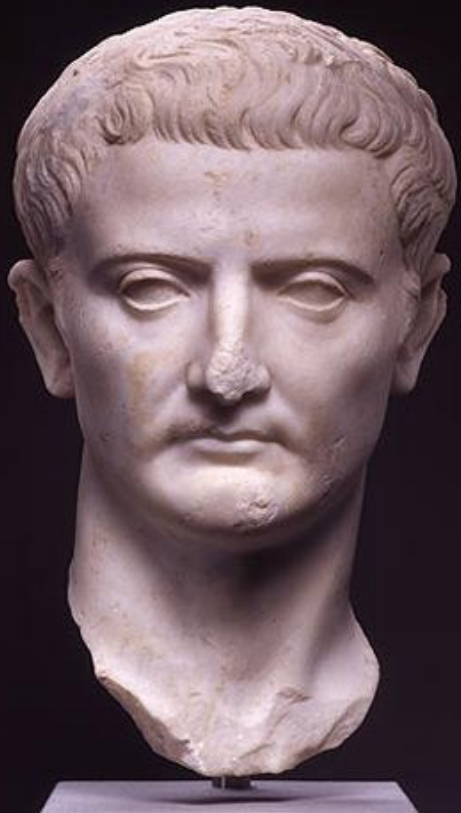




From Village to Empire. Lecture 20-21: The Julio-Claudians

The gemma Augustea and the dynastic succession

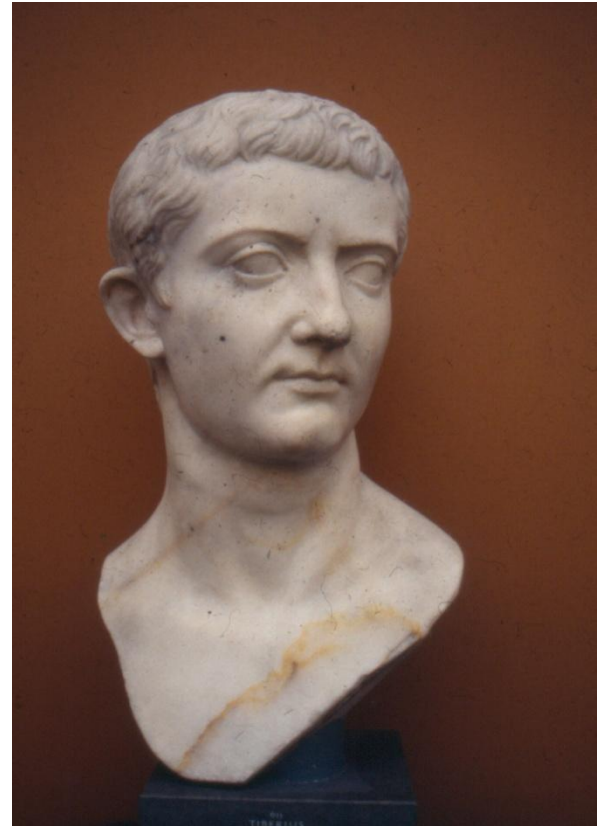


Why 'Julio-Claudians'?

- The full name of Tiberius, Augustus' successor, was Tiberius Claudius Nero, son of a former associate of Antony and of Livia Drusilla, second wife of Augustus (married in 38 BC)
- He found himself head of two *gentes* (clans): the Julii and the Claudii

