

Imperial Stability and Empirical Similarities: Tacitus' Agrippinae in *Annales* 3.1 and 14.8

- (1) *Annales* 3.1: *interim adventu eius audito intimus quisque amicorum et plerique militares, ut quique sub Germanico stipendia fecerant, multique etiam ignoti vicinis e municipiis, pars officium in principem rati, plures illos secuti, ruere ad oppidum Brundisium, quod naviganti celerrimum fidissimumque adpulsu erat. atque ubi primum ex alto visa classis, complentur non modo portus et proxima maris sed moenia ac tecta, quaque longissime prospectari poterat, maerentium turba et rogitantium inter se silentione an voce aliqua egredientem exciperent. neque satis constabat quid pro tempore foret, cum classis paulatim successit, non alacri, ut adsolet, remigio sed cunctis ad tristitiam compositis. postquam duobus cum liberis, feralem urnam tenens, egressa navi defixit oculos*

Meanwhile, with Agrippina's arrival having been heard, each of the closest friends and many military personnel, as each had served under Germanicus, and even many others who did not know him from the nearby municipality, some thinking it the duty owed to the princeps, others following their own leaders, rushed to Brundisium, a place which was quickest for the journey and safest for landing. When the fleet was first seen at a distance, not only were the port and the nearest places of the sea filled by a crowd of mourning people, but also the walls and roofs, wherever it was possible to see furthest out; the crowd was asking amongst themselves whether they should greet Agrippina in silence or with various words as she disembarked from the ship. It was still not decided what was most fitting for the occasion when the fleet approached little by little, not with swift rowing, as usually happened, but with everything ordered according to sadness. Then, with her two children, holding the funeral urn, disembarking the ship, she fixed her eyes on the ground

- (2) *Annales* 14.8: *interim vulgato Agrippinae periculo, quasi casu evenisset, ut quisque acceperat, decurrere ad litus. hi molium obiectus, hi proximas scaphas scandere; alii, quantum corpus sinebat, vadere in mare; quidam manus protendere. Questibus, votis, clamore diversa rogitantium aut incerta respondentium omnis ora compleri; adfluere ingens multitudo cum luminibus, atque ubi incolumem esse pernotuit, ut ad gratandum sese expedire, donec adspectu armati et minitantis agminis deiecti sunt.*

Meanwhile the danger of Agrippina had become public knowledge, as if it had happened by accident, as each learned of it, they all rushed to the shore. Some people climbed the barriers of the embankments, those climbed onto the nearest boats; some waded out into the ocean as far as their body would allow them; certain others stretched forth their hands. The entire shore was filled with questions, prayers, and the cry of those asking diverse questions or those responding uncertain things. A huge crowd of people rushed to the shore with torches, and when it was ascertained that Agrippina was safe, they prepared themselves for greeting her, until they were scattered by the appearance of an armed and menacing guard.