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should be the same prefect who appears later in the drama⁹. Why then is he not named? It should be relevant that Tigellinus lived on after Nero's death, protected by Titus Vinius, until the murder of Galba and Vinius removed his protection: he committed suicide at Sinuessa shortly after 15 January 69 (Plutarch, Galba 17; Tacitus, Hist. 1, 74). A dramatist writing while Tigellinus retained influence had an obvious motive for leaving Nero's prefect anonymous.

A date for the Octavia of late 68 will also lend added point to the final lines, where the chorus compares Octavia to Iphigeneia. Less cruel than Rome are Aulis and the land of the Tauri where foreigners are sacrificed to the gods: *civis gaudet Roma cruore* (983). Those words may have been written by one who saw how feeble the government of Galba had shown itself, who predicted and dreaded the resumption of civil war in 69. If the date of the Octavia is not to be left imprecise, then the reign of Galba is surely the most appropriate historical context for its composition.

⁹ L. Herrmann argued from the contrast between the prefect's behaviour on the two occasions that it was Tigellinus in the first scene, Rufus in the second (op. cit. 63). L. Y. Whitman, op. cit. 84, identifies the prefect in both scenes as Rufus (who perished in 65).

Miszelle

Vergil, Georgics 3, 280–281

By Howard Jacobson, Urbana (Illinois)

*Hic demum, hippomanes vero quod nomine dicunt
pastores, lentum destillat ab inguine virus.*

destillat = manat.