania (*Ann.* 3.64.1), we should guess that Tiberius' public concern for the health of his son in 21 could hardly have been less than that for his mother in the following year. So, Tiberius returned to Rome in about April A.D. 21 almost certainly because his son fell ill.

### *Tacitus' treatment of the consulship*

This leads us to Tacitus' view of the consulship of A.D. 21, a view that seems bereft of appropriate detail concerning Drusus. As was his common practice, Tacitus has not followed a strict chronology in detailing the events of this year, but he has grouped events according to topic,<sup>42</sup> dealing first with domestic matters (*Ann.* 3.31–8), external affairs (*Ann.* 3.38–46), and then domestic affairs again (*Ann.* 3.47–51).<sup>43</sup> By paying only lip-service to the chronology in this way, Tacitus has spared himself the need for comment on the political or personal imperatives governing Tiberius' actions and movements.

Although Tacitus initially does use the consulship for chronological purposes, as a dating criterion for the year, he immediately goes on to focus on Tiberius' previous consulship, that shared with Germanicus in A.D. 18. A shift in focus to Tiberius' poor relations with Germanicus in 18 has freed Tacitus from the need to comment on any aspect of the joint-consulship of A.D. 21.<sup>44</sup> Instead of considering the political factors that led to Tiberius' and Drusus' taking up the consulship this year (that is, whether the state had been unsettled by the death of Germanicus and whether Drusus' succession was unopposed),<sup>45</sup> Tacitus has portrayed Tiberius' consulship as an element of a broader agenda that has nothing to do with contemporary events. He intimates that the emperor exploited his position to effect a withdrawal from Rome at the start of the year, and that this manoeuvre was simply a prelude to his later, permanent retirement from the city (*Ann.* 3.31.2: . . . *longam et continuam absentiam paulatim meditans* . . .).<sup>46</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Ginsburg (n. 9), 53–79; Woodman and Martin (n. 12), 274–5. On Tacitus' literary technique, see also Koestermann (n. 12), *ad* 3.40.1.

<sup>43</sup> Some of the events Tacitus describes clearly overlapped, since in his first section, on 'internal' matters, he seems to acknowledge that Tiberius was back in Rome to deal with Magius Caecilianus (*Ann.* 3.37.2), but when he comes to discuss 'external' matters, in particular the Gallic Revolt, Tacitus locates Tiberius again in Campania (*Ann.* 3.47.3).

<sup>44</sup> He does not note that the tenure of the office was only three months, too long for a simply honorific term, as we see from the few days of Tiberius' and Germanicus' shared consulship in 18 (cf. Suet. *Tib.* 26.2; Tac. *Ann.* 2.53.1, 3.31.1).

<sup>45</sup> The testamentary intention of Augustus had been that Germanicus and his sons succeed Tiberius in the principate and that Drusus be excluded from power, although not from a portion of the wealth of the imperial house (Suet. *Aug.* 101.2; cf. E. Champlin, 'The testament of Augustus', *RhM* 132 [1989], 158–9).

<sup>46</sup> In pursuing his parallel between the two periods of retirement, the relatively short ones in 21 and 22 and the permanent one in 26, Tacitus uses each to substantiate the other. Under A.D. 21,

To give credence to his theory that Tiberius was little more than an absent tyrant this year, Tacitus stresses the emperor's periods of absence in A.D. 21 and 22,<sup>47</sup> which give the impression that Tiberius left the city early in 21 and returned only in 22.<sup>48</sup>

Not only does Tacitus convey the impression that Tiberius spent a long period away from the city (cf. *Ann.* 3.31.2), but he also implies that the emperor exercised power *in absentia* with Drusus as his proxy in Rome.<sup>49</sup> The events of 21 have been enveloped with an ominous, yet unspecified significance, and the atmosphere of looming trouble is later heightened through a contrast between the sociability of Drusus and the isolation of Tiberius (*Ann.* 3.37.2; cf. 52.1). Tacitus, therefore, is hinting at the difficulties that Rome would experience when governed by an absent tyrant, and he further illustrates the pitfalls of Tiberius' absence by means of the case of Clutorius Priscus (*Ann.* 3.49.1–51.2).

