TACITUS’ GERMANICUS AND THE COMMANDERS OF GERMANIA

By

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A DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2013

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to my brother Michael
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my advisor Victoria Pagán for her many years of support in all things Classics, but more specifically for sharing with me her passion for Tacitus. Her guidance has been vital in the completion of this project. She has encouraged me always to keep thinking deeper, wider, onward, and upward. I am indebted also to Andrew Wolpert, who throughout my graduate years pushed me to think more critically and never to forget the influence of the Greek world. I would also like to express my gratitude to Lewis Sussman and Mary Watt, both of whom were inspirational in the early stages of my career and have since helped me through this most challenging task.

I must also thank the rest of the Classics family at the University of Florida, in particular Mary Ann Eaverly, Jennifer Rea, Konstantinos Kapparis, and Jim Marks, for contributing in no small way to my development as a student, teacher, and scholar. I am in debt also to my colleagues, especially James Lohmar, Seth Boutin, George Hendren, Bob Brewer, and David Hoot, with whom I have spent countless hours talking about the classical world and how it affects us today. In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to the Center for Greek Studies at the University of Florida for funding my recent research trip to Germany which provided so much insight and inspiration for this project. Furthermore, I thank Professor Herbert Benario for his encouragement and pleasant conversation regarding Tacitus and Germany.

On a more personal note, I must thank Teresa Turner and my friends from the Williams and Badcock houses. I would not have made it this far without their friendship and support. I would like to thank Sifu and Simu Jackson as well for teaching me about strength and showing me that nothing is impossible. Finally, I thank my family for their love and for believing in me.
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH ........................................................... 250
This dissertation examines the characterization of Germanicus in Tacitus’ *Annals* with respect to the characterizations of previous commanders of Germania. I analyze and compare the characters of Drusus the Elder, Quintilius Varus, and Tiberius as they appear in the *Annals* and the greater literary tradition and then consider how these characters affect Tacitus’ portrait of Germanicus. This approach thus compares Germanicus not with contemporaries but with predecessors and embraces not just the *Annals* but literature from various genres and periods. This dissertation therefore aims primarily to offer a new perspective from which Germanicus can be viewed by placing him alongside other military commanders. In doing so it uncovers the literature associated with the Roman generals of Germania and explores the portrayal of Rome’s relationship with Germania from the first century BCE onward.

The introduction offers an overview of scholarship on Germanicus and explains the methodology of this study. The careful consideration of intertextuality, sources, and ancient characterization are key as the literary portraits of Drusus, Varus, Tiberius, and Germanicus are constructed. For reference basic historical information is provided in
the introduction and excerpts from the literary traditions surrounding each commander are offered in the appendices.

The middle three chapters focus on each commander in turn. The portrayal in the Annals is first considered, then the portrayal in the literary tradition pre-dating Tacitus followed by the portrayal in the literary tradition contemporaneous with and postdating Tacitus. Each chapter offers portraits of its commander both within and outside of the Annals and considers how those portraits affect Tacitus’ characterization of Germanicus.

Germanicus is thus placed in a new context: he is examined not with the typical characters of the Annals such as the emperor Tiberius, Drusus the Younger, or Arminius, but with less prominent characters who nevertheless have a heavy impact on Germanicus. He is also examined on a large timeline: he is compared to predecessors through analysis of literature spanning hundreds of years. From this perspective Germanicus claims a different position in Roman literature. He takes on a human quality identifiable to every generation.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Germanicus is an enigma. He is popularly known as a charming young leader who died before his time, but it is difficult to say much more about him without sparking controversy. Ancient authors have left a portrait clouded with ambiguity, especially concerning his political savvy, military strategy, leadership skills, and relationship with Tiberius. Tacitus is no exception. His depiction of Germanicus in the first three books of the Annals allows plenty of room for interpretation, and Tacitean scholars have certainly offered many points of view over the years. This study, however, offers a fresh approach: Germanicus’ character from the Annals is analyzed alongside the other major Roman commanders of Germany: Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius.¹ The ultimate goal is to understand Germanicus’ character through an understanding of who his predecessors were and how Germanicus measures up to them throughout Tacitus’ text and fits into the picture of Roman Germany. In order to achieve this goal, a deep investigation of the literary traditions behind Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius is essential so when Tacitus uses these characters in his own text to flesh out the character of Germanicus, we can understand the full effect achieved through intertextualities.

Review of Literature

The sometimes-hero-sometimes-failure figure of Germanicus has roused comments from just about every major Tacitean scholar since Walker, who noted

¹ I define Germany as Tacitus does at Ger. 1.1: Germania omnis a Gallis Rhaetisque et Pannoniis Rheno et Danubio fluminibus, a Sarmatis Dacisque mutuo metu aut montibus separat, “The whole of Germany is separated from the Gauls and the Rhaetians and the Pannonians by the Rhine and Danube rivers, from the Sarmatians and Dacians by mutual fear or by mountains.” See also Rives (2012) 45. All translations of Tacitus are my own. All Latin text of the Annals comes from Fisher (1906). Text and translations of other authors are adopted as noted. I will follow the lists of abbreviations for authors and works found in L’Année philologique and OCD.
Tacitus’ deep interest in Germanicus and posited that Tacitus seems to idealize Germanicus, give him virtues so as to render him Tiberius’ foil, and generally paint him as the romantic hero of the first hexad. Syme believed that Tacitus could have found reason to criticize Germanicus, yet chose to follow the encomiastic tradition. Daitz calls Germanicus “a hero of almost epic quality” and observes a great contrast between him and Tiberius. It was not until 1968 that Shotter argued for a less idealized and more balanced portrayal of Germanicus. Suddenly Germanicus was allowed to have faults and scholars began to re-analyze his characterization. In his commentary, Goodyear recognizes the growing debate and adds to it: he insinuates that Germanicus’ character need not be a consistent good or bad, but that Tacitus changes Germanicus’ character from one situation to another so as “to move and enthrall his readers.” From this middle ground, Ross shifts to the next extreme: he believes that Tacitus subtly undermines the encomiastic tradition surrounding Germanicus and allows Germanicus’ behavior during the German mutiny to go pale in comparison to Drusus’ control during the Pannonian revolt. In his opinion, Germanicus does not come out of the mutiny a hero. Too many flaws show. Rutland agrees, and although she gives Germanicus credit for his fair reputation as a leader in the field, she believes that Germanicus otherwise acted on quick emotions, often avoided responsibility, and was too naïve. She does not think

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2 Walker (1952) 118-20.
3 Syme (1958) 418.
4 Daitz (1960) 37, 48.
5 Goodyear (1972) 240-1.
6 Ross (1973).
Tacitus idealized Germanicus.⁷ And so from the early 1950s to the late 1980s, the scholarly views of the Tacitean Germanicus moved from one extreme to the other.

Yet scholars seem to agree upon one thing: Tacitus uses Germanicus as a “foil” to Tiberius. Walker notices that Germanicus is given virtues which are opposite of those of Tiberius; Daitz sees a black and white contrast between the two; Martin observes that Tacitus even uses different stylistic features to heighten the distinction between the two men.⁸ The stress between emperor and adopted son is unmistakable.

Pelling’s 1993 chapter “Tacitus and Germanicus” is a satisfying culmination of all this previous scholarship. Pelling clearly states the several problems surrounding Germanicus and then addresses each in turn. Concerning Goodyear’s question of consistency, Pelling asserts that Germanicus’ characteristics actually are consistent, although the results which they produce are not. From the ancient point of view, “a hero’s faults and strengths are closely related and are often even facets of the same basic traits.”⁹ And so while Germanicus acts consistently, sometimes he comes out looking like a success, sometimes a failure. But what impression is Germanicus meant to leave on the reader? Pelling lists the main scenes which tend to relate ambiguous messages about Germanicus. He shows that Walker’s and Ross’ views of Germanicus are unsatisfying and claims that a better answer may lie in a close examination of Germanicus’ role in the text. He argues that Germanicus cannot simply be labeled as Tiberius’ foil. Although the relationship between Germanicus and Tiberius has been and continues to be a very attractive topic, Germanicus interacts with other characters as

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well, and these characters can serve to illuminate Germanicus' character more fully. For example, Pelling notices that the actions of Germanicus and Agrippina sometimes mirror later actions of Piso and Plancina. Germanicus and his wife "presage very sinister themes" when looked at in this way.\(^{10}\) Germanicus also pairs up nicely with Arminius, the young headstrong leader of the Germans. Germanicus may appear impetuous and wild when looked at in this way. Pelling's overarching point is that readers should not insist on reading Germanicus in just one way, whether as good hero, horrible failure, Tiberian foil, or so on. Germanicus is a complex character and can be seen from many different angles.

Part of Germanicus' complexity derives from his position on the periphery, both physically and temporally. As Pagán explains, Tacitus uses the scene at Teutoburg to show Germanicus not only pushing the boundaries of the empire, but also pushing the boundaries of time: he seems to travel back to 9 C.E. as he surveys the battlefield. When Germanicus again pushes boundaries by crossing the Weser (Visurgis) river at 2.7-9, Pagán sees "exorbitance" and "extravagance" akin to the actions of Alexander the Great or Caesar.\(^ {11}\) Germanicus' position on the periphery influences the portrayal of his character. Shumate makes similar observations and calls Germanicus a "displaced aristocrat."\(^ {12}\) She says of him and Corbulo:

Still, they are imagined as lonely, anachronistic figures, out of step with their contemporaries and out of place in the imperial center with its pernicious 'modern' trends. At the edges of the empire—on the British, German, and

\(^{10}\) Pelling (1993) 72.

\(^{11}\) Pagán (1999) 312.

Parthian frontiers—they find a field where they can practice the republican virtues that have long since fallen out of fashion in the capital…

Like Corbulo, Germanicus does not fit in with his own times, and thus he becomes an outsider, a lone man on the periphery.

The recent work of Pelling, Pagán, and Shumate seemingly quiets discussion on many topics of the Tacitean Germanicus, but it also opens many new doors. Pelling encourages readers to view Germanicus not just alongside Tiberius, but also with Piso and Arminius. But with the temporal and peripheral approaches of Pagán and Shumate in mind, I believe we can look farther still. Tacitus often uses shadowy, less noticeable characters in his text, characters of the past. If we can identify these characters and use them as a lens through which to view Germanicus, we may find yet another facet of Germanicus’ character. After all, as Pelling suggests, Germanicus is “distinctively connected with the past.”

Methodology

In order to achieve an understanding of Germanicus’ place alongside Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius, we must examine the sources which discuss these men and the possible intertextualities between these sources and Tacitus’ text. We must also take into consideration ancient ideas concerning characterization.

Intertextuality

In his study of Livy’s account of the Hannibalic War, Levene neatly expresses the importance of intertextuality in his recent book:

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14 Pelling (1993) 73.
No issue is more central to contemporary scholarship on Latin literature than the ways in which Latin authors allude to and rework their predecessors, and the consequences of this for how they are to be read.\textsuperscript{15}

As Conte explains in his work \textit{The Rhetoric of Imitation}, when the reader approaches Tacitus’ text, he brings a mind full of literature with him.\textsuperscript{16} So as Tacitus pulls a character from the past into his text, he essentially pulls in any impressions his readers may have of that character from earlier literature. When Tacitus mentions Drusus or portrays Germanicus acting like Drusus, an ancient reader may think back to certain poems of Horace. The modern reader, however, may not be so quick to catch the references, unless he or she happens to have a strong knowledge of Horace. The modern reader thus enjoys the text differently and less fully than the ancient reader, until such intertextuality is excavated.

And so this study must enter the realm of allusion, intertextuality, and intersubjectivity.\textsuperscript{17} Although the pursuit of these literary links is highly rewarding and important to a comprehensive understanding of a text, this realm is often dangerous. Grey areas abound: how do we decide if something is allusion, intertextuality, reference, \textit{topos}, or something else?\textsuperscript{18} How do we detect intended allusion or accidental confluence?\textsuperscript{19} Can we be sure of the source of a given allusion?

\textsuperscript{15} Levene (2010) 82.
\textsuperscript{16} Conte (1986) 29.
\textsuperscript{17} Intersubjectivity supposedly occurs when “the literary process will center more on the personal will of two opposing authors than on the structural reality of the text,” see Conte (1986) 27; Hinds (1998) 21.
\textsuperscript{18} For a discussion of allusion and intertextuality, see Levene (2010) 83; for allusion and reference, see Hinds (1998) 21; for allusion and \textit{topos}, see Hinds (1998) 34.
\textsuperscript{19} Hinds (1998) 17-51 tackles Richard Thomas’ question of accidental confluence.
Levene divides these scholars into conservatives and radicals. Conservatives seek out instances where one text seems to link with another in some way by the intention of the author. Radicals also seek out such places, but intention is not necessary. Every text has the potential to reflect another whether the author truly meant it or not. Naturally each side has its criticisms of the other:

‘Conservatives’ accuse ‘radicals’ of having no criteria that would enable them to distinguish genuine textual relationships from mere scholarly fantasy. ‘Radicals’ accuse ‘conservatives’ of seeking tacitly or explicitly to pin down a series of fluid connections to a specific but unprovable intention inside the mind of the author.\(^{20}\)

Each of the two extremes is problematic.

Hinds unfolds deeper complexities concerning allusion as he investigates it alongside reference and \textit{topos} and explores the relationship between author and reader.\(^{21}\) Ultimately, Hinds admits that the term ‘allusion’ is problematic because it connotes authorial intention, which is impossible to know. If we focus on intertextuality instead of allusion, we can abandon intention.\(^{22}\)

And intention is mostly irrelevant in this study anyway. Intention suggests purpose, but more important is result. I wish to investigate not how Tacitus wanted us to view Germanicus, but how we perceive the Germanicus that Tacitus portrayed. My goal is not to argue that Tacitus intentionally took his material from a certain author and thus created a certain effect, but rather to show that an attentive reader can read Tacitus alongside other authors, make some profitable observations concerning similarities in content, and in the end walk away with an enriched view of Germanicus and the \textit{Annals}.\(^{23}\)

\(^{20}\) Levene (2010) 83.


Sources

In order to find intertextualities and resurrect hidden characters from Tacitus’ text, we must ask what sources Tacitus may have had available to him.\textsuperscript{23} There are fortunately many sources which were available, which he most likely read, and which are still extant to us. For Drusus, the main sources include Horace, Livy, Strabo, Velleius Paterculus, and the \textit{Consolatio ad Liviam}. Varus may be found in Strabo, Velleius, Manilius, Frontinus, Seneca the Younger, and Pliny the Elder. For Tiberius we have Strabo, Velleius, Pliny the Elder, Valerius Maximus, Ovid, and the \textit{Consolatio ad Liviam}. Various minor and fragmentary works may offer some assistance as well.\textsuperscript{24} These sources will guide us towards a better understanding of Tacitus’ text.

Of the sources which were available, which he most likely read, and which are not extant to us, there are a few which we still need to keep in mind. Aufidius Bassus wrote a \textit{Bellum Germanicum} which was highly praised by Quintilian, and a full-length history which perhaps began as early as the death of Caesar and extended into Tiberius’ reign.\textsuperscript{25} Pliny the Elder composed a work in 31 books picking up where

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{23} The first chapter of Devillers (2003) will be indispensable for this task. As Devillers (2003) 7-8 points out, Tacitus only states a few of his sources by name, and so we must use detective work to speculate about which texts were probable or possible sources. Potter (2012) 128 explains the difficulty of source analysis: "...it is not plausible to assert that we can know all of his sources or even which sources necessarily said what...A reasoned account of the obvious sources of the \textit{Annals} alone reveals the use of more than sixty literary texts ranging from the works of men whom Tacitus regarded as major historians to works such as philosophic compositions by Seneca..." Wilkes (1972) 181 says that Tacitus’ possible sources "represent a cross-section of the upper strata in Roman imperial society, and their output consists of works ranging from the personal memoirs of emperors and empresses, through the specialized treatises offering information about geography and ethnology, many of them composed by Roman generals in retirement looking back on their campaigns..."

\textsuperscript{24} Devillers (2003) 133-4 notes the importance of records like the \textit{Tabula Hebana} and \textit{Tabula Siarensis} on Tacitus’ text, particularly concerning the depiction of Germanicus.

\textsuperscript{25} Quint. \textit{Inst.} 10.1.103; Syme (1958) 274-5 speculates about the scope and content of these works but admits that such matters are uncertain; Devillers (2003) 12-5. Devillers (2003) 14 suggests that Aufidius’ \textit{Histories} may not have treated much of the German wars since these would have been addressed in his earlier work.
\end{footnotesize}
Aufidius left off. This leaves open the possibility that he too covered a portion of Tiberius’ reign. He also wrote a *Bella Germaniae* that was 20 books in length and may have stretched from the Roman encounters with the Cimbri and Teutones at the end of the second century BCE into the reign of Claudius. The influence of *Bella Germaniae* on the *Annals*, however, is debatable, although it seems that such a work would have been invaluable to Tacitus.

Servilius Nonianus is also commended by Quintilian, but more importantly he is applauded for his history of Rome by Tacitus himself at *Annals* 14.19 (*...Servilius...mox tradendis rebus Romanis celebris et elegantia vitae, quod clariorem effecit...*).

Servilius had been both a senator and a consul (35 CE) under Tiberius. He was also a

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26 Plin. *Ep.* 3.5. The endpoint of Aufidius’ work is not certain, although Syme (1958) 698-9 summarizes the reasons behind the possibilities, either the catastrophe of Sejanus, AD 31, or somewhere between 47 and 54. Based on these dates, Pliny the Elder’s work may or may not have included a part of Tiberius’ reign.

27 Plin. *Ep.* 3.5. Syme (1958) 288-9. The starting point (as well as the endpoint) of Pliny’s work is unknown, as expressed by Ash (2011) 3-4 who writes, “It covered some or all of Nero’s principate, the civil wars, and at least some of Vespasian’s principate, probably culminating in the Jewish triumph of AD 71.” The attitude of this work towards the emperors, which Devillers (2003) 18 briefly addresses, is naturally unknown. Wilkes (1972) 183 believes Tacitus would not have been interested in Pliny’s work: “It may be assumed that the thirty-one books of the Elder Pliny’s Histories exhibited the same vast erudition and tireless research which are such a feature of his last work, the *Naturalis Historia*. This alone does not make him attractive to a later historian writing political history of the purest kind.”

28 Devillers (2003) 17. It has been speculated that this work may have shown favor towards Drusus the Elder and Germanicus since it was written during the time of Claudius and Agrippina the Younger. See Devillers (2003) 19 and Syme (1958) 288.

29 Marincola (1997) 47, for example, writes that the *Bella Germaniae* possibly “culminated with Drusus’ wars in AD 4-7.” In this case, the work would have been much less useful to Tacitus. However, Syme (1958) 288-9 and Rives (1999) 36-7 believe the work covered later events, perhaps into Claudius’ reign. Tac. *Ann.* 1.69 and Suet. *Calig.* 8.1-2 seem to suggest that the work stretched at least to the beginning of Tiberius’ reign.

30 For more on these lost works of Pliny, see Ash (2011) 3-4 and Devillers (2003) 20-2. Based on Devillers’ list, it seems the later books of the *Annals* may have been more heavily influenced by the *Bella Germaniae* than the early books.

respected orator and proconsul of Africa around 47 CE. Syme suggests that these credentials make him an attractive source for a writer like Tacitus. Some other authors whose relevant works are not extant and who may have affected Tacitus include Seneca the Elder, Cn. Cornelius Lentulus Gaetulicus, Tiberius, Agrippina the Younger, and poets like Albinovanus Pedo. Seneca the Elder wrote a history which extended from the beginning of the civil wars into his own lifetime. It seems he wrote about Tiberius, including his death, but there is no indication that he was hostile towards Tiberius. Gaetulicus lived during the reigns of Tiberius and Caligula and is supposed to have been a flatterer of Caligula. Although his place as a writer is debated, it is possible he had knowledge which Tacitus could have used. Not only was his father a friend of Tiberius, but he himself was consul in 26 CE. More importantly, Tacitus writes at Annals 6.30 about his role as commander of the legions in Upper Germania, his connection with Lower Germania through his father-in-law Lucius Apronius, and the

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32 Syme (1958) 276.

33 Devillers (2003) lists many other possible sources whose contribution to the literary tradition is debatable. For example, men like Corbulo and Antistius Vetus served in Germania and wrote autobiographies. Although their work may not necessarily focus on events in Germania, they may still have offered some useful information to the tradition. Tacitus was certainly aware of these men (see Devillers [2003] 37-40). According to Devillers (2003) 41, Gaecina, the governor of Germany, may have contributed information about Germania, although no known literary work has been attributed to him. Biographies may also have contributed to the literary tradition of Germania and her leaders. Devillers (2003) 43 cites bibliographies of Germanicus and Corbulo as possible sources of information. Devillers (2003) Chapter 1 also reminds us that lost pamphlets, poetry, letters, and even celebratory songs composed for triumphs would have contributed to the traditions surrounding men like Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus.

34 Seneca the Younger hints at the span of this history in De Vita Patris fragment 1, lines 5-7: quisquis legisset eius historias ab initio bellorum ciuilium, unde primum veritas retro abit, paene usque ad mortis suae diem...

35 Suet. Tib. 73.2 relates information about Tiberius’ death and cites Seneca as a source. For possible biases of Seneca towards the imperial court, see Devillers (2003) 30-1.

36 Gaetulicus is cited at Suet. Calig. 8. See Devillers (2003) 33 for more on his role as a possible source.
great esteem that he seemed to have earned from a great many people. Both Tiberius and Agrippina the Younger wrote autobiographical works which may have affected Tacitus’ *Annals* and the larger literary tradition in unique ways. Moreover, Devillers has asserted that poets like Albinovanus Pedo likely offered poetic tones to the tradition. He cites several dramatic scenes concerning Germanicus, particularly the shipwreck disaster at *Annals* 2.23-4 and the German campaigns at *Annals* 1.55-71, as evidence of poetic influence. Finally, Devillers reminds us that documents like the *acta Senatus*, *acta diurna*, as well as letters, speeches, and family archives would presumably have been available to authors like Tacitus who were contributing to the literary traditions surrounding Drusus, Varus, Tiberius, and Germanicus. We must remember that such a wide variety of works, although lost to us, may have been very influential to Tacitus and the tradition at large.

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37 Gaetulicus is mentioned also at *Ann. 4.42* and *4.46*. See Wilkes (1972) 185 for more information on his life.

38 Devillers (2003) 130. Devillers (2003) 53 points out that Pedo served under Germanicus (some have identified him as the Pedo mentioned by Tacitus at *Ann. 1.60*) and thus likely had a bias in favor of the general and portrayed him kindly. Pedo composed an epic style work concerning the exploits of Germanicus (see *Sen. Suas. 1.15* for the fragment; Courtney [2003] 315-19; Hollis [2007] 372-81.), but he has also been cited in the past by Joseph Scaliger as a possible author for the *Consolatio ad Liviam*. This would presumably mean that he had contributed greatly to the literary traditions surrounding not only Germanicus but also Drusus and Tiberius. His authorship of the *consolatio*, however, has been highly debated and now is generally rejected (see Schoonhoven [1992] 38 n. 78, *OCD² 28*). His value as a poet is mentioned by Quint. *Inst. 10.1.90*.

39 Devillers (2003) 54-69. In particular, Devillers (2003) 57-8 believes the *acta Senatus* would have been used for affairs relating to Germany, the triumph of Germanicus, the discussion between Tiberius and Germanicus at *Ann. 2.26* concerning the campaign, and the posthumous honors of Germanicus. Devillers (2003) 64 points out that Tacitus at *Ann. 3.3* turned to the *acta diurna* to find information about the aftermath of Germanicus’ death. It may also have supplied information concerning the arch of Germanicus mentioned at *Ann. 2.41* (Devillers [2003] 66).

40 Devillers (2003) 11 names Pliny the Elder, Aufidius Bassus, and Servilius Nonianus among the five most invoked sources of the *Annals*. The other two, Fabius Rusticus and Cluvius Rufus, likely served as important sources for the later books of the *Annals*. Tacitus perhaps gestures at the influence of Aufidius and Servilius on his work at *Dial. 23*. He cites Pliny openly at *Ann. 1.69*, 13.20, and 15.53.
And finally, there are some texts written after Tacitus’ *Annals* which need to be considered, since it is possible the writers of these later texts used the same sources as Tacitus. These authors include Cassius Dio, Suetonius, and Florus.\textsuperscript{41} In the case of Cassius Dio, for example, many scholars since Schwartz have noted similarities between Dio’s account of Tiberius’ reign and Tacitus’ and therefore have suspected that the two authors worked with a common source.\textsuperscript{42} The exact source, or sources, however, are unknown, but we can still use Dio’s text as a clue to understanding what kind of information might be missing from the literary tradition.

In a chapter on Tacitus’ sources, Potter explains that because Tacitus engaged in “a dynamic process of communication both with past accounts and present audience,” a discussion of sources must push beyond literary prosopography and ask not just who Tacitus’ sources were, but how he manipulated them.\textsuperscript{43} For this project we will consider how Tacitus may have manipulated sources to influence the portrayal of character.

**Character**

Once I have isolated the passages pertaining to Germanicus, I will take into account Tacitus’ overall technique in character portrayal as well as ancient theories and stereotypes of character as discussed especially by Aristotle and ask how Tacitus’ use of intertexts affects characterization, particularly of Germanicus.

\textsuperscript{41} For Tacitus’ ties with Dio and Suetonius, see Syme (1958) 271-86. Syme (1958) 271 undertakes the same type of analysis of Tacitus via Dio and Suetonius: “The annalistic predecessors of Tacitus having perished, the inquiry must take an indirect path, through comparison and inference.”

\textsuperscript{42} See the Cassius Dio entry in *RE*; Martin (1981) 204-6; Devillers (2003) 27 adds that this unknown author may even have been critical of Tiberius and sympathetic towards Germanicus. Syme (1958) 272 writes that the idea of a common source “is seductive, but not convincing. It explains too much. The historical tradition about a ruler at Rome was not formed and transmitted, during the first and second generations at least, by writers only, still less by a single man.”

\textsuperscript{43} Potter (2012) 128-30.
Aristotle’s *Poetics* raises three particular questions. In Chapter 2, Aristotle explains that an author represents his characters as better than in real life, or as worse, or as they are. From this, we must ask how past characters might help Tacitus idealize, discredit, or fairly portray Germanicus. In Chapter 9 Aristotle discusses the license of authors to write not only about things which have actually happened, but also to address the possible or the probable. This raises the question of how past characters might help Tacitus suggest what Germanicus could have become had he lived his life differently or had he not died so young. And finally, Aristotle’s discussion of the tragic character, particularly in Chapter 8, tempts us to ask how Tacitus may use past characters to paint Germanicus as tragic.\(^{44}\)

In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle discusses the differences among the young man, the old man, and the man in prime of life.\(^{45}\) When we encounter Germanicus, it seems he is a young man who is attempting to cross over into his prime: when he first appears in Tacitus’ text, he addresses the mutiny in Germany with a certain amount of impetuosity and naïveté, but over the course of books 1 and 2 we can see Germanicus perhaps gaining experience and growing. From this we must ask to what extent Germanicus’ character does change and mature (if at all), and how Tacitus’ use of past characters might help show change.

