

## THE FIERY EYES OF AUGUSTUS AND THE ANNALES OF NICOMACHUS FLAVIANUS\*

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### ABSTRACT

The anecdote concerning the fiery eyes of Augustus is known from the *Epitome de Caesaribus* and Servius. The latter quotes Suetonius as its source, yet in Suetonius' extant works, the anecdote is missing. According to Jörg Schlumberger, its late antique source could have been the *Annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus, which, however, could not possibly be referred to at the time, due to the *damnatio memoriae* cast upon its author. Some observations seem to support this explanation, and in addition, the *Annales* may even have been at least a partial cause to have brought about this *damnatio*.

**Key words:** Augustus; *Annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus; *Epitome de Caesaribus*; Servius; commentary on Aeneid; Suetonius; historians of late antiquity; Quellenforschung; correspondence of Symmachus; *damnatio memoriae*

The first emperor of the Roman Empire attracts scholarly attention any time, but the 2000th anniversary of his death invites even non-specialists to occupy themselves with the man, who made the epoch. In the present paper, however, Augustus will concern us in the capacity of a hero of the anecdote which might play some role in recent debate of students of late antiquity. In this debate, in my view, some relevant circumstances are overlooked as yet, so the goal of this paper is to consider whether they may cast some new light on what is at issue.

The anecdote in question is to be found in two late antique sources, the *Epitome de Caesaribus* and Servius' commentary on Virgil's *Aeneid*. In the former, it occurs as an addition to a brief characteristic and description of the emperor, who is said to have enjoyed intimidating with them those dealing with him at the moment, wherefore one soldier allegedly even turned his face away from Augustus because of them, as he revealed when asked, why he had done so.<sup>1</sup> Servius mentions the anecdote while commenting upon Virgil's account of the battle of Actium as depicted on the shield of Aeneas, during which

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<sup>1</sup> Ps. Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 1, 20: *fuit mittis, gratus, ciuilis animi et lepidi, corpore toto pulcher sed oculis magis; quorum aciem clarissimorum siderum modo uibrans libenter accipiebat cedi ab intendibus tamquam solis radiis aspectui suo. a cuius facie dum quidam miles oculos auerteret et interrogaretur ab eo cur ita faceret, respondit: "quia fulmen oculorum tuorum ferre non possum".*

Octavian was standing on the stern of his ship with flames blazing from his temples. It is preceded with a shorter remark that it was impossible to withstand the gaze of these eyes; instead of the soldier, however, an equestrian appears, and in addition, Suetonius is quoted as the source.<sup>2</sup> In the extant *Lives of the Caesars* by this author, however, a mere allusion to Augustus' fiery eyes occurs, but not the anecdote itself.<sup>3</sup> This was noticed already by 19th century scholars, who offered a variety of more or less acceptable explanations.

In his Teubner edition of Suetonius, Roth classified Servius' text as one of the fragments entitled "*sed male e libris de vita Caesarum afferuntur*".<sup>4</sup> Wölfflin,<sup>5</sup> rejecting explicitly any possibility of the anecdote's coming from one of the non-extant works by Suetonius, thought of several eventualities. According to him, Servius could have drawn directly upon the anonymously published *Epitome de Caesaribus*, and quoted Suetonius, since its first chapters indeed contain excerpts from this author. The name of Suetonius could also have become some kind of a nickname for a writer of imperial biographies.<sup>6</sup> Or, Servius could simply have made a mistake when quoting by heart, or wanted to use Suetonius' reputation to boost his own credibility. The first two alternatives were rejected by Enmann, who considered more likely that both the *Epitomator* and Servius had drawn upon an abridged version of Suetonius' *Lives* containing some *dicta et facta memorabilia* of the emperors, which had also been enriched from other sources.<sup>7</sup> Independently of

<sup>2</sup> Serv. Aen. VIII, 680: TEMPORA FLAMMAS LAETA VOMVNT *naturaliter enim Augustus igneos oculos habuisse dicitur, adeo ut obtutum eius nemo contra aspectare posset, denique quidam eques Romanus, interrogatus ab eo, cur se uiso uerteret faciem, dixerit "quia fulmen oculorum tuorum ferre non possum", sicut ait Suetonius.*

<sup>3</sup> See Suet. Aug. 79, 2: *oculos habuit claros ac nitidos, quibus etiam existimari uolebat inesse quiddam diuini uigoris, gaudebatque, si qui sibi acrius contuenti quasi ad fulgorem solis uultum summitteret.*

<sup>4</sup> Roth (1858: 287).

<sup>5</sup> Wölfflin (1874: 301–302).

