

PART I

**Texts**

COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL



# The Textual Transmission

---

*Charles E. Murgia*

## 1. *Annals* 1–6

The textual transmission of the *Annals* and *Histories*, to the extent that they survive at all, is relatively simple since the archetypes (the source of all transmitted readings) survive, and these codices have been published in facsimile editions. *Annals* 1–6 (except for a lacuna covering most of Book 5 and the beginning of Book 6) survive in Florence as Laurentianus Mediceus plut. 68.1 (that is, the first codex chained to Bench 68 in the Library in the cloister of the church of St. Lawrence – the beautiful Basilica di San Lorenzo). This codex was written in the mid-ninth century in Caroline minuscules, probably in Fulda (so Bischoff 1998; facsimile with preface by Rostagno 1902). The fact that the preposition *apud* is regularly written *aput* attests to transmission in a Germanic-speaking region, where final *d* was pronounced as *t*. Although the correspondence of Poggio shows an attempt to acquire the codex from the monastery at Corvey, it was not until the sixteenth century that Pope Leo X gained possession and handed it over to Beroaldus (Filippo Beroaldo), whose text was used for the first edition (1515).

## 2. *Annals* 11–16, *Histories*

*Annals* 11–16 and *Histories* 1–5 are preserved in a mid-eleventh-century MS written in the Beneventan script of Monte Cassino. It is also currently housed in the Medicean Library in Florence, catalogued as Laurentianus Mediceus plut. 68.2 (facsimile with preface by Rostagno 1902). It is bound under the same number with a somewhat later Beneventan MS, through which survive

Apuleius' *Apology* (titled "On Magic"), *Metamorphoses*, and *Florida*. A librarian's note on the verso of the opening flyleaf indicates that the codex (including the Apuleius) had passed from the estate of Niccolò Niccoli (died 1437) to the monastery of San Marco in Florence. Letters between Poggio and Niccoli confirm his role in the humanists' discovery of Tacitus. The two Medicean MSS of Tacitus are reported by editors under the symbol (siglum) M. They are the sole sources of transmitted scribal readings of Tacitus (except for quotations of Tacitus by other authors), though at one time an effort was made to establish a later MS, L (whose watermark indicates a date no earlier than 1475, later than the first printed edition of these works, de Spira, Venice, 1472–1473) as having access to a line of transmission independent of the Second Medicean MS. Despite the efforts of Mendell (Mendell and Ives 1951) and Koestermann (1969), most editors now recognize that L, Leiden B. P. L. 16B, copied by Rudolphus Agricola (Roelf Heysman), simply exhibits the ingenuity of fifteenth-century humanists, including Agricola. It is useful for its conjectural corrections of the text as are other fifteenth-century codices, whichever is the earliest to divine a correction of a mildly corrupt text. But they are generally helpless against major errors such as lacunae. M's text ceases (before the end of the page) at *Histories* 5.26.3 *Flavianus in Pan<no>nia*. All the fifteenth-century codices stop either there or at an earlier passage. Editors such as Wellesley (1989) classify the later MSS (over thirty) according to the place where their text stops. Class 1 stops exactly where M stops, Class 2 (which includes Leiden B. P. L. 16B, and its probable main source, the first printed edition) stops substantially earlier at 5.23.2 *potiorem*, and Class 3 even earlier at 5.13.1 *euenerant*. Further details and bibliography are available in Tarrant (1983). Although the fifteenth-century MSS lack authority where M is extant, some at least must be invoked where M has suffered loss after the first copies of it were made, as in *Histories* 1.69 *placa|bilem*–75.2 *incertum* and 1.86.2 *inopia*–2.2.2 *Cyprum*, where M has suffered the loss of a bifolium. Useful MSS for this purpose include (from Class 1) Vat. Lat. 1958 (which Tarrant described as copied at Genoa in 1449 by Giovanni Andrea de'Bussi) and Laur. Med. plut. 68.5.