In his Nichomachean Ethics Aristotle discusses excess, deficiency, and mean. The golden mean is of great importance in the discussion of virtue and character.\(^{46}\) For

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\(^{44}\) On tragedy in the *Annals*, see Santoro L’Hoir (2006). On the theatricality of Germanicus in *Annals* 1.31-51, see Fulkerson (2006).


example, excess courage is foolhardiness and deficiency of courage is cowardice.\(^{47}\) The mean is the goal of a good man, but it is difficult to attain. For our purposes, we may ask how Tacitus’ use of past characters helps place Germanicus along a scale of success and failure. Do they serve to highlight Germanicus’ excess, deficiency, or perfect achievement? Does Germanicus come out of the text looking good, bad, or a mix of the two?

Modern scholars have examined Tacitus’ overall technique of characterization which also will be of use in our study. Ferguson in his 1913 article lists several methods which Tacitus uses for characterization, the fifth being “contrast of two characters”.\(^{48}\) He offers Germanicus and Tiberius, Tiberius and Augustus, and Agrippina the Younger and Antonia as some examples of characters placed in high contrast. Thus it will be important for us to note contrasts as well as comparisons made between Germanicus and other characters in the *Annals*.

Daitz stresses the importance of lineage, action, character contrast, and interplay of characters in Tacitus’ technique of characterization. He notes, for example, how Tacitus connects Germanicus’ lineage to Drusus “upon whom hopes of liberty had been placed.”\(^{49}\) As for character contrast and interplay of characters (which Daitz defines as “the impact of the characters upon each other”),\(^{50}\) he focuses only on how Germanicus and Tiberius pair up together, but there is certainly room for us to investigate character contrast and interplay of characters with Germanicus.


\(^{48}\) Ferguson (1913) 3.

\(^{49}\) Daitz (1960) 34; Tac. *Ann.* 1.33.

\(^{50}\) Daitz (1960) 50.
Historical Background

Drusus

Nero Claudius Drusus was born in 38 BCE to Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla. He was their second child. His older brother was the future emperor Tiberius. Around the time of Drusus’ birth Livia divorced her husband and married Octavian. Yet Drusus was not raised by Octavian until after his father’s death in 33 BCE. Thereafter he was taken in by his stepfather Octavian and given the expected privileges. In 19 BCE he was granted permission to run for public offices five years before the normal age requirement, and in 18 BCE he became quaestor. In 15 BCE he teamed up with his brother Tiberius to conquer the Rhaeti and Vindelici and thus improve Roman control across the Alps. He also began the construction of a road across the Alps, the road which later would be completed by his son Claudius and named via Claudia Augusta. His first son, Germanicus, was born in 15 BCE. In 13 BCE Drusus was sent to govern Gaul where he carried out a census. On the kalends of August in either 12 or 10 BCE he dedicated an altar to Roma and Augustus at Lyon (Lugdunum), the administrative center of Tres Galliae.

Beginning in 12 BCE Drusus took charge of Roman military affairs in Germany. His main bases were located at Xanten (Vetera) and Mainz (Mogontiacum). He fought the Usipetes and Sugambri, two of the major tribes settled between these two bases along the Rhine. He then sailed north to the Frisii through a canal which he dug and to

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51 For secondary source information on Drusus, Varus, Tiberius, and Germanicus, see Syme (1958; 1986); Levick (1990); Ferrill (1991); Shotter (1992); Wells (2003); Murdoch (2006); Seager (2005); Eck (2007). For relevant stemmata, see Syme (1986) tables III and XXVI.

52 Suet. Claud. 1.1 states that Drusus’ original praenomen was Decimus. Possible reasons for the change and its timing are discussed by Simpson (1988).

53 Hor. Carm. 4.4.
which he gave his name: the *Fossa Drusiana*.\textsuperscript{54} He encountered also the Bructeri and Chauci in this year. While sailing again in the northern waters his boats were stranded by the tide, but he was assisted by the friendly Frisii.

In 11 BCE Drusus was named urban praetor but he did not stay in Rome. He ventured out once again against the Usipetes, then crossed the river Luppia (Lippe) and approached the Weser (Visurgis). By this time Drusus had made great headway and had developed many Roman bases in Germania, including at the modern locations Nijmegen, Xanten, Moers-Asberg, Neuss, Bonn, Mainz, Holsterhausen, and Oberaden.\textsuperscript{55} He was rewarded for his deeds with an *ovatio* and *ornamenta triumphalia*.

His military endeavors in 10 BCE were more modest than those of previous years. As proconsul he fought against the Chatti, but then returned to Rome. In 9 BCE he served as consul, but again spent his time in Germania. He encountered the Chatti, Marcomanni, and Cherusci and marched as far as the Elbe River (Albis). He died that summer from injuries associated with a fall from his horse. Tiberius was able to be present at his deathbed after rushing there from Ticinum. Drusus’ body was taken to Rome and laid to rest in the Mausoleum of Augustus. A cenotaph was set up at Mogontiacum and can still be seen today. For his achievements he and his descendents were given the surname Germanicus. Much of what he accomplished in Germania, however, was erased with the disaster of Varus in 9 CE.

\textsuperscript{54} Suet. *Claud.* 1.2.

\textsuperscript{55} For the Roman military outposts in Germany, see Wells (1972) and Brewer (2000) Chapter 4.
Varus

Publius Quintilius Varus was born to a patrician family of little importance, but he was able to gain favor through marriage connections. Varus and Tiberius were consuls in 13 BCE, and their wives were sisters. Both women were daughters of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa. If these connections to Augustus through Tiberius and Agrippa were not enough, Varus later was married to Claudia Pulchra, Augustus’ grand-niece. Varus’ sisters also married well. His sister Quinctilia was married to Sextus Appuleius, a nephew of Augustus, consul in 29 BCE and proconsul of Asia around 23-21 BCE.\(^{56}\)

Thus Varus was able to form ties close to Augustus and his political career took off. After his consulship, Varus went on to become proconsul of Africa around 7 or 6 BCE. Thereafter he was legate in Syria and became involved in affairs in Judaea. He is most infamous, however, for his defeat in Germania in 9 CE. While marching with three legions through the Teutoburg forest, Varus was ambushed by the Cheruscian leader Arminius. The Romans were obliterated and the Varian disaster became a great blemish on Augustus’ reign. Tiberius was sent out immediately in an attempt to maintain control of the province, but the Roman foothold in Germania would never be the same.

Tiberius

Tiberius Iulius Caesar Augustus was born on November 16, 42 BCE to Tiberius Claudius Nero and Livia Drusilla. He was their first child. His younger brother was Drusus, born in 38 BCE. When Tiberius was three and perhaps almost four, his mother and father divorced and Livia married Octavian. Tiberius and his brother Drusus were raised by their father until his death in 33 BCE, and then were transferred into

\(^{56}\) Reinhold (1972) 119.
Octavian’s care. Thereafter Tiberius, like his brother, was given the special privileges. In 23 BCE he became quaestor five years before the normal age requirement. In 20 BCE he began to handle affairs in Armenia. In 15 BCE he teamed up with his brother Drusus to conquer the Rhaeti and Vindelici. While Drusus was campaigning in Germania from 12 to 9 BCE, Tiberius spent this time subduing Pannonia. When Drusus fell ill in 9 BCE, Tiberius rushed to his death bed, then accompanied his body back to Rome for funeral rites. Since Drusus was dead, Tiberius carried out campaigns in Germania from 9 to 7 BCE. From 6 BCE to 2 CE he spent his time in Rhodes in what seemed to have been a voluntary exile. In 4 CE Tiberius was adopted by Augustus and Tiberius in turn adopted his nephew Germanicus. Tiberius also became active once again in military affairs and returned to Germania to campaign from 4 to 6 CE. From 6 to 9 CE he was in Pannonia and Illyricum suppressing revolts, and after the Varian disaster of 9 CE he returned to Germania a third time in an attempt to secure Roman control in the area. He returned to Rome in 12 CE. Tiberius’ military career can in general be considered successful. In 14 CE he became emperor and never again took the field or even traveled to Germania.  

**Germanicus**

Nero Claudius Drusus Germanicus was born in May of 15 or 16 BCE to Nero Claudius Drusus and Antonia. He was adopted by his uncle Tiberius in 4 CE and his name was thus changed to Germanicus Iulius Caesar. His military career began in Pannonia under Tiberius in 7-9 CE. He also served under his uncle in Germania in 11

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57 Tiberius talks about going out to visit the legions at *Ann.* 1.47 and 4.4. At *Ann.* 2.47 when Maroboduus asks Tiberius to help him against the Cherusci, Tiberius sends him a harsh reply and then sends Drusus. Tiberius likewise sends his sons out in his stead at *Ann.* 1.47. At *Ann.* 3.34 Drusus remarks that princes must travel often, then talks about how much Augustus traveled. At *Ann.* 1.46 the people compare Augustus to Tiberius: they criticize the latter for not going out to see the armies when the former had traveled even when he was feeble. See Syme (1958) 423.
CE. He held the consulship in 12 CE and was commander-in-chief in Gaul and Germania in 13 CE. In 14 CE he settled mutinies in Germania and then campaigned against the Marsi. In 15 CE he campaigned against the Chatti, Cherusci, Marsi, and Bructeri. He visited the Teutoburg forest where he buried remains from Varus’ disaster. By the end of the season he had successfully recovered some standards that had been lost by Varus, but he failed to defeat Arminius decisively. In the next year, 16 CE, he led troops back into northern Germania via his father’s canal and other waterways and finally was victorious against Arminius after fighting two battles in and around the Idistavisian plain. The end of the campaign season, however, was met with disaster when the fleet suffered through storms on its return voyage. Germanicus celebrated a triumph for his achievements in Germania in May of 17 CE, but instead of campaigning again in the north, he was sent east. He died there unexpectedly in 19 CE. Like his father he was popular and was believed to have had republican sentiments. He was married to Agrippina the Elder and had nine children by her, many of whom had great impact on the course of Roman history. Germanicus himself, however, is best remembered for his deeds in Germania and for his popularity with the Roman people. Tacitus emphasizes these features of Germanicus in the Annals, particularly through his use of Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius alongside Germanicus. It is to this topic that this project now turns.
When Germanicus Julius Caesar took up the position of commander-in-chief in Germania in 13 CE, he had three examples before him: his own father Drusus, who had been so successful during his campaigns in Germania that he won the name Germanicus for himself and his descendants; his uncle Tiberius, who had established a fairly admirable military career over the course of several campaigns in various places; and the general Quintilius Varus who had been utterly defeated by Arminius just a few years earlier in 9 CE. Varus was known as a failure, the careless general who fell directly into a German ambush, the one who caused Augustus to cry out for his legions and henceforth discourage Roman activity in northern Germania.¹ Tiberius seemed capable enough, but always seemed to be overshadowed by others. Drusus was a hero, one of the first to beat back roaming German tribes, penetrate their territory, and repeatedly rout their forces in battle. Which man was Germanicus to reflect? Would he prove successful against such fierce peoples and live up to the name his father gave him, would he simply maintain the territory, or would he cause another military disaster for Rome?

Tacitus raises this very question when he refers to the military careers of Drusus, Tiberius, and Varus in Annals 1 and 2. The noticeable presence of these three generals reminds the reader that Germanicus was walking ground that had been traveled before. Germanicus had the potential to become another Varus had he not been careful against Arminius; on the other hand, he had the opportunity to prove that he was just as

¹ Suet. Aug. 23.
talented as his father. As Tacitus narrates the young commander’s movement through the deep forests of Germania, the ghosts of Drusus and Varus seem to follow Germanicus. By mentioning Drusus and Varus so frequently and emphasizing instances when Germanicus faces similar situations, Tacitus develops his character on a scale defined by Drusus’s success at the top and Varus’ failure at the bottom.

**Germanicus and Drusus in the *Annals***

Drusus is mentioned in conjunction with his son Germanicus at *Annals* 1.3, 1.33, 1.43, 1.56, 2.7, 2.8, 2.14, 2.41, 2.82, and 3.5. In these passages, Tacitus connects father and son through mention of family ties, through Germanicus’ own words, topographically through military exploits, and through the thoughts and words of the Roman people. At *Annals* 1.3, Tacitus introduces Germanicus among the family members in whom Augustus placed power. Tacitus calls Germanicus *Druso ortum*, the offspring of Drusus. This is not an uncommon way to introduce a new character. Daitz notes, “Tacitus, as did most ancients, attached great importance to the lineage of the character, and will usually mention it, often with an appropriate comment.” The combination of *Druso ortum* and the immediate mention of Germanicus’ command on

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2 Drusus is mentioned also at Tac. *Ann.* 1.41, 4.72, and 6.51, but not in direct association with Germanicus, although at Tac. *Ann.* 1.41 Drusus is called *socr* to Agrippina, Germanicus’ wife, so there is still a nominal connection being made between father and son.

3 Tac. *Ann.* 1.3: *at hercule Germanicum Druso ortum octo apud Rhenum legionibus inposuit adscirique per adoptionem a Tiberio iussit, quamquam esset in domo Tiberii filius iuvenis...*, “But assuredly he put Germanicus, son of Drusus, in command of eight legions on the Rhine and he ordered that he be adopted by Tiberius, although there was a young son in the household of Tiberius...” Goodyear (1972) 114 points out that the use of *hercule* is unusual in Tacitus’ historical narrative and he cites Tac. *Ann.* 12.43.2 as its only other occurrence. *Hercule* seems to punctuate strongly *Germanicum Druso ortum* which follows. Concerning its use at the introduction of Germanicus, Goodyear (1972) 114 writes that “T. discloses his sympathies more overtly than usual.”

4 Daitz (1960) 34.
the Rhine reminds the reader of just how similar the son is to the father who was famous for his achievements in the Rhineland. In addition, Tacitus writes that Augustus promoted Germanicus by ordering Tiberius to adopt him, in spite of the fact that Tiberius had a son of his own. Similarly, Tacitus writes just a few sentences earlier in *Annals* 1.3 that Germanicus’ father Drusus was also favored by Augustus with high official title in spite of the fact that other family members were available.\(^5\)

Germanicus is reintroduced at *Annals* 1.33 with a list of more familial connections.\(^6\) Drusus again is part of his identification as Tacitus stresses for the second time Germanicus’ paternity through the phrase *Druso...genitus*.\(^7\) Tacitus continues with an elaboration of his ties to his father by commenting on the strength of Drusus’ popularity with the people and his supposed republican sentiments.\(^8\) The people equate Germanicus with Drusus by placing in them both the same hope (*spes eadem*) of freedom.\(^9\)

While in the field Germanicus associates himself with his father twice through his own words. At *Annals* 1.43 Germanicus is in the midst of an emotional speech to his

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\(^5\) Tac. *Ann.* 1.3: *Tiberium Neronem et Claudium Drusum privignos imperatoriis nominibus auxit, integra etiam tum domo sua,* “He promoted Tiberius Nero and Claudius Drusus his stepsons with the title *imperator*, while his own household was still intact.”

\(^6\) Germanicus is briefly mentioned 3 times before Tac. *Ann.* 1.33, at 1.7, 1.14, and 1.31 (to which Tacitus refers when he writes *ut diximus* at 1.33), but he does not emerge as a main character until the beginning of the German mutiny.

\(^7\) Tac. *Ann.* 1.33: *...ipse Druso fratre Tiberii genitus...,* “...he himself was born of Drusus the brother of Tiberius...”

\(^8\) Tac. *Ann.* 1.33: *quippe Drusi magna apud populum Romanum memoria, credebaturque, si rerum potitus foret, libertatem redditarus; unde in Germanicum favor et spes eadem,* “Indeed the memory of Drusus was great among the Roman people, and it was believed, if he had obtained power, he would have restored freedom; whence the same hope and favor existed in Germanicus.”

\(^9\) Goodyear (1972) 251 believes that the republicanism attached to Drusus and Germanicus here provides “a convenient explanation” for the great popularity which Drusus and Germanicus had in common.
mutinous troops when he invokes Drusus directly.\textsuperscript{10} While \textit{pater Druse} is in the vocative case, Germanicus calls on the \textit{imago} and \textit{memoria} of Drusus for support.\textsuperscript{11} He hopes the recollection or memory of his successful military father will encourage the troops to aid him in his own success. He similarly calls on his father again at \textit{Annals} 2.8, but in a more private scene. When visiting the area known as Drusus’ channel, Germanicus prays for his fathers’ \textit{exemplum} and \textit{memoria} to help him in his endeavors.\textsuperscript{12} Germanicus acknowledges that he is undertaking the same venture (\textit{eadem ausum}) as his father, namely navigation on the northern ocean.\textsuperscript{13}

In both passages Tacitus portrays Germanicus invoking abstract representations of Drusus for aid in activities in which Drusus succeeded. However, at \textit{Annals} 1.43 Drusus is invoked in front of a crowd with the hope of manipulating its behavior, whereas at \textit{Annals} 2.8 the invocation of his father seems more personal to Germanicus and perhaps shows filial piety. Goodyear notes the difference between these two passages: “From being an inspiring memory (1.43.3) Drusus has progressed to semi-

\textsuperscript{10} Tac. \textit{Ann.} 1.43: \textit{tua, dive Auguste, caelo recepta mens, tua, pater Druse, imago, tui memoria isdem istis cum militibus, quos iam pudor et gloria intrat, eluant hanc maculam irasque civilis in exitium hostibus vertant}, “Your spirit, divine Augustus, received into heaven, your ghost, father Drusus, and the memory of you with these same troops, whom now shame and ambition penetrate, may they clean away this dishonor and turn civil violence towards destruction for the enemy.”

\textsuperscript{11} Goodyear (1972) 295 explains, “\textit{Imago} is not an effigy of Drusus, still preserved in the legionary camp, but, as \textit{memoria} suggests, a vivid recollection or vision.”

\textsuperscript{12} Tac. \textit{Ann.} 2.8: \ldots\textit{fossam, cui Drusianae nomen, ingressus precatusque Drusum patrem ut se eadem ausum libens placatusque exemplo ac memoria consiliorum atque operum iuvaret}, “...he arrived at the channel named “Drusiana” and prayed to his father Drusus that he be willing and pleased to help him with his example and the memory of his insight and accomplishments as he dared the same endeavors...”

\textsuperscript{13}\textit{According to Cass. Dio 54.32.2, Drusus was the first Roman to navigate the northern ocean (see Furneaux [1896] 299). At Tac. \textit{Ann.} 2.8 Germanicus is about to travel through the same waters, and this is what is meant by \textit{eadem ausum}.}
divine status” at *Annals* 2.8. However, *Annals* 1.43 seems to place Drusus on par with *divus Augustus* (note *dive Auguste* also in the vocative), thereby suggesting his semi-divine status in this earlier passage as well.

*Memoria* and *eadem* are important recurring words in these passages. At *Annals* 1.33 the strength of Drusus’ *memoria* with the people causes them to project certain expectations onto Germanicus, *the same* expectations they had for Drusus. At *Annals* 1.43 Germanicus assumes that his fathers' *memoria* is also strong with the troops when he invokes it in a speech with the hopes that it will help him through his difficulties. At *Annals* 2.8 Germanicus invokes Drusus' *memoria* more privately when he is in Germania faced with the reality of pursuing *the same* feats as his father. Through the repetition of *memoria* and *eadem* Drusus follows Germanicus through the text. At the same time, Germanicus seems like a reincarnation of his father as he reenacts aspects of his father's career.

At *Annals* 2.14 Germanicus punctuates a rousing speech to his troops with the reminder that he is treading the same path as his father and uncle, and he entreats them to make him a victor in the same lands which they had striven to conquer:

> propiorem iam Albim quam Rhenum neque bellum ultra, modo se patris patruique vestigia prementem isdem in terris victorem sisterent.

> now the Elbe was closer than the Rhine and there was no war beyond, if only they support him as he treads the footsteps of his father and uncle to be a victor in the same lands. *Ann.* 2.14

*Isdem* again expresses the similarity of experience between Drusus and Germanicus, but also powerful here is the word *vestigia*. This word in connection with *isdem in terris* reinforces the fact that Germanicus is following in his father's footsteps.

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Indeed Germanicus is walking the same ground and visiting the same sites his father visited. Topography links the two men. At *Annals* 1.56 *vestigia* appears again as Germanicus builds his camp on the same site where his father had placed his entrenchments.\(^{15}\) Although the *vestigia* in this sentence belong to the *praesidii* and not to Drusus, it is still understood by the word *paterni* that Drusus had tread upon this very site.\(^{16}\) As Germanicus walks where Drusus had walked, he rebuilds what Drusus had built.

This is not the only time Germanicus visits the very ground on which his father left a mark. At *Annals* 2.7, Germanicus visits the site of Drusus’ altar, and finding it destroyed, he rebuilds it:\(^{17}\) He then celebrates funeral games in another sign of filial piety.\(^{18}\) The act of rebuilding what his father once built at *Annals* 1.56 and 2.7 further reinforces Germanicus as a recreation of Drusus. Not only does Germanicus dare the same military endeavors and visit the same places, but he builds the same structures in

\(^{15}\) Tac. *Ann.* 1.56: *...positoque castello super vestigia paterni praesidii in monte Tauno expeditum exercitum in Chattos rapit...*，“...having placed his fortifications over the traces of his father’s garrison on Mount Taunus he hurried lightly armed troops against the Chatti...”

\(^{16}\) Furneaux (1896) 254 and Goodyear (1981) 76 believe that this may be one of the forts which Cass. Dio 54.33.4 says Drusus built. Wells (1972) 225-6 tells us that Schmidt first identified the location of this fort at Friedberg, but that later excavations cast doubt. Wells (1972) 226 concludes “the operations of both Drusus and Germanicus must have produced marching-camps in the area.”

\(^{17}\) Furneaux (1896) 298 and Goodyear (1981) 206 explain that this altar was either commemorative or was set up for the worship of Drusus’ manes, perhaps set up where Drusus died (the location is vaguely given by Val. Max. 5.5.3, Cass. Dio 55.1.4). Furneaux (1896) 298 postulates its location near the middle Weser, and Goodyear (1981) 206 warns us not to confuse it with Drusus’ cenotaph on the Rhine (to which Dio refers at 55.2.3), which according to Suet. *Claud*. 1.3 also had *decursiones*, ceremonial running, associated with it.

\(^{18}\) Tac. *Ann.* 2.7: *tumulum tamen nuper Varianis legionibus structum et veterem aram Druso sitam disiecerant. restituit aram honorique patris princeps ipse cum legionibus decucurrit*, “They had, however, thrown down the mound recently erected for the legions of Varus and the old altar of Drusus. He restored the altar and for the honor of his father the leader himself with his legions celebrated funeral games.”
the same places. Thus Tacitus reinforces these similarities between father and son through the words *eadem, memoria, vestigia*, and the motif of rebuilding.

At *Annals* 2.41, Germanicus walks where Drusus surely would have walked had he lived a longer life: in the triumph. Seeing Germanicus honored in such a way causes the people once again to associate father with son. Drusus was once favored by the people also, but this did not save him from bad fortune. Although the word *memoria* is not used here, the *memoria* of Drusus is being recalled by the people (*reputantibus*) and projected onto Germanicus as they look upon him. Walker writes that “the effect of the repeated comparisons between Germanicus and his father Drusus is to prepare the reader for Germanicus’ tragic death; Drusus, with Marcellus, was in the popular mind a type of heroic youth meeting a premature end.” The passage ends with a more general statement concerning the bad fate of those loved by the people, a statement which also foreshadows Germanicus’ death and equates it to the death of his father.

The people associate Drusus with Germanicus twice more (2.82 and 3.5). At *Annals* 2.82, just as at 1.33, father and son are associated by their republican views.

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19 Walker (1952) 118 sees the triumph as an important point in Germanicus’ characterization and asserts that “Tacitus chooses Germanicus’ triumph as the occasion to present him as foil to Tiberius, and also to introduce reminiscences of his father Drusus.”

20 Tac. Ann. 2.41: *sed suberat occulta formido, reputantibus haud prosperum in Druso patre eius favorem vulgi, avunculum eiusdem Marcellum flagrantibus plebis studiis intra iuventam ereptum, brevis et infaustos populi Romani amores*, “But a latent fear was lurking for those reflecting on how the favor of the people in the case of his father Drusus was hardly fortunate, how his uncle Marcellus, with the zeal of the people inflamed, was snatched away while still in his youth, how short-lived and unfortunate were the favorites of the Roman people.”

21 Walker (1952) 68.

22 Tac. Ann. 2.82: *vera prorsus de Druso seniores locutos: displicerre regnantibus civilia filiorum ingenia, neque ob alium interceptos quam quia populum Romanum aequo iure complecti reddita libertate agitaverint*, “What the old men said about Drusus was absolutely true: that rulers dislike
is believed that Drusus and Germanicus suffered the same fate because of these views, thus their deaths are once again equated.\textsuperscript{23} Suspicions that Tiberius may have been involved in Germanicus’ death remind people of former rumors that Augustus may have caused Drusus’ death.\textsuperscript{24} From the perspective of the seniores, Germanicus’ death proves what Drusus’ death had suggested.

Since the people have thus equated Germanicus and Drusus, they expect Germanicus to be paid funeral honors similar to those of Drusus. Just as at Annals 2.82, the way Augustus treated Drusus is again being compared to the way Tiberius treats Germanicus. The people are surprised when they see a contrast between the two ceremonies.\textsuperscript{25}

Both men, whom the people loved and in whom the people placed their hopes, lived similarly and died suddenly. But as Woodman and Martin point out, the circumstances of their deaths were significantly different: since Germanicus had died months before and hundreds of miles away, a state funeral perhaps was not possible in Rome, whereas Drusus’ body was able to be carried back to the city intact for its

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\textsuperscript{23} Walker (1952) 123 makes note of this passage as an example where echoes of the past have a strong effect on the characterization of Germanicus: “the old tale that Drusus was also murdered is joined to a vision of father and son as restorers of the Republic.”

\textsuperscript{24} Furneaux (1896) 377 cites Suet. Claud. 1 which relates and rejects the rumor that Drusus was poisoned for his republican views. Goodyear (1981) 431 writes that Tacitus “without countenancing it himself, employs it as material for recreating contemporary views.”

\textsuperscript{25} Tac. Ann. 3.5: \textit{Fuere qui publici funeris pompam requirerent compararentque quae in Drusum patrem Germanici honora et magnifica Augustus fecisset...at Germanico ne solitos quidem et cuicumque nobili debitos honores contigisse}, “There were those who expected the ostentation of a public funeral and compared the honors and magnificence Augustus had bestowed on Drusus the father of Germanicus...but not even the honors customarily owed to any nobleman befell Germanicus.”
honors. For this reason Woodman and Martin believe this reference to Drusus is “ill-chosen.” They continue to observe,

T. has strongly implied throughout the preceding narrative that Germanicus was indeed treated very like his father, an implication which the present reference to Drusus serves only to bring to the reader’s attention.\(^{26}\)

Tacitus certainly does seem to make a noticeable effort to bring Drusus and Germanicus into comparison in this passage. Whether the thoughts of the people are justified or not does not matter; Tacitus’ goal is once again to portray Germanicus alongside Drusus.

Thus Tacitus binds Drusus and Germanicus in various ways, not only through direct mention of familial ties, but also through Germanicus’ own words, topographically through mention of their similar military exploits and travels, and through the similar feelings of the Roman people towards both. By binding father and son together, Tacitus augments the character of Germanicus, creating in him a more experienced military leader, a more republican hero, and a greater favorite of the people.

Thus far we have examined the effects that Drusus has on Germanicus’ character when the reader has only the text of the \textit{Annals} in mind. However, the ancient reader would already have had ideas about Drusus from other texts and may have recalled and projected these ideas while reading about Germanicus in the \textit{Annals}. Tacitus’ Germanicus has the potential to be influenced not only by Tacitus’ Drusus, but by other versions of Drusus as well. If Tacitus identifies Germanicus with Drusus, then what do we know about Drusus from other texts that can help us understand our reading of Germanicus as a character who reflects Drusus? To answer this question we will

\(^{26}\) Woodman and Martin (1996) 98.
examine other authors who write about Drusus, organize their information thematically, then consider how this information might influence our reading of the Tacitean Germanicus.