<sup>6</sup> Including Caesar, which is, according to Wölfflin, proved by evidence of Sidon. *Epist.* IX, 14, where Suetonius is considered even the author of the *Commentarii de bello Gallico*. Yet the very Sidon. *Epist.* IX, 14, 7 illustrates only dimly this mistake: *imminet tibi thematis celeberrimi uotiuua redhibito, laus uidelicet peroranda, quam meditaris, Caesaris Iulii. quae materia tam grandis est, ut studentum si quis fuerit ille copiosissimus, nihil amplius in ipsa debeat cauere, quam ne quid minus dicat. nam si omittantur quae de titulis dictatoris inuicti scripta Patauinis sunt uoluminibus, quis opera Suetonii, quis Iuuentii Martialis historiam quisue ad extremum Balbi ephemeridem fando adaequauerit?* Lacking the context (and attaching no importance to *opera* in plural), Sidonius could be understood as having Caesar's biography by Suetonius in mind, and both recent editors of Sidonius' works probably comprehended his words in this manner: Loyen (1970: 173 note 63) apparently so, although judging by his remark that "*nā subsistē que l'œuvre de Suétone*" we cannot be sure, Anderson (1936: 587 note 3) certainly so, since in his footnote he refers to Suetonius as the author of the *Lives of the Caesars* and other non-extant works. Nevertheless, this misconception is more suitably illustrated with what Roth (1858: CI–CII) and Reifferscheid (1860: 471–472) refer to: in some manuscripts, Caesar's memoirs are directly credited to Suetonius, and Oros. *Hist.* VI, 7, 2 introduces his own summary of them with the remark: *hanc historiam Suetonius Tranquillus plenissime explicuit, cuius nos competentes portiunculas decerpimus.* Schlumberger (1974: 26 note 34) further refers to similar treatment of the name of Livy concerning the history of the Roman Republic reportedly mentioned by Wagener (1886: 513), but to me these instances do not seem to resemble one another, since Wagener had one particular epitome of Livy in mind as the source, instead of Livy himself, for all the authors of late antiquity, which nonetheless had been entitled with his name. Schlumberger indeed counts as well on one particular "*späterer Suetonsauszug*" which "*den Namen des berühmten Biographen als eine Art Gattungsname geführt hat*", but I think using the name of Suetonius in general is what Wölfflin rather had in mind.

<sup>7</sup> Enmann (1884: 405–406), with a remark, if the lemma is authentic and Servius had not been mistaken, objected to Wölfflin that Caesar had been neither an author of imperial biographies, nor a writer of the period of the Empire, and that Servius' *eques* could hardly have evolved from *miles* of the *Epitomator*, since only the reverse process had been possible. By contrast, there are three extant abridgements of Suetonius' *Lives*, one of them, contained in the *Codex Lipsiensis*, supplemented from

him, Cohn envisaged what he had directly labelled *Suetonius auctus*: an exemplar of Suetonius enriched with supplements from other sources;<sup>8</sup> he also rejected in advance the eventual origin of the anecdote in any of Suetonius' non-extant works.<sup>9</sup> This was, in a dispute with Cohn, advocated by Armstedt,<sup>10</sup> who once more rejected Wölfflin's thesis of Servius directly drawing upon the *Epitome* and applying the name of Suetonius to it, because its author had used his *Lives* as a source.<sup>11</sup>

Another hypothesis of the day could give the impression of possibly being the solution to this problem, namely that of Suetonius' authorship of a historical treatise on the civil wars between Pompey and Caesar, and between Antony and Octavian. The possibility of the anecdote about the fiery eyes of Augustus occurring in such a source to my knowledge never came to mind; nevertheless as it presents itself, a brief summary of the development of this hypothesis may be useful for the eventual consideration of this possibility. It was first laid down in his edition of the Suetonian fragments by August Reifferscheid,<sup>12</sup> inspired on one hand by two further quotations of Suetonius, one by Aulus Gellius who had taken from him the information on the successes of Ventidius Bassus against Parthians and on his public funeral,<sup>13</sup> and yet another one by Servius, concerning the distribution of estates

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Orosius, although according to Möbius, these supplements had come from another source, upon which Orosius had drawn as well. Nevertheless, the effect of analogy between these instances misleads a bit. The description of this *Codex* by Möbius (1846: 636–639) himself reveals that in fact, the wording by Suetonius is occasionally only altered, so as to more closely resemble most often that of Orosius, but in no manner that it had been enriched, except for two supplements concerning Trajan and Iovinianus (sic!), which, however, only follow after the excerpts themselves.

<sup>8</sup> Cohn (1884: esp. 60–67), who had come to this verdict following his study of the sources of Aurelius Victor and the first eleven chapters of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. The Suetonian quotation by Servius, he considered an acknowledgement thereof, further validated through other quotations by Servius, John the Lydian, Eutropius, Festus, and the Scholiast to Juvenal, all drawing according to Cohn upon this source and conserving other hints represented by various details lacking in Suetonius himself, although often he is explicitly quoted, or by correcting his accounts. The very mention of the anecdote by Servius, Cohn considered evidence of it not having been fabricated by the author of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*. And he too noticed the discrepancy between the soldier of the *Epitomator* and Servius' equestrian, and ascribed it "*levitati Epitomatoris ... quam saepe iamprehendimus*".

<sup>9</sup> Cohn (1884: 62) referred to *Lyd. Mag.* 1, 12 fin., where according to him, the very biography of Augustus is quoted, although a detail is added lacking therein: καὶ τοῦτο Τράγκυλλος ἐν τοῖς Περὶ Αὐγούστου διαμείνηται. ἰδόντα γὰρ φησι τὸν Αὐγούστου ἐν τῷ ἵπποδρομίῳ τινὰς τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἐπὶ τὸ βαρβαρικὸν ἐσταλμένους ἀγανακτήσαι, ὡς ἐν ἀκαρεῖ τοὺς καταγνοσθέντας ἀποβαλόντας τὸ βάρβαρον μόγις ἐπιγνοσθῆναι τῷ Καίσαρι ≈ *Suet. Aug.* 40, 5: *etiam habitum uestitumque pristinum reducere studuit, ac uisa quondam pro contione pullatorum turba indignabundus et clamitans: "en Romanos, rerum dominos, gentemque togatam!" negotium aedilibus dedit, ne quem posthac paterentur in foro circae nisi positis lacernis togatum consistere.* Yet the discrepancy between the last sentences by John and by Suetonius had been explained differently by Schrader (1877: 16–17): either John or his source had quoted Suetonius by heart and therefore garbled his account.