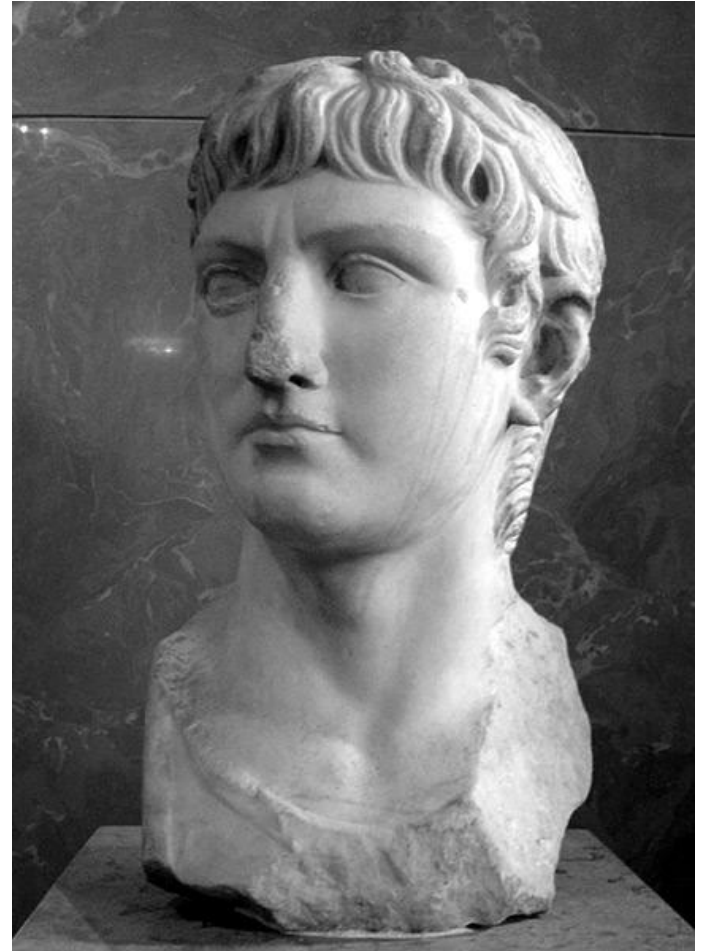
Tiberius

**Tiberius Julius
Caesar Augustus
born Tiberius
Claudius Nero
(42 BC – 37 AD)**



Germanicus

**Germanicus Julius
Caesar born Nero
Claudius Drusus** (24
May 16 BC or 15 BC –
10 October AD 19)



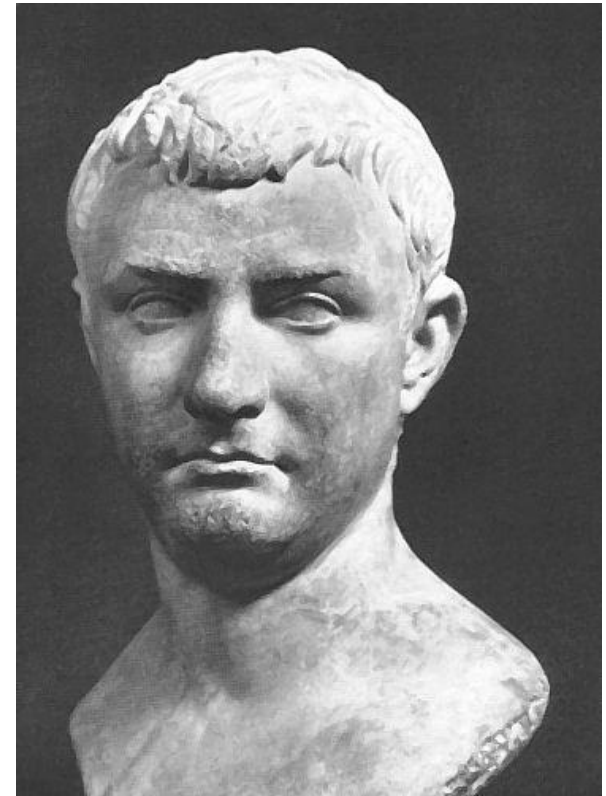
Agrippina the Elder

- **Agrippina Major**
- or **Agrippina the Elder**
- (AGRIPPINA•GERMANICI
- 14 BC– 33 Ad)



Sejanus

**Lucius Aelius
Seianus** (20 BC –
October 18, 31 AD).
Praetorian prefect



Why Tiberius?