**Drusus in Pre-Tacitean Authors**

When attempting to reconstruct the Drusus tradition from pre-Tacitean works, there are three important things to keep in mind: first we must realize that not all works which contributed to the tradition of Tacitus’ day are extant to us. We must consider the possibility that Tacitus and these early authors used some of these missing sources. The information offered by pre-Tacitean authors may give a clue as to what kind of information may have been available to Tacitus and how he might be manipulating that information for his own characterization. Second, these pre-Tacitean authors may have influenced Tacitus directly. His Germanicus-as-Drusus characterization may be based on these very passages. Such intertextualities may have altered the way the character of Germanicus was viewed. Third, some pre-Tacitean authors may have had direct personal connections to Drusus or his family. This can raise questions of bias and accuracy, matters which are important to think about if these texts are going to influence the reading of Tacitus.

One of the earliest literary works to mention Drusus is Livy’s *Ab Urbe Condita*. It seems that Drusus’ death is in fact the last major event covered in Livy’s monumental work.\(^{27}\) The books concerning Drusus, 138-42, of course do not survive in the original

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\(^{27}\) Ogilvie (1982) 458 states that Livy’s last twenty books covered events from the Battle of Actium to 9 BC, but he adds later that the work may have been unfinished upon Livy’s death. Conte (1994) 368 writes that Livy’s work seems to end at book 142 with the death of Drusus in 9 BCE, but acknowledges the possibility that it ended with the defeat of Varus in 9 CE. He further explains that Livy may have wished to write 150 books which covered time all the way up to Augustus’ death in 14 CE, but that his work was interrupted by his death. Stader (1972) 299 states that books 121-142 covered the period 42 to 9 BC (see also the chart on 306).
full form, but the *Periochae* offer summaries of their content (see Appendix A p.185).

Drusus is first mentioned in book 138 when he is credited with subduing the Rhaeti with Tiberius, and with setting up a census. In book 139 Drusus is said to have fought Germanic tribes and to have suppressed an uprising in Gaul sparked by the census. In book 140 Drusus is said to have subdued more Germanic tribes, specifically the Cherusci, Tencteri, Chauci. In book 141 more accounts of Drusus' fighting across the Rhine are given. In book 142 Drusus’ injury, death, transport to Rome by Tiberius, eulogy, and funeral are covered. Here the *Periochae*, and presumably Livy’s *Ab Urbe Condita*, end. This all too brief glimpse of Livy’s original text suggests that Livy portrayed Drusus as a successful military leader, an important player in Rome’s involvement with Germania and Gaul, and a well-honored man.

The *Periochae* represent pieces of the full work of Livy which Tacitus would have known and accessed. What information not included in the *Periochae* and coloring the full work might have had regarding Drusus we cannot know, but from the summaries we can see that Livy seems to have written extensively about Drusus at the end of his work to the point that entire books appear to revolve solely around him. The information shared here may have rung in the minds of readers as they read passages about Drusus in Tacitus’ *Annals*.

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28 At *Ann.* 4.33 Tacitus perhaps compares his work to that of Livy. Devillers (2003) 9 affirms Livy’s influence on Tacitus. Syme (1959) 67 writes that Tacitus’ description of Germanicus in Germania is “perhaps designed to recall Livy to his readers.” Yet Syme (1958) 146 brings into question whether Tacitus considered Livy to be among the historians he speaks of at *Ann.* 1.1.

29 Walsh (1961) 7 believes that the *Periochae* suggest that later pentads “appear to be constructed not around particular campaigns, but around the dominant Roman of the day.” Drusus certainly seems to stand in the foreground of *Periochae* books 138-142. However, Walsh (1961) 8 admits that “the summaries of the last books are too brief to infer the structure of them.”
But what of Livy’s connection to Augustus and the effect it may have had on his portrayal of Drusus? Syme insinuates that Livy played into the propaganda of Augustus, writing that “the Emperor and his historian understood each other.”30 Walsh and Petersen, however, reject this view. Walsh states that there is no evidence that Livy acted as a propagandist for Augustus, and that “nowhere is there flattering mention of the Emperor.”31 Petersen cites among his evidence Tacitus’ *Annals* 4.34 where it is written that Augustus called Livy a Pompeian because of his great praise of Pompey, but that this was no hindrance to their friendship.32 It seems that Augustus was tolerant of Livy’s opinions and that Livy was not necessarily under the spell of Augustus.33 Ogilvie agrees, stating that “it is impossible to trace political motives in his writing.”34 However, Luce has recently studied Livy’s text and has discovered that “in many significant ways Livy’s views in the first pentad coincide with Augustus’ program of religious, social, and moral reform.”35 Conte takes middle ground and writes that “Livy certainly was not part of the opposition, but neither was he an uncritical supporter.”36 Perhaps Livy is not categorized as one of the historians of *Annals* 1.1 who wrote with flattery. Perhaps he wrote about Drusus factually and without sycophancy.

30 Syme (1939) 317. See also 464 concerning Livy along with Virgil and Horace: “The class to which these men of letters belonged had everything to gain from the new order.”

31 Walsh (1961) 11, 14.

32 Petersen (1961) 441.

33 Walsh (1961) 12 points out Augustus’ tolerance of historians like Cremutius Cordus.

34 Ogilvie (1982) 459 continues, “There is no sign of attempting to justify, or to attack, the policies and aims of Augustus, although like any other creative writer, he does reflect to some extent contemporary preoccupations, such as the desire for peace, stability and liberty.”

35 See Luce (2009) 46-7 for thoughts on Livy and Augustus.

36 Conte (1994) 369.
Although it is possible if not likely that Tacitus knew Livy’s work on Drusus and perhaps even used it as a source or guide, we do not have definite evidence of this. But most of Tacitus’ readers certainly would have read Livy’s text, since it was immensely popular in its day and stood as one of the commanding histories of Rome. When encountering references to Drusus and descriptions of German military affairs in Tacitus’ text, any well-read Roman would have likely thought of Livy’s work and the Drusus character described therein.

Drusus also is mentioned in Strabo’s geographical text (see Appendix A p. 186). While discussing the territories of the Germanic tribes, he mentions Drusus’ associations with certain areas. When he covers the area between the Rhine and Elbe rivers, he mentions Drusus’ naval victory over the Bructeri on the river Ems (7.1.3.8-13). When he brings up the river Salas, he writes that it was between this river and the Rhine that Drusus, while carrying out a successful campaign, died. He adds that Drusus had subdued many tribes and islands along the coast, citing specifically the Burchanis (7.1.3.52-6). Again Drusus’ military prowess is prominent.

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37 Though Syme (1958) 146 asserts that Tacitus may have had Livy in mind at times and he reminds us that Tacitus praised Livy openly at Ann. 4.34 (1958) 202, he does not include Livy in his discussion of Tacitus’ possible sources. Devillers (2003) also does not consider Livy among the major historians possibly used by Tacitus.

38 For Livy’s popularity and influence on other authors, see Conte (1994) 374. See Plin. Ep. 2.3.8 for the anecdote of the man who traveled a great length just to see Livy.

39 It must be conceded that perhaps only the most educated of Romans would have been familiar with the portion of Livy’s text covering Drusus. Concerning the full text of Livy, Begbie (1967) 337 asserts that “few people would have been interested in reading it in full for information” and that the more popular decades, like the first, third, and fourth, were most likely to be the portions of Livy read in full and committed to readers’ minds. Begbie (1967) 334 notes that the later books of Livy have “meager” summaries, and thus must have been of less interest.

40 Tozer (1893) 188 notes that Drusus’ victory against the Bructeri is not discussed by any other author, and he speculates that it happened perhaps in 12 BCE when Drusus traveled as far as the ocean.
When reading about Drusus in Strabo’s text, we must consider how geography and characters fit together. If Strabo is concerned mainly with geography, why does he mention Drusus? According to Dueck, “Strabo’s main purpose is to present the knowledge increased by recent Roman conquests.” Since Drusus was a driving force behind the conquests of 12-9 BCE, he merits at least brief attention. As a geographer, Strabo can help us understand location, specifically where Drusus was when certain things happened to him, a detail which many other sources frequently forget to state or leave unclear. Strabo was also a man of the Augustan age, and even though he traveled much, he seems to have spent a great deal of time in Rome. Although he had many acquaintances in the city, including Cn. Calpurnius Piso, a friend of Augustus and Tiberius, Dueck believes that Strabo probably did not personally know many of the leading figures he names. But the fact that he was alive and probably in Rome during Drusus’ campaigns makes him an important source. He was no doubt privy to all the news which came in from Germania at that time, and he may have even been present when Drusus was honored in the city and laid to rest after his death.

Horace (see Appendix A p. 188) is also a man of the Augustan age, but unlike Strabo, we know that he had connections to the most important leaders of Rome. According to Suetonius (Vita Horati; cf. Porphyrio on Carm. 4.1.1) Horace wrote his 4th book of Carmina partly because of Augustus’ wish to have Drusus and Tiberius honored


44 If Strabo was indeed in Rome during the years 20 BCE to at least 7 BCE as Dueck asserts, then he would have been in the city during the years of Drusus’ campaign.
for their achievements.\textsuperscript{45} The poems which chiefly serve this function are 4.4 and 4.14. If Horace was being pushed to write about Drusus and Tiberius, how forced are the encomiastic statements in \textit{Carmina} 4.4 and 4.14? Would Horace’s readers have read these poems as artificial or unnatural in tone, or would they have viewed them as a genuine, accurate measure of Drusus’ glory? The answers to these questions are certainly impossible to know. We must keep in mind, however, that as Horace writes about Drusus in 4.4 and 4.14, he is participating in Augustan propaganda.\textsuperscript{46}

\textit{Carmina} 4.4 begins in grand Pindaric fashion, likening Drusus to an eagle and a lion cub.\textsuperscript{47} Fraenkel believes this ode “shows a few signs of being a tour de force,” offering grandeur through two parallel similes which cascade along majestically for 28 lines to conclude with \textit{Nerones}.\textsuperscript{48} A connection is made in typical panegyric fashion between Drusus’ victories and those of his ancestor. In spite of the strange digression at 18-22, this epinician provides the reader with a lofty image of the mighty commander Drusus.\textsuperscript{49}

Yet there is something unsettling about this ode. Lyne targets Horace’s use of direct encomium here and asks, “Can Drusus, a figure of today, plausibly wear the great Pindarizing lines 1-28?“\textsuperscript{50} Johnson similarly questions this ode and wonders whether

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\textsuperscript{45}For Horace’s motivation for writing \textit{Carmina} 4, see Fraenkel (1957) 364, 410; White (1993) 128-32.

\textsuperscript{46}For more about how these odes relate to other forms of Augustan propaganda, especially the \textit{Ara Pacis}, see Benario (1960).

\textsuperscript{47}For more on Pindaric elements in this ode and for an in-depth analysis, see Johnson (2004) 98-114.

\textsuperscript{48}Fraenkel (1957) 426.

\textsuperscript{49}For possible explanations of lines 18-22, see Fraenkel (1957) 428-30. Fraekel (1957) 430 suggests that Horace may be using these lines “to poke fun, in passing, at the silly pedantries of certain panegyrists, especially if he could be sure that Drusus would take the point and appreciate the indirect compliment paid to his own good taste.” See also White (1993) 129, Lyne (1995) 200-1.

\textsuperscript{50}Lyne (1995) 201.
Horace is writing serious epinician or a parody. He ultimately concludes that Horace is tactfully affirming, denying, and then reaffirming the sources of Drusus’ excellence. Whether Drusus’ accomplishments stem from Augustus’ nurturing, his family line, or from talents and virtues learned or inborn, in this ode he surely emerges as a figure praiseworthy in multiple respects.

*Carmina* 4.14 is not nearly as focused on Drusus as 4.4, but it still offers some praise to him in conjunction with Augustus and Tiberius. The lofty style in this poem is like that of 4.4: a long, unbroken opening filled with Pindaric grandeur. Augustus is the addressee of this ode, and when Drusus is praised for his military accomplishments, Augustus receives praise through him. Indeed Drusus must be seen as an admirable figure himself if he is considered an adequate conduit through which to honor Augustus.

Velleius wrote after Horace during the time of Tiberius, and his work is also influenced by the emperor (see Appendix A p. 187). It is clear that Velleius had a lofty impression of Drusus. Like other authors, Velleius describes Drusus’ military achievements in Germania. He praises Drusus’ earlier efforts against the Rhaeti and Vindelici, recording his successes against strongholds as well as in the field, adding that more damage was done to the enemy than to the Romans, and that Drusus was able to prevail in spite of a difficult foe (2.95.1-2). This praise once again underscores Drusus’ talent in military affairs. While the information offered by the *Periochae* and Strabo is

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51 Johnson (1969) 171, 179.
52 *Carmina* 4.14 is directed more towards praise of Tiberius than of Drusus, and Fraenkel (1957) 431 in fact labels it as an epinician for Tiberius, the counterpart to 4.4, the epinician for Drusus. For an in-depth analysis of 4.14, see Johnson (2004) 181-98.
54 Fraenkel (1957) 431.
quite brief and uncolored, Velleius provides the reader with a sparkling image of Drusus at 2.97.2-3. This passage is the lengthiest extant description of Drusus’ character and physical traits. He is praised highly in regards to his leadership talents, his personality, and his appearance. Then his success and early death are mentioned.

Why would Velleius speak so highly of Drusus? First one must consider Velleius’ connections with Drusus’ family line. Sumner has shown that the connections made by Velleius’ family members influenced his career.55 His paternal grandfather was a well respected Roman knight who served as praefectus fabrum under Tiberius Claudius Nero.56 Velleius makes sure to mention the singularem amicitiam which existed between his grandfather and the father of Tiberius (2.76.1). As for Velleius’ father, it seems he was praetor equitum in the Rhine army in the years preceding 4 CE, when his son Velleius took over his post (2.104.3). Sumner deduces that if amicitia existed between Velleius’ grandfather and Tiberius’ father, and between Velleius and Tiberius, there is likelihood that it also existed between Velleius’ father and Tiberius, perhaps in a military context. He concludes, “Later may have come service under Tiberius (and his brother Drusus) on the northern frontiers of the Empire.”57

There seems to be a possibility, therefore, that Velleius’ father knew Drusus personally or at least heard stories about his life and accomplishments while stationed near the Rhine. And Velleius himself, when he took over his father’s position in 4 CE, also probably heard much about Drusus’ deeds in that part of Germania. He may have

seen some of the important sites associated with Drusus and may have known men who had served under him.

The same year Velleius succeeded his father as *praetor equitum* in the Rhine army, Tiberius was adopted by Augustus and then sent to the Rhine himself as supreme commander. As Tiberius’ army moved through Germania, Velleius traveled with it: “We follow Tiberius (and Velleius) into Germany, warring down the stubborn tribes, crossing the Weser, making winter camp at the headwaters of the Lippe.” Upon returning to Rome in 6 CE, Velleius was elected quaestor, perhaps with the help of Tiberius. With a revolt in Pannonia and Illyricum soon following, Velleius was sent to deliver troops to Tiberius (2.111.3), and after returning to Rome he was sent back again as a *legatus Augusti* (2.111.4). At the end of 8 CE Tiberius departed for Dalmatia leaving Velleius behind to serve under Marcus Lepidus, but the two were reunited when in 9 CE Lepidus’ army moved south to join Tiberius in Dalmatia (2.115.2).

Velleius enjoyed Tiberius’ favor after returning to Rome. He participated in Tiberius’ triumph in 12 CE, took a seat in the Senate, and in 14 CE he was elected to the praetorship as one of the *candidati Caesaris*. Sumner postulates that he may have even held further positions later on in life. All this is to say Velleius was active in military and political affairs at the beginning of the first century CE and had a good relationship with Tiberius. This could account for the glowing portrait of Tiberius’ brother

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60 Sumner (1970) 271.
61 Sumner (1970) 274.
Drusus. But does his connection with Tiberius and his family force him to be biased, or does his connection enable him to speak more accurately about Drusus?

Sumner and Woodman have suggested that Velleius may not deserve the harsh criticism he has received from scholars over time. His contribution to Roman history is often underestimated. His focus on the person of Tiberius in the latter part of book 2 has led scholars like Syme to label his work as panegyric. Although he had an attachment to Tiberius, his history reflects many of the same traits found in the works of other, well-respected historians. Although early Roman authors like Fabius Pictor and Cato the Elder avoided the practice, later writers like Cicero, Sallust, Livy, and Tacitus embraced in their works portraits of important individuals and oftentimes centered their narratives on these men. Velleius’ subject matter itself for the latter part of book 2, namely the military affairs of the end of the first century BCE, requires a heavy presence of the commander in chief. Thus Velleius’ focus on Tiberius should not so quickly be labeled as biased. His connections to Tiberius’ family may actually lend credibility to his portrait of Drusus.

Valerius Maximus was also alive and writing during the reign of Tiberius. He completed his collection of stories in 31 CE (see Appendix A p.189). But little about his life is known. He tells us himself that he was friends with Sextus Pompeius, consul in 14 CE. He was not rich. It does not seem that he had any connections to Tiberius, however

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64 Devillers (2003) 10 and Walker (1952) 140 both acknowledge the availability of Valerius Maximus’ text to Tacitus.

this cannot be argued from silence. What can be said with certainty is that Valerius promoted the *mos maiorum* with his stories.\(^{66}\)

One of the more touching examples displaying the relationship between Drusus and Tiberius comes from Valerius Maximus’ *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia* 5.5.3. This story is meant to illustrate the special connection which ought to exist between brothers. Valerius writes that Tiberius had such great affection for his brother that when he heard of his illness, he quickly made a dangerous journey to reach him. Valerius proceeds to describe the kindness Drusus showed his brother upon his arrival and concludes his story by stating “I know for certain that no other example of brotherly love could appropriately be placed beside theirs than the love of Castor and Pollux.”\(^{67}\)

A similar picture of brotherly love appears in the words of Claudius in Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Polybium* (see Appendix A p. 190). Seneca designs a tragic scene when he portrays the successful military commander Drusus dying in his brother’s arms. The troops so loved Drusus that they wished to claim his body, but Tiberius led by example and checked his own grief so that the troops might restrain themselves. This passage not only sheds more light on the perception of Drusus’ accomplishments in Germania, but it also illustrates the emotional attachment his troops and brother had to him.

Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Marciam* (see Appendix A pp. 190-1) praises Drusus for his accomplishments, but is primarily focused on the sadness his death brought to the people and most of all to Livia. The fact that Seneca uses Drusus more than once as an

\(^{66}\) Conte (1994) 381.

\(^{67}\) Val. Max. 5.5.3.26-8: *his scio equidem nullum aliud quam Castoris et Pollucis specimen consanguineae caritatis conuenienter adici posse.*
exemplary candidate for deep mourning years after Drusus had actually died speaks to the power his name carried for the Romans even in the middle of the first century CE.

When reading these passages of Seneca, one must remember that they come from the genre *consolatio*. The very genre in which he works demands that the author deal with his subject in a dramatic but delicate way. The deceased of any *consolatio* is surrounded by the tragic and the emotional, and is certainly presented in a flattering light. Seneca, however, is writing years after Drusus, Augustus, and even Tiberius. He does not have to worry about the pressures of writing under the eyes of these men, but he does have Nero. Nero was the great-grandson of Drusus, so anything Seneca wrote involving Drusus was likely to be of interest to Nero. Seneca had to extract information about Drusus from another source and then exercise caution about this material and its arrangement.

Much more elaborate in its expression of mourning for Drusus is the *Consolatio ad Liviam de Morte Drusi* (see Appendix A p. 193). This pseudo-Ovidian piece is puzzling not only in its authorship, but also in its date. Most scholars, however, argue for dates that are pre-Tacitean. This poem shows sadness for the loss of the beloved son of Livia and a leader of the people. One of the more poignant passages describes Tiberius’ behavior during Drusus’ death scene (85-94). Tiberius, weeping and disheveled from grief, sits with his brother until his last moment. Here we can again observe the closeness of the two brothers, but unlike Seneca’s passage, this scene

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68 For a brief background on the consolatory tradition, see Gibson (2006) xxxi-iv.

69 For a discussion of possible dates for this text, see Schoonhoven (1992) Chapter 2. Schoonhoven (1992) 39 suggests a date of 54 CE and rejects the possibility that the piece was written during the Renaissance.
does not focus on Tiberius’ restraint in mourning, but rather expresses his depth of mourning.

Near the start of the poem Drusus’ mores and res gestae are prominent (13-20). He is hailed as a Roman exemplum, excellent in war and peace, and his deeds near the Alps and in Germania are praised. This passage indicates that upon his death, Drusus was particularly remembered for his good character, his military and political accomplishments, his bond with his brother, and his duty to Rome. Many similar statements of praise are made throughout the entire Consolatio.

It is impossible to know if the author of the Consolatio ad Liviam had any connections to the imperial family since the author is questionable. In his commentary Schoonhoven has suggested that the poem dates to “the short period of transition after Claudius’ death when Britannicus was still alive.”\textsuperscript{70} If this work is indeed pre-Tacitean, perhaps the author knew Livia, Tiberius, or even Drusus personally, thus creating a heartfelt poem of imperial mourning. We must remind ourselves, however, that the work is a consolatio. By convention it is meant to be overly dramatic and it is meant to portray the deceased in a perfect light.

These works may have been known to Tacitus, but it is difficult to know how they may have influenced his text since he discusses none of them directly.\textsuperscript{71} It seems reasonable, for example, to think that Velleius, a man who gained senatorial rank and wrote a summary of Roman history, was referred to by Tacitus.\textsuperscript{72} But Devillers believes

\textsuperscript{70} Schoonhoven (1992) 37. See Schrijvers (1988) for some background on some of the arguments concerning the date.

\textsuperscript{71} The only author of this group mentioned directly by Tacitus is Livy (Ann. 4.34). Tacitus extols him as a writer, but does not mention how he might have used Livy’s work as a source for his own.

\textsuperscript{72} See Syme (1958) 277 for this suggestion.
that overall Velleius’ praise for Tiberius is too incompatible with Tacitus’ hostility for him. Pagán, however, has recently made a convincing argument that Tacitus did indeed know Velleius’ work and was not adverse to alluding to it to amplify the flavor of his own text. Whatever the case, we must keep in mind the possibility that the works of these authors were extant in Tacitus’ day and that they all contributed to a tradition on Drusus that influenced Tacitus’ writing.

These early authors, then, are writing at various times before Tacitus, with various purposes in various genres. Each author also is writing under the close watch of an emperor and is dealing with certain pressures and expectations, either directly or indirectly. They may have been known by Tacitus’ readers and thus knowledge of these texts has the potential to amplify parts of the Annals.

Let us now turn to examine these early primary sources thematically, and investigate what overarching messages they send about Drusus. When these earlier authors write about Drusus, the main features which surface are his military accomplishments, his good character, his relationship with Tiberius, his death, and the resultant mourning. These are the same sort of features Tacitus focuses on when he writes about Germanicus in the Annals.

**Drusus’ Military Accomplishments**

Drusus is best remembered for his military accomplishments. Almost every source above, at least in passing, mentions the victories he won for Rome. The

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75 Valerius Maximus alone does not mention Drusus’ military accomplishments, but it is not important to his purpose, which is to demonstrate brotherly love between Drusus and Tiberius. Authors as late as
Periochae outline his career from Rhaetia (book 138) and Gaul (book 139) to the Rhine and its various tribes (books 139-142). Strabo mentions his naval victory over the Bructeri (7.1.3.12) and credits him with the subjugation of most of the German tribes along the Rhine (7.1.3.52-6). Velleius praises him for his deeds against the Rhaeti and Vindelici (2.95.1-2), and the Germans (2.97.3). Horace likewise cites his victory over the Rhaeti and Vindelici (Carm. 4.4.17-28), and then against the Genauni and the Breuni (Carm. 4.14.10-1). Seneca mentions Drusus' success before his death (15.5) and particularly emphasizes the extent of his incursion into Germania (Ad Marciam 6.3.1), while the Consolatio ad Liviam cites his deeds against the Suevi and Sicambri (311-2) and lists the many other places and peoples he encountered (384-92). Throughout these descriptions, the authors seem to focus on the completeness of Drusus' subjugation of his foes, their ferocity, the ease of his victories, and the glory that he brought to Rome.

Periochae book 140 suggests thorough domination by naming several tribes subdued by Drusus, and then adding aliae gentes (Cherusci, Tencteri, Chauci aliaeque Germanorum trans Rhenum gentes subactae). Strabo says Drusus conquered not only most of the tribes near the Rhine, but also many islands (7.1.3.54-5). At 2.95.2 Velleius uses the word perdomuerunt to describe the thorough defeat of the Rhaeti and Vindelici by Drusus and Tiberius. At 2.97.3 Velleius calls Drusus the conqueror of Germania and writes that he caused its tribes much bloodshed (Sed illum magna ex parte domitorem Germaniae, plurimo eius gentis variis in locis profuso sanguine).

Orosius associate great military achievement with Drusus: at 6.21.12-7 Orosius stresses not only the toughness of Drusus' German foes, but the fact that he so utterly conquered so many of their tribes.

76 Cf. Orosius 6.21.12-7 where many conquered tribes are listed. Orosius further emphasizes Drusus' thorough domination by adding that the Marcomanni were slaughtered almost to the point of extinction.
Horace expresses complete subjugation more metaphorically in his descriptions of the eagle and the lion cub (Carm. 4.4.1-16), then calls the Vindelici *consiliis iuuenis reuictae* (Carm. 4.4.24). At *Carmina* 4.14.13 Horace uses the word *deiecit* to describe what Drusus did to the Genauni and Breuni. In Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Polybium* 15.5, the depth of Drusus’ penetration into Germania is implied with the phrase *intima Germaniae recludentem*, while in the *Consolatio ad Marciam* it is said that Drusus brought the standards to a place so deep into Germania that the people there hardly knew the Romans existed (6.3.1). In the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, Drusus is praised along with Tiberius for the many peoples which they routed so often (*pulsus totiens hostis*, 384). Towards the end of the poem Drusus is called *ignoti victor Germanicus orbis* (457), a title which surely asserts the completeness of his military success.

When the conquered are fierce, the accomplishments of the conqueror seem greater, and Drusus is frequently depicted facing a fierce foe. At 2.95.2 Velleius writes that Drusus defeated *gentes locis tutissimas, aditu difficillimas, numero frequentes, feritate truces*. At *Carmina* 4.4.22-3 the Vindelici are described as *diu / lateque uictrices cateruae*. At *Carmina* 4.14.10-1 Drusus easily defeats the Genaunos, *implacidum genus, / Breunosque veloces*. Seneca portrays Drusus subjecting *gentes ferocissimas* to Roman rule. Yet Drusus conquers with ease. At 2.95.2 Velleius states that Drusus caused much damage to the enemy and little damage to the Romans (*maiore cum periculo quam damno Romani exercitus plurimo cum earum sanguine*). In the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, he sets the enemy to flight and brings new glory to Rome (*inque fugam barbara terga dedit, / Ignotumque tibi meruit, Romane, triumphum, / Protulit in*

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77 This concept can be seen also in texts as late as Orosius. At 6.21.12-7 Orosius emphasizes the strength, size, and courage of the Germans as well as their *feritas* to amplify Drusus’ victory over them.
terras imperiumque novas, 18-20). The high distinction of Drusus’ deeds is made clear later in the consolatio when the author predicts their everlasting fame:

Facta ducis vivent operosaque gloria rerum:
Haec manet, haec avidos effugit una rogos.
Pars erit historiae totoque legetur in aevo
Seque opus ingeniis carminibusque dabit.