<sup>10</sup> Armstedt (1885: 30) considered it very unlikely that a source of such nature as supposed for the *Suetonius auctus* would have been henceforward still entitled with the name of Suetonius. Cohn's quotations of other alleged users of such a source could have referred to other Suetonius' writings, as in the case of the above (note 9) adduced quotation from John the Lydian, which Armstedt claimed to have originated in the non-extant Suetonius' *De genere uestium*. Furthermore, such writings could have served precisely John, Servius, and the scholiasts better as sources than imperial biographies, especially the first of the three, as some had apparently been written in Greek.

<sup>11</sup> According to Armstedt (1885: 30) as well, Servius could not have altered the *miles* of the *Epitomator* to *eques*, while the reverse process he considered easily possible, and the explicit reference to Suetonius excludes eventual error.

<sup>12</sup> Reifferscheid (1860: 469–472).

<sup>13</sup> *Gell. Noct. Attic.* XV, 4, 4: *eundem Bassum Suetonius Tranquillus praepositum esse a M. Antonio prouinciis orientalibus Parthosque in Syriam introrumpentis tribus ab eo proelis fusos scribit eumque*

by Pompey following the pirate war;<sup>14</sup> and on the other hand by Mommsen's postulation of an unknown historical writing, not yet ascribed to Suetonius, resulting from his inquiry into the sources of Jerome's additions to the *Chronicle* of Eusebius.<sup>15</sup> Reifferscheid further pointed out that Suetonius is the only one among the sources of Jerome's additions referred to by name,<sup>16</sup> which he explained by Suetonius' being the eldest among these sources.<sup>17</sup> General approval, however, was not won by this hypothesis even in its time,<sup>18</sup> and later it was challenged by Helm's theory of a single source for Jerome and Eutropius, covering the history of both the Republic and the Empire,<sup>19</sup> advocated today as well.<sup>20</sup> And in fact, the

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- primum omnium de Parthis triumphasse et morte obita publico funere sepultum esse.* Roth (1858: 283) classified this fragment among those of Περὶ Ῥώμης καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ νομιμῶν καὶ ἡθῶν βιβλία β' mentioned in *Suda* T 895, while according to Reifferscheid (1860: 436) these two books had been a part of Suetonius' broader work, the *Prata*. He himself (1860: 355–356 frag. 210) included this text among the fragments of the historical work in question, entitled *Historiae cuius titulus incertus est reliquiae*. Earlier on, Egger (1844: 266) had thought of the origin of the quotation in Suetonius' *De uiris illustribus*. Of these three, Pirogoff (1873: 86 with note 4) referred only to Roth, Schrader (1877: 30–33) considered Roth's suggestion more likely than that of Reifferscheid, while completely rejecting that of Egger, and Wagener (1886: 527–528) mentioned only Roth's suggestion, since to Reifferscheid he referred only in connection with his inclusion of the writing favoured by Roth into the *Prata*. At the same time, he rejected Pirogoff's and Schrader's opinion of the origin of Eutr. VII, 5, 2 in this less known Suetonian work, preferring rather the above (note 6) mentioned Livian epitome, a possible source for Suetonius too, or Livy himself, or an entirely unknown source. Recently, Marache (1989: 218 note 6 to p. 152) referred without anything further only to Reifferscheid.
- <sup>14</sup> Serv. *Georg.* IV, 127: *per transitum tangit historiam memoratam a Suetonio. Pompeius enim uictis piratis Cilicibus partim ibidem in Graecia, partim in Calabria agros dedit.* Roth (1858: 306) classified this among the fragments of the *Prata*, while Reifferscheid (1860: 355 frag. 209) similarly to the preceding one.
- <sup>15</sup> Mommsen (1850: 681 = 1909: 618), according to whom, however, this writing had covered a period only starting with the death of Pompey and reaching as far as the battle of Actium; besides Jerome, also Cass. Dio XLIII–XLVIII had drawn upon it, and it was characterised by “*Proprietät, Genauigkeit und Eleganz des Ausdrucks*”, wherefore Mommsen ascribed it “*einem römischen Autor guter Zeit*”. Reifferscheid (1860: 470–471) then pointed out that Cassius Dio had (according to him) demonstrably drawn upon Suetonius' *Lives of the Caesars* (yet beginning with Schwartz [1899: 1714–1717 = 1957: 438–443], the opinion prevailed that both had followed common sources), while at the same time claiming that a writing containing the pirate war had to have a broader scope than that allowed for by Mommsen, he included therein also Jerome's mention of the birth of Pompey, sc. Hier. *Chron.* 148b, to which see Reifferscheid (1860: 354 frag. 208). Mommsen (1850: 676 = 1909: 613) considered this a piece of Cicero's biography in *De oratoribus*, since both Pompey and Cicero were born the same year.
- <sup>16</sup> See Hier. *Chron.* praef. p. 6 vers. 17–20 Helm: *a Troia usque ad uicesimum Constantini annum nunc addita, nunc admixta sunt plurima, quae de Tranquillo et ceteris inlustribus historicis curiosissime excerpti.*
- <sup>17</sup> With the work, in which also Caesar's activities in Gaul were supposed to have been described, Reifferscheid (1860: 471) linked also the above (note 6) mentioned mistaken ascription of Caesar's memoirs to Suetonius. Preferable explanation, however, is given by Roth (1858: CII).
- <sup>18</sup> Among the scholars referred to above in note 13, only Schrader allowed therefor. Subsequently, it was rejected by Haupt (1885), according to whom Jerome's additions had come from Livy or rather from some Livian epitome, and both Suetonian quotations from various books of the *Prata*. Schanz, Hosius, Krüger (1922: 62) mentioned another opponent and two followers, themselves watering down Schanz's initially negative stance to rather neutral. Nowadays, eventually, the hypothesis could perhaps be revived, as a special interest on part of Suetonius in the period in question is observed, as summarized by Birley (1984: 247; 249) and de Coninck (1991: 3699), but so far it is not the case yet.
- <sup>19</sup> See Helm (1927: esp. 303–306), who elsewhere (1927: 159 note 1) recognized Reifferscheid's observation that Suetonius had been the eldest of Jerome's sources, yet according to him, it need not have been a historical writing by this author which Jerome had drawn upon. Furthermore, Helm questioned (1927: 275–277) whether the two non-Jeromian fragments, which had formed the base for Reifferscheid's hypothesis, could not have come from other Suetonius' works, and argued, although rather unconvincingly, for Haupt's above (note 18) outlined view.
- <sup>20</sup> See Burgess (2005: esp. 190).