### 3. The Minor Works

#### *Agricola*

For the minor works, we again have available the archetype, but only one quire of the original ninth-century MS survives entire, containing *Agricola* 13.1 *munia* to 40.2 *missum*. Some readings of the *Agricola* survive in palimpsest after 40.2, but for the most part, for both the beginning and end of

the *Agricola*, the ninth-century original was replaced by a fifteenth-century scribe identified by Annibaldi (1907) as Stefano Guarnieri. Guarnieri also added following the *Agricola* the text of the *Germania*. This MS (which also has bound with it, in front of the *Agricola*, the *Trojan War* of Dictys of Crete) used to be known as the codex Aesinas (Jesi lat. 8), preserved by the Count of Jesi, who successfully hid it from a Nazi attempt to seize it in 1944 (details in Schama 1995, 75–81). After a sojourn in Florence, where some folia were damaged in the flooding of the Arno in 1966 (Schama 1995, 81 and n. 15; Niutta 1996, 178), the codex was acquired in 1994 by the Biblioteca Nazionale in Rome, where it is catalogued as Cod. Vitt. Em. 1631. A full description is given by Niutta (1996), who reports that the codex must have passed from the estate of the Guarnieri family to the Balleani of Jesi in 1793. Its importance was recognized in 1902, and a printed diplomatic copy of the *Agricola* and perceptive analysis were published by Annibaldi in 1907. Till published a photographic facsimile in 1943, and photos of the entire codex, including the Dictys, are also housed in the paleography room (Widener D) at Harvard University. Annibaldi recognized that the ninth-century text of the *Agricola* corresponded to an inventory known from letters of Niccolò Niccoli (1431) and Decembrio (1455) of a MS found by a Hersfeld monk that contained in order the *Germania*, *Agricola*, *Dialogus* of Tacitus, and the *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* of Suetonius. This codex is commonly referred to as the Hersfeldensis (Hersfeld codex): the ninth-century writing of Aesinas lat. 8 is given the siglum E by Ogilvie in his Oxford Classical Text and is distinguished from e, the fifteenth-century writing. Doubts about the identification of the Hersfeld codex with E for the *Agricola* (based on the lack of mention of the Dictys text in the inventories) have been answered in Murgia and Rodgers (1984). The text of the *Agricola* was copied in the fifteenth century by scribes of two codices, A (Vat. Lat. 3429, written by Pomponio Leto) and T (Toledo 49.2, dated to 1474). Since these scribes copied the codex after it had been supplemented and corrected by Guarnieri, their testimony has no evidential value, but they need to be cited a few times for their conjectural emendations. The same is true of B, Vat. Lat. 4498, a copy of A (see Murgia 1977, 323–326).

The advantage of having extant a quire of the ninth-century MS that transmits the *Minor Works* is that we do not have to guess at what it was like. We can see that it was liberally corrected by a different ninth-century hand, evidently from a different scribal source, since many of the readings added as variants in the margins would seem to a scribe to be improbable. Murgia (1977, 329) counted “at least 145 notable corrections and variants” in the *Agricola* text. Therefore when MSS of the *Germania* (whose fifteenth-century history followed a different path from the *Agricola*) display marginal variants, we can recognize that they thereby show a closer affinity to the archetype.

### *Germania*

Although when Guarnieri supplemented the text of E he used E itself as his source, he did not use the Hersfeld codex as his immediate source for his text of the *Germania*. Guarnieri's text, given by Winterbottom (1975) the siglum E, is placed by Winterbottom in the same family with an equal witness, codex, B: that is, based on shared errors, Winterbottom sees E and B as separated from the archetype by at least one shared MS (a hyparchetype). I could easily believe that even more hyparchetypes intervene, but the process of developing a stemma of the scribal relations is complicated by the fact that the archetype is known to have had corrections and marginal variants. Whenever two MSS share errors one must eliminate the possibility that the archetype had both the error and the correct reading or the codices must share the same choices too often for coincidence. Winterbottom narrowed the witnesses worth citing to six, comprising three families: W and m he combined as the family ζ; E (Guarnieri) and B he combined in the family β; and C he combined with a family Φ into the family Γ. W is Vienna s. n. 2960 (copied in 1466 by Hugo Haemste), m is Munich Clm 5307, B is Vat. Lat. 1862, C is Vat. Lat. 1518. The chief representative of Φ is Q (Venice Marcianus Lat. 4266, copied in 1464 in Bologna). Each of the three groups he presented as descending independently from the (now lost) Hersfeldensis, and he proposed to make the agreement of any two families usually establish the correct reading. This does not work in a tradition in which the archetype is known to have had variants. So in a reading such as *Germania* 2.2.9 (the third number is the line number in Winterbottom's OCT), where Winterbottom printed the *Hermiones* of βC, but ζ correctly attests *Herminones*, the more likely explanation is that the archetype had *hermiones* in the text and *herminones* as a marginal variant, just as in *Agricola* 14.1, E had *cogidumnus* in the text, but the correct (and less Latin-looking) *togidumnus* as a marginal variant. The fact that βC share the same incorrect variant is compatible with two explanations: either they share a common hyparchetype or they share a preference for the *facilior lectio* (the easier reading – Hermione being a familiar name in mythology; see Murgia 1977, 340).