- Only worthy successor within the Julio-Claudian house by AD 14
- Born in 42 BC; adopted by Augustus in AD 4
- Extensive military experience, especially in Germany
- Acted as aide to Augustus in the last part of his reign
- General consensus about his rise to power

Tiberius' policies

- Deification of Augustus immediately after his death
- Pledge to cooperate with the Senate
- Necessity to address the revolt of the legions on the Rhine: Tiberius entrusts the repression to his nephew and adoptive son Germanicus, son of Drusus (born 15 BC)

Tiberius. Chronology of events

- **14-16:** Mutiny of legions in Pannonia and Germania. Germanicus placates them.
- **14.** L. Aelius Sejanus Praetorian Prefect.
- **15.** Tiberius transfers the elections from the popular assemblies to the Senate.
- **19.** Death of Germanicus in Antiochia. Tiberius expels the Egyptians from Rome and deports 4,000 Jews from Sicily.
- **22.** Building of the Castra Praetoria in Rome.

Tiberius. Chronology of events

- **23** Tiberius' son Julius Caesar Drusus dies.
- **26.** Pontius Pilate appointed as prefect of Judaea. Tiberius retires to Capri and leaves state affairs to Sejanus
- **29.** Death of Livia
- **31.** Sejanus becomes co-consul. Execution of Sejanus, accused of conspiracy against Tiberius. Replaced by Gn. Naevius Sutorius Macro.
- **37.** Death of Tiberius, aged 78.

The Death of Germanicus



The Death of Germanicus

- Germanicus died in October the 10th of AD 19 in Syria.
- After his death, the senate gave him commemorative honours.
- A trial against Cn. Piso, governor of Syria followed. He was formally accused of his death.
- The results of the trial (*acta senatus*) and Piso's condemn are reported by Tacitus and also contained in the tabulae Siarensis and Hebana (*the lex Valeria Aurelia*).
- These epigraphic testimonies are complementary of Tacitus' account

Tacitus on the death of Germanicus

- Annals 3, 73 “His funeral, devoid of ancestral effigies or procession, was distinguished by eulogies and recollections of his virtues. There were those who, considering his personal appearance, his early age, and the circumstances of his death, — to which they added the proximity of the region where he perished, — compared his decease with that of Alexander the Great”

**Tabula Siarensis (found in Sevilla) and
tabula Hebana (Etruria), contain a fragment
of the Senatus Consultum de Cn. Pisone
patre**



Suetonius, Tiberius 41-42

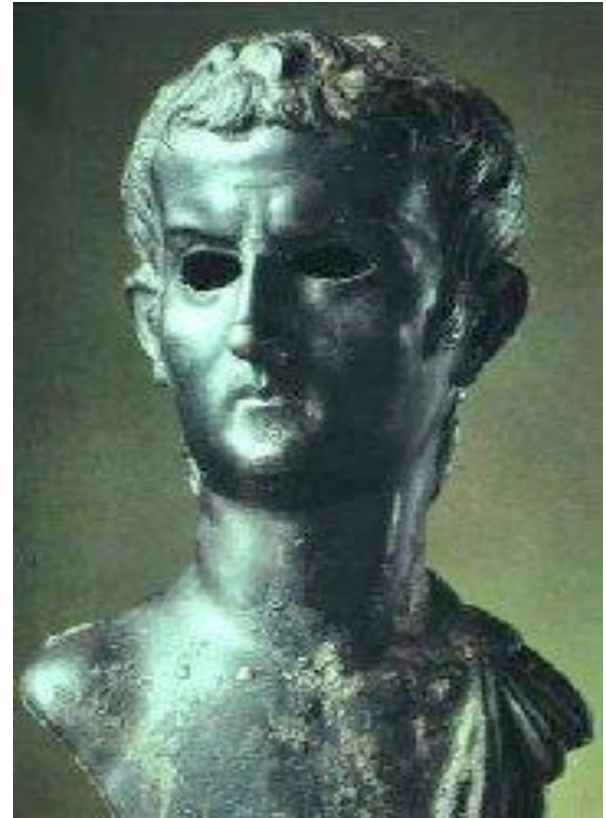
“On his return to Capri he let all affairs of state slide: neither filling vacancies that occurred in the equestrian order, nor making new appointments to senior military posts, or the governorships of any province. Spain and Syria were left without their governors of consular rank for several years. He allowed the Parthians to overrun Armenia; the Dacians and Sarmatians to ravage Moesia; and the Germans to invade Gaul – a negligence as dangerous to the empire as it was dishonourable. But having found seclusion at last, and no longer feeling himself under public scrutiny, he rapidly succumbed to all the vicious passions which he had for a long time tried, not very successfully, to disguise.”