assumption of a very circumscribed number of sources Jerome could have drawn upon,<sup>21</sup> I approve of as well.

In the 20th century, Jörg Schlumberger once more came back to the question of the origin of the anecdote while involved in his comprehensive study of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*.<sup>22</sup> As for the earlier explanations,<sup>23</sup> he objected to Armstedt that none of the known titles of Suetonius' non-extant works suggests an inclusion of such an anecdote therein.<sup>24</sup> His own explanation then resulted from the main output of his book: his detection of a no longer extant source used by the anonymous author of the *Epitome*, identified with the lost *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus, whose recovery, at least partial, in Schlumberger's opinion, the *Epitome* may have served, after Flavian had suffered the *damnatio memoriae* following his death during the battle of Frigidus.<sup>25</sup> The anecdote, according to Schlumberger, came into the *Epitome* from Flavian's *annales*; hence he suggested as the most acceptable possibility that Servius, having drawn upon these *annales* as well, but due to the *damnatio memoriae* kept from quoting Flavian directly, yet knowing he had drawn upon Suetonius abundantly, ascribed precisely to this author also the anecdote, which, however, Flavian himself had to have found elsewhere.<sup>26</sup>

As a matter of course, Michel Festy in his recent edition of the *Epitome de Caesaribus*, dealt with the anecdote as well. This scholar shares with Schlumberger the opinion that the so called *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus served the author of the *Epitome* as a source, yet not throughout the entire writing, but only starting with the chapter on Severus Alexander, since the 1st and the 2nd centuries had been, in Festy's view, treated only very briefly in the *annales*.<sup>27</sup> As for the origin of the anecdote, he thus looked elsewhere: in the so called *Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte* (hereafter *EKG*), with which he explicitly identified Cohn's *Suetonius auctus*.<sup>28</sup> There is, however, one detail slightly less favourable to this

<sup>21</sup> To which see Helm (1927: esp. 138–139) and for a solid foundation of this assumption also Burgess (1995: 354–356).

<sup>22</sup> Schlumberger (1974).

<sup>23</sup> More briefly than here summarized by Schlumberger (1974: 25–26).

<sup>24</sup> Schlumberger (1974: 26).

<sup>25</sup> For Schlumberger's conclusions concerning the *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus as the source for the *Epitome*, see Schlumberger (1974: 235–244). Competing views of *Epitome*'s sources as offered by Barnes (1976), Festy (1999: XII–XXXVIII), for whose partial agreement to Schlumberger's conclusions see below on this page, and Gauville (2005: 97–158, esp. 157–158, and 221–222) do not at all prove that of Schlumberger mistaken and are not preferable, since allowing for higher total of sources, some of them, such as Marius Maximus, Eunapius of Sardis, or rhetorical handbooks, hardly fitting the needs of the hastily working *Epitomator*. The largely different approach of den Boer as mirrored for example in his remarks towards Schlumberger (1979), is in my view untenable. Basic information about the *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus, a supposed source more cautiously also titled as *Leoquelle*, since its identification with the lost *annales* is only possible, and only according to some, including myself, likely, while according to others unfounded or even impossible, is to be found in the works referred to by Prchlik (2011: 313–314 note 17). For the deficiencies of Cameron's (2011: 627–690) declinatory exposition (the "final word" according to one of the anonymous referees to this paper) see Paschoud (2012: 369–380) and Brendel (2013: 1390–1391). The purpose of the *Epitome*'s having been composed mentioned here has been considered by Schlumberger (1974: 245–246) and Festy (1999: LV). As for eventual further circumstances concerning the impact of the *damnatio memoriae* with respect to other non-extant writings by Flavian, see Prchlik (2012: 59–60).

<sup>26</sup> See Schlumberger (1974: 61–62 with note 211; 243–244 note 52; 246 note 56).