When Tacitus turns to a discussion of the reasons for Tiberius' absence from Rome during his consulship, he states, but then denies, the official reason given for Tiberius' withdrawal (to restore his health), calling it false (*quasi*), and he speculates that there were two 'real' reasons for Tiberius' retreat to Campania (*Ann.* 3.32.2). First, as noted above, Tacitus suggests that Tiberius' departure from Rome was a practice-run for his later retirement, but it is clear that Tacitus has used hindsight at this point. Until A.D. 26, Tiberius was renowned for hardly ever having left the city for an extended period or for going more than a short distance away (Suet. *Tib.* 38).<sup>50</sup> For the first twelve years of his principate, therefore, including the period in question, Tiberius exercised power through proximity to the capital. The emperor's departure for Campania in 21 was noteworthy, but not in the way that Tacitus suggests.

The alternative excuse suggested by Tacitus for Tiberius' retirement from Rome, that he left Drusus alone in the city as consul so that his son might enjoy sole power (*Ann.* 3.31.2), lacks substance in view of later events. A three-month tenure as consul was hardly long enough for such an exercise,<sup>51</sup> and Drusus had already held a year-long

Tacitus alludes to the implicit misanthropy of the emperor, for which he has no evidence except the withdrawal to Campania (cf. *Ann.* 3.37.2 with Woodman and Martin [n. 12], *ad loc.*), and he only briefly mentions plausible reasons for the emperor's departure from the city at that time. Later, he enlarges upon the theme of Tiberius' misanthropy (e.g. *Ann.* 4.41–2), and because he has already linked this vice to Tiberius' earlier retirement, in dealing with the permanent withdrawal, Tacitus has freed himself from the necessity of providing valid reasons for Tiberius' second retreat from Rome. He does make a superficial assessment of the situation in A.D. 26, but he never really investigates why Tiberius departed never to return to Rome again (*Ann.* 4.57.1–3). Suetonius (*Tib.* 39), for example, links Tiberius' retirement with the deaths of his sons, a deeper, more sophisticated analysis. On this problem, see Syme (n. 9), 402, 695–6.

<sup>47</sup> Tacitus records Tiberius' departure for Campania, and he notes that both the emperor and Drusus were out of the city when Drusus received a grant of tribunician power in the first half of 22 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.59.2). He also relates that Tiberius was in Campania as news of the suppression of the Gallic revolt was revealed to the senate (*Ann.* 3.47.3–4), and out of easy reach of the city at the end of this year when Clutorius Priscus was condemned and executed by the senate (*Ann.* 3.51.1–2). On the thematic relevance of Tiberius' withdrawal, see Woodman and Martin (n. 9), *ad* 38.1.

<sup>48</sup> The view adopted generally, e.g. Woodman and Martin (n. 9), 274–5.

<sup>49</sup> Rogers (n. 2), 128–9, and D. C. A. Shotter, 'The trial of Clutorius Priscus', *G&R* 16 (1969), 15, believe that Drusus presided in the senate at the trial of Clutorius Priscus at the end of the year, although he was holding no formal power. This cannot have been the case, and it is more likely that Drusus was out of the city at the time of the trial because otherwise some blame would have accrued to him. See Levick (n. 3), 273, n. 54.

<sup>50</sup> Tiberius took official leave of absence from the senate in A.D. 16 (Tac. *Ann.* 2.35.1–2). See Talbert (n. 21), 210.

<sup>51</sup> Tacitus may be correct in suggesting that Drusus was left in Rome as a proxy *princeps*, but

consulship in A.D. 15, with minimal interference from his father (Tac. *Ann.* 1.7.3, 1.77.3; cf. Suet. *Tib.* 30, 31.2).<sup>52</sup> Tacitus seems off the mark on this assessment too.

Although Tacitus has argued that Tiberius had a hidden agenda in leaving the city, he cannot provide any support for either of the two propositions he presents as the possible reasons dictating Tiberius' decision to depart. On this basis, it is likely that Tiberius' official excuse, that he left Rome for the sake of his health, was in fact the truth (*Ann.* 3.31.2: *firmandae valitudini*).<sup>53</sup>

The motives driving Tiberius' withdrawal from the city and his return, therefore, have been denied or concealed by Tacitus' account, perhaps because these two events were dictated by a common theme, the emperor's emotional entanglement with his sons. When the emperor withdrew from Rome for health reasons, then it had been Germanicus' death and its aftermath that had perhaps put him under almost unsustainable pressure, and when Tiberius returned post-haste to Rome three months later, it was at the first signs of sickness in his son. These paternal imperatives do not suit Tacitus' characterization of the emperor. Instead, Tacitus wants the reader to believe that Tiberius was unconcerned about the death of Germanicus and the problem of succession, that he remained in retreat for over a year,<sup>54</sup> and that he was and would be derelict in his duty to the state.

