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Nota di contenuto	1. Introduction: irony, history, reading -- 2. Imperium sine fine: problems of definition in Annals I -- 3. Germanicus and the reader in the text -- 4. Reading Tiberius at face value -- 5. Obliteration and the literate emperor -- 6. The empress's plot -- 7. Ghostwriting the emperor Nero -- 8. Conclusion: the end of history.
Sommario/riassunto	This 2000 book examines Tacitus' Annals as an ironic portrayal of Julio-Claudian Rome, through close analysis of passages in which characters engage in interpretation and misreading. By representing the misreading of signifying systems - such as speech, gesture, writing, social structures and natural phenomena - Tacitus obliquely comments upon the perversion of Rome's republican structure in the new principate. Furthermore, this study argues that the distinctively obscure style of the Annals is used by Tacitus to draw his reader into the

ambiguities and compromises of the political regime it represents. The strain on language and meaning both portrayed and enacted by the Annals in this way gives voice to a form of political protest to which the reader must respond in the course of interpreting the narrative.