<sup>27</sup> See Festy (1999: XV–XX, esp. XVIII–XX) and also Schlumberger (2000: 397–398) for some weak points of this approach. In this respect, I share the latter's view, see Prchlik (2011: 313 in note 17).

<sup>28</sup> Thus Festy (1999: 63–64 note 18). For only the basest information about this likewise supposed source postulated by Enmann (1884), and its identification with *Suetonius auctus* as postulated by

viewpoint. Augustus' fiery eyes are mocked by Julian, who is supposed to have known the tradition of the *EKG*,<sup>29</sup> but there is no sign at all of his eventual knowledge of the anecdote. What he actually says can very well be based only on the general characteristics known from Suetonius, and thus presumably also from the *EKG*. Although the cogency of an argument of this kind is obviously rather doubtful, in my opinion it cannot be omitted completely, when considering the suitability of the anecdote to Julian's sense of humour.<sup>30</sup>

On the other hand, another circumstance may seem very compatible with Schlumberger's view, yet only if Jean-Pierre Callu's suggestion is approved of. His point is that the famous anonymous addressee of the letter in which Symmachus addresses a senator engaged in writing history,<sup>31</sup> is to be identified as Flavian.<sup>32</sup> I approve of this, even if other suggestions are at hand,<sup>33</sup> since with Flavian, also the opportunity is presented to think of the reasons for the omission of the letter from the original corpus edited by Symmachus' son.<sup>34</sup> At the time of its publication, he could have been afraid of any kind of allusion

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Cohn, see Festy (1999: XIII–XV), for a more elaborate discussion, including a disputation with the opponents to this theory, see Burgess (1995: 349–354, disputation 352–354). And for the most recent hypothesis on this source see Burgess (2005: 187–190).

<sup>29</sup> See *Iul. Caes.* 4 [309b]: Ὀκταβιανὸς ἐπεισέρχεται πολλὰ ἀμείβων, ὥσπερ οἱ χαμαιλέοντες, χρώματα, καὶ νῦν μὲν ὠχρίων, αὐθις δὲ ἐρυθρὸς γινόμενος, εἶτα μέλας καὶ ζοφώδης καὶ συννεφής, ἀνιέτο δ' αὐθις πρὸς Ἀφροδίτην καὶ Χάριτας, εἰναί τε ἤθελε τὰς βολὰς τῶν ὀμμάτων ὁποῖός ἐστιν ὁ μέγας Ἥλιος· οὐδένα γὰρ οἱ τῶν ἀπαντῶντων ἀντιβλέπειν ἤξϊου. Julian's knowledge of the *EKG* tradition has been considered by Alföldi (1968); clues to continually drawing upon it, however, were detected only in the passage from Gallienus to Diocletian, while the depiction of the earlier emperors Alföldi considered too general to allow for the identification of its source (1968: 5). Yet some items, among them Augustus' fiery eyes, he derived from the *EKG* tradition as well (1968: 6–7). According to Bleckmann (1992: 24 note 98), in the case of Julian, the *EKG* tradition need not have been exploited; Alföldi's conclusions, on the contrary, have been approved by Chastagnol (1994: LXX).

<sup>30</sup> Alföldi (1968: 6) even compared Julian's text to that of the *Épitome de Caesaribus*, which he quoted with the anecdote included, but did not address anyhow its omission by Julian.

<sup>31</sup> See *Symm. Epist.* IX, 110, 2.

<sup>32</sup> Callu (1999: 95–96).

<sup>33</sup> Ammianus Marcellinus, identified as the addressee for a long time, is ruled out by Cameron (1964). Naucellius, Protadius, Eutropius, or Aurelius Victor suggested by Roda (1981: 241–245) seem to me ruled out as well by Callu (1999: 95 with note 44), and the first one also by Paschoud (2010: 318). The author of the *Épitome de Caesaribus* touched on by Cameron (2011: 635 note 34) is ruled out, if approved of Schlumberger's (1974: 244 and 245) and Festy's (1999: XLIX) persuasion that in this author rather some scribe, secretary, or clerk is to be seen. Unlike that of Gauville (2005: 162 and 224), according to whom the *Épitomator* belonged to the Latin educated elites, this persuasion is well grounded. On the contrary, Flavian was ruled out by Enßlin (1923: 8) and Cameron (2011: 635) owing only to their persuasion that all the letters addressed to him had been gathered in the book II of the Symmachian corpus, which need not be true, as pointed to in the following note. Moreover, as for Cameron, this persuasion contradicts his approval of Roda's suggestions referred to in the following note as well. Flavian, or the author of the *Leoquelle*, is further credited with the Sallustian style, to which see e.g. Schlumberger (1974: 238 with note 29), suitable to Symmachus' words: *senatorias actiones et Romanae rei monumenta limasti*. And likewise suitable to these words is Flavian's interest in senatorial interventions into history, to which see Schlumberger (1974: 178) and Bleckmann (1992: 401–402) and also numerous descriptions of the senate's actions in the *Historia Augusta*, to which Flavian's *annales* had served as a source too.

<sup>34</sup> Cameron's (2011: 366–370) notion of the three phase publication of the corpus by Symmachus himself (book I), Symmachus' son (books II–VII), and a later, unknown member of his family, incapable by then of supplying the missing headings (books VIII–X), seems acceptable. Among those additionally published, some letters were probably inserted whose addressees had been included in the original corpus, for which see Cameron's (2011: 366 note 62) approval of Roda's suggestions. As to the question of self-censorship in the original Symmachian corpus, see Prchlík (2012: 52 with note 15) and Cameron (2011: 370–371 and 381), whose exposition I understand as complementary to that

to Flavian's historical writing, and his motivation could thus have been similar to that considered by Schlumberger in the case of Servius.