It is difficult to gauge the motives for the slant given by Tacitus. In the case of the illness of Drusus, Tacitus' failure to examine this seems a crucial omission, since this illness was almost certainly a pivotal factor in determining Tiberius' movements this year. Worries about Drusus may have brought Tiberius hurrying to Rome from his retreat in Campania and perhaps forced him into the public arena at a time that he was seeking to divest himself of some of the burdens of his role as *princeps*. In addition, although Tiberius made plans to go to Gaul in 21 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.2), the state of Drusus' health may have kept him from undertaking this objective, and his abandonment of this trip and of a later one planned for 23, which also may have foundered because of problems over Drusus' health (Tac. *Ann.* 4.4.2), certainly led to adverse propaganda about Tiberius' aborted provincial journeys (Suet. *Tib.* 38).

As the treatment of the consulship of A.D. 21 shows, Tacitus is reluctant to allow the relationship between Tiberius and Drusus to play a *significant* part in the events of this year (cf. *Ann.* 3.31.1–4, 34.6), but this is a policy Tacitus has followed throughout his depiction of the years between A.D. 14 and Drusus' death. For whatever reasons, Tacitus has chosen to ignore Drusus as a political and literary figure in the *Annals*, and so, the application of this principle to A.D. 21 is in no way a deliberately different policy on Tacitus' behalf.

In effect, we should judge that Tacitus has followed a technique of reporting that

the fact that Tiberius did return abruptly only three months later should have occasioned some comment.

<sup>52</sup> See H. Lindsay, *Suetonius Tiberius* (London, 1995), ad locc.

<sup>53</sup> Although Tiberius received intelligence from distant parts of the empire and communicated with the senate, he seems to have expected Drusus and the senate to shoulder the burden of responsibility for government, as we see from the occasion when he wrote querulously to the senate (Tac. *Ann.* 3.35.1).

<sup>54</sup> Tacitus seems to have taken pains to note Tiberius' absence from Rome during A.D. 21 and early 22, but he does allow an opening for Tiberius' return after the end of the Gallic revolt, and he has not hidden the emperor's personal and seemingly controversial involvement in some of the political activities of 21 (*Ann.* 3.37.1–38.2). Tacitus may have specified that Tiberius was out of Rome on various occasions only because the absence of the emperor was unusual and worth noting, but he did not bother to record when Tiberius returned to Rome or was present in the senate simply because Tiberius was seldom away from the city in that period (Suet. *Tib.* 38).

has occasionally done serious disservice to the history of these years, but it is a pattern to which he adheres without special prejudice to A.D. 21. Thus he did not deliberately intend to conceal or omit historical information or links that might have coloured the interpretation of the consulship of A.D. 21, but Tacitus' interpretation is certainly limited in scope, and it is not the only possible account of this year.

### THE GALLIC REVOLT

Given that we now know how long Tiberius spent in Campania in A.D. 21, we can make some judgements concerning Tacitus' setting of the Gallic Revolt in this same year. Tiberius is said to have received news of the end of the revolt while still in Campania (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.1–4), and since he returned to Rome at about the end of the first quarter of the year, the Gallic revolt must have concluded relatively early in the year. So, despite the explicit claim that the rebellion started and finished in A.D. 21 (Tac. *Ann.* 3.40.1), it is implausible that all of the events associated with the uprising could have occurred within the period from January to March A.D. 21.<sup>55</sup> Some, if not all of the incidents associated with the uprising must be back-dated to A.D. 20,<sup>56</sup> as we can see from a brief logistical analysis of the various stages of the revolt.