The chieftain’s deeds will live, and the hard-won glory of his exploits; this abides, this alone escapes the greedy pyres. It will be a part of history, and will be read in every age, and will be a theme for writers and for poets.

(365-8)

The military glory attached to Drusus by these earlier authors lives on in Tacitus’ Drusus as well. Germanicus twice hints at his father’s military accomplishments by invoking the memoria the troops have of him (Tac. Ann. 1.43, 2.8). Germanicus hopes that his own military accomplishments will also be successful and prays to his father for his aid (2.8). As Germanicus attempts the same endeavors, he strives for the same victories. He reenacts some of his father’s military exploits by visiting some of the same locations and rebuilding the same structures. Drusus’ military glory is thus transferred to Germanicus.

Certain passages in the Annals concerning Germanicus call to mind these military features of Drusus from earlier authors. For example, according to Periochae book 138 and 139 Drusus conducted a census in Gaul early in his career (A Druso census actus est, 138; et tumultus, qui ob censum exortus in Gallia erat, componitur, 139). When readers of Tacitus comes upon Germanicus conducting a census in Gaul at Annals 1.31 (regimen summae rei penes Germanicum agendo Galliarum censui tum intentum) and Annals 1.33 (Interea Germanico per Gallias, ut diximus, census accipienti), they might

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78 Text and translation from Mozley (1929).
be reminded of Drusus engaging in this same activity in the same place in approximately the same phase of his career.79

As Drusus experiences a *tumultus* shortly after conducting the census in Gaul (*Periochae* 139), Germanicus faces a mutiny (Tac. *Ann.* 1.31-49). However, from *Annals* 1.50 onwards through the end of the German campaigns (2.26), Tacitus portrays Germanicus’ military career with successes reminiscent of Drusus. The attack against the Marsi at *Annals* 1.50-51 is such a complete slaughter (though Tacitus concedes that the foe was drunken and unsuspecting) that no harm is done to the Romans (*sine vulnere milites*, 1.51, cf. Vell. Pat. 2.95.2 *maiore cum periculo quam damno Romani exercitus*). With encouragement from Germanicus, the troops proceed to defeat the Bructeri, Tubantes, and Usipetes. Their success gives the men confidence as they are stationed in their winter camp (1.51).

The Drusus-like completeness and ease of Germanicus’ exploits are expressed several more times in book 2 as Germanicus matures in military competence. At *Annals* 2.18 when Germanicus fights Arminius and the Cherusci, he earns a great victory without bloodshed (*magna ea victoria neque cruenta nobis fuit*). There is a massive slaughter covering a great span of time and space and a trophy is raised.

As the German tribes regroup (2.19), Germanicus prepares for another victory by discovering the enemy’s plans and using them to his advantage (2.20).80 Germanicus rides into battle encouraging his troops to slaughter, and indeed he insists on complete

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79 See Furneaux (1896) 222: Drusus in 12 BCE was the first to revise the census which Augustus had instituted in 27 BCE. Germanicus later revises it again.

80 Devillers (2003) 148 writes that the fact the Germans are able to regroup for another battle shows that perhaps Germanicus’ first encounter with these people was not as successful as Tacitus made it out to be.
victory by discouraging the taking of captives and promoting full extermination of the enemy (orabatque insisterent caedibus, nil opus captivis, solam internicionem gentis finem bello fore, 2.21). Total victory is achieved once again with much blood lost by the enemy (ceterae ad noctem cruore hostium satiatae sunt, 2.21). Germanicus proclaims this success with the phrase debellatis...nationibus inscribed on a monument (debellatis inter Rhenum Albimque nationibus exercitum Tiberii Caesaris ea monimenta Marti et lovi et Augusto sacravisse, 2.22).

Much to the fear of his enemies, the completeness of Germanicus' victories continues even after the disasters experienced by his fleet (2.23-4). As he advances his enemies dare not face him, or if they do, they are repelled (2.25). The Romans under Germanicus are considered invincible (quippe invictos et nullis casibus superabilis Romanos praedicabant, 2.25).

Perhaps others were equally convinced of Germanicus' ability to achieve complete victory, since it was thought that just one more campaign season might bring the war to a close, but Tiberius refuses Germanicus' request for more time and recalls him to Rome (2.26).81 For the sake of appearances the war is considered finished (2.41). Later on Tacitus seems to imply that Germanicus, like Alexander, would have completely subdued his enemy if only he had not been hindered (2.73). Drusus, although he enjoyed much military success in Germania, is also unable to bring the German campaigns to a full close. As we will see, Drusus also may have been recalled

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81 See Devillers (2003) 148-9 concerning the favor for Germanicus shown in this passage.
by the emperor from his province, but our pre-Tacitean sources merely report that Drusus’ death cut his operations in Germania short.\(^8\)

**Drusus’ Character**

In addition to his military success, these early sources highly praise Drusus’ character. Horace praises Augustus for raising a stepson with such a great mind and character (*quid mens rite, quid indoles*, 4.4.25). In Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Marciam* Drusus’ character is also obviously praised, but to the greatest height: it is asserted not only that he was a great leader but that he would have been a great emperor as well. This statement is followed by remarks about the love he gets from the people, the respect he gets from his enemies, and the fact that he died for his country. His triumph-like funeral parade nicely caps off what looks like a portrait of the perfect war hero.

The *Consolatio ad Liviam*, as dictated by its genre, naturally offers repeated praise for the deceased. Near the opening of the poem Drusus is hailed as *exemplum iuvenis venerabile morum* (13). And later he is awarded superlatives and is identified with *spes* and *gloria* (*maximus ille quidem iuvenum spes publica vixit / Et qua natus erat gloria summa domus*, 365-6). His many virtues connect him to his brother Tiberius (*nec tu, tot turba bonorum, / Omnis cui virtus contigit, unus eras*, 79-80). And at the end of the poem a statement which echoes line 13 insinuates Drusus’ greatness even though Tiberius is really meant: *Est tibi (sitque precor) multorum filius instar* (471).

This positive characterization of Drusus seems to prefigure Tacitus’ portrait of Germanicus. In fact, if one reads Velleius’ portrait of Drusus with Tacitus’ Germanicus in mind, it sounds like it describes him quite well. Woodman analyzes Velleius’ passage on

\(^8\) Suet. *Claud*. 1.5 hints at this rumor of Augustus recalling Drusus. More about this passage will be discussed below.
Drusus into three parts: six lines on Drusus’ character, one and a half on Drusus’
campaign, and one line on his death. 83 Tacitus focuses on these same features when
he describes Germanicus. Tacitus praises Germanicus’ ingenium and comitas
immediately after commenting on how the people equated the young man with his
father (Ann. 1.33). After his death Germanicus (Ann. 2.73), like Velleius’ Drusus (Vell.
Pat. 2.97.2-3), is noted for his virtues, his beauty (corpora decoro, cf. Vell. Pat.
pulchritudo corporis), and his death at around 30 years of age (haud multum triginta
annis egressum, cf. Vell. Pat. agentem annum tricesimum). He is also said to have
been kind to his friends (mitem erga amicos, cf. Vell. Pat. adversus amicos aequa) and
is remembered for doing damage against the Germans but not quite completely
subjugating them (praepeditusque sit perculsas tot victoriis Germanias servitio premere,
cf. Vell. Pat. illum magna ex parte domitorem Germaniae, plurimo eius gentis variis in
locis profuso sanguine). 84

Both Velleius’ Drusus and Tacitus’ Germanicus, then, get character sketches that
emphasize their good nature, their military accomplishments in Germania, and their
premature deaths.

Another telling character sketch of Germanicus occurs in the Annals at 2.13 when
Tacitus describes Germanicus sneaking around the military camp to hear what his own

83 Woodman (1977) 43.

84 Tac. Ann. 2.73: sed hunc mitem erga amicos, modicum voluptatum, uno matrimonio, certis
liberis egisse, neque minus proeliatorem, etiam si temeritas aferit praepeditusque sit perculsas
tot victoriis Germanias servitio premere, “But Germanicus was gentle towards his friends, had
restraint in pleasures, one wife, and legitimate children, and was no less a fighter, even if
rashness was lacking and he was hindered from suppressing Germany which he had struck down
with so many victories.”
troops are saying about him.\textsuperscript{86} Germanicus is praised not only for noble features (cf. Vell. Pat. \textit{pulchritudo corporis}) but for his level-headedness (cf. Vell. Pat. \textit{par sui aestimatio inimitabilis}). Also, the \textit{comitas} which Tacitus uses to describe Germanicus (1.33, 2.13, 2.72) seems very much like the \textit{morum certe dulcedo ac suavitas} of Drusus (Vell. Pat. 2.97.3).

Upon his death, Germanicus’ character is praised once more.\textsuperscript{86} \textit{Comitas} is emphasized again, as well as his physical appearance and good rapport with others. The word \textit{venerabilis} is used for Germanicus, just as it is used for Drusus in the \textit{Consolatio ad Liviam} (13), and the grandeur and dignity attributed to Germanicus surely makes him an \textit{exemplum} like Drusus (13). Overall, both father and son are characterized as model Roman leaders.

\textbf{Drusus and Tiberius}

It is interesting to note that Drusus rarely is mentioned without his brother Tiberius. Indeed the two brothers were often involved in military affairs simultaneously, thus writers could hardly praise one without bringing up the other. \textit{Periochae} book 138 says that Drusus defeated the Rhaeti alongside his brother. Velleius also witnessed their partnership in this undertaking (2.95.1). Tiberius even appears in Drusus’ portrait when

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{85} Tac. Ann. 2.13: \textit{fruiturque fama sui, cum hic nobilitatem ducis, decorem alius, plurimi patientiam, comitatem, per seria per iocos eundem animum laudibus ferrent reddendamque gratiam in acie faterentur, “He delights in his own reputation, as one man praised the nobility of the leader, another his appearance, many his patience, his kindness, his same demeanor in serious and light-hearted matters and they admitted that thanks ought to be paid back in battle.”

\textsuperscript{86} Tac. Ann. 2.72: \textit{tanta illi comitas in socios, mansuetudo in hostis; visuque et auditu iuxta venerabilis, cum magnitudinem et gravitatem summae fortunae retineret, invidiam et adrogantiam effugerat, “So great was his kindness towards allies, his mildness towards enemies; he was venerable in appearance and voice alike, while he upheld the grandeur and dignity of the highest fortune, he escaped envy and arrogance.”

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Velleius writes that his personal beauty was second only to that of his brother (*nam pulchritudo corporis proxima fraternae fuit*, 2.97.3). After Horace finishes praising Drusus directly, he praises Augustus for nurturing not just Drusus, but both boys (*quid Augusti paternus / in pueros animus Nerones*, 4.4.27-8). Valerius Maximus presents Tiberius and Drusus as exemplary brothers, like Castor and Pollux. When he heard of his brother’s illness, Tiberius in fearful haste put himself in danger, riding non-stop even at night through perilous territory with little companionship, to be at Drusus’ side. As for Drusus’ death, Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Polybium* portrays Tiberius stepping up and taking control of Drusus’ troops after his brother’s passing. The *Consolatio ad Marciam* implies that Livia’s grief for Drusus was tempered by Tiberius (6.3.2 and 6.4.2). And both the *Consolatio ad Liviam* 169-72 and the *Consolatio ad Polybium* as well as *Periochae* book 142 attest that it was Tiberius who was with Drusus when he died and then oversaw the transport of the body back to Rome.

The *Consolatio ad Liviam* binds the two brothers together repeatedly. At the very opening of the poem Livia is hailed *mater Neronum* no longer (1). She only has half (*dimidium*) of that title and no longer has to ask *uter?* (6) when someone refers to her son. Many other words and phrases throughout the work bind the brothers as a close pair, like *alter* (*duplicis sors altera partus*, 121; *maior an alter*, 150) and *pars* (*pars Neronum*, 145; *pars partus*, 472). Thus the *Consolatio ad Liviam* implies a close bond between the two brothers.

Considering the close ties between Drusus and Tiberius, the animosity shown Germanicus by Tiberius is shocking. Tacitus himself when he first introduces Germanicus calls this animosity *iniquae* (1.33). Tacitus makes several references to the
apparent animosities between uncle and nephew. At *Annals* 1.52 Tiberius disapproves of the way Germanicus handles the troops after the mutiny. Tiberius is also not happy about Germanicus’ visit to the Teutoburg forest, and one of the speculated reasons is that Tiberius interpreted all of Germanicus’ endeavors unfavorably (1.62). Tiberius also shows displeasure with Germanicus when he visits Egypt. Not only did Germanicus break sanctions of Augustus by visiting there without permission, but Tiberius also disapproved of Germanicus’ dress and demeanor (2.59).

Tacitus shows more animosity between uncle and nephew by suggesting that Tiberius was jealous of Germanicus. At *Annals* 2.5 Tiberius is eager to move Germanicus to the troublesome East where he might encounter dangers. Germanicus certainly is aware of Tiberius’ feelings towards him and consequently wishes to hasten victory in Germania (2.5). When he achieves success, he erects an inscription with Tiberius’ name (*debellatis inter Rhenum Albimque nationibus exercitum Tiberii Caesaris ea monimenta Marti et Iovi et Augusto sacravisse*, 2.22) but not his own, partly for fear of jealousy (2.22). When Tiberius recalls him to Rome, Germanicus perceives the true reason to be jealousy (2.26).

Tiberius’ disingenuous feelings for Germanicus are obvious especially when Germanicus is sent to the East. Piso is said to have been put in place to thwart him, possibly by the order of Tiberius (2.43). By this point Tiberius’ animosity seems clear to others and the emperor’s dislike for his nephew makes people favor Germanicus even more (2.43). The stressed relationship between Tiberius and his nephew even extends

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87 Devillers (2003) 127 notes the omission of Germanicus’ name and points out how important the omission of information can be in the interpretation of the text.
to Germanicus’ deathbed: suspicions of Tiberius were supposedly whispered by the
dying commander (2.72).

Tacitus’ repeated references to the animosity of Tiberius for Germanicus might
surprise the reader who is familiar with the repeated references to the brotherly love of
Tiberius for Drusus expressed by earlier authors. This disparity may serve to increase
the shock effect one gets when reading about Tiberius’ behavior towards his brother’s
son in the Annals. The fact that an uncle should act in such a way towards a nephew
seems bad enough, but it seems even worse when one knows how strong Tiberius’
bond with Germanicus’ father was, at least in the portrayals of earlier authors.

**Drusus’ Death and Mourning for Drusus**

At Annals 3.5 the people compare Drusus’ funeral honors to those of Germanicus.
An examination of Drusus’ death and the resultant mourning can help illuminate this
comparison. According to Periochae book 142, Drusus dies on the frontier of the empire
from an accident: he falls from his horse and injures his leg. He lingers for thirty days
before he passes. Velleius points to fatorum iniquitas (2.97.3). Germanicus also dies on
the frontier and also unexpectedly. Fortune does not smile on Germanicus either. He
lingers on for what seems to be a significant amount of time: he falls ill at Annals 2.69
and remains in precarious health long enough for Piso to hesitate, disperse
Germanicus’ well-wishers at Antioch, and travel to Seleucia. Germanicus seems to get
well during this time (recreatum), only to fall ill again (aegritudinem, quae rursum
Germanico acciderat, 2.69). Piso is denounced by Germanicus and leaves Syria
immediately but has time to make it to Kos before he hears news of Germanicus’ death
(Ann. 2.70, 2.75). Meanwhile, Germanicus has some time in which his spirits are raised
(2.71) before he regresses towards his death. Although Tacitus compresses
Germanicus’ illness into a small span of text, the wide traveling of Piso and Germanicus’ wavering condition suggest that Germanicus actually was sick for a considerable period of time. Thus both father and son suffer for a long time before their passing, and as Germanicus has Agrippina at his bedside (2.72), Drusus has his brother Tiberius.

Yet in a way, Tiberius is present at both deaths. He is physically in attendance at Drusus’ death, playing the role of supportive, loving brother in the Consolatio ad Liviam. Knowledge of this sad farewell heightens the shock of Tiberius’ presence at Germanicus’ death. At Annals 2.72 Tiberius is present as a whisper, a fear just before Germanicus expires (alia secreto per quae ostendisse credebatur metum ex Tiberio, “other things were said in secret, through which he was believed to have shown his fear of Tiberius”).

As noted by Strabo (7.1.3) and in Periochae book 142, Drusus dies on campaign. According to Consolatio ad Polybium 15.5 and Consolatio ad Liviam 169-170, his soldiers are distraught and wish to claim the body themselves. Yet Tiberius makes sure the body returns to Rome for its proper rites (Periochae book 142, Seneca Consolatio ad Polybium 15.5, Consolatio ad Liviam 171-76). Germanicus also dies on campaign, but his body does not return intact. His wife Agrippina is the escort, and the body is cremated. Tiberius rushed out to meet his brother and was sure to escort his body to Rome; yet in Tacitus’ text he shows little concern for Germanicus and does not go out to meet the procession (3.2). Indeed he does not even go to the city gates (3.5) or leave the palace (3.3). Moreover, he does not see to it that Germanicus receive full rites. Tacitus points out that Germanicus, in contrast to Drusus, does not even receive the honors of a nobleman, and the people notice (3.5).
When Drusus’ body returns to the city, the people mourn deeply. In the Consolatio ad Liviam the city groans (Urbs gemit, 181) and grief is public (luctus...publicus, 66). Crowds weep (Obvia turba ruit lacrimisque rigantibus ora / Consulis erepti publica damna refert, 199-200) and people of all ages mourn (Omnis adest aetas, maerent iuvenesque senesque, 203). The whole city grieves (Invenit tota maeror in Urbe locum, 294) and indeed the pain could fill the ages (Iste potest implere dolor vel saecula tota, 77). The same widespread grief can be seen at Consolatio ad Marciam 6.3.1. Not only are the citizens deeply touched by Drusus’ death but the whole of Italy and the provinces, too, are affected (ingens ciuium provinclarumque et totius Italiae desiderium). People come from all over as if to see a triumph instead of a funeral.

Mourning for Germanicus is just as extensive, if not more so. On his deathbed Germanicus states that even strangers will weep for him (flebunt Germanicum etiam ignoti, Ann. 2.71), and his prediction seems immediately true. At Annals 2.72 the province, surrounding peoples, and foreign kings show sorrow at once. When news of Germanicus’ death first goes public at Rome at Annals 2.82, he is associated with Drusus through the statement that rulers dislike civil-minded sons. Then the reaction of the people is given. The city closes down (desererentur fora, clauderentur domus), and there are groans (passim silentia et gemitus, 2.82).

When Agrippina arrives in Italy with Germanicus’ ashes at Annals 3.1, mourning is again widespread. Not only do Agrippina and her retinue show continued grief, but people come from all over to partake in the scene. Just as Drusus’ soldiers showed grief for him in Seneca’s Consolatio ad Polybium 15.5. at Annals 3.1 many officers and men who served under Germanicus are present. As Germanicus predicted, many strangers
attend (*multique etiam ignoti vicinis e municipiis*). Mourners come out in crowds (*maerentium turba*) and one cannot tell the laments of kinsman from those of strangers, or women’s from men’s (*neque discerneres proximos alienos, virorum feminarumve planctus*). As the procession moves towards Rome (3.2), the people are in black (*atrata*), they make offerings, and they show their pain with tears and crying (*lacrimis etclamationibus dolorem testabantur*).

To calm the people’s mourning, Tiberius speaks at *Annals* 3.6 in a way which seems to recall his behavior in Seneca’s *Consolatio ad Polybium*. He sets a limit on mourning, saying that after initial grief, the heart must be strengthened. He proceeds to relate many themes that echo the *Consolatio ad Liviam*. He cites examples of famous people who have mourned and been mourned, he states that death even touches the imperial family, and he asserts that excessive grief is not befitting of the imperial family (cf. *Consolatio ad Liviam* 59-70, 473-4). Although Tiberius essentially delivers his own miniature *consolatio* here and echoes themes from the *Consolatio ad Polybium* and *Consolatio ad Liviam*, his motives are different from those that underlie these other two works. He is not genuine in his attempt to comfort the people, but rather Tacitus states that his purpose is to suppress the talk of the people (*utque premeret vulgi sermones*), especially those who in *Annals* 3.5 objected to Tiberius’ treatment of Germanicus.

Indeed at *Annals* 3.5 the people observe that the way Tiberius treats Germanicus does not correspond to the way Augustus treated Drusus. Our earlier sources allow us to know more about Augustus’ mourning for Drusus. As stated in *Periochae* book 142, Augustus pronounced Drusus’ eulogy. Certainly the man who nurtured the Drusus in Horace *Carmina* 4.4 grieved greatly when he lost this heir. In the *Consolatio ad Livam*
Drusus’ death draws tears from the emperor several times. At *Annals* 3.5 the people wonder why there are no laudations and tears for Germanicus (*ubi illa veterum instituta, propositam toro effigiem, meditata ad memoriam virtutis carmina et laudationes et lacrimas vel doloris imitamenta? “where were those customs of old, the likeness placed on the bier, the songs commemorating the memory of his virtue and eulogies and tears or even the imitation of grief?”).

The women in Drusus’ life also grieve over his loss. Livia is of course the addressee of the *Consolatio ad Liviam*, so she is portrayed several times in deep mourning. At the beginning of the poem she must see Drusus return to the city during his funeral instead of his triumph (25-36). At the end of the poem she can scarcely eat or drink without the comfort of Augustus and Tiberius (417-22). She is encouraged by the author to control her grief as is befitting to her station (350-4; 473-4). Control of grief is an expected subject in a *consolatio*, and it appears in the *Consolatio ad Marciam* as well. At 6.3.2 Livia is pained repeatedly as pyres of others remind her of her own loss, but once Drusus is laid to rest, her grief is put aside and Livia acts as a model mourner. At 6.4.1-6.5.3 Livia is beseeched to behave as an exemplary mourner for the sake of all those around her. Perhaps Livia in the *Annals* tries to follow this advice. Like Tiberius, she does not leave the palace upon the arrival of Germanicus’ ashes. Tacitus offers two possible reasons: either public grieving was considered below her station (*inferius maiestate sua rati si palam lamentarentur, Ann. 3.3*), or she was afraid of revealing her joy. Knowledge of her portrayal in the *consolationes* might tempt one to believe the former, although Tacitus compels his reader to believe the latter.

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88 *Drusus / A magno lacrimas Caesare quartus habet, 71-2; Et voce et lacrimis laudasti, Caesar, alunnum, 209; Denique laudari sacrato Caesaris ore / Emerui, lacrimas elicuique deo, 465-6.*
The section of the *Consolatio ad Liviam* addressing Antonia, Drusus’ wife (299 - 327), is really quite tender and recalls the grief felt for Germanicus by Agrippina. Although Antonia was not present by the side of her dying husband as Agrippina was, the author of the *Consolatio ad Liviam* describes how Drusus wished her there and called out to her as he was dying and his tongue was growing cold (307-8). Germanicus also devotes his last words to his wife (Ann. 2.72). Like Agrippina (Ann. 2.73), Antonia was her husband’s only love (305-6), and was left with children (one of whom was Germanicus himself) after her husband’s death (323-4). Both men are greatly grieved by their wives long after their deaths.

Thus both Drusus and Germanicus are mourned deeply by the people, the military, and their wives. Earlier sources seem to show that Drusus was deeply mourned also by Tiberius and Livia, and so one might expect them also to show sorrow and compassion when his son passes. But when the opposite happens in the *Annals* and Germanicus is not mourned by Tiberius and Livia, at least not openly, their reaction to Germanicus’ death seems that much more appalling, and Tacitus is thus able to make Tiberius and Livia appear that much more guilty and villainous.

**Drusus in Parallel and Post-Tacitean Authors**

Thus far we have examined pre-Tacitean authors who may have influenced Tacitus directly, or may have used the same sources as Tacitus. Not all early sources concerning Drusus are extant, but the remaining authors can help give us an idea of what information might be missing to us. Authors that are contemporaneous with and later than Tacitus can also help us fill in the missing pieces of the Drusus tradition on which Tacitus was building. It is important to consider what some of these later authors
say about Drusus since they too may have obtained information from the same sources used by Tacitus.

Florus, Cassius Dio, and Suetonius all lived and wrote at the same time or shortly after Tacitus. All three authors cover the affairs of Drusus in enough detail to show that Drusus was still a person worth talking about in the second century CE. When contemporary and near contemporary authors mention Drusus in their texts, they bring Drusus into the minds of readers so Drusus stands out more readily when they pick up Tacitus’ text. Of particular interest in these authors are details about his activity in Germania and the aftermath of his death. Readers of Tacitus’ Annals may have been reminded of these passages while following Germanicus on his own journey through Germania, and while reading about the aftermath of Germanicus’ death, especially since Tacitus seems to encourage such connections. It seems difficult, for instance, to believe that an informed reader would not have thought about Suetonius’ remarks on the funeral honors of Drusus when Tacitus writes about the people comparing Drusus’ honors to those of Germanicus, especially since Tacitus is brief about the details of Drusus’ funeral. When he writes that Drusus was honored by all things established by ancestors and things which later generations invented (3.5), he seems to invite the reader to reach back into their knowledge stores to supply further information with which to make their own comparison between Drusus and Germanicus. With extra information from other authors like Suetonius in mind, Tacitus’ text becomes amplified and suggestions of dishonor against Germanicus become all the more grave.

The way the information in these later texts and in Tacitus’ text overlap and complement each other may suggest that these authors used the same sources as
Tacitus. Syme notes, “In their general presentation of Tiberius as man and emperor, Suetonius and Dio go in harmony with Tacitus. Detail and selection, emphasis and structure are notably divergent.” Syme plays with the idea that Tacitus and Dio may have worked from a common source, but he remains skeptical, arguing that there are a few similarities between the two, but many differences. He concludes “Though passages in Dio (and also in Suetonius) derive from the ultimate source, or rather sources, of Tacitus, too many unknown factors are involved.” Devillers also is skeptical when discussing the supposed common source of Tacitus and Dio, but still notes the possibility under sources labeled “Ignoti.”

These parallel and post-Tacitean sources also remind us that we are reading Tacitus’ text with an incomplete version of the Drusus tradition. Tacitus may have used sources about Drusus which are no longer available to us, thus there may be more intertextualities between Drusus and Tacitus’ Germanicus which we simply cannot decode. But we can try to identify passages where Tacitus seems to be making character connections and then try to amplify our knowledge of those passages with what does exist in other authors.

Florus and Cassius Dio offer similar information about Drusus. They both relate Drusus’ movements and activities in Germania in great detail. Therefore we will use these authors to compare Germanicus’ movements and activities in Germania to those of his father. Our focus will be topographical. Suetonius offers some of the same sort of

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89 Syme (1958) 271.
91 Syme (1958) 273-4.
detail but then turns to focus heavily on what happens after Drusus’ death. His text will invite various comparisons between his Drusus and Tacitus’ Germanicus.

**Drusus and Germanicus in Germania: A Topographical Comparison**

Florus, a near contemporary of Tacitus, includes a rather large section about Drusus and the German war (2.30.23-8, see Appendix A p. 193). The passage mainly follows Drusus’ military accomplishments by listing the tribes he encountered and tracing his steps through Germania. The passage ends with his death and the honor awarded him by the senate.