There is, however, one obvious objection to this notion, namely the bizarreness of the circumstances under which Flavian himself is mentioned abundantly in the corpus, yet in connection with his historical writing, his name was to have been suppressed. An acceptable explanation, nevertheless, is at hand. Elsewhere, I have pointed out the possibility that the complete loss of Flavian's literary works could have been due to his *damnatio memoriae*, although the reason for this *damnatio* did not have to be these works themselves.<sup>35</sup> My opinion on the nature of his *annales*, namely that they were meant to prompt Theodosius, then in conflict with Ambrose, to placability towards the traditional cults, I have outlined yet elsewhere.<sup>36</sup> The matter mulled over here could, however, suggest that it was perhaps Flavian's literary works and the *annales* in particular, which had indeed brought about his *damnatio*.

Theodosius probably can be believed to have forgiven to all those who had stood against him at the Frigidus and to have been keen on pardoning Flavian as well.<sup>37</sup> And as his grandsons Theodosius II and Valentinian III, but more likely Flavian the Younger in fact,<sup>38</sup> in their imperial letter assure, the *damnatio* had been cast upon Flavian against the will of Theodosius himself, due to the envy of Flavian's enemies. Yet the reference to the *annales* occurs in the letter in this very connection, and so it seems as if it was this historical writing, which indeed provoked the hostile reaction of Theodosius' entourage, or at least escalated it.<sup>39</sup> Is it then possible that it may have been written in a manner

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I advert against in mine, rather than a shift in opinion; but still, I consider that of mine valid. The absence of any allusion to Flavian's *annales* in the Symmachian corpus is seen by Cameron (2011: 633–635) as an indication of their poor standard, due to which Flavian himself supposedly disliked them to be remembered. By contrast, I gathered elsewhere several hints indicating their rather high standard, which in my opinion are more relevant, see Prchlik (2011: 315–316 note 22). Moreover, the *annales* were later commemorated by the members of Flavian's family, namely Symmachus' son (see *ibidem*), Flavian's son (see below on this page with note 39), and perhaps Cassiodorus (see below in note 41), whose respect for Flavian's legacy can hardly be questioned. Paschoud (2012: 373) explains this absence more reasonably, through Symmachus' lack of interest in history, especially in contemporary history. In my view, however, considering Symmachus' frequent allusions to the literary works of his addressees, it was rather self-censorship on part of the editor of the original corpus, while the later editor of the additional letters might not have been aware of having included such potentially dangerous material, or could have believed in eliminating the danger by the omission (then perhaps deliberate) of the heading to this letter.

<sup>35</sup> Prchlik (2012: 59–60).

<sup>36</sup> Prchlik (2011: 320–321).

<sup>37</sup> See CIL VI, 1783 = ILS 2948 vers. 16–17: EVM (sc. *Flavianum*), QVEM VIVERE NOBIS SERVARIQ(ue) VOBIS – QVAE VERBA EIVS (sc. *Theodosii*) APVT VOS FVISSE | PLERIQ(ue) MEMINISTIS – OPTAVIT, and further add Ambr. *Obit. Theod. 4: (Theodosius) qui etiam his, qui in se peccauerant, doluit, quam dederat, perisse indulgentiam et ueniam denegatam*, and Socr. *H. E. V, 14, 4–9* for a similar earlier treatment of Symmachus. Theodosius' *clementia* towards the defeated is praised also by Claud. *Paneg. dictus Honorio cos. IV 111–117*. Treatment of the supporters of the deposed usurpers in general is discussed by Szidat (2010: 328–337), according to whom they were being put to death mostly if they had participated in murdering the legitimate emperor, which was not Flavian's case. Yet even so, his situation was in my opinion precarious, because of the religious component of the conflict, played down unduly by Szidat (1979) and Cameron (2011: 59–131), even if emphasized perhaps also unduly (and unfortunately, without direct disputing at least the former) by Ratti (2012a: 111–114). In this case, therefore, rather the personal ties, of which Szidat (2010: 143) is aware, played their role.

<sup>38</sup> Which is a very persuasive argument of Hedrick (2000: 222–225).

<sup>39</sup> See CIL VI, 1783 = ILS 2948 vers. 18–21: QVIDQVID IN ISTVM (sc. *Flavianum*) CAECA INSIMVLATIONE COMMISSVM EST, PROCVL AB EIVS | PRINCIPIS (sc. *Theodosii*) VOTO FVISSE IVDICETIS, CVIVS IN EVM

bearable to Theodosius himself, at the time of mutual respect during his sojourn to Rome, when he could have shown interest in the views of the followers of the traditional cults,<sup>40</sup> but unbearable to his entourage?

