

Sabinus and Cotta in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*

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AP Latin syllabus (effective Fall 2012)

- Vergil *Aeneid*:

- English: books 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 12 (better to read it all)
- Latin: 1.1-209, 418-440, 494-578; 2.40-56, 201-249, 268-297, 559-620; 4.160-218, 259-361, 659-705; 6.295-332, 384-425, 450-476, 847-899

- Caesar *Bellum Gallicum*:

- English: books 1, 6, 7 (better to read it all)
- Latin: 1.1-7; 4.24-36.1; 5.24-48; 6.13-20

AP Latin Learning Objectives and Evidence Statements

- Reading and Comprehending
- Translation
- Contextualization
- Analysis of Texts

AP Latin Themes and Essential Questions

- Literary Genre and Style
- Roman Values
- War and Empire
- Leadership
- Views of Non-Romans
- History and Memory
- Human Beings and the Gods

Sabinus and Cotta in *BG* and beyond

- Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 2.1-11
 - Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 3.11, 17-19
 - Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 4.22, 37-38
 - Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 5.24-37
 - Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 5.38-41, 47, 52, 53
 - Caesar *Bellum Gallicum* 6.1-6, 29-44
 - Hirtius *Bellum Gallicum* 8.24-25
 - [Livy] *Periocha* 106
 - Florus *Epitome de rebus gestis Romanorum* 3.10.7-8
 - Suetonius *Divus Julius* 25.2, 67.2
 - Eutropius *Breviarium ab urbe condita* 6.17
 - Orosius *Historiae adversum paganos* 6.10.1
- (All translations of passages in this PowerPoint are my own.)

Sabinus in *BG* 2.5.6

in eo flumine pons erat. ibi praesidium ponit et in altera parte fluminis **Q. Titurium Sabinum** legatum cum sex cohortibus relinquit: castra in altitudinem pedum XII vallo fossaque duodeviginti pedum munire iubet.

Over this river [i.e., the Axona, mod. Aisne] there was a bridge. There he [Caesar] placed a guard, and along another part of the river he left the legate **Quintus Titurius Sabinus** with six cohorts: he ordered him to fortify a camp with a rampart twelve feet in height and with a ditch eighteen feet in depth.

Cotta in *BG* 2.11.3

prima luce, confirmata re ab exploratoribus, omnem equitatum qui novissimum agmen moraretur praemisit. his Q. Pedium et **L. Aurunculeium Cottam** legatos praefecit; T. Labienum legatum cum legionibus tribus subsequi iussit.

At dawn, when this situation [i.e., the flight of the Belgae] had been confirmed by the scouts, he [Caesar] sent out all of the cavalry in advance so that they might delay the rearguard. He put the legates Quintus Pedius and **Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta** in charge of this cavalry; [and] he ordered the legate Titus Labienus to follow up in support with three legions.

Sabinus in *BG* 3.11.4

Q. Titurium Sabinum legatum cum legionibus tribus in Venellos, Curiosolitas Lexoviosque mittit, qui eam manum distinendam curet.

He [Caesar] sent the legate **Quintus Titurius Sabinus** with three legions into the lands of the Venelli, the Curiosolitae, and the Lexovii, so that he might hold off this band of troops.

Sabinus in *BG* 3.17.7

id ea de causa faciebat quod cum tanta multitudine hostium, **praesertim eo absente qui summam imperi teneret**, nisi aequo loco aut opportunitate aliqua data legato dimicandum non existimabat.

He [Sabinus] did this [i.e., stayed in camp] for this reason, because he thought that a legate ought not to engage with such a great number of the enemy, **especially when his overall commander was absent**, unless the fight was to be on level ground or some unique opportunity had presented itself.

Sabinus and Cotta in *BG* 4.22.5

reliquum exercitum **Q. Titurio Sabino et L. Aurunculeio Cottae** legatis in Menapios atque in eos pagos Morinorum ab quibus ad eum legati non venerant ducendum dedit.

He [Caesar] gave the rest of the army [i.e., five legions] to the legates **Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta** to lead into the lands of the Menapii and into those districts of the Morini from which legates had not come to him.