Cassius Dio, an author writing a bit later than Tacitus, writes extensively about Drusus in several passages and relates his military career in great detail (see Appendix A pp. 196-9). Dio describes the actions of Drusus and Tiberius against the Rhaetians (54.22.1, 3-4) and narrates Drusus’ activities in Germania against various tribes (54.32.2-33.2).

What is perhaps most valuable from Florus and Dio is the detail with which Drusus’ deeds and movements in Germania are recorded. It seems as though these authors are drawing Drusus’ path out on a map. This very detail, supported by some of the information from our earlier authors, invites comparisons between Germanicus’ journey in Germania and his father’s. We can question further what exactly Germanicus is doing the same as his father, if he really is walking in his father’s footsteps, and if he is in fact rebuilding what his father built. We can corroborate the words *eadem* and *vestigia* and the recurring concepts of rebuilding which show up so often in the *Annals*.

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93 I include here only certain excerpts of Dio’s work on Drusus, since the length of these passages makes it impractical to cite them all fully in this chapter. Other passages of Dio concerning Drusus include 48.44, 54.10, 54.19, 54.25, 54.35, and 54.36.
Florus starts Drusus off against the Usipetes, Tencturi, and Catthi, the tribes which inhabit the area just north of Mogontiacum. Germanicus fights the Usipetes too in 14 CE (Ann. 1.51), but not before he attacks the Marsi (Ann. 1.50). In 15 CE Germanicus was decreed a triumph and then set out for Germania in the spring (Ann. 1.55). He built his camp on his father’s old entrenchments and then turned his attention to the Chatti (Dio’s Catthi; Ann. 1.55-6).

Florus next tells of Drusus’ engagements with the Cherusci, Suebi, and Sicambri. Germanicus also fights with the Cherusci starting in 16 CE, and Tacitus makes it clear that Germanicus is patrolling the same area as Drusus when he describes Germanicus’ visits to Drusus’ altar (Ann. 2.7) and Drusus’ channel (Ann. 2.8) and then proceeds to portray Germanicus invoking Drusus (Ann. 2.8).94 The Cherusci show clear arrogance when they bring to battle chains with which to bind defeated Romans, but Germanicus ends up slaughtering them instead (Ann. 2.17-8). Florus reports that the Cherusci and fellow tribes act with similar arrogance towards Drusus: they lay claims on spoils as if their victory is certain, but Drusus ends up utterly defeating them. After these victories, both commanders are able to travel freely through Germania. Drusus goes as far north as the Weser (Visurgis) and Elbe (Albis) Rivers, he builds in several locations, and he penetrates the Hercynian forests.95 Germanicus wanders through the countryside only to find a fearful enemy who either dares not encounter Germanicus or suffers devastating defeat (Ann. 2.25). The Germans have been cowed much like the mild

94 Wells (1972) 111 suggests the possibility that Germanicus was at Vechten just before setting sail through the lakes and ocean to the river Ems. He uses Germanicus’ prayer to Drusus at Ann. 2.8 to assert that “If Vechten was Germanicus’ base, it was also Drusus.” He writes that the fossa Drusiana with Vechten as a base made the amphibious operations of Drusus and Germanicus possible (116).

95 Wells (1972) 97 notes that “over half a century of intensive search has failed to produce evidence to support Florus’ statement that Drusus established over fifty such forts on the Rhine bank alone.”
Germans in Florus’ text. Both commanders have caused change in the spirits of a fierce people.

Dio records Drusus’ activity against the Usipetes and his passing of the island of the Batavians on his way to Sugambrian territory. Germanicus uses the island of the Batavi as well at Annals 2.6 when he designates it as a rendezvous for his fleet. While he waits for the fleet’s arrival, Germanicus makes his way to a besieged fort on the river Lippe (Ann. 2.7). Germanicus does not encounter the besiegers, but he does repair the altar of Drusus which had been damaged by them. Once his fleet arrives, Germanicus proceeds to Drusus’ channel where he invokes his father. He then moves through the lakes and ocean to the river Ems. Drusus makes a similar voyage in Dio’s text, sailing down the Rhine, crossing through lakes, invading the Chauci beyond the Ems. 96 Both commanders experience difficulties while using these waterways: Dio recounts how Drusus’ fleet was left high and dry near the ocean and how the Frisians offered aid; Germanicus runs into disaster at Annals 2.23-4 when his troops are shipwrecked by a storm while sailing down the Ems to the ocean. They find themselves pushed out into the ocean or onto islands, and the Angrivarii offer aid as they restore some ransomed soldiers to Germanicus. Their unfamiliarity of the northern waters causes both commanders trouble in their expeditions and compels them to accept help from the local tribes.

Dio makes much of the fact that Drusus marched to the Weser and would have crossed it had he not been for inconveniences caused by lack of supplies, winter, and

96 Wells (1972) 96 explains that the fossa Drusiana allowed both Drusus and Germanicus access from the Rhine into the IJsselmeer, along the Frisian coast, and to the Ems, Weser, and Elbe. He notes “Both Drusus and Germanicus mounted amphibious operations along this route.”
bees. Germanicus reaches the Weser as well at *Annals* 2.9, and it is this very area which serves as the scene of Germanicus' battles against Arminius and the Cherusci. Germanicus acknowledges that this area holds a special significance for himself and his father when he says to his troops that the Elbe is now closer than the Rhine and there is no war beyond, provided that they set him up for victory in the same lands as he is following in the footsteps of his father and uncle (*propio rem iam Albim quam Rhenum neque bellum ultra, modo se patris patruique vestigia prementem isdem in terris victorem sisterent, Ann. 2.14*). Both Germanicus and his father push the boundaries of the empire, bringing Roman conquest far north to the area of the Weser.

It seems Florus and Dio, then, confirm to a deeper extent that Germanicus and Drusus did indeed live through many of the same experiences in Germania.

**Drusus’ Death**

Suetonius, another near contemporary of Tacitus, writes with similar detail about Drusus’ career but focuses more on events after Drusus’ death (see Appendix A p. 194). At *Claudius* 1.2 he begins his narrative about Drusus by describing his naval accomplishments in Germania. He continues on to tell about Drusus’ journey deep into Germania. Some of his offices and honors are listed before his death is reported. Suetonius then describes Drusus’ posthumous honors. A note on Drusus’ strong military spirit is made. Finally Suetonius closes his narrative on Drusus with an anecdote about his republican views and his relationship with Augustus.

Dio also provides details about the events surrounding Drusus’ death at 55.1-2. He starts by reporting bad omens which preceded Drusus’ death: several buildings, including the Temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, are damaged by storms. But Drusus ignores these signs and heads for the territories of the Chatti, Suebi, and Cherusci, crosses the
Weser, and reaches the Elbe River. There he meets a figure similar to that encountered in Suetonius' text: a female of abnormal size forbids him from marching forward. Dio continues with a list of more strange events which surrounded the death of Drusus: wolves prowling and howling, two youths riding through the camp, women wailing, and stars shooting through the sky. Then he relates the reactions of Augustus and Tiberius to the news of Drusus' illness. The body's journey into the Campus Martius, its cremation, and placement into the Mausoleum of Augustus follow. His final note on Drusus' death is given to his honors.97

Many of the same details related by pre-Tacitean authors and Suetonius can be found in Dio 55.1-2, but Dio knits them together into one smooth narrative. Dio, then, as the latest of the authors studied in this chapter, certainly accessed the earlier Drusus tradition and seems to represent a nice culmination of the information offered in earlier authors. The information concerning omens, however, seems to be preserved in Dio only. Perhaps these omens were mentioned by authors now lost to us, authors who may have had a great deal of other things to say about Drusus which Tacitus may have accessed. Dio's text here may be providing a clue as to what kinds of holes exist in the pre-Tacitean Drusus tradition.

Another anecdote which cannot be found in pre-Tacitean authors is the story related by both Suetonius and Dio of the large barbarian woman. Like Dio (54.32.2-33.2), Suetonius asserts Drusus' association with the waterways of Germania by mentioning the North Sea and the fossa Drusiana which Germanicus was to use during his campaigns. Also as in Dio (54.32.2-33.2), Suetonius explains that Drusus could

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97 This cenotaph is located at Mainz, ancient Mogontiacum. Eutropius mentions it briefly at 7.13.1.
have gone farther into Germania. A vision of a woman, however, prevented his advance. Suetonius surprisingly does not embellish this story but instead discusses honors and offices won by Drusus after this journey north. Dio, however, elaborates on the tale to the point of even providing the words spoken by the woman, words including a prophecy of Drusus’ death. He concludes by commenting on the story’s marvelous quality, but he does not wish to discredit it. This comment suggests that Dio has retrieved this anecdote from some source or tradition and is not claiming it as his own. Whether he took it from Suetonius or whether he and Suetonius both used an earlier source now lost to us is unknown. It is possible, however, that this story also stands as evidence that the Drusus tradition which would have existed in Tacitus’ day has come down to us incomplete.

Nonetheless Tacitus would surely have used this Drusus tradition to its full potential for his own purposes. This story of a female apparition appearing to the commander calls to mind the dream of Germanicus at *Annals* 2.14 in which his grandmother Augusta comes to him bearing a beautiful garment. This female vision does not hinder Germanicus but instead encourages him to rouse his troops and head out to victory against Arminius and the Cherusci.

Suetonius writes that for his accomplishments Drusus was given an *ovatio* with triumphal honors and a consulship. Germanicus is awarded similar honors once he finished his campaign season. At *Annals* 2.41 Germanicus celebrates a triumph, and the people are reminded of how Drusus, who also was favored by the people, had come

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98 At *Germania* 34 Tacitus mentions Drusus along with Hercules and praises Drusus’ courage for sailing to the northern ocean. Whether Drusus’ association with such a great hero is Tacitus’ own invention or whether he took it from a lost part of the earlier tradition is unknown.
to an unfortunate end. At *Annals* 2.42 Tiberius nominates Germanicus and himself for the consulship, and at *Annals* 2.53 Germanicus begins this consulship while setting out to the East where he would meet his end. According to Suetonius, Drusus similarly takes the consulship just as he sets out for the campaign which would bring his death.

Suetonius and Dio write that after Drusus’ death his body was carried by the leading men of the towns and colonies to Rome where it was laid to rest in the Campus Martius. This recalls the journey Germanicus’ body makes from its landing point at Brundisium to Rome. People from surrounding towns come out to show respect to him (*Ann. 3.1-2*) and his ashes are carried by tribunes and centurions (*Ann. 3.2*). His remains finally make their way to Augustus’ Mausoleum in the Campus Martius (*Ann. 3.4, cf. Dio 55.2*). But the people notice that Germanicus does not receive the pomp which Augustus gave Drusus (*Ann. 3.5*). Suetonius says that Augustus delivered Drusus’ eulogy and also composed a laudatory inscription and a memoir of his life. Dio mentions two eulogies, one by Tiberius and one by Augustus. Perhaps this is the sort of thing the people at Germanicus’ funeral mean when they ask *ubi...meditata ad memoriam virtutis carmina et laudationes...?* (“where were...the songs commemorating the memory of his virtue and the eulogies...?” *Ann. 3.5*).

Suetonius tells us that after Drusus died, several monuments associated with him were erected. The summer camp where he died was named “Accursed”, and the army raised a monument to him and instituted an annual ceremony. An arch was also erected on the Appian Way (*Claud. 1.3*). Dio mentions statues of Drusus in addition to his arch

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99 Drusus’ death is briefly mentioned at Suet. *Tib. 7.3*: *Drusum fratrem in Germania amisit, cuius corpus pedibus totus itinere praegrediens Romam usque pervexit*, “He lost his brother Drusus in Germany and conveyed his body to Rome, going before it on foot all the way.”
and cenotaph (55.2.3). These monuments to Drusus recall the monuments to Germanicus discussed at *Annals* 2.83: a cenotaph was built at Antioch where his body was burnt, and a mound was raised at the actual location of his death. Arches were erected at Rome, on the Rhine, and on Mount Amanus.  

The cause of Drusus’ death as related by Suetonius seems to have much in common with the way Germanicus died according to Tacitus. Suetonius reports that Drusus was open about his desire to restore the Republic and that other authors consequently thought that there was animosity between Drusus and the emperor. Suetonius also reports the rumor that Drusus was poisoned by Augustus when he did not return from his province. This scenario certainly would seem familiar to anyone acquainted with the *Annals*. When Germanicus died, many people believed that his political beliefs were responsible for his downfall. They believed that he, like his father, had attracted the hostility of the emperor because of his civil-mindedness (*Ann. 2.82*). Indeed Germanicus and Tiberius were not always in agreement. Germanicus, too, was recalled from Germania by the emperor, and Germanicus at first was not eager to obey (*Ann. 2.26*). In the long run, however, he returned to Rome, but was sent out to the East only to fall ill. It is asserted that he may have been poisoned (*Ann. 2.69, 2.70*), and that the emperor may have been involved (*Ann. 2.43, 2.72*). Although Suetonius discourages such rumors against Augustus, Tacitus seems to encourage such rumors against Tiberius.

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100 For mention of these arches, see *Tabula Siarensis* frag. 1 lines 9-34; Potter (1987) 269-76.

One interesting note made by Suetonius about Drusus concerns his behavior on the battlefield. Suetonius says that Drusus often pursued enemy leaders at great personal risk. This is another anecdote which does not exist in the earlier tradition but makes a significant contribution to the characterization of Drusus and his military personality. Readers of Tacitus might see this same intensity in Germanicus at Annals 2.21 when he rouses his troops by taking his helmet off in battle. Although he is not directly pursuing any enemy leader, he is still taking great personal risk in order to promote victory.

One further passage of Suetonius deserves some consideration. At Tiberius 50.1 Suetonius offers an interesting anecdote about Tiberius’ hatred of his brother:

Odium adversus necessitudines in Druso primum fratre detexit, prodita eius epistula, qua secum de cogendo ad restituendum libertatem Augusto agebat, deinde et in reliquis. 102

He first showed his hatred of his kindred in the case of his brother Drusus, producing a letter of his, in which Drusus discussed with him the question of compelling Augustus to restore the Republic, and then he turned against the rest. 103

This passage suggests that Tiberius may have engineered Drusus’ downfall with Augustus just as he may have engineered Germanicus’ downfall as described by Tacitus in the Annals, all because of the republican dispositions of the two men.

Although this passage contradicts the tender brotherly relationship attested in so many other sources on Drusus, it seems to support the duplicity of the Tiberius as seen in

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102 Goodyear (1972) 251 writes about the skepticism this passage throws onto the tradition of Drusus’ republicanism and believes “Drusus’ republicanism was probably sentimental and idealistic, and, if it commended him to the people at large, it was not taken seriously by Augustus and the prudentiores.” The same “sentimental and idealistic” republicanism might apply to Germanicus as well, especially if we consider Ann. 1.34 (Sed Germanicus quanto summae spei propior, tanto impensius pro Tiberio niti) and Ann. 1.35 (at ille moriturum potius quam fidem exueret clamitans).

103 Text and translation from Rolfe (1913).
Tacitus’ text. There are a few times in the Annals when Tiberius tries to display affection for Germanicus, but ends up showing his hatred instead. At Annals 1.52 Tiberius tries to praise Germanicus to the senate, but his words do not seem to come from the heart. Similarly, at Annals 2.42 Tiberius distributes money in Germanicus’ name, but the gesture is not sincere and Tiberius in truth is eager to get rid of Germanicus. At Annals 3.3 Tiberius stays in the palace after Germanicus’ death in order to show grief, but instead Tacitus suggests his hypocrisy. Tiberius’ seemingly tender feelings are not genuine in the Annals, and they perhaps are not genuine in Suetonius’ text either. Tacitus and Suetonius may be working from a version of the tradition in which Tiberius and Drusus do not exemplify the ideal brotherly love as portrayed by Valerius Maximus and others. Knowledge of this piece of Suetonius perhaps shows that Tacitus was not the only one painting a grim portrait of Tiberius.

**Conclusion**

Throughout the many Germanicus scenes in Annals 1-3 Tacitus’ frequent mention of Drusus encourages readers to compare father to son. In addition, when Tacitus writes “Drusus,” he activates a body of knowledge in his readers which reaches as far back as Livy and Strabo. The information offered by these others authors reinforces Tacitus’ apparent efforts to emphasize that Germanicus is like his father in character, military accomplishments, and even death. Germanicus is amplified when associated with his father. His good character increases when associated with his father’s good character; his exploits in Germania seem more like a grand inheritance; the treatment he receives from Tiberius appears more heinous; his death feels twice as tragic.
CHAPTER 3
GERMANICUS AND VARUS

Just as Tacitus compares Germanicus to Drusus, he simultaneously contrasts him with Quintilius Varus. Varus’ disaster was fresh in the minds of Romans when Germanicus assumed his command on the Rhine in 13 CE, and the references to him in so many disparate texts demonstrates that the disaster remained prominent in the Roman memory for quite some time. Germanicus was under great pressure to repair the damage and return Roman power in Germania back to the way it was when his father governed there. Tacitus does not miss opportunities to write Varus into the background of the Annals to show what Germanicus had the potential to become, but what he ultimately was able to escape.

**Germanicus and Varus in the Annals**

Varus is mentioned twelve times in the first two books of the Annals at 1.3, 1.10, 1.43, 1.55, 1.57-8, 1.60-1, 1.65, 1.71, 2.7, 2.25, 2.41, and 2.45-6. In these passages, Tacitus brings Varus into the action and alongside Germanicus in three ways: he appears not only in the speeches of Germanicus himself, but also in the words of Arminius and Segestes; he is compared to Germanicus topographically through military exploits; his name is mentioned in connection with the recovery of military standards.

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1 Varus’ nomen is sometimes spelled “Quintilius” and other times “Quinctilius.” I will follow Fisher’s Oxford text (1906) and Goodyear (1972, 1981) and spell it without the “c”. According to the OLD, “Quinctilius” is an earlier form.

2 Devillers (2003) 210 observes that while Varus plays an important role in the Annals, he is not prominent in Tacitus’ Germania, possibly due to the time during which this latter work was written.
At *Annals* 1.3, Tacitus introduces Varus as the reason for the war against the Germans.⁴ Tacitus makes it clear that the loss of Varus’ legions disgraced the Romans, a disgrace that had to be undone. Thus Varus is immediately presented as a driving force behind Germanicus’ campaigns in Germania.

Varus is mentioned again when the German leaders Arminius and Segestes are introduced (*Ann.* 1.55). Tacitus’ text breaks from its chronological timeline and the story of Varus is told: Segestes is said to have warned Varus of Arminius’ treachery and to have encouraged him to prevent it by arresting the German leaders, but Varus meets his end at the hands of Arminius anyway.⁵ Varus plays an important role in the background of Arminius and Segestes, and his mention at their introduction suggests that when Germanicus, as the new Roman commander of Germania, encounters these two characters, he will inevitably be associated with Varus. This passage might even serve as a warning, stating that Germanicus should be more careful than Varus as he heads towards Arminius’ territory.

When Germanicus meets Segestes face to face at *Annals* 1.58, the story of Varus is related again through the words of Segestes.⁶ Segestes emphasizes not only

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¹ Tac. *Ann.* 1.3: *bellum ea tempestate nullum nisi adversus Germanos supererat, abolendae magis infamiae ob amissum cum Quintilio Varo exercitum quam cupidine proferendi imperii aut dignum ob praemium*, “No war remained at this time except against the Germans, for the sake of dispelling the disgrace of the army lost with Quintilius Varus rather than with a desire of extending the empire or for the sake of a worthwhile recompence.”

² Tac. *Ann.* 1.55: *...Segestes...suasitque Varo ut se et Arminium et ceteros proceres vinciret: nihil ausuram plebem principibus amotis; atque ipsi tempus fore quo criminata et innoxios discerneret. sed Varus fato et vi Armini cecidit;* “…and he urged Varus to imprison himself and Arminius and the other chiefs: the people would attempt nothing with their leaders removed; and there would be time for him by which he could distinguish between the guilty and the innocent. But Varus fell by fate and the violence of Arminius.” Furneaux (1896) 253 and Goodyear (1981) 74 both comment on Tacitus’ use of *fato* at *Ann.* 1.55.

⁵ Tac. *Ann.* 1.58: *ergo raptorem filiae meae, violatorem foederis vestri, Arminium apud Varum, qui tum exercitui praesidebat, reum feci. dilatus segnitia ducis, quia parum praesidii in legibus erat, ut me et
Arminius’ villainy, but also Varus’ failure to act against it. Segestes’ goal in this speech is to prove his dedication to the Romans. He hopes that his story will show that he was loyal to Varus and thus suggest that he will also be loyal to Germanicus.

Varus and the issue of loyalty come up again when Germanicus gives his speech in front of his mutinous troops. In his own words Germanicus compares his hypothetical death to the death of Varus. He accuses his soldiers of being ready to allow his death but being driven to avenge the death of Varus. Germanicus tests his troops’ dedication by contrasting their loyalty to him with their loyalty to Varus. By depicting himself as Varus, a commander killed by treachery, Germanicus tries to instill discipline in his men. He uses Varus’ name as a tool of manipulation to rouse his soldiers to a certain course of action.

Varus’ name will be manipulated by the German commanders as well. At Annals 2.15 when Arminius’ forces encounter Germanicus’ men, Arminius invokes Varus’ disaster to encourage his fighters. He exclaims that the Romans they are fighting are the same cowards who fled from Varus’ battle. Arminius’ men are roused by these

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6 Tac. Ann. 1.43: *cecidissem certe nondum tot flagitorum exercitu meo conscius; legissetis ducem, qui meam quidem mortem inpunitam sineret, Vari tamen et trium legionum ulcisceretur,* “surely I should have died while not yet conscious of such great shame in my army; you would have chosen a leader, who certainly would have allowed my death to go unpunished, nevertheless would have avenged the death of Varus and his three legions.”

7 Cass. Dio 57.20.1-2 also associates the death of Varus with the death of Germanicus.

8 Tac. Ann. 2.15: *nec Arminius aut ceteri Germanorum proceres omittebant suos quisque testari, hos esse Romanos Variani exercitus fugacissimos qui ne bellum tolerarent, seditionem induerint; quorum pars onusta vulneribus terga,* “nor did Arminius or the other chiefs of the Germans neglect each to call his men to witness that these were the Roman troops of Varus, men quick to flee and who, lest they tolerate war, put on a mutiny; part of them had backs full of wounds.”
words and demand action.\textsuperscript{9} Thus for the troops of both Germanicus and Arminius, the name of Varus is meaningful and inspiring. Both leaders know the power Varus’ name holds, and they use it accordingly.

Twice Varus’ name is invoked by the German commanders against each other. Arminius uses the memory of Varus as a weapon against Maroboduuus and encouragement for his men.\textsuperscript{10} He calls Maroboduuus a coward and a traitor, and exclaims that he should be killed with the same hostility with which Varus was killed. By projecting Varus onto Maroboduuus, Arminius can vilify him and lessen any resistance in the Germans who might be hesitant to treat Maroboduuus, one of their own chieftains, as an enemy. This strategy is particularly important for Arminius at this stage of the war since some of Maroboduuus’ own men, the Semnones and the Langobardi, have just revolted from Maroboduuus and joined Arminius’ side. Arminius needs to solidify the loyalty of these tribes. Varus was their common enemy in the past, so his name unites these tribes with Arminius’ men in the present. Arminius justifies violence against Maroboduuus not only by making him appear Roman, but by likening him to one of the worst Roman commanders of Germania.

\textsuperscript{9} Tac. \textit{Ann}. 2.16: \textit{Sic accensos et proelium poscentis in campum, cui Idistaviso nomen, deducunt.} “Thus fired up and demanding battle, the men were led down into the field named Idistavisuus.”

\textsuperscript{10} Tac. \textit{Ann}. 2.45: \textit{contra fugacem Maroboduum appellans, proeliorum expertem, Hercyniae latebris defensum; ac mox per dona et legationes petivisse foedus, proditorem patriae, satelititem Caesaris, haud minus intensis animis exturbandum quam Varum Quintilium interfecerint,} “he called Maroboduuus a fugitive, one inexperienced in battles, one who was protected by the hiding places of the Hercynian forest, and who soon through gifts and ambassadors sought a treaty, a traitor of his fatherland, an agent of Caesar, one who ought to be put away with hardly less hostile spirit than that with which they killed Quintilium Varus.”
Maroboduus retaliates at *Annals* 2.46 and turns Varus’ name against Arminius.\(^{11}\) He wishes to promote his new ally Inguiomerus by centering the glory of the Cheruscii on him and devaluing Arminius, the Cheruscian leader on the opposing side. He does this by downplaying Arminius’ victory against Varus, saying that it only occurred because of Arminius’ treachery and the carelessness of the legions and general. Arminius is also characterized by madness and arrogance, features which make him into an even less attractive leader. Maroboduus is employing Varus’ name in much the same way as Arminius and for much the same purpose. The opposing German leader is degraded so that the loyalty of the troops remains intact and desertion to the enemy does not seem attractive.

Arminius also uses Varus’ name to promote violence against Caecina and his troops. At *Annals* 1.65 when Arminius’ men are about to join battle with the Romans, Arminius identifies Caecina and his men with Varus and his legions to incite the Germans.\(^{12}\) By calling out his name, Arminius almost seems either to turn back time to when Varus was still alive, or to resurrect Varus to make him present at the battle. Past meets present in an overlap of time as Tacitus creates a sort of *déjà vu* through Varus’ name. Arminius insinuates that victory can be achieved now as easily as it was before.

The memory of Varus is deeply embedded in this war. He is the underlying reason for it, he is the motivation of the troops, he is in the speeches of the leaders, he is in the thoughts and words of everyone. No one wants to be like Varus, but they are

\(^{11}\) Tac. *Ann.* 2.46: *vaecordem Arminium et rerum nescium alienam gloriam in se trahere, quoniam tres vagas legiones et ducem fraudis ignorant perfidia deceperit,* “Arminius in his madness and arrogance attributed to himself the glory of another, because he entrapped with treachery three wandering legions and a general ignorant of his deceit.”

\(^{12}\) Tac. *Ann.* 1.65: *inrumpere Germanos iubet, clamitans ‘en Varus eodemque iterum fato vinctae legiones!’* “He orders the Germans to rush forth, exclaiming, ‘behold Varus and his legions entrapped again in the same fate!’”
eager to make their enemies like Varus. The mention of Varus and his legions belittles the Roman forces of Germania, the soldiers and campaign under Germanicus’ control.

Tacitus is careful about the extent to which he inserts the memory of Varus into the Annals. He cannot project Varus onto Germanicus directly, not only because this will compromise Germanicus’ character, but also because it simply will not align with historical fact. Germanicus did not experience any disaster even close to Varus’ while in Germania, but Tacitus can show that Germanicus was in the same dangerous situation as Varus and had the potential to fare just as miserably. By suggesting that his character could have become like Varus but instead was able to steer away from that path, he portrays Germanicus as an even better character, one who can rise above dangers and triumph where others fail. Thus throughout Annals 1 and 2 Tacitus makes Varus’ presence known and places Varus in contexts with Germanicus through other characters, but Varus is not directly compared to Germanicus himself. Sometimes it appears as though Germanicus is headed directly towards Varus’ fate, but then he escapes. Instead, Germanicus swerves away from disaster and then veers far from Varus’ path to become the anti-Varus, the one who appears to undo the damage Varus caused. He does this by recovering spoils and standards lost during the Varian disaster, burying Varus’ dead, and finding it unnecessary to rebuild Varus’ memorial.