### *Dialogus*

Winterbottom used many of the same codices for the *Dialogus* as for the *Germania*. But W is now called V, and it joins with Vatican Ottobonianus Lat. 1455 (instead of m) to form ζ. B now stands alone as the representative of β. The relationships of the codices are clearer in the *Dialogus* in as much as the transmission is inferior. In the *Dialogus* the fact that there are fewer

double readings presented as variants, but a number of apparent confluences of variants, makes it likely that the MSS all descend from a Renaissance apograph of the Hersfeld codex which either suppressed or conflated inherited variants. Some of the shared errors suppose fifteenth-century abbreviations. So 31.7.13 *comitem* Vahlen *citem* (with line over *i*) B *ciuitatem* Γζ shows the shared mistaking of *citem* (with line over *c*, Caroline abbreviation for *comitem*) for *citem* (with line over *i*, Renaissance abbreviation of *ciuitatem*). The Renaissance abbreviation for forms of *ille* (*i* followed by superscript *e*, or appropriate termination, such as superscript *a* for *illa* or *d* for *illud*) is frequently expanded as *iste* or *id* or *iam* by B and/or Γ, and once (41.5.13) all the MSS seem to have corrupted *illi* to *isti*. In 21.4.23, where the correct reading is ζ's *illae*, BC have *regulae*, and Q reads *re* followed by a space of three letters. It is clear that a common source of BCQ had *r* followed by superscript *e* (a Renaissance abbreviation of *regulae*), a mistake for *i* with superscript *e* (Renaissance abbreviation for *illae*). So we have here shared errors that cannot be attributed to marginal variants in the ninth-century Hersfeldensis, since those abbreviations are not known before the fifteenth century. We have to assume at least two Renaissance MSS anteceding BCQ, one of which correctly abbreviated *illae* with *i* and superscript *e*, and a second of which misread the *i* as an *r*. Other shared errors, such as at 11.1.21 *parantem inquit* Walther *parant enim quid* (*quidem* V) ζ *parant quid enim* BΓ (which show BΓ sharing a failed conjecture, where ζ more accurately transmits an unintelligible corruption), suggest that the most likely stemma makes BΓ share a common source (hyparchetype) of which ζ is independent. This was the view of Robinson (1935) on the *Germania* (where, though the independent value of ζ is clear, the argument is less secure), and Winterbottom (1983, 411) came to concede that Robinson may have been right.

## GUIDE TO FURTHER READING

E. A. Lowe (early name Loew) did early paleographic work on the MSS of the *Annals* and *Histories* which may conveniently be found collected in his *Paleographical Papers* (Lowe 1972 Vol. 1: 92–98, 113 n. 3, 289–302 and plates 37–38), as well as in his *The Beneventan Script* (1980, 34: 43). For the *Minor Works* the main authority is Bischoff. Although it has often been assumed that the Hersfeldensis was written in Fulda (near Hersfeld, and where M for the *Annals* 1–6 was written), Bischoff, on paleographic grounds, thought that a monastery on the Loire was the more likely origin of the codex Aesinas.