Sabinus and Cotta in *BG* 4.38.3

at **Q. Titurius et L. Cotta** legati, qui in Menapiorum finis legiones duxerant, omnibus eorum agris vastatis, frumentis succisis, aedificiis incensis, quod Menapii se omnes in densissimas silvas abdiderant, se ad Caesarem receperunt.

But the legates **Quintus Titurius and Lucius Cotta**, who had led the legions into the lands of the Menapii, returned to Caesar after laying all of their fields to waste, cutting down all of their grain, [and] burning down all of their dwellings, because all of the Menapii had hidden themselves in the very dense forests around them.

Sabinus and Cotta in *BG* 5.24.5

eis militibus Q. Titurium Sabinum et L.
Aurunculeium Cottam **legatos praeesse** iussit.

He [Caesar] ordered the legates Quintus Titurius Sabinus and Lucius Aurunculeius Cotta to be in command over these troops [i.e., the legion and five cohorts mentioned in 5.24.4].

Sabinus and Cotta in *BG* 5.31.2

[The officers said] *facilem esse rem, seu maneant, seu proficiscantur, si modo **unum omnes** sentiant ac probent; contra in dissensione **nullam se salutem** perspicere.*

[The officers said] that the situation was easy, whether they stayed or they left, if only everyone agreed on and approved one and the same plan; on the contrary, they saw no safety in disagreement.

Sabinus in *BG* 5.33.1

tum demum Titurius, **qui nihil ante providisset**, trepidare et concursare cohortisque disponere, haec tamen ipsa timide atque ut eum omnia deficere viderentur; quod plerumque eis **accidere** consuevit qui in ipso negotio consilium capere coguntur.

Then, finally, Titurius, who had foreseen nothing beforehand, was startled and ran all around and arranged the cohorts, doing even these things, however, timidly and as though everything seemed to fail him; this is what usually tends to happen to those who are forced to devise a plan of action in the middle of the action itself.

Cotta in *BG* 5.33.2

at Cotta, **qui cogitasset haec posse in itinere accidere atque ob eam causam profectionis auctor non fuisset**, nulla in re **communi saluti** deerat et in appellandis cohortandisque militibus imperatoris et in pugna militis officia praestabat.

But Cotta, who had thought that this might happen on the march and for that reason had not been a proponent of the departure, in no way failed the common safety and fulfilled the duties of a general by calling upon and encouraging his troops, as well as those of a soldier by engaging in the fighting himself.

Q. Lucanius and son in *BG* 5.35.7-8

Q. Lucanius eiusdem ordinis, **fortissime pugnans**, dum **circumvento filio** subvenit, **interficitur**; L. Cotta **legatus** omnis cohortis ordinesque adhortans in adversum os funda **vulneratur**.

Quintus Lucanius of the same rank [i.e., the same rank as Titus Balventius, *primipilus*], fighting most bravely, when he came to the aid of his son, who had been surrounded, was killed; Lucius Cotta the legate, urging on all of the cohorts and ranks [officers] was wounded by a slingshot right to the face.

Death of Sabinus in *BG* 5.37.2

interim, dum de condicionibus inter se agunt longiorque consulto ab Ambiorige instituitur sermo, paulatim **circumventus interficitur**.

Meanwhile, while they were negotiating the terms of surrender, and the parley was being dragged out on purpose by Ambiorix, he [Sabinus] was gradually surrounded and killed.

Death of Cotta in *BG* 5.37.4

ibi L. Cotta **pugnans interficitur** cum maxima parte militum. reliqui se in castra recipiunt unde erant egressi.

There Lucius Cotta, along with a very great part of his troops, was killed fighting. The rest of the troops retreated back into the camp from which they had set out.

Mutual suicide in *BG* 5.37.6

illi aegre ad noctem oppugnationem sustinent:
noctu **ad unum omnes desperata salute** se ipsi
interficiunt.

They [the Roman troops] barely withstood the
attack [of the Eburones] until nightfall: during
the night, having lost all hope of safety, they all
killed themselves to the last man.