Administration under Tiberius

- Consolidation of the Augustan institutions
- Promotion of the equestrian order
- Effort to organise the financial administration throughout the Empire
- New provinces were created: Moesia, Raetia, Cappadocia
- Client states on the borders

“Caligula”

**Gaius Julius
Caesar Augustus
Germanicus (12-
41 AD)**



Main Events

- **March, AD 37:** Caligula named emperor. He is 25 years old. His unique experience in the *cursus honorum* was a quaestorship in AD 33.
- Literary evidence of this period is frequently very anecdotal, marked by scandalous and extravagant episodes.
- The third of six children of Germanicus and Augustus' granddaughter, Agrippina. His familiar background made him very popular.

Main Events

- He was backed by the Praetorian Prefect Q. Sutorius Macro.
- His initiatives conveyed the continuity of Tiberius' regime but also connexions with his father, Germanicus, and with Augustus
- He made the first imperial donation to the Praetorian Guard, honoured Tiberius and avoided to accuse those who have caused the destruction of his closest family.
- He compensated those abused by the imperial tax system.

Main Events

- The ancient sources indicate a sudden change in Gaius' attitude and character and are unanimous in portraying him as insane.
- Along with cruelty and sexual scandals, sources emphasise Caligula's disrespect towards Roman tradition and the Senate.
- **38 CE:** Early in the year, Caligula forced his father-in-law, Gaius Silanus, and young Gemellus, grandson of Tiberius, to commit suicide by accusing them of treasonable activities

Main Events

- Among the famous deeds assigned to him are his incestuous relations with his sisters, ridiculous military campaigns in the north, the building of a pontoon bridge across the Bay at Baiae and the plan to make his horse a consul.
- Gaius' portrait by the literary sources is that of the tyrant.
- Contrast between the literary sources and the iconography, which portrays the continuity between Augustus and Gaius.

Main Events

- External politics: Mauretania was annexed and reorganised into two provinces.
- Herod Agrippa was appointed to a kingdom in Palestine, and severe riots took place in Alexandria between Jews and Greeks.
- **Conspiracy of 39:** under the commander of the Upper German legions, Cn. Lentulus Gaetulicus. Gaius's brother-in-law, M. Aemilius Lepidus and 2 of Gaius' sisters were also involved.

Caligula and his sisters



Main Events

- Gaius military campaigns in Gallia and Germania: Searching for support of provincials rather than victorious military campaigns
- **On 24 January A.D. 41** the praetorian tribune Cassius Chaerea and other guardsmen caught Gaius alone in a secluded palace corridor and cut him down. He was 28 years old and had ruled three years and ten months.