At Annals 1.57 Germanicus is making successful progress in Germania: he is assured of Segestes’ loyalty, he successfully ends a siege, and he captures the wife of Arminius. Yet there is one instance when Germanicus could have ended up like Varus. When Germanicus receives the envoys which ensure Segestes’ allegiance, Segestes’ son, Segimundus, is among them. Tacitus reveals that during the revolt in Germania,
Segimundus had rejected his role as a priest and joined the rebels. He was only now reporting to the Romans because of his father. Tacitus uses the word *adductus*, “induced,” to describe Segimundus’ meeting with the Romans.\(^\text{13}\) Segimundus’ genuine feelings towards the Romans may still not match those of his father, but Germanicus receives him with kindness anyway. At this point Germanicus opens himself up to treachery and does not sufficiently protect himself against the same type of deceit that brought down Varus. If Segimundus’ plea of friendship had been false and if he had been so bold, he could have used this opportunity to plot against Germanicus. He could have become the next Arminius, and Germanicus could have been taken by surprise and made to be like Varus, a commander deceived by a German claiming alliance. Germanicus demonstrates on this occasion that he has not learned from Varus’ greatest mistake. He trusts a German of uncertain loyalty. Luckily Segimundus did not repeat the treachery of Arminius.

A greater amount of caution is exercised with Segimundus’ cousin, however. At *Annals* 1.71 Segestes’ brother Segimerus surrenders and is pardoned along with his son. Segimerus’ son is not forgiven as easily as Segestes’ son. Segimerus’ son, Segimundus’ cousin, was pardoned with reluctance since he was said to have abused

\(^{13}\) Tac. *Ann*. 1.57: *addiderat Segestes legatis filium, nomine Segimidum: sed iuvenis conscientia cunctabatur. quippe anno quo Germaniae descivere sacerdos apud aram Vbiorum creatus ruperat vittas, profugus ad rebellis. adductus tamen in spem clementiae Romanae pertulit patris mandata benigneque exceptus cum praesidio Gallicam in ripam missus est*, “Segestes had added to the envoys his son, Segimundus by name: but the young man was held back by a feeling of guilt. Indeed in the year in which the Germans revolted, having been made a priest at the altar of the Ubii he had broken the fillets and fled to the rebels. Nevertheless induced into hope of Roman mercy he bore the mandates of his father and having been received kindly he was sent with a detachment to the Gallic banks.”
Varus’ dead body.\textsuperscript{14} In this passage deeds committed against Varus affect the trust extended by Germanicus.

At the end of \textit{Annals} 1.57 Germanicus recovers some spoils which had been taken from Varus’ legions.\textsuperscript{15} This sentence which depicts Germanicus reversing loss under Varus caps a long series of positive events for the new commander of Germania. He has already experienced some successful encounters against the Germans, he has secured some alliances with local tribes, and he has taken Arminius’ wife into custody. He extends kindness to a troublesome German, but suffers no adverse results. By concluding this paragraph with the retrieval of spoils lost under Varus, Tacitus can bring to attention how opposite the experiences of Germanicus are in Germania compared to the experiences of Varus.

Germanicus continues to recoup more losses of the Varian disaster as he moves closer to the Teutoburg forest. At \textit{Annals} 1.60 he finds the eagle of the nineteenth legion and thus erases some of its shame.\textsuperscript{16} The loss suffered under Varus is rectified and the nineteenth is Roman again.

Although the recovery of items lost under Varus makes Germanicus look like he is repairing what Varus did, Tacitus still suggests Germanicus’ potential to become a

\textsuperscript{14} Tac. \textit{Ann}. 1.71: \textit{data utrique venia, facile Segimero, cunctantius filio, quia Quintilii Vari corpus inlusisse dicebatur}, “pardon was given to each, easily to Segimerus, reluctantly to his son, since it was said that he had abused the corpse of Quintilius Varus.”

\textsuperscript{15} Tac. \textit{Ann}. 1.57: \textit{ferebantur et spolia Varianae cladis, plerisque eorum qui tum in deditionem veniebant praedae data}, “also the spoils of the disaster of Varus, which had been given as plunder to many of those who were coming to surrender, were being brought in.”

\textsuperscript{16} Tac. \textit{Ann}. 1.60: \textit{interque caedem et praedam repperit unde vicesimae legionis aquilam cum Varo amissam. ductum inde agmen ad ultimos Bructerorum, quantumque Amisiam et Lupiam annis inter vastatum, haud procul Teutoburgiensii saltu in quo reliquiae Vari legionumque insepultae dicebantur}, “whence among the slaughter and loot he found the eagle of the twentieth legion which had been lost with Varus. Thence the column was led to the boarder of the Bructeri, and all that was between the rivers Amisia and Lupia was ravaged, hardly far from the Teutoburg forest in which the remains of Varus and the legions were said to be unburied.”
Varus by depicting him tracing Varus’ footsteps. Germanicus is likened to Varus through the places he visits and through military exploits. At the end of *Annals* 1.60 Germanicus is very close to the Teutoburg forest, which Tacitus reminds us is the very site where Varus’ disaster occurred. But Germanicus is not timid; in fact, he is aggressive against the Germans by laying waste to the surrounding area. Germanicus shows the power of his Roman forces in the place where Varus had shown their greatest vulnerability.

Germanicus continues to trace the steps of Varus’ character through space when he enters the Teutoburg forest at *Annals* 1.61. Just as he visits his father’s camp at *Annals* 1.56, he comes across the remains of Varus’ camp, a space that suggests three legions. But unlike Drusus’ camp, Germanicus does not wish to stop to settle his own men here, but he passes over the site to visit the horrors of the battlefield. The ghastly evidence of the disaster is still quite visible: Tacitus describes pieces of weapons and horses; even remnants of the soldiers themselves are still present: skulls are displayed on the trees. As Tacitus provides these details the battle comes alive. The words of survivors also help Germanicus and his troops relive the disaster as if they had been in the battle themselves, or as if the battle were reoccurring with them in it.¹⁷ Tacitus collapses together the time between 9 CE and 14 CE.¹⁸ Several scenes of the battle are reenacted by the survivors: the murder of officers, the capture of the eagles, and Varus’ own end. Germanicus is thus caught in a scene of death and must act in order to prevent himself from becoming associated with Varus. Before he had even entered the

¹⁷ Tac. *Ann.* 1.61: *et cladis eius superstites, pugnam aut vincula elapsi, referebant hic cecidisse legatos, illic raptas aquilas; primum ubi vulnus Varo adactum, ubi infelici dextera et suo ictu mortem invenerit,* “and the survivors of this disaster, having slipped away from the fight or escaped capture, recalled that here officers had died, there the eagles were taken; (they recalled) where Varus’ first wound was exacted, where by an unlucky hand and his own blow he found death.”

¹⁸ For the collapse of time in Tac. *Ann.* 1.61, see Pagán (1999) 310.
site Germanicus already showed eagerness for rectifying the situation at the Teutoburg forest: *igitur cupido Caesarem invadit solvendi suprema militibus ducique*, “Therefore a desire to pay funeral rites to the soldiers and their leader consumed Caesar” (Tac. *Ann.* 1.61). The words *invadit* and *solvendi* are key here. *Invadit* implies how deeply invested Germanicus feels in this matter and how strong his desire is for helping Varus and his men. *Invadit* implies that he is pierced to the core about paying the final respects to Varus. *Solvendi* implies an undoing. By giving Varus and his men their proper rites, the disaster will be over once and for all and Germanicus can end or even reverse some of the pain and shame that Varus caused. While Varus made ghosts out of his men, Germanicus puts them to rest by burying them. With Varus and his men buried, they can finally stop haunting the Romans.

Thus at *Annals* 1.62 Germanicus buries the dead. His soldiers clearly identify with the lost legions: they consider them *coniunctos* and *consanguineos*. Germanicus’ men also become more enraged at the enemy, as if they were Varus’ legions looking for revenge or a second battle through which to redeem themselves. Tiberius perhaps is worried that their visit to the Teutoburg forest may make Germanicus’ men identify too much with Varus’ legions. He is afraid that their contact with the dead might make them hesitant and fearful to fight, that perhaps they will now be afraid of becoming like Varus’ legions. 19 Indeed although Germanicus has traveled through the treacherous Teutoburg forest unscathed, he still has much fighting to do in Germania, so his potential of becoming like Varus, and his troops’ potential of becoming like the three legions, still lingers on.

19 This is one of the reasons Tacitus gives for Tiberius’ disapproval of Germanicus’ acts at Teutoburg (*Ann.* 1.62).
Tacitus then narrates a dream to show that Germanicus has not quite avoided the
danger of becoming like Varus. At *Annals* 1.65 his general Caecina dreams of a blood-
smeared Varus reaching and calling out to him.20 Pelling notes the implication that “the
danger of re-enacting Varus’ disaster is all too clear.”21 Another Varian disaster may be
close at hand and Varus seems to attempt to come back to life by reaching out for
Caecina. Yet Caecina refuses this fate. He does not obey (*obsecutus*) Varus but
repulses (*reppulisse*) his hand as it stretches out towards him. Varus’ attempt to rise up
out of the swamp, grab hold of the command, and retake the battlefield has been
denied.22

With the spirit of Varus himself having been thwarted, Germanicus has escaped
the danger of becoming like Varus. Varus has been laid to rest at last. Therefore when
Germanicus finds at *Annals* 2.7 that the mound for Varus’ legions has been toppled, he
sees no need to rebuild it.23 The mound served as a reminder of the Varian disaster, but
now thanks to Germanicus the Romans can move past that disaster and no longer need

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20 Tac. *Ann.* 1.65: *ducemque terruit dira quies: nam Quintilium Varum sanguine oblitum et paludibus
erersum cernere et audire visus est velut vocantem, non tamen obsecutus et manum intendentis
reppulisse,* “a frightful dream terrified the leader: for he seemed to see Quintilius Varus smeared in blood
and immersed in the swamp and to hear him as if he were calling, nevertheless he did not yield and he
repulsed his hand as he stretched out.” Pagán (1999) 315 notes, “Even after his bones have been buried,
he still walks the earth, haunting Caecina in a restless dream (1.65.1-2). Just as Germanicus and his
troops violated the boundary between living and dead, so Varus continues to transgress the boundary
between life and death.”


22 Woodman (1988) 174 notes that the next day brings a near re-enactment of Varus’ disaster for the
Romans: “With this identification of Caecina with Varus, the present and past merge into one, as they do
so often in the *Aeneid*, and the battle seems to be going the way of its predecessor.” After much
bloodshed, the greed of the Germans for looting saves the Romans from slaughter. Perhaps here the
Romans come closest to another Varian disaster.

23 Tac. *Ann.* 2.7: *tumulum tamen nuper Varianiis legionibus structum et veterem aram Druso sitam
diisiecerant. restituit aram honorique patris princeps ipse cum legionibus decucurrit; tumulum iterare haud
visum,* “They had, however, thrown down the mound recently erected for the legions of Varus and the old
altar of Drusus. He restored the altar and for the honor of his father the leader himself with his legions
celebrated funeral games; it hardly seemed necessary to rebuild the mound.”
this monument for its remembrance. Besides, Germanicus just recently built a new mound for Varus' legions at Annals 1.62, one that actually serves the purpose of burial. So Germanicus’ decision not to rebuild this mound signifies that he has reversed the damage of the Varian disaster to such an extent that the Romans no longer need to grieve for it through this monument. It also severs any link between Germanicus and Varus. When Germanicus rebuilds the altar of Drusus, it shows a bond between father and son. Through the act of rebuilding, Germanicus shows himself as the new Drusus. Similarly, Germanicus’ decision not to rebuild Varus’ monument shows how unlike Varus he is, how his chances of becoming like Varus have been destroyed.

Two final passages further demonstrate Germanicus’ escape from the fate of Varus. Germanicus makes successful attacks against the Germans and learns that another eagle lost by Varus is nearby and ready for the taking.24 Once again Germanicus is presented with an opportunity to undo the damage of Varus and to win back Roman honor.25 Perhaps Germanicus earns even more credit because the information about the eagle came from a German leader who had surrendered to him.

Germanicus’ reversal of the Varian disaster is complete when at Rome an arch is dedicated to the recovery of the standards lost with Varus.26 This recovery is

24 Tac. Ann. 2.25: ipse maioribus copiis Marsos inrumpit, quorum dux Mallovendus nuper in ditionem acceptus propinquuo luco defossam Varianae legionis aquilam modico praesidio servari indicat, “he himself with greater forces attacked the Marsi, whose leader Mallovenus, who recently had surrendered, revealed that an eagle of a legion of Varus was buried in a nearby grove and that it was protected by a small detachment.”

25 The insult the Romans suffered when their standards were captured by the Germans is related by Tacitus at Ann. 1.61: referebant...utque signis et aquilis per superbiam inluserit, “They recalled how in his haughtiness he insulted the standards and eagles.”

26 Tac. Ann. 2.41: Fine anni arcus propter aedem Saturni ob recepta signa cum Varo amissa ducu Germanici, auspiciis Tiberii...dicantur, “at the end of the year an arch near the temple of Saturn was dedicated for the recovery of the standards lost with Varus, under the leadership of Germanicus and the auspices of Tiberius.” This arch’s location is marked in the Roman Forum. See Richardson (1992) 29-30.
undoubtedly an important victory for the Romans, one that shows their success over the Germans. Varus’ failure has been erased by Germanicus, who triumphs through Rome for all to see. The building of a structure stands for official acknowledgement that Germanicus has completed the task of repairing the damage of Varus, just as he was sent to do according to *Annals* 1.3.²⁷

Thus the character of Varus is a driving force in the *Annals* until Germanicus lays his memory to rest by his ability to avoid or reverse Varus’ mistakes. By appearing frequently in the text alongside Germanicus but never being directly compared to him, Varus adds depth to the character of Germanicus and emphasizes his success. Germanicus could have become like Varus, but instead he manages to undo everything Varus did and erases the shame of Varus from the Roman mind.

**Varus in Pre-Tacitean Authors**

The study of pre-Tacitean authors helps reveal the literary tradition concerning Varus that influenced Tacitus’ writing and thus helps us better understand how Varus fits into the *Annals* and affects Germanicus’ character. Just as with the literary tradition of Drusus, there are a few things to keep in mind while attempting to reconstruct the

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²⁷ The recovery of military standards was an important accomplishment and indeed merited elaborate celebration by the Romans; cf. Cass. Dio 54.8.2 on the importance of Augustus’ recovery of the Parthian standards: “Augustus received them as if he had conquered the Parthian in a war; for he took great pride in the achievement, declaring that he had recovered without a struggle what had formerly been lost in battle.” *Res Gestae* 29 describes also the recovery of standards lost by other generals and a sense of dominance over the Parthians. Augustus’ retrieval of military standards, like Germanicus’, is seen as a victory not only for the Romans over a foreign people but as a victory that makes up for a past loss. Also like Germanicus, Augustus is honored for his achievement with a triumphal arch (Cass. Dio 54.8.3, Zanker [1988] 187). Barnes (1974) 21 mentions the glory earned by Augustus when he retrieves from the Parthians the standards lost by Crassus and Antonius. Zanker (1988) 186 writes about the failure of Crassus and Antony in the East and then insinuates that Augustus, “like a new Alexander,” must prove the worth of the Roman *virtus*. The retrieval was celebrated on coins (Zanker [1988] 186; Barnes [1974] 22; Wallace-Hadrill [1986] 77-8), in the construction of a small round temple to Mars Ultor in which the standards were thereafter housed (Zanker [1988] 186), and on the breastplate of the Augustus of Prima Porta (Zanker [1988] 188-92).
tradition of Varus. Not all works that contributed to the early tradition of Varus are extant now, but Tacitus may have used some of these missing sources. The examination of pre-Tacitean authors may hint at what kind of information may have been available to Tacitus and how he might have used that information for his own purposes. Second, Tacitus may have used these pre-Tacitean authors directly. These very passages may have had a great influence on what Tacitus wrote in his own text. In turn, these intertextualities may have affected the way the character of Germanicus was viewed. Third, many of these authors were contemporaries of Varus and were alive when the disaster happened. Their personal impressions of Varus and the disaster, then, are important to consider when analyzing these texts in conjunction with Tacitus.

One of the earliest works to mention Varus is Strabo’s *Geographica* (see Appendix B p. 201). At the beginning of book 7 Strabo discusses the area beyond the Rhine. After covering the various Germanic rivers and tribes and mentioning Drusus’ naval victory over the Bructeri and his death, he begins to write about Roman encounters with the Germanic tribes. He cites specifically the Cherusci’s defeat of Varus and his three legions. Misplaced trust is identified as the cause. Strabo then immediately suggests that Varus’ defeat created the opportunity for Germanicus to celebrate a great triumph.

Strabo is an interesting source for Varus since he was alive during Varus’ early career and his disaster in Germania, and he lived long enough to see what kind of effect it had on Romans over the years. For example, he knew the disaster was one of the most serious losses the Romans had suffered in Germania (indicated by the superlative τὰ μέγιστα κατέβλαψαν, Str. 7.1.4.14), and he knew how to put the Varian disaster in perspective alongside Germanicus’ triumph of 17 CE. According to Dueck, Strabo may
have remained in Rome until the end of his life, and so it is possible that he was there not only when news of Varus’ loss and the slaughter of the legions reached the city in 9 CE but also when Germanicus celebrated his triumph on May 26, 17 CE. Strabo does, after all, go into detail about exactly which famous German men and women were in the procession.\textsuperscript{28} If this is true and Strabo has personal experience concerning the disaster of Varus and the triumph of Germanicus, it is no surprise that he would highlight them in his geography.

One must wonder if Strabo’s view that Germanicus dealt the Germans payback for the Varian disaster is his own or if it belongs to his time. Either way, the thought may have influenced Tacitus to portray Germanicus as the general who inherited Germania from Varus and set things right. Strabo’s stark juxtaposition of Varus and Germanicus does indeed beg the reader to make this connection. The words ἔτισαν δὲ δίκας ἅπαντες “but they all paid the penalty” and παρέσχον τῷ νεωτέρῷ Γερμανίκῳ λαμπρότατον θρίαμβον “they afforded the younger Germanicus a most brilliant triumph” (Str. 7.1.4.18-9) in particular imply a cause and effect relationship between Varus’ disaster and Germanicus’ triumph.\textsuperscript{29}

Varus and Germanicus are also connected in Seneca the Elder’s \textit{Controversiae} 1.3.10 concerning the woman and the Tarpeian rock (see Appendix B p. 201). When Varus’ son declaimed against the words of Cestius, Cestius retorted harshly and capped his response with an insult against the young Varus’ father: “It was by that sort

\textsuperscript{28} Str. 7.1.4.19-25; Dueck (2000) 85-6.

\textsuperscript{29} Text and translations of Strabo are from Jones (1924).
of carelessness that your father lost his army.\textsuperscript{30} The Elder Varus’ defeat had lasted into the next generation to haunt his son.\textsuperscript{31}

Seneca the Elder, like Strabo, was also alive during Varus’ career and beyond. He is believed to have written the \textit{Controversiae} sometime in the 30s CE, around the time of Tiberius’ death.\textsuperscript{32} Although Seneca’s work is focused on the rhetorical, Varus slips into the text through his son, the younger Varus. Also like Strabo, Seneca the Elder gives us a hint of how the disaster lasted in the minds of Romans who lived on after 9 CE. We can tell that it was definitely a sensitive subject: it could be used vindictively, and Seneca writes that upon hearing the insult, everyone disapproved.\textsuperscript{33}

It is interesting to note Seneca’s connection of the younger Varus to Germanicus. Seneca introduces Varus Minor as “then son-in-law of Germanicus and only a very young man.”\textsuperscript{34} The young Varus was to be married to Germanicus’ youngest daughter Julia Livilla. The two were distant relatives, but the marriage never occurred since the young Varus was caught up in a treason trial in 27 CE.\textsuperscript{35} Although the marriage connection never became official, Seneca makes the association. In an anecdote that is supposed to be about Varus’ son, Seneca manages to sneak in both Germanicus and

\textsuperscript{30} Sen. \textit{Controv.} 1.3.10.12-3: “\textit{ista neglegentia pater tuus exercitum perdidit.}” Text and translations of Seneca the Elder are from Winterbottom (1974).

\textsuperscript{31} Sen. \textit{Controv.} 1.3.10.13: \textit{Filium obiurgabat, patri male dixit}, “In telling off the son, he slandered the father.”

\textsuperscript{32} Sussman (1978) 92-3.

\textsuperscript{33} Sen. \textit{Controv.} 1.3.10.10-2: \textit{Cum multa dixisset, novissime adiecit rem quam omnes improbavimus}, “And after a lot more, he finally added something we all disapproved.”

\textsuperscript{34} Sen. \textit{Controv.} 1.3.10.2: \textit{Varus Quintilius, tunc Germanici gener ut praetextatus}.

\textsuperscript{35} Syme (1986) 59, 149, 315, 327.
Varus. Perhaps this suggests that the two German commanders easily came as a pair together in the Roman mind, even in unexpected contexts.

Of all the pre-Tacitean authors Velleius Paterculus offers the most extensive details concerning Varus (see Appendix B p. 202). After a brief character sketch, Velleius outlines Varus’ career by mentioning his behavior as governor in Syria and his policy with the German tribes (2.117). He then explains how the Germans and Arminius took advantage of Varus, how Varus ignored Segestes’ warning, and how fate played a role in the disaster (2.118). The details of the disaster itself are given at 2.119: the troops, characterized with bravery and experience, are said to have met destruction in part because of the negligence of their general. Varus is shown preferring suicide over battle, and the treatment of Varus’ body and head is described, as well as the burial. Velleius discusses some of the aftermath of the defeat and then reflects on the cause: “From all this it is evident that Varus, who was, it must be confessed, a man of character and of good intentions, lost his life and his magnificent army more through lack of judgement in the commander than of valour in his soldiers” (2.120).36 Velleius’ portrait of Varus is mixed, at times showing pity towards him, at other times highlighting his faults.

Velleius’ section on Varus is quite lengthy considering the brevity or selection of subject-matter he uses throughout his history.37 Velleius consciously allows himself to

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36 Text and translations of Velleius are from Shipley (1924).

37 Concerning Velleius’ brevity Woodman (1975) 280 writes “Thus ‘speed’ and ‘brevity’ are simply technical ways of describing the selection or the pruning down of subject-matter, and Velleius’ references to precisely these two features of his work need not imply fast writing in the literal sense at all.” For more on Velleius’ brevity, see Rich (2011) 73-4; Bloomer (2011) 100-6 writes on festinatio; and Lobur (2011) 208-9.
digress (*moram exiguit*).\textsuperscript{38} His Varus episode spans four sections, a significant amount of text when compared to the three sections given to the Battle of Actium for example (2.84-6), or the one section given to the Battle of Philippi (2.70). The reason for this prolonged and detailed account is perhaps because the disaster happened during his adult life and because he had an intimate knowledge of Germania.\textsuperscript{39} Velleius spent much of his early military career in Germania beginning in 4 CE when he succeeded his father as *praefectus equitum* in the Rhine army.\textsuperscript{40} Alongside Tiberius he became familiar with the Weser, Lippe, and Elbe and the tribes surrounding these rivers (2.105-6). By 6 CE Velleius was back in Rome and was elected *quaestor*, but he did not stay in the city long. He was sent out by Augustus to aid Tiberius when Pannonia and Illyricum revolted (2.111). By 8 CE Tiberius moved towards Dalmatia and had Velleius’ brother Magius as a legate. Velleius was left by Tiberius in Pannonia to serve under Marcus Lepidus. The two forces joined in Dalmatia in 9 CE around the time of the Varian disaster (2.115). Velleius begins his account this way: “Scarcely had Caesar put the finishing touch upon the Pannonian and Dalmatian war, when, within five days of the completion of this task, dispatches from Germany brought the baleful news of the death of Varus…”\textsuperscript{41} Velleius would have been with Tiberius when news of the disaster reached

\textsuperscript{38} 2.117.1; See also 2.41.1 when introducing Caesar; 2.108.2 when introducing Maroboduus; See Rich (2011) 73 n. 6.

\textsuperscript{39} Sumner (1970) 270 comments appropriately on the importance of the events Velleius experienced and the corresponding attention he gives them in his history: “By his association with Tiberius, Velleius was now at the centre of the most important and crucial events going on in the Roman world. This is reflected in a sharp expansion of his brief narration. It takes him as long to cover the ten years from Tiberius’ adoption to Augustus’ death as it took for the previous thirty-four years, since Actium.”

\textsuperscript{40} Vell. Pat. 2.104; Sumner (1970) 264-5.

\textsuperscript{41} Vell. Pat. 2.117: *Tantum quod ultimam imposuerat Pannonico ac Delmatico bello Caesar manum, cum intra quinque consummati tanti operis dies funestae ex Germania epistulae nuntium attulere caesi Vari*...
him, and Velleius likely traveled with him to settle matters in Germania. According to Sumner, “Velleius does not mention himself at all in the subsequent account of Tiberius’ rescue operation to save the Rhineland after the clades Variana. Nevertheless he was there.” Velleius himself tells us that he served with Tiberius for a period of eight or nine years starting from 4 CE, which means he would have still been present with him in 9 CE (2.104.3). Thus Velleius is able to write of Tiberius swooping in and setting things right: he strengthened garrisons, crossed the Rhine, and moved forward to open roads, lay waste to fields and homes, and make successful attacks against the enemy; then he returned to winter camp without suffering heavy losses (2.120). Velleius experienced the aftermath of the disaster firsthand, and so he was able (and probably eager) to write about it at length and in detail, down to each praiseworthy or culpable individual. Indeed the type of information Velleius offers in these sections is interesting. Velleius often likes to focus episodes of his history around personalities. When Velleius covers the Battle of Philippi (2.70), for example, he centers squarely on the deaths of Brutus and Cassius. For the Battle of Pharsalia (2.52-3) naturally he spotlights Caesar and Pompey. The Battle of Actium (2.84-6) is perhaps solely comparable to Velleius’ description of the Varian disaster in that more than just the main characters are given attention. In his account of the Varian disaster, Velleius not only portraits Varus and Arminius, but he characterizes the armies and also pays attention to minor figures, men like Eggius,

42 Levick (2011) 4 writes, “After the Varian disaster he transferred to the Rhine with Tiberius, and reached Rome again only for his Illyrian triumph of October 23 three years later.”


44 Woodman (1977) 28-56 tackles this topic at the beginning of his commentary and argues that Velleius does not differ much from other Latin authors like Sallust or Livy in his tendency to focus on big personalities. Scholars like Elephante (1997), and Schmitzer (2000), however, have argued that Velleius’ history seems often to resemble biography. Starr (1980) 292 mentions “Velleius’ passion for biography.” For a discussion of this topic in relation to Caesar, see Pelling (2011).
Ceionius, Numonius, Asprenas, Caedicius, and even Caldus Caelius. Velleius was there after the battle to hear all of their stories and lock them away in his history.

Did Velleius know Varus personally? It seems likely. Varus began his governorship of Germania in 7 CE, after Velleius had already finished his service there. But their paths may have crossed in Rome. Both men were held in high esteem by the imperial family: Velleius of course had ties of amicitia with Tiberius, Germanicus, and Gaius Caesar, and Varus was connected to Augustus and Agrippa through his first marriage to Vipsania, Agrippa’s daughter. It is tempting to believe that two men of such high standing would have met at some point. In any case, Velleius is our most valuable pre-Tacitean source on the Varian disaster and on Varus himself not only because he was a contemporary, but because he had had personal experience in Germania both before and immediately after the disaster.