Although Tacitus suggests the ease with which Acilius Aviola, the Roman governor of Lugdunensis, dealt with the first stage of Gallic disaffection, that among the tribes living in the west of Gaul along the Loire, the Andecavi and the Turones, it is clear that the events described lasted many months (*Ann.* 3.41.1–3).<sup>57</sup> Subsequent to the problems along the Loire, there was a quiescent period before the next stage of the revolt in the north of Gaul, but this lull may have been relatively lengthy,<sup>58</sup> in that it was the belligerent attitude of the Aeduan nobleman Sacrovir that determined the length of this period of inactivity. He first fought on the side of the Romans in the campaigns against the Loire tribes,<sup>59</sup> then decided to join Julius Florus in engineering the more widespread revolt in

<sup>55</sup> Tacitus has been accused similarly of placing the revolt of Boudicca in 61, instead of 60 (Syme [n. 9], 391), a date now accepted without question (C. M. Bulst, 'The revolt of Queen Boudicca in A.D. 60', *Hist.* 10 [1961], 496–509). I thank the anonymous reviewer for pointing this out to me.

<sup>56</sup> Tacitus, *Annals* 3.40.3 puts the onset of the revolt loosely after the death of Germanicus (10 October A.D. 19), and links it with mutiny in the Roman army (cf. Woodman and Martin [n. 12], ad 40.3, cf. 44.1). This association suggests that the Gauls began their uprising while Piso was in revolt, thus in late A.D. 19 or early 20. M. Griffin, 'The Senate's story', *JRS* 87 (1997), 260, however, links this trouble in the army to the period after the anniversary of Germanicus' death, so after October A.D. 20.

<sup>57</sup> Aviola contacted Visellius Varro, the governor of Lower Germany, to plan a rendezvous with his forces in the vicinity of Tours, so time must be allowed for messengers to pass to and from these two Roman commanders, stationed approximately 600 km apart, and for Gallic auxiliaries to be convened. In addition, there was the emperor's input (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 2.41.3). Acilius' forces marched from Lugdunum to the Andes Mountains, a distance of about 400 km, a journey of perhaps two weeks, and campaigned against the Andecavi. The campaign itself seems not to have taken very long. To defeat the Turones, who also lived along the Loire, Aviola used additional support both from leading Gauls and from the forces of Lower Germany (*Ann.* 3.41.2–3). Despite these being easy victories for the Romans, the Loire campaigns could not have taken less than a couple of months, from planning stages through to completion.

<sup>58</sup> A lengthy time-lag is suggested by the speech attributed to Sacrovir and Florus (*Ann.* 3.40.3; cf. Woodman and Martin [n. 12], 327–8), who allegedly awaited their ideal time to regain Gallic liberty (*egregium resumendae libertati tempus*). See also P. Herz, 'Der Aufstand des Iulius Sacrovir (21 n.Chr.)', *Laverna* 3 (1992), 42–93.

<sup>59</sup> The Aeduan Sacrovir may not have been the only leading Gaul to fight for the Romans against the Turones, although he is the only Gallic nobleman named in the Loire campaigns (Tac. *Ann.* 3.41.3). Tacitus also mentions, in the next breath, that cavalrymen of the Treveri were

the north against the Romans.<sup>60</sup> It must have taken Sacrovir some time, however, to convince the Gauls that his *volte-face* was genuine, and then for him to have set his own movement in train.

The length of the last phase of the Gallic uprising would have been commensurately longer than the Loire revolts, if only because of the scale of the activities of the participants.<sup>61</sup> The events began among the Belgae,<sup>62</sup> when some men from an *ala* of cavalry from the Treveri were inspired by Florus to massacre Roman businessmen in the town. The cavalymen, joined by others, then headed west from Trier into the Ardennes (Tac. *Ann.* 3.42.1–2). These insurgents, however, were caught in a pincer movement between the Roman armies of Upper and Lower Germany and crushed. Florus seems to have eluded capture for some time, then to have committed suicide (*Ann.* 3.42.3). Although Tacitus gives the impression that matters were settled easily by the Romans (*Ann.* 3.42.2–3), the brevity of his narrative need not be taken to imply that the campaign was shortlived.<sup>63</sup>

The last part of the revolt, the uprising of the Aedui centred at Augustodunum, was on a far grander scale than the earlier efforts, and so this stage alone must have lasted an extended period of time. Sacrovir is said to have raised 40,000 men, seized Augustodunum and to have solicited help from the neighbouring Sequani (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.45.1, 46.2). Although, as with Florus' uprising among the Treveri, Tacitus conveys the idea that the threat from Sacrovir and the Aedui was exaggerated, that rumour magnified everything, and that Tiberius was unconcerned about the turn of the events (*Ann.* 3.44.1–4), logic dictates otherwise.<sup>64</sup> The governor of Upper Germany was summoned to deal with these events.<sup>65</sup>

trained along Roman lines (*Ann.* 3.42.1), and perhaps the Treveri and other Gallic tribes had been represented in these campaigns.