Flight to Labienus in *BG* 5.37.7

pauci ex proelio elapsi incertis itineribus per silvas ad T. Labienum legatum in hiberna perveniunt atque **eum de rebus gestis certiores faciunt.**

The few [Roman troops] who had escaped from the battle came to the legate Titus Labienus at his winter camp by pathless routes through the forest and informed him about what had happened.

Ambiorix in *BG* 5.38.3

interfectos esse legatos duo magnamque partem exercitus interisse demonstrat.

He [Ambiorix] explained that two legates had been killed and that a great part of their army had perished with them.

Nervii in *BG* 5.41.2-4

facta potestate **eadem quae Ambiorix cum Titurio egerat commemorant**: omnem esse in armis Galliam; Germanos Rhenum transisse; Caesaris reliquorumque hiberna oppugnari. addunt etiam **de Sabini morte**; Ambiorigem ostentant fidei faciendae causa.

After having been given the opportunity to speak, they [the Nervii] recalled the very same issues about which Ambiorix had spoken with Titurius: they said that all of Gaul was in arms; that the Germans had crossed the Rhine; [and] that the winter camps of Caesar and the other commanders were under attack. They also added a report about the death of Sabinus; [and] they pointed to Ambiorix as a reliable source.

Labienu in *BG* 5.47.4-5

Labienu, **interitu Sabini et caede cohortium cognita**, ... litteras Caesari remittit: quanto cum periculo legionem ex hibernis educturus esset; **rem gestam in Eburonibus perscribit**; docet omnis equitatus peditatusque copias Treverorum tria milia passuum longe ab suis castris consedisse.

Labienu, having learned about the death of Sabinus and the slaughter of the cohorts, ... wrote a letter back to Caesar: he pointed out under how great a danger he would lead out the legion from the winter camp; he wrote in great detail about what had happened in the lands of the Eburones; [and] he explained how all of the cavalry and infantry forces of the Treveri had encamped three miles away from his own camp.

Caesar in *BG* 5.52.4

Ciceronem pro eius merito legionemque collaudat; centuriones singillatim tribunosque militum appellat, quorum egregiam fuisse virtutem testimonio Ciceronis cognoverat. **de casu Sabini et Cottae certius ex captivis cognoscit.**

He [Caesar] praised Cicero and the legion according to their merits; one by one he called out by name the centurions and the tribunes of the soldiers about whose outstanding service he had learned on the testimony of Cicero. He learned more information about the disaster of Sabinus and Cotta from the captives.

Caesar in *BG* 5.52.5-6

postero die contione habita **rem gestam** proponit; milites consolatur et confirmat: quod detrimentum culpa et temeritate **legati** sit acceptum, hoc aequiore animo ferendum docet, quod beneficio deorum immortalium et virtute eorum expiato **incommodo** neque hostibus diutina laetatio neque ipsis longior dolor relinquatur.

On the next day, at a gathering of the troops, he [Caesar] laid out for them what had happened [in the lands of the Eburones]; he consoled and strengthened his soldiers: whatever loss they had suffered through the fault and recklessness of the legate [i.e., Sabinus], he [Caesar] explained to them that they had to bear this with greater equanimity, since, after they had expiated the disaster through the goodwill of the immortal gods and their virtue, neither were the enemy given a very long period of happiness nor were they themselves given any longer a period of grief.

Gauls in *BG* 5.53.4

nam **illo incommodo de Sabini morte perlato** omnes fere Galliae civitates de bello consultabant, nuntios legationesque in omnis partis dimittebant et quid reliqui consili caperent atque unde initium belli fieret explorabant, nocturnaue in locis desertis concilia habebant.

For, after news of the disaster had been reported, namely, about the death of Sabinus, almost all of the states of Gaul began to consult about war and to send messengers and ambassadors out into all parts [of Gaul], and they investigated into what plans the other [Gauls] were making and where the beginning of the war would be, and they also held nighttime councils in deserted places.

[Livy] *Periocha* 106.2-3

Gallorum aliquot populi Ambiorige duce, rege Eburonum, defecerunt; a quibus Cotta et Titurius, **legati Caesaris, circumventi insidiis cum exercitu cui praeerant caesi sunt.**

Several peoples of the Gauls, with Ambiorix, King of the Eburones, as their leader, revolted; by them Cotta and Titurius, legates of Caesar, were surrounded with an ambush and slaughtered along with the army over which they were in command.