Manilius, like Velleius, suggests the role of fate in the Varian disaster (see Appendix B p. 207). In his Astronomica Manilius asserts that the sky foretold of the slaughter through its lights, but that the message of the heavens was not heeded. Manilius chooses Varus’ misfortune as an example to show how damaging it can be to ignore the signs of nature.

Very little is known about Manilius’ life or when he wrote the Astronomica. Our very passage (1.896-903) is a terminus post quem. Manilius writes after 9 CE, so his floruit spans the end of Augustus’ reign and into Tiberius’ reign. His work can roughly be dated

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45 Levick (2011) 3, 7 notes that Velleius and Germanicus shared the quaestorship and thus likely knew each other personally. Velleius’ bond with Gaius comes from their travels in the East (see also Vell. Pat. 2.101 and Sumner [1970] 265-6).

46 Reinhold (1972).
to the second decade of the first century CE. This means that he too was a contemporary of Varus and alive during the period of the disaster and its aftermath. The fury of the heavens he describes and the fact that he picks the Varian disaster as his prime example suggests how grievously it was perceived by Manilius and other Romans.

And indeed other Romans of Manilius’ time likely associated the astrological with events like the Varian disaster. Green notes that astrology was popular around the beginning of the first century CE, and like Manilius, Germanicus had put out a text about the stars, his translation of Aratus. To the Romans, astrology was a science. It offered a way of understanding the world. Volk describes Manilius’ optimistic world view thus:

Human beings live in a kosmos, a beautiful and well-ordered whole ruled by (or identified with) a divine being. This god is well disposed towards humans, to whom he affords the opportunity to interact with him and to achieve perfection and happiness through the contemplation of the workings of the heavens.

This suggests that the happiness of a man’s life is a negotiation between him and a divine being. So in his brief mention of Varus, Manilius seems to suggest that divine forces played a role in Varus’ disaster, but that Varus could have noticed the warnings of nature and perhaps could have acted differently. Varus failed to interact with the divine or contemplate the signs given to him through the heavens. Thus his ability to negotiate his fate slipped through his grasp and the divine force carried out the disaster.

47 Volk (2009) 3-4, 138; Volk (2011) 4-5.
48 Green (2011) 137.
49 Green and Volk (2011) vii.
as planned. Manilius offers us the impression that Varus had the chance to control his fate, but he forfeited it.

The Flavian writer Josephus mentions Varus not as the general of Germania but as the governor in Syria. In *Bellum Judaicum* Varus is present a few brief times in book 1 as a visitor of King Herod and an overseer of the trial of Herod’s son Antipater. Varus is not much more than an observer and says or does little that teaches us about his character, other than react with some emotion at a speech of Antipater (*BJ* 1.636). In book 2, Varus is a bit more involved in the action as the question of Herod’s heir arises and multiple revolts begin to spring up, but he again does not have much color as a character until he receives requests for aid from Sabinus (*BJ* 2.66). Varus marches to Samaria but spares the city when he finds that it was not responsible for the trouble. Much of the damage that occurs hereafter is done by Arabs allied with Varus and not by Varus himself (*BJ* 2.69-70). Once he notices their destructive behavior, he dismisses them (*BJ* 2.76). Varus does, however, act violently himself when he burns Emmaus to the ground in revenge of the death of Arius (*BJ* 2.71). When he reaches Jerusalem, he pardons the inhabitants and imprisons the less threatening of the rebels, but crucifies around two thousand others (*BJ* 2.72-5). He then marches to Idumaea to put down some lingering rebels there, but they surrender (*BJ* 2.77-8). Of these, most are pardoned, except for those who were relatives of Herod. Once Jerusalem is settled, he returns to Antioch (*BJ* 2.79).51

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51 Varus also appears in several passages of Josephus’ *Antiquitates Judaicae* book 17, but those passages very closely echo what has been laid out here from *Bellum Judaicum*. For similarities between *AJ* 17 and *BJ* 2 and their sources, see Schwartz (2002) 66-8.
Josephus’ account of Varus is invaluable because it gives us a glimpse of what Varus’ career was like before he went to Germania. Varus’ military action, or rather lack thereof, while governor of Syria does not prepare him well for the military situation of Germania. According to Josephus, Varus was often dealing with unruly inhabitants who dispersed or surrendered before any battle ensued. They certainly were not comparable to the weather-hardened war-trained tribes of northern Europe. While settling the rebellions Varus ends up pardoning many people, and others are found completely innocent. When he arrives at Jerusalem, Varus merely has to show himself and the rebels are frightened away (BJ 2.72). At Idumaea the rebels surrender before Varus takes any action (BJ 2.77). The mild level at which Varus operates in these episodes perhaps gives us an idea of why Varus acted the way he did once he got to Germania. The rebels Varus found around Jerusalem simply needed discipline and did not require battle. Perhaps Varus thought the Germans would be the same way when he decided to be more of a praefectus than a general towards them. Varus was not a military man at this earlier stage in his career, and he certainly did not develop into one later.

But how accurate is Josephus’ account of Varus? What was his bias and how reliable were his sources? Josephus was born in 36 or 37 CE, years after the Varian disaster. He grew up in Jerusalem and belonged to a family of priests. In 64 CE he traveled to Rome, but he was back in Jerusalem in time to get mixed up in the revolt of 66. He commanded an army of Galilee in 66-7, was besieged by Vespasian, and was captured by the Romans. He predicted that Vespasian would become emperor, and when this actually happened in 69, Josephus was released and accompanied
Vespasian back to Rome where he lived out the rest of his days writing on an imperial pension.\(^{52}\)

Josephus’ personal experience both with military affairs and Roman politics makes him a valuable source for his own time period, but we cannot underestimate the information he can offer us about Varus’ time as well. While on imperial pension, he had access to Roman archives (\(AJ\) 14.185-9, 265-7; 16.161, 164-78).\(^{53}\) Perhaps he was able to gather his records on Varus there. But did he have a bias to add to this information? Scholars have argued variously about Josephus’ attitude towards the Romans and how it affected his writing.\(^{54}\) Many have detected his engagement in Flavian propaganda, but it seems Josephus would have little reason to dress up Varus’ role in his text.\(^{55}\) If we are to believe him, Josephus at the beginning of the \textit{Bellum Judaicum} claims in the typical historiographical manner that he writes without bias.\(^{56}\)

Still, a test may help clarify the matter. Nodet offers a comparison between the Slavonic version of the war and Josephus’ Greek account.\(^{57}\) She notes significant differences. The Slavonic version is shorter and clearer and does not involve Sabinus the procurator of Syria. It does, however, state that Varus marched on the rebels upon reaching Jerusalem, that there was a battle, and that many died on both sides.

\(^{52}\) Bilde (1988) 20-1.


\(^{54}\) For a summary of arguments, see Bilde (1988) 174-6. For more recent views, see Curran (2011) and Gruen (2011). For Josephus and his attitude about being a Jew in Rome, see Goodman (1994) 329-38.

\(^{55}\) For Josephus’ connection to imperial figures and his place in Rome, see Curran (2011), Mader (2000) 119-23, 155, and Bilde (1988) 173-8. Bilde (1988) 177 states, “In \textit{Bell.}, which was intended to be a pro-Roman and Flavian work of propaganda, Josephus speaks at great length about his participation in the Revolt...”

\(^{56}\) Joseph. \textit{BJ} 1.1. For more on historiographical statements concerning bias, see Luce (1989).

\(^{57}\) Nodet (2011) 275-7.
Josephus’ story states that Varus needed only to show his army to put down the revolt. The discrepancy is startling. Whether Josephus offers us an accurate picture of Varus is thus unknown. We must read his text with caution.

Pliny the Elder briefly mentions Varus when he lists many of the misfortunes suffered by Augustus during his career (7.147; see Appendix B p. 207). While enumerating political adversities, illnesses, other threats on his life, the loss of family members, and various difficulties with the empire, he includes Varus’ disaster: “next the disaster of Varus and the foul slur upon his dignity” (iuxta haec Variana clades et maiestatis eius foeda suggillatio, 7.150). Varus makes it into the catalog of Augustus’ most painful woes.

Pliny is not a contemporary of Varus. He was born during the reign of Tiberius in 23 or 24 CE, years after the Varian disaster, but still within living memory. The details of the slaughter were probably still known to him. Pliny began his military career at Mogontiacum in Germania in 47 CE. He had experience campaigning against the Chauci under Domitius Corbulo, the Chatti in Upper Germania when Pomponius Secundus was governor, and in Lower Germania alongside the young Titus Flavius Vespasianus. We even have an inscription that possibly links him to the Roman base at Xanten (Vetera). Thus it seems he traveled widely all over Germania through his intimate involvement in Roman military affairs there. He held three posts on the Rhine

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58 Text and translations of Pliny the Elder are from Rackham (1942).


between 46 or 47 and 58 CE. Syme writes that he “in his career as equestrian officer and procurator had come to know well the lands of the Roman west” and that his reports “derive not from books but from life.”

During this time in Germania Pliny began to write his *History of Rome’s Wars against the Germans*. This gave Pliny the opportunity to cover the Varian disaster in full detail. From his own campaigns in Germania Pliny likely had heard many stories and probably visited sites associated with the slaughter. Coupled with his enthusiasm for research, his personal experience in Germania made his account an authority on the subject. If the battle was covered at length in this historical work as we might expect, there was surely no need for Pliny to make more than a brief mention of it in his *Natural History*. But now all but this tiny bit is lost to us.

Frontinus’ *Strategemata* allows readers to see the aftermath of Varus’ disaster (see Appendix B pp. 207-8). Once the Battle of the Teutoburg forest ended and Varus was dead, the surviving Roman troops had to continue in Germania under other leaders. The glimpses that the *Strategemata* offer of the aftermath of the Battle of the Teutoburg forest make these leaders look like clever and careful military strategists, stark contrasts to Varus. Caecidius is one such leader who took charge after the Varian disaster. While facing a siege, he feared that the Germans would use gathered wood to burn their fortifications. Feigning a lack of fuel, he sends men out to steal some of the

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61 Syme (1991) 496. To add to Pliny’s credentials, he was an *animus princeps* to Vespasian (Plin. *Ep.* 3.5.7), earned the title *praefectus alae* under him, and also held procuratorships in various places (the exact locations are uncertain). He was *praefectus classi* at Misenum at the end of his life (Healy [1999] 6-8; Sallmann [1987] 108).

62 Syme (1979) 743.

63 Pliny the Elder had a dream while at Mogontiacum in which Drusus the Elder appeared to him. He was thus inspired to write the 20 books of the *Bella Germaniae* (Plin. *Ep.* 3.5).
wood. The Germans consequently remove the wood and the Romans are safe from fire (4.7.8). Again while being besieged the Romans make sure to show their abundant food stores to their German captives before releasing them so that these captives would tell the besieging forces that an attempt to starve out the Romans would be hopeless (3.15.4). Once again the Romans avoid disaster, a feat that Varus could not manage.

Frontinus lived roughly from the 40s to around 103 CE. He held various political offices and was an esteemed military man.\(^6^4\) An inscription found at Xanten may even show that he at some time held a command in Lower Germania.\(^6^5\) So he seems a trustworthy source when it comes to military affairs. It is interesting that he never mentions Varus or the Varian disaster directly but twice refers to events happening in its wake. These two references to the Varian disaster are notable, however. Turner points out that throughout Frontinus’ four books some famous Roman men, including Augustus, Claudius, Agrippa, and Germanicus, get no mention at all.\(^6^6\) So while it may be no surprise that Varus himself is not named in his text, it seems remarkable that his men should show up twice. Arminius, however, makes a brief cameo in the work of Frontinus. When Frontinus discusses the aftermaths of battles, he notes that Arminius put the heads of his dead foes on spears and displayed them outside the enemy

\(^{64}\) According to Perkins (1937) 102 he was urban praetor for a short time in 70, suffect consul in 73, and governor of Britain in 74. Turner (2007) 426, 429 writes that he was proconsul of Asia in 84/5, *curator aquarum* in 97, suffect consul again in 98, and *consul ordinarius* in 100.

\(^{65}\) *CIL* xiii. 8624; Perkins (1937) 102.

\(^{66}\) Turner (2007) 432.
fortifications (2.9.4). This anecdote injects the sting of Varus and his disaster into the text again, and again indirectly.

These early authors, then, are writing at various times before Tacitus, with various purposes and in various genres. It is interesting to note that many of these early authors are not writing history like Tacitus but are writing what might be collectively described as academic or didactic works, works in which a historical episode like the Varian disaster may not be expected. We have geography with Strabo, rhetoric with Seneca the Elder, the heavens with Manilius, a natural history with Pliny the Elder, and military strategy with Frontinus. These technical treatises are focused on very specific areas of knowledge, yet they somehow manage to find a place for Varus. It nearly seems that no matter what the Romans living in the aftermath of the disaster were writing, they were able to include the infamous Varus in some way. This was the impact he had on the first century CE.

These authors also offer us views of Varus from various points in his lifetime. Some, like Josephus and Velleius, give us an idea of what Varus was like before his disaster in Germania. Some give us details about the disaster itself, and others give us information about the aftermath and reception of the disaster. They all contributed to a tradition of Varus that may have influenced Tacitus’ writing. Thus knowledge of these texts has the potential to amplify parts of the Annals. We now turn to examine these early sources thematically and investigate the overarching messages they send about Varus. When these earlier authors write about Varus, they appear to label him as a bad

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67 Frontin. Str. 2.9.4: Arminius dux Germanorum capita eorum, quos occiderat, simili praefixa ad vallum hostium admoveri iussit, “Arminius, leader of the Germans, likewise fastened on spears the heads of those he had slain, and ordered them to be brought up to the fortifications of the enemy.” Text and translations of Frontinus are from Bennett (1925).
general or as an unfortunate victim. Of all the early authors considered here Velleius offers the fullest body of information on Varus, so we will use him as our guide. Our other authors will add information and build on the foundation laid by his text.

**Varus the Person**

These early sources give only a few brief glimpses of Varus' character, family, and ties to the imperial house. Velleius offers by far the fullest description of Varus the person, and he in fact allows himself a digression with which to cover the personality of the general:

Varus Quintilius inlustri magis quam nobili ortus familia, uir ingenio mitis, moribus quietus, ut corpore, ita animo immobile, otio magis castrorum quam bellicae adsuetus militiae, pecuniae uero quam non contemptor, Syria, cui praefuerat, declarauit, quam pauper diuitem ingressus diues pauperem reliquit; is, cum exercitui, qui erat in Germania, praesset, concepit esse homines, qui nihil praeter uocem membraque haberent, hominum, qui gladiis domari non poterant, posse iure mulceri. Quo proposito medium ingressus Germaniam uelut inter uiros pacis gaudentes dulcedine iurisdictionibus agendoque pro tribunali ordine trahebat aestiua.

Varus Quintilius, descended from a famous rather than a high-born family, was a man of mild character and of a quiet disposition, somewhat slow in mind as he was in body, and more accustomed to the leisure of the camp than to actual service in war. That he was no despiser of money is demonstrated by his governorship of Syria: he entered the rich province a poor man, but left it a rich man and the province poor. When placed in charge of the army in Germany, he entertained the notion that the Germans were a people who were men only in limbs and voice, and that they, who could not be subdued by the sword, could be soothed by the law. With this purpose in mind he entered the heart of Germany as though he were going among a people enjoying the blessings of peace, and sitting on his tribunal he wasted the time of a summer campaign in holding court and observing the proper details of legal procedure. Vell. Pat. 2.117.2-4

Velleius mentions the fame of Varus' family first but fills in no particular details. Instead he discusses Varus' character: he is mild, quiet, slow both physically and mentally, a friend more of leisure than of battle, and desirous of money even at the expense of others. Velleius does not paint Varus as a good leader either for Syria or for Germania.
Varus seriously misjudges the Germans and fails to use his army and his time properly. Rather than engaging in the needed military activity, he wasted time with legal procedure.

To punctuate further the insinuation that Varus was not the ideal Roman vision of a brave military man, Velleius describes his quite unheroic death:

Duci plus ad moriendum quam ad pugnandum animi fuit: quippe paterni auitique successor exempli se ipse transfixit.

The general had more courage to die than to fight, for, following the example of his father and grandfather, he ran himself through with his sword. Vell. Pat. 2.119.3

Varus is depicted following in the footsteps of his “famous” military family members by choosing the noble act of suicide, but the deed is made ignoble when Velleius mentions his lack of courage. Varus is depicted giving up. This embarrassment is made worse when Varus’ head is sent from Maroboduus to Augustus. But Velleius writes that the head was still honored with a burial in Varus’ ancestral tomb.

After his long description of Varus and the battle, Velleius concludes with an apology for Varus’ character and a reiteration of Varus’ shortcomings as a commander:

Ex quo apparat Varum, sane grauem et bonae uoluntatisuirum, magis imperatoris defectum consilio quam uirtute destitutum militum se magnificentissimumque perdidisse exercitum.

From all this it is evident that Varus, who was, it must be confessed, a man of character and of good intentions, lost his life and his magnificent army more through lack of judgement in the commander than of valour in his soldiers. Vell. Pat. 2.120.5

This statement may be typical of Velleius’ tendency to be kind towards the Romans he writes about, but it demonstrates that Varus is often categorized as a bad general or an unfortunate victim. Velleius depicts him as both.
Varus the Bad General

Although Velleius might allow Varus some slack in his confession that he was “a man of good character and of good intentions,” he heavily insinuates that Varus was a bad general. In Varus’ character sketch Velleius openly asserts that Varus was not well accustomed to military service and instead of using his army he preferred to hold court and focus on legal matters (2.117.4). Indeed Varus fashioned himself as more of a judge than a general (2.118.1). Moreover when it came time to fight, Varus did not play the role of the general but decided instead to die.

Varus is also labeled as a bad general because of his negligence, a feature emphasized by Velleius with three different synonyms: Velleius labels Varus’ behavior as the greatest negligence (summam socordiam, 2.118.1); Arminius is said to have taken advantage of Varus’ negligence (segnitia ducis, 2.118.2); the slaughter was caused in part by the negligence of its general (marcore ducis, 2.119.2). The fact that Varus was known for negligence is supported also by Seneca the Elder. An opponent of Varus’ son cites neglegentia as the cause of Varus’ loss (ista neglegentia pater tuus exercitum perdidit, Controv. 1.3.10.12-3) and uses it to belittle the young Varus. Indeed, Varus’ negligence was notorious enough for the following generation to remember it.

Velleius also mentions Varus’ poor judgment twice. It is suggested that his judgment was corrupted by fate (consilia corrumpat, 2.118.4), and his lack of judgment is given as the main cause of the slaughter (imperatoris defectum consilio, 2.120.5). Another one of Varus’ fatal flaws, which Velleius says is a common beginning of

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68 Shipley (1924) translates the synonyms socordia, segnitia, and marcor all as “negligence.”
disaster, was a sense of security (2.118.2). Arminius was able to identify Varus’ lack of fear and use it against him.

In spite of Varus’ failure as a general, Velleius mentions several times that his men were brave and talented. Varus’ troops are first described as “an army unexcelled in bravery, the first of Roman armies in discipline, in energy, and in experience in the field” (exercitus omnium fortissimus, disciplina, manu experientiaque bellorum inter Romanos milites princeps, 2.119.2). Velleius follows this praise of the troops immediately with marcore ducis, providing a steep contrast between the excellence of the army and the failures of Varus. Velleius apologizes for the troops and exonerates them from any responsibility for the disaster. The soldiers were not given much of an opportunity to fight or escape from the ambush; under normal circumstances the Romans would have defeated their foes easily (2.119.2). In his conclusion of the cause of the disaster, Velleius once again excuses the troops and juxtaposes their heroic nature with Varus’ faults. He writes that Varus “lost his life and his magnificent army more through lack of judgement in the commander than of valour in his soldiers” (magis imperatoris defectum consilio quam virtute destitutum militum se magnificentissimumque perdidisse exercitum, 2.120.5). Although his troops were top-notch, Varus was an inadequate leader. He did not have the sense to use them and he wasted their talents. This pins the blame of the disaster squarely on Varus.

The greatness of Varus’ army in contrast to Varus himself is expanded through specific examples. The praefect Lucius Eggius acted nobly (2.119.4). The lieutenant Lucius Asprenas is praised for having saved his men from the slaughter and for securing the allegiance of tribes in Lower Germania. His two legions are praised in
connection to him: they aid Asprenas with an industrious and manly effort \( (gnava virilique opera, 2.120.3) \). The camp praefect Lucius Caedicius also earns praise along with his men. While besieged at Aliso they used careful planning, foresight, and watchfulness along with fighting (all things that Varus lacked) to escape their situation (2.120.4). Frontinus praises this same Caedicius at \textit{Strategemata} 4.7.8. When the besieged Caedicius worries that the Germans will use nearby wood to burn down the Roman fortifications, he uses quick thinking to prevent this. A similar situation occurs at \textit{Strategemata} 3.15.4. The besieged Romans trick their German prisoners into thinking that their food supply is plentiful so that when the prisoners are released, they convince the German forces that it is hopeless to force the Romans into submission through hunger. These passages of Frontinus illustrate that after Varus’ death, the Roman troops got what they really needed: clever, strong leadership that could save them from disastrous situations.

Immediately after relating the story of Caedicius, Velleius concludes that the disaster was due more to Varus’ poor judgment than the valor of his troops (2.120.5). And following this, a final story of courage is told about Caldus Caelius, a prisoner who ended his life by hitting himself over the head with his chains (2.120.6). Velleius embeds his statement of Varus’ failure in accounts of the bravery and quick thinking of others.

Indeed as a bad general Varus easily makes others look good. Although Velleius never seems to miss an opportunity to praise Tiberius, at 2.120.1-2 he does not have to try hard. Tiberius swoops in with his armies, strengthens the garrisons, and (most unlike Varus) he does not misjudge his enemy \( (non fiducia hostis metiens, 2.120.1) \). Also unlike Varus, he embraces battle instead of shunning it \( (arma infert hosti quem arcuisse \).
pater et patria contenti erant, 2.120.2) and accomplishes much without losing any men (incolumni omnium, quos transduxerant, 2.120.2). Tiberius exhibits the positive opposites of Varus’ negatives and makes military campaigning in Germania look easy, thus making Varus look even more foolish.

It must be conceded that Velleius does portray a few men besides Varus negatively. Ceionius is criticized for his suggestion to surrender and his desire to die by torture rather than in battle. But this comparative phrase (auctor deditionis supplicio quam proelio mori maluit, 2.119.4) seems to echo the comparative phrase about Varus just a few sentences earlier (duci plus ad moriendum quam ad pugnandum animi fuit, 2.119.3). Varus prefers to die by suicide rather than in battle. So Velleius’ account of Ceionius’ disgraceful act reflects and amplifies Varus’ baseness. Velleius also criticizes Vala Numonius because, like Varus, he was not a good leader for his men in battle and he did not have the bravery to fight until the bitter end. Lucius Asprenas is the third man to attract blame, although Velleius seems to suggest by the words Sunt tamen, qui...crederint that the rumors of Asprenas’ misdeeds are uncertain. But he, like Varus when he was governor in Syria, supposedly demonstrated greed and took from others when his official position afforded him the opportunity to do so. Thus these men and their shameful behavior in fact increase Varus’ failings.

When these details from these pre-Tacitean authors are brought to the surface, Varus appears to be a very bad general and seems to deserve to be the man behind what many considered the most serious Roman defeat. But sprinkled throughout the works of these same early authors are suggestions that perhaps Varus is not as blameworthy as he is made out to be. Perhaps Varus is just an unfortunate victim.
Varus the Victim

When our pre-Tacitean authors try to make Varus look unfortunate rather than blameworthy, they portray him as a victim either of deceit, barbaric ferocity, or fate. Strabo, for example, makes the treachery of the Germans clear when he writes that the Germans ambushed Varus and that they were in clear violation of their treaty (7.1.4). Varus trusted the Germans because they had an agreement, but the Germans chose perfidy instead. When Velleius introduces the Germans, they are noted for supreme craftiness (versutissimi, n.b. the superlative form) mixed with ferocity “to an extent scarcely credible to one who has had no experience with them”. Velleius then calls them “a race to lying born” (natumque mendacio genus, 2.118.1). After Velleius introduces Arminius, he writes that the German leader used Varus’ sluggishness as an opportunity for evil (in occasionem sceleris) and then provides some details about Arminius plotting: how he gathered men, persuaded them, and named a day for the treachery (tempus insidiarum, 2.118.3). When Velleius begins to describe the disaster, the perfidy of the enemy (perfidia hostis, 2.119.1) is one of three reasons such an excellent army was able to be slaughtered.69 Manilius, too, notes the deceit of the Germans. He uses the Varian disaster as an example of an occasion when the heavens portended that arms would be raised in treachery (clandestinis surgentia fraudibus arma, 1.897). Manilius also writes that the Germans broke their oaths when they attacked Varus (foedere rupto, 1.898). The Germans are portrayed as a treacherous group in these statements and deflect some blame off of Varus. When the Germans are made deceitful, Varus looks like the poor victim of deceit.

69 The other two reasons are the negligence of its general (marcore ducis), which has been covered above, and the unkindness of fortune (iniquitate fortunae), which will be covered below.
Varus is also a victim of German barbarity and ferocity. Again, Velleius makes great ferocity one of the key features of the Germans (*in summa feritate versutissimi*, 2.118.1). Part of the German deceit was to allow Varus to think he was taming their barbarous nature (*feritasque sua...mitesceret*, 2.118.1) when he settled their lawsuits. But the Romans were exterminated (*ad internecionem trucidatus est*, 2.119.2) by German barbarity in a fierce slaughter and Varus’ body was mutilated in their barbarity (*hostilis laceraverat feritas*, 2.119.5). Even when the battle ended, the Germans continued their rage against the Roman captives (*in captivos saeviretur a Germanis*, 2.120.6). The word *feritas* is used three times in these passages to describe the Germans. Similarly when Manilius describes Germania, he uses the adjective *fera* (1.899). When Varus’ enemy is thus portrayed as savage and bloodthirsty almost to an inhuman extent, his loss against them seems more forgivable.

What makes Varus look most blameless, however, is the suggestion that fate or fortune had a large hand in his loss. Indeed, Velleius mentions the inequality of fortune as one of the three reasons why his army perished (2.119.1). First, fortune was involved when he writes that fortune granted them an indulgence concerning the timing of the disaster (2.117.1). After Varus ignores Segestes’ attempt to warn him about Arminius’ plot, Velleius writes, “But fate now dominated the plans of Varus and had blindfolded the eyes of his mind” (*Sed praevalebant iam fata consiliis omnemque animi eius aciem praestrinxerant*, 2.118.4). This sentence, and particularly the word *praevalebant*, insinuates that Varus no longer had control over himself and his own decisions. He was taken over by fate, and so he could not be held responsible for his actions. Second, Velleius continues, “it is usually the case that heaven perverts the judgement of the man
whose fortune it means to reverse” (ita se res habet, ut plerumque cuius fortunam mutaturus est deus, consilia corrumpat, 2.118.4). We have already seen that one of Varus’ biggest downfalls was his flawed judgment. But here Velleius suggests that Varus’ poor decisions were not his own, but that they were bestowed on him by divine forces. Third, Velleius makes a general statement about fate: “(heaven) brings it to pass...that that which happens by chance seems to be deserved, and accident passes over into culpability” (efficiatque...ut, quod accidit, etiam merito accidisse videatur et casus in culpam transeat, 2.118.4). In this final statement Velleius seems to attempt to free Varus from any kind of blame with the suggestion that the disaster happened by chance and was not his fault. Or perhaps we can look at this statement another way; Velleius certainly plants throughout his account the idea that Varus was a bad general who deserved such a great disaster, but he also hints that Varus may have been a victim. Perhaps Velleius presents his readers with this thought-provoking statement so he can continue to ride the fence and deflect the duty of judging Varus onto the reader.