One aspect, however, could embarrass an affirmative answer. After his rehabilitation in 431, reasons to be afraid of mentioning Flavian's name in connection with his *annales* certainly diminished, if not ceased, and afterwards, he was indeed occasionally mentioned at least in connection with his other literary works.<sup>41</sup> So the question is, when were the *Epitome de Caesaribus* and Servius' commentary published. As for the first one, the scope of the matter is quite clear, since there is quite secure *terminus post quem* here: Theodosius' funeral in Constantinople in November 395, and quite secure *terminus ante quem* as well: the death of Arcadius in May 408.<sup>42</sup>

The date of the commentary is less clear, since the first decade of the 5th century, prior to the fall of Rome, is preferred only by a majority of scholars. Two kinds of clues are at hand, the internal hints in the commentary itself and those based on Macrobius' *Saturnalia*, in which Servius appears as one of the main characters, whereby an approximate *terminus post quem* is provided.<sup>43</sup> But otherwise, this second group of clues is conten-

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EFFVSA BENIVOLENTIA ET VSQ(ue) AD AN|NALIVM, QVOS CONSECRARI SIBI A QVAESTORE ET PRAEFECTO SVO VOLVIT, PROVECTA | EXCITAVIT LIVOREM IMPROBORVM.

<sup>40</sup> Pacat. *Paneg.* 47, 3 describes certainly exaggeratedly Theodosius' behaviour in Rome, but the fact remains that in two subsequently issued constitutions, Theodosius intervened against some negative impacts brought into the public life by the church, to which see *Cod. Theod.* XVI, 2, 27 and 3, 1, and perhaps he had even been inclined towards the restitution of the Altar of Victory in the senate, as suggested by Ambr. *Epist.* 57, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Sidon. *Epist.* VIII, 3, 1 mentions Flavian's *Vita Apollonii*, to which see Prchlik (2012: 50–51). Cassiodorus could have perhaps mentioned Flavian even in connection with his *annales*, yet the extant excerpt of his *Ordo generis Cassiodorum* no more than does not exclude, but neither supports this possibility, to which see Cassiod. *Anecd. Hold.* vers. 6–9. The *De vestigiis sive de dogmate philosophorum* is quoted directly at least by Iohannes Saresber. *Policrat.* II, 26 [460b]; VIII, 11 [749a]; VIII, 11 [755a]; VIII, 12 [758a]; VIII, 12 [761a], which certainly testifies to that the writing could have circulated inscribed with Flavian's name from some time on. For its ascription to Flavian see provisionally Prchlik (2012: 51) and add Ratti (2012a: 132–136), whose exposition contains valuable observations, acceptable even if his central thesis – the attribution of the authorship of the *Historia Augusta* to Flavian – is not accepted. For other quotations of “Flavianus”, although uncertain or doubtful whether to be identified with Virius Nicomachus Flavianus, see Prchlik (2012: 58–59). Furthermore, it cannot be excluded that Flavian as an author of the literary works is mentioned in the *Historia Augusta*, to which see both Prchlik (2012: 53–54 and 55) and Paschoud (2012: 368–369), yet under a nickname, and at an undisclosed time, as the date of publication of the *Historia Augusta* is very contentious, although not a few favour some point during the period of Flavian's *damnatio*. For the suspicious absence of any mention in Symmachus' letters, see above in note 34; similar absence in Macrobius' *Saturnalia* I consider caused by reasons of the kind suggested by Schlumberger, as referred with objections by Cameron (2011: 634), but these objections are based only on unfulfilled expectations which Cameron himself lays on Macrobius, and disregard the *lacunae* in those sections of the *Saturnalia* in which Flavian appears. And moreover, Cameron forgets about his own persuasion of the source of Macrobius' information, the letters of Symmachus (which, however, to clarify my own opinion, certainly was not his only source).

<sup>42</sup> For the general date see Schlumberger (1974: 245), Festy (1999: LIII–LVI and 237 note 28) and Gauville (2005: 13–14). Theodosius' funeral is mentioned in Ps.Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 48, 20, and Arcadius together with Honorius in Ps.Aur. Vict. *Epit.* 48, 19 without any indication of his not being alive at the time. Cameron's (2001) suggestion, accepted as far as his premise, but not the conclusion by Barnes (2002: 27), according to whom the *Epitome* could have been published during the year 395, after the death of Theodosius, but before his funeral, has been decisively refuted by Festy (2003).

<sup>43</sup> The point is, when at latest Servius must have been born, to allow Macrobius to use him, probably with some licence, as a character, with regard to the dramatic date of the *Saturnalia*, to which see different opinions of Marinone (1970: 185–188) and Cameron (2011: 239–241).

tious, since Macrobian Servius differs largely in his expositions from the real Servius;<sup>44</sup> yet neither Servius does in his commentary reflect in any way the eventual existence of the *Saturnalia*, so the question is, which one of these two published his work first.

As for the internal hints, Thilo pointed to Servius' remark, that even the ancients had considered the Getae, identified commonly with the Goths during late antiquity, to be ferocious, which he deemed to have been inspired by Alaric's campaigns in Italy.<sup>45</sup> According to Georgii, Servius would not have had been so laconic following the fall of Rome in 410, yet he adverted to the battle of Adrianople in 378 as to an equally relevant possibility.<sup>46</sup> The idea was further developed by Döpp, who thought of three possibilities: the battle of Adrianople, the battle of Pollentia in 402, and the fall of Rome. The first one, however, had occurred too early, and in a far too distant Thracia, while the third one he excluded on the same grounds as Georgii did. On the contrary, the outcome of the battle of Pollentia had been Roman victory, which in Döpp's view corresponds with the aloofness of Servius' remark.<sup>47</sup> Murgia was more sceptical as to the *terminus post quem*, which he considered impossible to be specified, but at the same time he supported the fall of Rome as the *terminus ante quem* with the observation that Servius in no manner reflects it even when mentioning the prophecy of the rule of Rome lasting as long as the altar of Terminus remains in its place.<sup>48</sup> Cameron disputed the significance of Servius' remark concerning the Getae, which he considered suitable for any time between 380 and 440, but was nevertheless convinced that at the time of publication of the *Saturnalia* after 430,<sup>49</sup> Servius had already been dead, and that the commentary on the *Aeneid* had been written by him as the first of his Vergilian commentaries.<sup>50</sup> Also Schlumberger,

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<sup>44</sup> See esp. Marinone (1970: 198–203).