Florus *Epitome de rebus gestis* *Romanorum* 3.10.7-8

Indutiomarus Treveros, **Ambiorix** concitavit **Eburones**. utrique **absente Caesare** coniuratione facta invasere legatos. ... hic **insidiis in valle dispositis dolo** perculit. itaque et castra direpta sunt et **Aurunculeium Cottam cum Titurio Sabino legatos** amisimus. nec ulla de rege mox ultio; quippe perpetua trans Rhenum fuga latuit.

Indutiomarus stirred up the Treveri and Ambiorix, the Eburones. Both of them, since Caesar was absent, having made a conspiracy, attacked the legates. ... On the other hand, he [Ambiorix], having set an ambush in a valley, won through treachery. And so, the camp was plundered, and we lost Aurunculeius Cotta together with Titurius Sabinus. Nor was any immediate vengeance ever exacted from the king; rather, he remained in hiding in perpetual flight across the Rhine.

Suetonius *Divus Julius* 25.2

per tot successus ter nec amplius adversum casum expertus: in Britannia ... et in Gallia ... et in Germanorum finibus Titurio et Aurunculeio legatis per insidias caesis.

Through so many successes he [Caesar] suffered defeat no more than three times: in Britain [when] ..., and in Gaul [when] ..., and in the lands of the Germans when the legates Titurius and Aurunculeius were slaughtered by an ambush.

Eutropius *Breviarium ab urbe condita*

6.17

inter tot successus ter male pugnavit, apud Arvernos semel praesens et absens in Germania bis: nam **legati eius duo**, Titurius et Aurunculeius, **per insidias caesi sunt**.

Among so many successes he [Caesar] suffered defeat three times, once while he was present among the Arverni [i.e., at the battle of Gergovia] and twice in Germany while he was absent: for two of his legates, Titurius and Aurunculeius, were slaughtered by an ambush.

Orosius *Historiae adversum paganos*

6.10.1

namque Ambiorix, cum Eburonibus et Aduatucis conspirans, animatus Treverorum consilio, Cottam et Sabinum **legatos** apud Eburonas **cum tota funditus legione insidiis circumventos interfecit.**

For Ambiorix, conspiring with the Eburones and the Aduatuci, inspired by the counsel of the Treveri, surrounded with an ambush and killed the legates Cotta and Sabinus in the land of the Eburones along with their entire legion.

Mutual suicide in *BG* 5.37.6

illi aegre ad noctem oppugnationem sustinent:
noctu **ad unum omnes desperata salute** se ipsi
interficiunt.

They [the Roman troops] barely withstood the
attack [of the Eburones] until nightfall: during
the night, having lost all hope of safety, they all
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Livy *Ab urbe condita* 22.61.15

quo in tempore ipso adeo magno animo civitas fuit ut consuli ex tanta clade, cuius ipse causa maxima fuisset, redeunti et obviam itum frequenter ab omnibus ordinibus sit et gratiae actae **quod de re publica non desperasset**; qui si Carthaginiensium ductor fuisset, nihil recusandum supplicii foret.

At this very time the city was in such great spirits that the officers of all ranks went out to meet the consul [Varro] as he was returning home from such a great disaster, of which he himself had been the greatest cause, and they thanked him because he had not lost hope for the state; if he had been a Carthaginian general, he would have been spared no punishment.

For more info on the *Varro non desperavit* theme, see Liv. *AUC* 22.61.10, 25.6.7; [Liv.] *Perioch.* 22.10, 16; Sil. *Pun.* 10.629; Fron. *Str.* 4.5.6; Flor. *Epit.* 2.6.15-17; Oros. *Hist.* 5.5.9.



**Statue of Ambiorix in Tongeren (Atuatuca Tungrorum)
[= Tongeren_Ambiorix_01.jpg at Wikimedia Commons]**

Thank you to Don Sprague for inviting me to deliver this webinar, thank you to Bolchazy-Carducci for helping to ensure that the Classics continue to thrive at all levels, and thank you all for being with me this evening!