Oliver (1951) tried to reconstruct a rustic capital archetype of a thirty-book edition of the *Annals* and *Histories* together. The words *Ab excessu diui Augusti* (“From the death of divine Augustus”), which the First Medicean MS has prefixed to each of the first five books of the *Annals* (the beginning of six does not survive), and which

Mendell (1957, 295) interpreted as “the title of the MS,” is written as if part of the text and is interpreted by Oliver as a subtitle for the *Annals* within the thirty-book collection. But it should be noted that although the Second Medicean MS presents part of a collected edition of *Annals* and *Histories* together, it does not contain the alleged subtitle, and it contains within itself clear indication that it was copied from codices in which the *Annals* were bound separately from the *Histories*: although *Histories* 2–5 are titled (in colophons ending books in M) Books 18–21 of Tacitus (the end of *Histories* 1 and beginning of *Histories* 2 do not survive in M, but the colophon *Cornelii Taciti liber XVII explicit. Incipit XVIII*, “Cornelius Tacitus’ Book 17 ends. Book 18 begins,” found in later MSS, fits the pattern of the other book endings), the first book of the *Histories* begins in M without title on a recto (right-hand page) preceded by a blank verso (left-hand page, with the surviving bit of the end of the *Annals* on the other side). That indicates that the Second Medicean MS was copied from codices in which the end of the *Annals* ended the volume (and so was subject to losses, as often happens at the end of volumes) and the *Histories* began a new codex. So the binding together of *Annals* and *Histories* did not (in its line of transmission) antedate the eleventh-century Second Medicean MS, and, if a thirty-book edition is its source, it was a two-volume or multi-volume edition. The main reason for believing in a Late Antique thirty-book edition of Tacitus is a reference in Jerome, *Commentary on Zacchariah* 14.1.2, to Tacitus as composing the *Lives of the Caesars* “after Augustus all the way to the death of Domitian” in thirty volumes (*triginta uoluminibus*). But there is no secure proof that either Medicean MS descends from such an edition.

Oliver (1976) argued that Boccaccio, in his marginal addition to his *De genealogia deorum*, attributed to Tacitus a story about an attack by Venus on king Cinyras (*cinaras*) which is based on a corrupt version of Tacitus *Histories* 2.3 that is found in L and other late MSS of all three classes. That Boccaccio knew the version as early as 1371 is interesting, but since it contains no correct readings relative to M, but further corrupts M’s readings by failed conjectures, there is no basis for arguing that its text was independent of codex M.

Although Mendell’s arguments for L’s independence cannot be accepted, he did important work on the identification, description, and classification of the later MSS (1939 and 1957), and with Pol (1966) he published a facsimile of L. The most thorough arguments against independent value in L are provided by Goodyear (1965 and 1970). Römer’s 1976 edition of *Annals* 15–16 provides a complete apparatus from which the quality and deficiencies of the later MSS can be judged. An insert after page LXVIII presents his stemma of the MSS in descent from M.

While Gordan provides very readable English translations of the correspondence of Poggio and Niccolò relative to the Renaissance discovery of Tacitus, her translations are based on the Latin texts published by Tonelli. The Latin texts of Poggio and Niccolò that concern the *Minor Works* may also conveniently be found in Robinson (2–7), as well as a letter of Panormita (3) and a note of Decembrio to Guarino of Verona (8–9). Schaps (32) brought into play also a letter of Jacopo, Poggio’s son, which largely duplicates information contained in Niccolò’s inventory.



Schaps presented the chief reasons for doubting that the codex Aesinas was to be identified with the Hersfeldensis.

Winterbottom's arguments for a tripartite stemma for the *Dialogus* and *Germania* are presented most fully in 1972 and 1975. But Kaster (1992, 1–34) argued convincingly that Suetonius' *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus* (which followed the *Minor Works* in the Hersfeldensis) descends through the same bipartite stemma that Robinson constructed for the *Germania* and Murgia for the *Dialogus*. Murgia (1979), in arguing for a relatively short lacuna in the *Dialogus* (a single folio after chapter 35), adds further comments on the quality of evidence of the MSS and on the early history of the transmission.