<sup>60</sup> Although Tacitus may have expected his readers to assume that the sudden change of heart by the Gallic nobility was a sign of barbarian fickleness, he has in effect ignored the paradox in his account of Sacrovir's fighting against his fellow-countrymen and being simultaneously on the Gallic side. He even claims that Tiberius was informed of Sacrovir's duplicity. Tacitus has used this incongruous aspect of the Gallic revolt to condemn the *modus operandi* of the emperor, to criticize his *dubitatio* (*Ann.* 3.41.3), and to allow carping at Tiberius' focus on *maiestas* cases at the expense of the security of the empire (*Ann.* 3.44.2–3).

<sup>61</sup> After the Loire campaign, Florus and Sacrovir returned north and perhaps only then did the rounds of potential insurgents (Tac. *Ann.* 3.40.3). Also, the hostilities accompanying this major period of unrest were staggered, taking their beginning in Trier, but going on to involve Autun.

<sup>62</sup> Note the language used by Tacitus at this point (*Ann.* 4.42.1: . . . *bellum inciperet* . . .), calling this uprising the start of the war. See also Vell. Pat. 2.129.3, who also speaks of a *bellum* (cf. R. Urban, *Gallia Rebells* [Stuttgart, 1999], 39–40). This suggests the importance assigned by Tacitus to this phase of the uprising.

<sup>63</sup> For example, we are informed that news of the uprising of the Treveri spread well in advance of the report that these offending Gauls had been crushed, since the Aedui would surely not have contemplated the same course of action had they been aware of its summary suppression, nor would people at Rome have heard about the simultaneous uprising of the Treveri and Aedui, had the former been put down extremely quickly (Tac. *Ann.* 3.44.1).

<sup>64</sup> On the seriousness of the revolt, see Woodman and Martin (n. 12), 328–9. Tiberius was in communication with his provincial governors before moves were made against either the Treveri or the Aedui, since Tacitus has Tiberius claim that he had contributed to the planning of the offensive against the Gauls (perhaps intending that he master-minded *all* the operations), and he also has him note the loyalty of his legates (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.1). Varro and Silius argued over who would take command of the campaign against the Aedui (*Ann.* 3.43.3; cf. 4.19.1–4), indicating that Tiberius must have ordered one of the commanders in Germany to remain behind, the other to lead the advance. The need to communicate actions with the emperor would have added weeks to every stage of the process.

<sup>65</sup> Silius had to march south from Trier to Autun (Tac. *Ann.* 3.45.1–2), a journey of a couple of

Thus, each of the stages of the revolt: the campaigns around the Loire; the uprising of the Treveri concluding in the Ardennes; the pursuit of Florus; the extended hostilities centred on Augustodunum; and the periods of quiescence between the various outbreaks of conflict, must have, at the very least, lasted many months.

If we examine Tacitus' account closely, however, we can see that, instead of 'beginning at the beginning', Tacitus has initiated his discussion of Gallic disaffection by outlining the reasons used by Julius Florus and Julius Sacrovir, the organizers of the second major stage of the uprising, to inspire their followers to revolution (*Ann.* 3.40.3). This unusual choice of a starting-point exonerates Tacitus from any serious anachronism, since the final stage of the Gallic revolt could in fact have begun in A.D. 21 and concluded by March/April.<sup>66</sup>

Because of Tacitus' treatment of the Gallic Revolt among the events of A.D. 21, however, we are unable to establish what strategic imperatives governed the military planning of either the Gauls in revolt or the Romans in defence, nor how long these took to determine and implement. Tacitus indicates that the troubles in Gaul occurred over a relatively lengthy period of time,<sup>67</sup> and he even goes so far as to link Gallic insurgency indirectly with the death of Germanicus (*Ann.* 3.40.3) but, without a clear idea of the actual timing of the outbreak, we cannot assess, for example, Sacrovir's initial position in fighting against the Gauls, followed by a complete about-face, to overt hostility to Rome.<sup>68</sup> Similarly, the military deployments made by Tiberius surely owed something to the other commitments he faced in A.D. 20.<sup>69</sup>

Although the limited vision of the revolt provided by Tacitus perhaps occurred as a result of his choice of sources,<sup>70</sup> we should not discount the possibility that Tacitus

weeks; then time would have been needed for preliminary reconnaissance before battle. After this, Silius would have sent a messenger to announce his victory to Tiberius, who in turn reported to the senate. All these activities would have taken many weeks to conclude.