<sup>45</sup> Thilo (1881: LXXII) and see Serv. *Aen.* VII, 604: *Getarum fera gens etiam apud maiores fuit*.

<sup>46</sup> Georgii (1912: 523) further foisted on Thilo the opinion that the confusion Getae × Goths had appeared as lately as with Alaric, allegedly due to Claudian's *Bellum Geticum* (not mentioned in any way by Thilo himself). An earlier appearance was considered by Georgii as proven by a joke on Caracalla in Hist. Aug. *Carac.* 10, 6, which he, however, quoted under the name of Spartianus, which indicates that he had then not embraced the still fresh Dessau's hypothesis of the emergence of this work close to the date of Claudian's *Bellum Geticum*, which opinion nowadays prevails. Other clues used by Thilo and Georgii for the date of the commentary have lost their relevance lately.

<sup>47</sup> Döpp (1978: 630–631). Too early is meant in respect to his *terminus post quem*, seen by him in the publication of the *Saturnalia*, which he dated prior to the commentary, but after the death of Symmachus in 402, who had never mentioned it anywhere.

<sup>48</sup> Murgia (2003: 61–64 and 68); Serv. *Aen.* IX, 446. Although Murgia allows for the absence of the eventually actual polemic between pagans and Christians in the commentary to have been caused by Servius' intention solely to explain Vergil's text in which this polemic is of course lacking, the total absence of any allusion whatsoever to the fall of Rome having already occurred, he considers hardly plausible. And this, he also deemed more compelling than eventual suspicion of the emergence of the commentary in Servius' late years, as is the case of e.g. Quintilian's *Institutio*.

<sup>49</sup> As for this date, I consider Cameron's reasoning fully justified, *pace* Ratti (2012a: 183 = 2012b: 1214–1215): Türk's (1963: 336–337) argument was not too cogent even at the moment when presented, Flamant's (1977: 91–93) attempt to establish a possibility for an earlier dating does not seem persuasive, and Bruggisser (2010: 832) supplies sufficient reasons for refuting the earlier date, while below (2010: 835) only some particulars supporting the later date are disputed relevantly by him. Accepting the date, however, does not at all mean that I share also Cameron's overall view of the *Saturnalia*.

<sup>50</sup> Cameron (2011: 247–252). Elsewhere (1966: 30; 2011: 240) he attempted to date the publication of two minor Servius' writings, yet established only the *termini post quos*, at approximately 400 in the first case, and possibly, but not necessarily, 408 in the second. Only in the first case did he establish also the *terminus ante quem*, at approximately 405.

even if without giving any reason, counted with approximately the year 400 as the date of publication of the commentary.<sup>51</sup>

Contrary to this, those who accept Cameron's date for the *Saturnalia*, but disapprove of the priority of the commentary, such as Marinone,<sup>52</sup> advocate a later date of emergence of the commentary, which is considerably less compatible with the above presented hypothesis concerning the *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus.

So, what conclusions can be drawn from these observations? Schlumberger's suggestion concerning the reason for Servius' false attribution of his Augustan anecdote seems slightly supported, yet of course it still remains only a possibility not to be excluded. Other consequences drawn here concerning the *annales* of Nicomachus Flavianus are thus to be treated similarly, save that the *annales* may have been at least a partial cause to have brought about Flavian's *damnatio memoriae*. This hypothesis, as based on the reading of Flavian's rehabilitation inscription, seems to bear more considerable plausibility.

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<sup>51</sup> Schlumberger (1974: 246 note 56).

<sup>52</sup> Marinone (1970: 208–210), according to whom both works were being written simultaneously, which is approved of by De Paolis (1986–1987: 119 and 125). Marinone (1970: 183–184) suggests that Servius could have mechanically taken over from his source the remark concerning the Getae, as well as he had done elsewhere, to which see esp. Serv. *Aen.* III, 80: *unde hodieque imperatores pontifices dicimus*. The fall of Rome could allegedly have been already forgotten around 430, if as early as 412 Honorius with all the requisites needed visited the city, and most of the destroyed buildings were soon repaired, as insinuated by Oros. *Hist.* VII, 40, 1.

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## AUGUSTOVY OHNIVÉ OČI A ANNÁLY NICOMACHA FLAVIANA

Shrnutí

Autor *Epitome de Caesaribus* a Servius zmiňují tutěž anekdotu o Augustových ohnivých očích, Servius s odkazem na svůj zdroj, Suetonia, u něž se ale tato anekdota nevyskytuje. Podle Jörga Schlumbergera mohly jejím skutečným pozdně antickým zdrojem být annály Nicomacha Flaviana, které ale nebylo možné citovat kvůli *damnatio memoriae* uvalené na jejich autora. Postřehy autora článku tuto domněnku podporují, a navíc samotné annály současně mohly uvalení této *damnatio* spolupůsobit.