## WORKS CITED

- Annibaldi, C. 1907. *L'Agricola e la Germania de Cornelio Tacito nel ms. latino n.8, della biblioteca del Conte G-Balleani in Iesi*. Città di Castello.
- Beroaldus, Ph. 1515. *P. Cornelii Taciti Ab excessu divi Avgvsti historiarvm libri quinq; nuper inuenti atq; cum reliquis eius operibus maxima diligentia excusi*. Rome.
- Bischoff, B. 1998. *Katalog der festlandischen Handschriften des neunten Jahrhunderts (mit Ausnahme der wisigothischen)*. Part 1. Wiesbaden.
- Goodyear, F. R. D. 1965. "The Readings of the Leiden Manuscript of Tacitus," *Classical Quarterly* 15: 299–322.
- Goodyear, F. R. D. 1970. "On the Leidensis of Tacitus," *Classical Quarterly* 20: 365–370.
- Gordan, P. W. Goodhart. 1974. *Two Renaissance Book Hunters: The Letters of Poggius Bracciolini to Nicolaus de Niccolis*. New York.
- Kaster, R. A. 1992. *Studies on the Text of Suetonius De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus*. Atlanta.
- Koestermann, E., ed. 1969. *P. Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt II.I Historiae*. Leipzig.
- Lowe, E. A. 1972. *Paleographical Papers, 1907–1965*, 2 vols. Oxford.
- Lowe, E. A. 1980. *The Beneventan Script: A History of the South Italian Minuscule*, 2nd edition prepared and enlarged by Virginia Brown. *Sussidi eruditi*, Vols. 33–34. Rome.
- Mendell, C. W. 1939. "Manuscripts of Tacitus XI–XXI," *Yale Classical Studies* 6: 41–70.
- Mendell, C. W. 1957. *Tacitus: The Man and His Work*. New Haven.
- Mendell, C. W. and S. A. Ives. 1951. "Ryck's Manuscript of Tacitus," *American Journal of Philology* 72: 337–345.
- Mendell, C. W. and E. H. Pol. 1966. *Codices Graeci et Latini Photographice Depicti* 20. Leiden.
- Murgia, C. E. 1977. "The Minor Works of Tacitus: A Study in Textual Criticism," *Classical Philology* 72: 323–345.
- Murgia, C. E. 1979. "The Length of the Lacuna in Tacitus' *Dialogus*," *California Studies in Classical Antiquity* 12: 221–240.

- Murgia, C. E. and R. H. Rodgers. 1984. "A Tale of Two Manuscripts," *Classical Philology* 79: 145–153.
- Niutta, F. 1996. "Sul Codice Esinate di Tacito, Ora Vitt. Em. 1631 della Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma," *Quaderni di storia* 43: 173–202.
- Oliver, R. P. 1951. "The First Medicean MS of Tacitus and the Titulature of Ancient Books," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 82: 232–261.
- Oliver, R. P. 1976. "The Second Medicean MS and the Text of Tacitus," *Illinois Classical Studies* 1: 190–225.
- Robinson, R. P. 1935. *The Germania of Tacitus*. Middletown, CT.
- Römer, F., ed. 1976. *P. Cornelii Taciti Annalium, libri 15–16: Einleitung, Text u. vollst. krit. Apparat aller bekannten Handschriften*. Vienna.
- Rostagno, H. pref., 1902. *Tacitus. Codex laurentianus mediceus 68 I–II phototypice editus (Codices graeci et latini photographice depicti duce Scatone de Vries, 7)*. Leiden.
- Schama, S. 1995. *Landscape and Memory*. London.
- Schaps, D. 1979. "The Found and Lost Manuscripts of Tacitus' *Agricola*," *Classical Philology* 74: 221–240.
- Tarrant, R. J. 1983. "Tacitus," in L. D. Reynolds, ed., *Texts and Transmissions*. Oxford: 406–409.
- Till, R. 1943. *Handschriftliche Untersuchungen zu Tacitus Agricola und Germania*. Berlin-Dahlem.
- Tonelli, T., ed. 1832–1861. *Poggio Bracciolini Epistolae*. Florence.
- Wellesley, K., ed. 1989. *Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt*. Leipzig.
- Winterbottom, M. 1972. "The Transmission of Tacitus' *Dialogus*," *Philologus* 116: 114–128.
- Winterbottom, M. 1975. "The Manuscript Tradition of Tacitus' *Germania*," *Classical Philology* 70: 1–7.
- Winterbottom, M. 1983. "Minor Works," in L. D. Reynolds, ed., *Texts and Transmissions*. Oxford: 410–411.
- Winterbottom, M. and R. M. Ogilvie, eds. 1975. *Cornelii Taciti Opera Minora*. Oxford.