<sup>66</sup> At the height of the revolt among the Belgae and Aedui (Tac. *Ann.* 3.44.2–3), Tacitus has contemporary gossip in Rome draw a vague contrast between the Gallic renegade Sacrovir and some Roman served with a summons to appear in the senate on the charge of *maiestas*. He links this to Tiberius' presence in Rome (3.44.4; cf. 47.2). This may be an allusion to Calpurnius Piso and to his trial in Rome in A.D. 20, and the reference to *cruentas epistolas* perhaps intends the missives of Tiberius not tabled during Piso's trial (cf. *Annals* 3.16.1). For a November/December date to the trial, see W. Eck, A. Caballos, and F. Fernández, *Das senatus consultum de Cn. Pisone patre* (München, 1996), 109ff. Cf. reservations expressed by M. Griffin, 'The Senate's story', *JRS* 87 (1997), 255, and R. J. A. Talbert, 'Tacitus and the *Senatus Consultum de Pisone Patre*', *AJPh* 120 (1999), 89–96, who date the trial earlier in the year. If the Gallic outbreak occurred in December 20, Sacrovir's part of the revolt might have begun before the start of 21 but perhaps culminated in the first few months of that year.

<sup>67</sup> The governor of Upper Germany, Silius, for example, was charged with having concealed the rebellious activities of Sacrovir for a long time (*Ann.* 4.19.4: *conscientia belli Sacrovir diu dissimulatus* . . .), but the period in question is not defined, and this was perhaps a charge unsubstantiated; cf. Urban (n. 62), 45–6, esp. n. 53.

<sup>68</sup> Gallic actions may have been governed by Rome's perceived personnel difficulties. Tacitus has the Gauls notice that they outnumbered Roman troops during the Loire campaigns (cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.41.1–2; cf. Koestermann [n. 12], *ad* 3.41.2; Woodman and Martin [n. 12], *ad* 41.2), and that the Romans fielded no cavalry (Tac. *Ann.* 3.42.1, 3; cf. 3.45.1). The low numbers of Romans committed to this campaign, however, did not signal a shortage. Although the army of Lower Germany contributed some men to the Loire campaigns, the army of Upper Germany did not commit any legionaries at this time but could have been deployed at short notice since it was stationed in Strasbourg (I. Paar, 'Der Bogen von Orange und der gallische Aufstand unter der Führung des Iulius Sacrovir 21 n. Chr.', *Chiron* 9 [1979], 222).

<sup>69</sup> If the eastern section of the empire was still unsettled in the wake of Piso's attempt to regain the province of Syria, Tiberius may have wished to keep troop movements to a minimum.

<sup>70</sup> Tacitus may have gleaned information about the events from senatorial archives (Paar



himself has manipulated the events to illustrate a number of recurring themes concerning Tiberius. In addition, we cannot discount the distorting effect of the artistry of Tacitus, who may have wanted to heighten the dramatic force of his account by introducing hints that Rome could have lost this encounter.

First, we should note how Tacitus characterizes the emperor as being cryptic about every aspect of the revolt (although everyone seems to know of the outbreak in Gaul, cf. Tac. *Ann.* 3.44), and behaving in such a way that no one could guess his state of mind, not even from the expression on his face (Tac. *Ann.* 3.44.4: . . . *neque loco neque vultu mutato* . . .). This secretiveness of Tiberius is a quality Tacitus stresses elsewhere in his work (e.g. *Ann.* 1.11.2, 1.24.1), and Tacitus intimates that Tiberius, through keeping everything hidden, would have concealed Rome's struggle against the Gauls, if Rome had lost this particular encounter.

In addition to fortifying the impression of Tiberius' tendency to concealment, Tacitus criticizes the emperor for a lack of overt action during the revolt, claiming that it was Tiberius' failure to act more forcefully in the initial stages of the revolt that led to further trouble (*Ann.* 3.41.3).<sup>71</sup> This claim provides a specific instance of a general theme about Tiberius, that he was unconcerned for Rome's military prowess or expansion of empire (*Ann.* 4.32.2; cf. 1.11.4, 2.64.1). Tacitus portrays the emperor as hesitant and bound by inertia, although later he allows, without comment, Tiberius' claim to the senate that he had contributed to the successful strategies used against the Gauls (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.1).