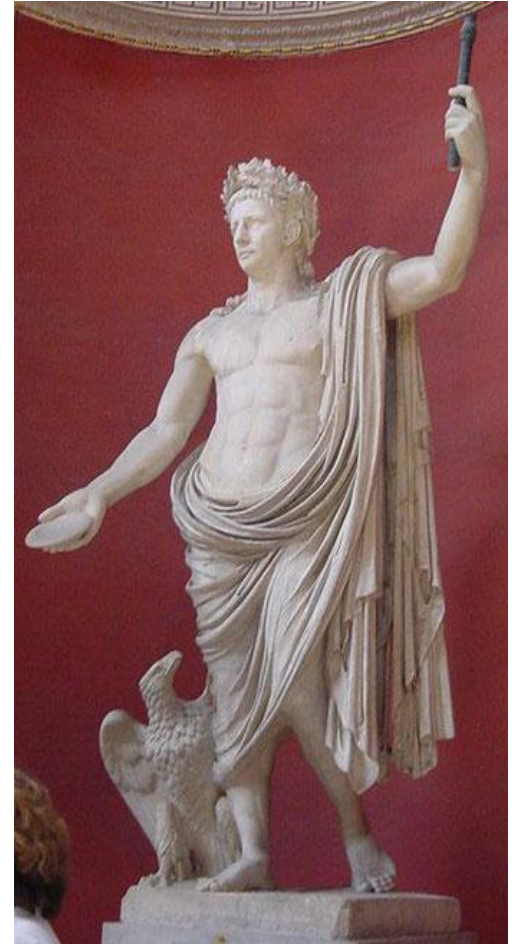
Alma-Tadema, A Roman Emperor AD 41





Claudius

- **Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus**, born **Tiberius Claudius Drusus**, later called **Tiberius Claudius Nero Germanicus** (10 BC – AD 54)



Main events

- **41:** Caligula's murder by the praetorians was not a political conspiracy.
- No obvious candidate exists when Claudius is spontaneously proclaimed emperor by the praetorians.
- Claudius had little previous political and no military experience (considered unable). Gaius promoted him to consulship at the age of 46 (AD 37).
- He was a learned man: he wrote an History of the Etruscans unfortunately lost.

Keys of Claudius' principate

- His reign represents a turning point in the history of the Principate. The manner of his accession determined his office. His was not a 'natural' election either supported by the senate.



Keys of Claudius' principate

- During his reign he promoted administrators who did not belong to the senatorial or equestrian classes (part. freedmen), and was later vilified by authors who did.
- Attempts to build consensus: lavish public expenditure, recruitment of a number of new senators, also from the provinces

Political decisions

- A keen eye for administration (esp. the role of the *procuratores*)
- Reinforcement of central administration and bureaucracy
- Revival of many long-forgotten traditions
- Detailed and abundant legislation
- Emphasis on the role of the Senate
- Persecution of foreign cults

The Conquest of Britain

- **AD 44:** He followed Caesar in carrying Roman arms across the English Channel into Britain but, unlike his predecessor, he initiated the full-scale annexation of Britain as a province.
- After a parade at Camulodunum (Colchester) to impress the natives, he returned to Rome to celebrate a triumph

The Triumphal Arch and the Conquest of Britain



Foreign policy

- He dispersed grants of Roman citizenship to provincials. Investment in the provinces. Public building. Direct orders (*mandata*) from emperor to governor.
- Under him the kingdom of **Mauretania, Lycia, Noricum and Thrace** were converted into provinces. Stable kingdoms, such as Bosphorus and Cilicia, were left untouched.
- Judaea: left as client kingdom to Herod Agripa I.

Dynastic trouble

- Married to Messalina; he repudiates and executes her in 48 on grounds of adultery
- Marries his niece Agrippina in 49
- Agrippina becomes increasingly influential
- A. plots to have her son L. Lucius Domitius Ahenobarbus adopted by Claudius, who had a son, Britannicus; he is adopted in 50
- A. organises the plot in which Claudius is poisoned (54)

Cassius Dio, Roman history Book 53, 19

On the imperial bureaucracy under the Julio-Claudians....:

3 "But after this time most things that happened began to be kept secret and concealed and even though some things are perchance made public, they are distrusted just because they can not be verified... "

Public Building. Temple of Roma and Augustus



Claudius and Messalina/Agrippina