During his depiction of the Revolt, Tacitus leads the reader in fact to expect that Tiberius' cryptic responses and lack of overt action or interest, combined with other factors (the large forces of the enemy, Rome's quarrelling generals, hysteria in Rome), will give rise to a Roman defeat. This makes for literary tension in the account, which is eventually relieved by the news that the Roman legionaries prevail at the right time. When presented in isolation like this, Tiberius' attitude to military affairs in Gaul does seem quite off-hand, and this particular portrayal makes the emperor appear generally unconcerned about provincial matters, not subject to stress in the proper way; in essence, to be unsuited to ruling the empire.

The treatment of events in Gaul among the events of A.D. 21 divorces these from the other serious activities going on during A.D. 20, and this has allowed Tacitus to outline an unduly pessimistic portrayal of the Gallic uprising heightened by Tiberius' actions. Tacitus suggests that Tiberius was fortunate in having no other major problems to deal with, and that otherwise the revolt in Gaul might have turned out badly for the Empire. On the other hand, had the revolt been assigned to its proper setting by Tacitus, the reader might have seen the potential for disaster posed by empire-wide problems and might, perhaps, have been impressed by Tiberius' handling of the events.

[n. 68], 222), but a major source of intelligence on Gallic affairs, even for the senate, would have been the emperor. If Tacitus is correct, Tiberius was secretive about most aspects of the Gallic disturbance (Vell. Pat. 2.129.3; Tac. *Ann.* 3.44.4, 47.1), for whatever reason (G. Woolfe, *Becoming Roman* [Cambridge, 1998], 30–3), and this may have led to the impression that the events were confined within 21.

<sup>71</sup> In Tiberius' favour, we should note that the leading Gauls initially demonstrated firm allegiance to Rome, despite rumours to the contrary (*Ann.* 3.41.2–3). See Urban (n. 62), 41. Had Tiberius taken action on the rumours, he might have driven the Gauls to war immediately. The sources of intelligence available to the emperor were suspect, since prisoners of war would be expected to implicate in treachery any fellow-countrymen who had fought with the Romans. Tiberius would have relied heavily on intelligence being gathered by his governors to give him an on-going assessment of the situation in Gaul (Tac. *Ann.* 3.47.1: . . . *fide ac virtute legatos* . . .).

## CONCLUSION

A close examination of Xiphilinus' account of A.D. 21 gives rise to a number of effects, both historical and literary. Xiphilinus' statement concerning Tiberius' return to the capital (probably in April) enables us to plot the emperor's movements in A.D. 21 with greater accuracy and allows placement of the events of this and other years in a relative sequence, as part of a broader historical context.

In terms of its literary impact of the material provided by the excerptor, his account helps us to evaluate some of the differing literary techniques employed by Tacitus. In the instance of the consulship held by Tiberius and Drusus in A.D. 21, Tacitus has been highly selective in his reporting and has omitted a great deal of material. He has been sparing in his analysis and has focused only on items that suit his overall image of the emperor, who is shown as isolated and largely unaffected by external circumstances. Tacitus has not commented on the reasons for the tenure of office by Tiberius and his son, nor has he specified when or why Tiberius resigned from office and returned to Rome. Tacitus has mentioned only in passing that Drusus almost died this year, although his illness must have made some impact on the political scene, and was almost certainly a major factor in determining Tiberius' movements this year. In this way, Tacitus has, perhaps inadvertently, misled readers into believing that the emperor was not in Rome at all in this period.

As far as the Gallic revolt is concerned, Tacitus' compression of events in Gaul within the confines of A.D. 21 has had quite a different impact on the history of this period, since it in fact has distorted the events of this period by removing material from one context and placing it another. Tacitus' account has made it impossible to determine the rationale behind the activities of the Gauls, and he likewise has perhaps misrepresented the emperor's response to the Gallic threat. Although Tacitus may have removed the revolt from its chronological setting for purely literary reasons, to increase the dramatic force of his account by having Rome's destiny in the hands of a disinterested *princeps*, his relocation of this material has had a serious and irremediable impact on the historical interpretation of the events of A.D. 20 and 21.

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