Manilius also suggests that divine forces were involved in Varus’ disaster; fires in the sky foretold disaster for Varus (Astron. 1.896-905). When the battle raged on earth, lights raged in the sky. Manilius closes his account by saying “the fault oft lies with us: we have not the sense to trust heaven’s message” (saepe domi culpa est: nescimus credere caelo, 1.905).70 Thus Manilius also straddles the fence on Varus; he is a victim of fate or divine forces but he should have been warned by those divine forces. There is room for blame as well.

70 Text and translations of Manilius are from Goold (1977).
Whether these early authors label Varus as a failure or victim, one thing they all agree upon is the seriousness of the disaster. When Strabo writes that the German peoples who have been trusted have done the greatest harm (οἱ δὲ πιστευθέντες τὰ μέγιστα κατέβλαψαν, 7.1.4.14), he is referring to the German peoples who fought against Varus. Seneca the Elder’s *Controversiae* shows that the Varian disaster was serious enough to be remembered by the next generation and to haunt the son of Varus. Velleius hints at the seriousness of the disaster when he lists the great loss of life: Varus, three legions, three divisions of cavalry, and six cohorts (2.117.1). But he really enforces the weight of the disaster when he calls it “a most terrible calamity, the heaviest that had befallen the Romans on foreign soil since the disaster of Crassus in Parthia” (*atrocissimae calamitatis, qua nulla post Crassi in Parthis damnum in externis gentibus grauior Romanis fuit*, 2.119.1). Manilius describes the heavenly portents associated with the disaster as if he were describing the end of the world. He writes that lights burned the skies all over and then adds “nature herself waged war with fire / marshalling her forces against us and threatening our destruction” (*et ipsa tulit bellum natura per ignes / opposuitque suas vires finemque minata est*, 1.902-3). Pliny the Elder sees fit to list the disaster among the most serious and painful events of Augustus’ life and calls it a “foul slur upon his dignity” (*maiestatis eius foeda suggillatio*, 7.150).71 Frontinus gives us a glimpse into the horrible aftermath of the slaughter and the dangerous situations the survivors had to deal with. Without a doubt these pre-Tacitean authors strongly demonstrate that the Varian disaster was very serious to the Romans.

71 *Suggillatio* is a rare word but it is used three times by Pliny the Elder (31.100, 32.74, and here at 7.150).
Varus in Parallel and Post-Tacitean Authors

Thus far we have examined pre-Tacitean authors who may have influenced Tacitus directly or may have used the same sources as Tacitus. The entire literary tradition of Varus is not extant, but pre-Tacitean authors can help give us an idea of what information might be missing. Authors that are contemporaneous with and later than Tacitus can also help us piece together the tradition on which Tacitus was building. It is important to consider what these authors say about Varus since they too may have obtained information from the same sources used by Tacitus.

Once again we will be focusing on the texts of Florus, Suetonius, and Cassius Dio, all of whom lived and wrote at the same time or shortly after Tacitus. Like Drusus, it seems Varus was still worth talking about all the way through the end of the first century CE and into the second century, since these three authors see fit to afford him such space and detail in their works. Florus offers ten sections to the account of the Varian disaster, a sizable chunk especially compared to some of the pieces extant from the pre-Tacitean authors. Suetonius discusses the Varian disaster most extensively in his lives of Augustus and Tiberius, but he makes mention of it also in the life of Caligula. And Cassius Dio, the latest of the three authors, offers the longest account as well as the greatest amount of detail concerning the battle. In fact, he includes many details not found elsewhere, either because he had exclusive access to some sources or because he alone judged this information worthy of space. In any case, these three authors not only affirm but amplify what we know about Varus from the pre-Tacitean tradition. These authors affirm Varus’ negligence, the ferocity and deceit of the Germans, and the perception of the role of fate in the disaster. They amplify the seriousness of the disaster, especially the way it affected Augustus personally. Finally, they add to the list
of difficulties the Romans experience during the battle; most importantly, they add to the character of Varus, who appears more cruel and seems to have a greater effect on the behavior of others.

Varus’ negligence is confirmed by all three post-Tacitean authors. Florus at the very outset of his passage on the Varian disaster implies Varus’ insufficiencies as a leader in Germania by contrasting him with Drusus, whom Florus claims the Germans respected (see Appendix B pp. 208-9); Varus thought “he could restrain the violence of barbarians by the rod of a lictor and the proclamation of a herald” and ignore military activity. 72 This is similar to the accusation made by Velleius that Varus acted more like a judge than a general (2.117). Also like Velleius, Florus emphasizes Varus’ negligent character by mentioning his misplaced confidence and lack of fear and his arrogant, careless reaction to Segestes. 73

72 Flor. 2.30.31: quasi violentiam barbarorum lictoris virgis et praeconis voce posset inhibere. Text and translations of Florus are from Forster (1929).

73 Cf. Vell. Pat. 2.118.2: qui nihil timeret, et frequentissimum initium esse calamitatis securitatem; Vell. Pat. 2.118.4: Negat itaque se credere speciemque in se benevolentiae ex merito aestimare profitetur.

Immediately following this description of Varus’ negligence is a brutal portrayal of the battle. Through such juxtaposition Florus strongly implies cause and effect. Suetonius (see Appendix B pp. 210-1) similarly asserts through the thoughts of Tiberius that

cum interim tanta erat Varo pacis fiducia, ut ne prodita quidem per Segestem unum principumconiuratione commoveretur. Itaque inprovidum et nihil tale metuentem ex inproviso adorti, cum ille – o securitas – ad tribunal citaret, undique invadunt;

Meanwhile Varus was so confident of peace that he was quite unperturbed even when the conspiracy was betrayed to him by Segestes, one of the chiefs. And so when he was unprepared and had no fear of any such thing, at a moment when (such was his confidence) he was actually summoning them to appear before his tribunal, they rose and attacked him from all sides. Flor. 2.30.33-4
Varus’ negligence was the cause: *Proximo anno repetita Germania cum animaduerteret Varianam cladem temeritate et negligentia ducis accidisse, nihil non de consilii sententia egit,* “The next year he returned to Germany, and realizing that the disaster to Varus was due to that general’s rashness and lack of care, he took no step without the approval of a council.” The words used by Suetonius to characterize Varus are *temeritas* and *negligentia*. Seneca the Elder also connects the word *negligentia* with Varus, whereas Velleius uses the words *socordia*, *segnitia*, and *marcor*. Suetonius alone uses *temeritas*.

Dio likewise asserts negligence (see Appendix B pp. 212-9). Varus did not keep his troops together “as was proper in hostile territory” (οὔτ’ οὖν τὰ στρατεύματα, ὥσπερ εἰκὸς ἦν ἐν πολεμίᾳ, συνεϊξε, 56.19.1) but rather had them scattered apart as he moved from the Rhine towards the Weser. Varus was blinded by trust, confidence, and arrogance. He felt he had established bonds of friendship with Arminius and Segimerus, who spent time and frequently feasted with him (συνόντες τε αὐτῷ ἀεὶ καὶ συνεστιώμενοι πολλάκις), and so he was confident (θαρσοῦντος οὖν αὐτοῦ), suspected nothing (καὶ μήτε τι δεινὸν προσδεχομένου), and rebuked those who warned him to be on guard (56.19.3). It is interesting to note that in Dio, Varus is warned by multiple unspecified people, whereas in Velleius, Florus, and Tacitus, the warning comes from Segestes. When Dio implies that several people were suspicious and tried to warn Varus, it makes Varus appear more oblivious and negligent as a general and thus more culpable.

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75 Text and translations of Cassius Dio 56 and 57 are from Cary (1924).

76 Vell. *Pat.* 2.118; Flor. 2.30.33; *Tac. Ann.* 1.55, 1.58.
Like their pre-Tacitean predecessors, Florus and Dio also portray the Germans as a fierce, deceitful foe. Florus suggests the wild nature of the Germans when he writes that they “had long been regretting that their swords were rusted and their horses idle” (2.30.32). In addition, the Germans are very barbaric because of their strong aversion to Roman order. Florus writes that they were adverse to the togas and the harsh laws of the Romans, and he criticizes Varus for thinking that he could tame the *violentia barbarorum* with his administration (2.30.31-2). His foolishness leaves him open to their deceit: when he summons them to his tribunal, they attack from all sides (2.30.34). Florus offers us a most gruesome account of German ferocity during the battle: some lose their eyes, others, their hands. Once again the Germans show anger towards Roman order: they are most cruel towards legal pleaders and even cut out the tongue of one man before sewing up his mouth (2.30.36-7). Not even the body of the consul is respected as it is dug up from the ground (2.30.38).

Concerning the nature of the Germans, Dio writes that they were not forgetful of their ancestral habits or “the power derived from arms,” (56.18.2) but unlike Florus, Dio portrays Germans who are not wholly adverse to Romanization. Dio tells us that “The barbarians were adapting themselves to Roman ways, were becoming accustomed to hold markets, and were meeting in peaceful assemblages” (56.18.2). As long as it was gradual, they did not mind or even notice the change (56.18.3). The trouble begins when Varus tries to change them too quickly, orders them about like slaves, and takes their money (56.18.3). Only then do they view the Roman presence as “foreign domination” and resort to revolt. A hint of this same idea can be seen when Florus
writes that the Germans respected the Romans under Drusus, but became discontented under Varus (2.30.30-1).

The Germans show carefully orchestrated deceit. They first draw Varus away from the Rhine while pretending to be friendly and submissive (Cass. Dio 56.18.5). Several communities requested aid from the Romans so the legions would be scattered (56.19.1). Dio then goes to great length and detail to describe the way the plans of the Germans played out: a staged uprising lures Varus out into what he thinks is friendly territory, the Germans excuse themselves to meet up with their troops, they kill the scattered detachments of Romans, and then attack just as Varus reaches difficult terrain (56.19.3-5). The Germans of Dio’s text certainly had thought well about their deceit of the Romans.

Much of the deceit in Dio derives from the repeated notion that the Germans acted friendly towards the Romans. As the Romans enter the territory of the Cherusci, the inhabitants are friendly (56.18.5). Arminius and Segimerus had formed friendly bonds with Varus by spending time and feasting with him, and Varus is led to believe he was crossing friendly territory (56.19.2; 56.19.4). It is therefore a great shock when the Germans reveal themselves as enemies at the very end of the paragraph (56.19.5).

The Germans in pre-Tacitean texts are ferocious and barbaric. Similarly, the Germans in Florus’ text are hostile towards Roman administration and are brutal in their reaction against it. For Dio, however, the Germans are willing participants of the Roman order until Varus pushes them too much (56.18.2-3). Then they become not wild attackers as Florus describes, but careful, calculated strategists. Florus’ brutal Germans may garner some sympathy for Varus, and like the pre-Tacitean authors, may make him
look like a victim. But Dio’s Germans heap responsibility for the disaster on Varus. According to Dio, Varus pushed the cooperative Germans into revolt.

Indeed when compared to the pre-Tacitean sources, Florus and Dio portray Varus with a darker character. The pre-Tacitean authors did not accuse Varus of much more than negligence. Velleius once hints at Varus’ greed and laziness (2.117.2), and the crucifixion of 2,000 people mentioned in Josephus’ text (2.72-5) may be considered cruel, but otherwise Varus’ character is not attacked by the extant pre-Tacitean sources. Florus and Dio, on the other hand, add some negative aspects to his character. Florus even compares (magis quam...haud secus quam) mores: he attaches licentiousness (libidinem), pride (superbiam), and cruelty (saevitiam) to Varus and offers them as reasons why the Germans went from being content under Drusus to discontented under Varus.77 Varus “dared” (ausus) to make proclamations over the Germans, particularly over the Catthi (2.30.31), and eventually the laws become “more cruel than arms” (saeviora armis iura, 2.30.32). Thus the Germans were driven to rally under Arminius.

Dio also suggests that the Germans were content until Varus came along. He tries to change them too quickly; his way of issuing orders does not sit well with the Germans. He treats them “as if slaves of the Romans.” His greed is also a factor: “he exacted money as he would from subject nations” (56.18.2-3). The Germans soon view Roman order as “foreign domination” and naturally refuse to submit (56.18.4).

It is not possible to know why Varus’ character is portrayed differently by these two authors. Perhaps the tradition surrounding Varus changed and intensified over time.

77 Flor. 2.30.30-1: moresque nostros magis quam arma sub imperatore Druso suspiciebant; postquam ille defunctus est, Vari Quintili libidinem ac superbiam haud secus quam saevitiam odisse coeperunt, “and under the rule of Drusus they respected our moral qualities rather than our arms. After his death they began to detest the licentiousness and pride not less than the cruelty of Quintilius Varus.”
Perhaps the story of Varus got more and more colorful as each generation of Romans told it. Or perhaps they follow earlier sources that are no longer extant. Perhaps there was a part of the pre-Tacitean tradition that made Varus into a cruel greedy general and was still around when Tacitus was writing and beyond, but is lost to us now. In any case, Tacitus himself does not engage in the same characterization of Varus as Florus and Dio. Tacitus’ Varus may still be a failure, but he is not accused of anything such as cruelty or greed.

The Varus in the texts of Florus and Dio is not only darker, but he also has greater effect on those around him. We have seen already how he directly compels the Germans to revolt (Cass. Dio 56.18.3). He also has a significant impact on his own men. The hatred that Varus had instilled in the Germans from his severe law-making causes the Germans to rage more brutally against the Roman administrators (Florus 2.30.36). Dio reports that Varus’ officers commit suicide with him (56.21.5). But this is not as surprising as what follows. The rest of the men immediately give up, some of them imitating Varus with suicide:

When news of this had spread, none of the rest, even if he had any strength left, defended himself any longer. Some imitated their leader, and others, casting aside their arms, allowed anybody who pleased to slay them; for to flee was impossible, however much one might desire to do so. Cass. Dio 56.22.1

The battle for the Romans ends with Varus’ life. His decision to commit suicide influences others to give up as well.
Suetonius elaborates the effect of Varus on Tiberius who realizes that the disaster was due in large part to Varus’ *negligentia* and *temeritas*, therefore he modifies his own behavior with the hope that he will not face the same problems as Varus (*Tib.* 18.1). Contrary to his normal tendency, Tiberius consulted several advisors concerning his campaign in Germania and did not act without their approval. Ordinarily Tiberius was supposed to be quite independent, but unlike Varus who did not listen to any warnings, Tiberius decides to seek the counsel of many. Also unlike the negligent Varus, Tiberius is more careful (*curam...exactiorem, *Tib.* 18.1). Thus Varus’ behavior does influence Tiberius when he enters Germania during the next campaign season. Tiberius does not want to become like Varus. Dio reports a similar influence over Tiberius (and also Germanicus). The two leaders campaign in Germany but achieve no definite victory, “for in their fear of falling victims to a fresh disaster they did not advance very far beyond the Rhine...” (δεδιότες γὰρ μὴ καὶ συμφορᾷ αὐθις περιπέσωσιν, οὐ πάνυ πόρρω τοῦ Ῥήνου προῆλθον, 56.25.3). This passage immediately follows Dio’s long description of the Varian disaster, so the “fresh disaster” which Tiberius and Germanicus fear is one similar to that suffered by Varus. Once again, the memory of Varus affects the behavior of others.

The person most deeply affected by Varus and his disaster, however, is Augustus, and the post-Tacitean authors make this abundantly clear through multiple references to the seriousness of the disaster and the very personal impact it had on the emperor. The seriousness of the disaster is acknowledged by Florus when he compares the death of Varus to that of Paulus at the battle of Cannae (2.30.35). This comparison puts the Varian disaster on the same level as one of the most disasterous battles in all
of Roman history. The seriousness is also implied when Florus summarizes the result: “the empire, which had not stopped on the shores of the Ocean, was checked on the banks of the Rhine” (imperium, quod in litore Oceani non steterat, in ripa Rheni fluminis staret, 2.30.39). Augustus’ foreign policy is forever changed.

Indeed Augustus’ rule becomes marked by this defeat in particular. We have already seen Pliny the Elder list it among Augustus’ most painful troubles. Tacitus himself mentions the Varian alongside the Lollian disaster when he reviews Augustus’ reign (pacem sine dubio post haec, verum cruentam: Lollianas Varianasque clades, “without a doubt there was peace after this, in truth bloody peace: there were the Lollian and Varian disasters,” Ann. 1.10). Similarly, Suetonius writes that Augustus only suffered two “severe and ignominious defeats” (graues ignominias cladesque, Aug. 23.1), that of Lollius and that of Varus. However, he dwarfs Lollius’ defeat in relation to Varus’ when he writes “the former was more humiliating than serious, but the latter was almost fatal” (sed Lollianam maioris infamiae quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitiabilem, Aug. 23.1). Finally, according to Suetonius, Augustus’ reign is infamous for the Varian disaster even years later in the eyes of the emperor Caligula. At Caligula 31.1 he laments that his reign is not remarkable for any disasters, while Augustus’ reign had the Varian disaster.

Suetonius offers the fullest description of the seriousness of Varus’ defeat and its effect on Augustus (Aug. 23.1-2). Like Velleius (2.117.1), Suetonius emphasizes the destruction of the entire army: three legions, the general, the lieutenants, and the auxiliaries. The emergency procedures taken by Augustus upon hearing the news are

78 Text and translations of Suetonius’ Augustus are from Rolfe (1913).
outlined: night watches are posted around the city, and the governors of the provinces are retained for a longer period to ensure the loyalty of the allies. Then, in accordance with historical precedent, he vows games to Jupiter Optimus Maximus. His personal reaction is reserved for last:

adeo denique consternatum ferunt, ut per continuos menses barba capilloque summisso caput interdum foribus illideret uociferans: 'Quintili Vare, legiones redde!' diemque cladis quotannis maestum habuerit ac lugubrem.

In fact, they say that he was so greatly affected that for several months in succession he cut neither his beard nor his hair, and sometimes he would dash his head against a door, crying: "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!" And he observed the day of the disaster each year as one of sorrow and mourning. Aug. 23.2

Dio offers a similar account of Augustus violently uncomposed and publicly mourning:

τότε δὲ μαθὼν ὁ Αὔγουστος τὰ τῷ Οὐάρῳ συμβεβηκότα τήν τε ἐσθῆτα, ὡς τινές φασί, περιερρήξατο, καὶ πένθος μέγα ἐπὶ τε τῶν ἀπολωλόσι καὶ ἐπὶ τῷ περὶ τῶν Γερμανιῶν καὶ περὶ τῶν Γαλατιῶν δέει ἐποιήσατο, τό τε μέγιστον ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν τὴν τε Ῥώμην αὐτὴν ὀρμήσειν σφᾶς προσεδόκησε.

Augustus, when he learned of the disaster to Varus, rent his garments, as some report, and mourned greatly, not only because of the soldiers who had been lost, but also because of his fear for the German and Gallic provinces, and particularly because he expected that the enemy would march against Italy and against Rome itself. Cass. Dio 56.23.1

Mourning is institutionalized by Tiberius who delays the celebration of his triumph because the city was in mourning over the Varian disaster (triumphum ipse distulit maesta ciuitate clade Variana, Tib. 17.2). In spite of the delay of ceremony, the Varian disaster brought additional glory to Tiberius’ success because if Tiberius had not taken care of the trouble in Illyricum, the victorious Germans undoubtedly would have united with the Pannonians against Rome (Tib. 17.1). In Suetonius as in Velleius, Varus makes Tiberius look good as a commander.
In addition to mourning, the disaster causes changes to the atmosphere in the city of Rome. Augustus is afraid of an uprising, so he posts night watches. The terrible news of the disaster prevents the celebration of a festival (Cass. Dio 56.18.1). Dio states that usual business had stopped and no festivals were celebrated (56.24.1). Augustus takes measures that affect many lives. He struggles to find men willing to go to Germania with Tiberius and he is forced to punish some by confiscating their property, and others by execution (56.23.2-3). The many Germans and Gauls in the city, including those on the praetorian guard, he sends away for fear of rebellion (56.23.4).

Dio explains that once Augustus heard that the Germans were not advancing to the attack and that some of Varus' troops had survived, “he ceased to be alarmed and paused to consider the matter” (56.24.1). Upon reflection, divine forces enter the picture:

τό τε γὰρ πάθος οὐκ ἄνευ δαιμονίου τινὸς ὀργῆς καὶ μέγα οὐτω καὶ ἀθρόον ἐδόκει οἱ γεγονέναι· καὶ προσέτι καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν τεράτων τῶν πρὸ τῆς ἥττης καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα συμβάντων δεινὴν ὑποψίαν ἐς τὸ θείον ἔσχεν.

For a catastrophe so great and sudden as this, it seemed to him, could have been due to nothing else than the wrath of some divinity; moreover, by reason of the portents which occurred both before the defeat and afterwards, he was strongly inclined to suspect some superhuman agency. Cass. Dio 56.24.2

Dio then proceeds to list eight different portents associated with the disaster, one reminiscent of Manilius: the sky is ablaze and many comets appear. Dio’s many portents reiterate the message of Manilius. A divine or super human force was involved in the Varian disaster, but the disaster should have been anticipated from all the many signs provided beforehand. As in the pre-Tacitean authors, this way of thinking makes
Varus, and by extension Augustus, look like an unfortunate victim of fate. Yet at the same time, this way of thinking leaves some room for blame.

In these post-Tacitean authors, then, Varus can be seen having a great effect on the Germans, his own men, Augustus, Tiberius, and even the city of Rome. These authors ponder more deeply what the Varian disaster meant to the different parties involved. Perhaps with time comes greater perspective – or at least distance. The later authors had a greater context of Roman history within which to place Varus and his disaster. They can gage its seriousness alongside other events and make judgments based not only on a wider scope of time, but on a wider scope of sources. The literary tradition of Varus under Dio was certainly much more expansive than that which existed in the time of Velleius.

While Velleius offers the most detailed portrait of Varus’ character, Dio gives by far the longest and most detailed narrative of Varus’ defeat. He covers every stage of the disaster: the events leading up to it, the actual battle, the sieges after the battle, and the reaction and aftermath. He covers just about every topic seen in our pre-Tacitean sources, from Varus’ negligence to the involvement of divine forces. He even covers details not seen in our other authors. For example, Dio writes extensively about the fighting itself from 56.20-22. He discusses terrain and the difficulties it caused the Romans (56.20.1). He mentions the baggage, women, children, and slaves that hindered them (56.20.2, 5). He describes twice how bad weather made their efforts more difficult (56.20.3, 56.21.3). He then proceeds to write about the battle from day

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79 Dio mentions the effect of unlucky fate on both Varus and Germanicus at 57.20.1-2. He notes that “Tiberius was evidently doomed to exert some fatal influence throughout his life,” since everyone who had held the consulship with him, including Varus and Germanicus, died horribly. It seems Varus and Germanicus have this one thing in common.
one through day four. The Germans, being well acquainted with the thick forest, surround the unprepared Romans (56.20.4-5). After suffering heavy losses the Romans make camp, and the next day they experience more difficulty fighting in the forest (56.21.1-2). They even have trouble wielding their own weapons due to the bad weather conditions (56.21.3). The Germans, on the other hand, have an easier time fighting because they are more lightly armed and thus can better tolerate the storm (56.21.4). They also gain reinforcements as more Germans join the cause for the sake of loot (56.21.4). Overall Dio’s account of the battle does a thorough job explaining all of the disadvantages of the Romans and all of the advantages of the Germans.

Then there is the aftermath (56.22.2a and 2b-4). The Germans begin to occupy various forts and lay sieges, but Dio notes “they did not understand the conduct of sieges” (56.22.2a), a fact which might explain how the Romans in Frontinus’ Strategemata seem easily to outwit their besiegers. Also like Frontinus (3.15.4), Dio describes besieged Romans who suffer from hunger (56.22.2b). But unlike in Frontinus’ account, the Romans of Dio’s text are unable to fool the Germans and eventually have to make a desperate sally out during a stormy night. Dio again offers details of every step of this story: the progress of the Romans up to the third German outpost, the discovery of their escape because of the women and children, their avoidance of total capture due to the focus of the Germans on plunder and the quick thinking of the Roman trumpeters, the aid brought in by Asprenas, and the ransoming of prisoners after the event. This account by Dio is much fuller than anything offered by Frontinus, although the subject matter is similar.
The reasons for such detail and length may be numerous. Perhaps Dio had access to sources that were not available to earlier authors. Or perhaps these sources were indeed available to others, but those authors simply decided not to include that information due to genre or other constraints. Dio’s work is meant to be a long, universal history which embraces full description. Velleius’ work, on the other hand, is meant to be shorter and shows hesitation for digression. It is possible that such authors would not be interested in the sort of detail which Dio provides due to the very nature of their work. Furthermore, Dio may simply be engaging in *inventio* when he offers such detailed accounts. *Inventio* was certainly not out of the question for ancient authors of history, and in fact it would be considered the substance of history.\(^80\) Thus some of the information gathered from Dio’s work may be of his own construction.

One further passage deserves consideration. Orosius, a much later author living at the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century CE, preserves the harsh tradition surrounding Varus and although his section on Varus is brief (6.21.26-7), he includes typical elements that we would expect: Varus’ bad character, the seriousness of the disaster, and Augustus’ strong reaction (see Appendix B p. 220). Varus is labeled for his haughtiness and greed (*superbia atque avaritia*), the legions are described as completely wiped out (*funditus deletus est*), and Augustus is depicted hitting his head against a wall and crying out “Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!”\(^81\) Thus Varus’ post-Tacitean tradition seems to last very consistently for hundreds of years.

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\(^80\) For *inventio* in history, see Bosworth (2003).

\(^81\) It seems very possible that Orosius closely follows Suetonius’ account here, especially since he cites Suetonius just a few sections earlier at 6.21.25.
Tacitus would surely have used the tradition surrounding Varus to its full potential, but for his own purposes. He has little reason to assassinate Varus’ character. Tacitus’ Varus is a failure, but he is not painted as cruel. In addition, Tacitus does not go out of his way to make Varus into a bad general. He only twice hints at Varus’ negligence. Segestes often (saepe) attempted to warn Varus about rebellion; he even encouraged Varus to arrest himself and the other German leaders at a banquet. But Varus did not heed Segestes’ multiple warnings (1.55). Later Segestes speaks again about his warning to Varus and his suggestion that he be arrested with Arminius and the others, but he says that he was put off by the negligence of the leader (dilatus segnitia ducis, 1.58). The word segnitia is used by Tacitus, as also by Velleius (2.118.2). Aside from these two passages, Varus is not emphatically portrayed as a bad general as he is by some of our other authors.

Neither is Varus emphatically portrayed as a victim. Tacitus once suggests that Varus may have fallen victim to fate (sed Varus fato et vi Armini cecidit, “but Varus fell by fate and the violence of Arminius,” 1.55). Otherwise fate is not emphasized as a factor in the disaster, certainly not as it is by Manilius or Dio. Varus can, however, be viewed as a victim of fierce Germans. Varus is killed by fate, but also by the violence of Arminius (vi Armini, 1.55). The horror of the Teutoburg forest also portrays the Germans as brutal foes. Tacitus describes piles of unburied bones that remain scattered everywhere and skulls that are nailed to trees as evidence of a violent massacre. He mentions altars where tribunes and centurions were slaughtered (mactaverant, 1.61). Survivors point out places where officers fell, where Varus was wounded, and where he committed suicide. Tacitus recounts Arminius’ vaunts and his capture and disrespect of
the standards and eagles (utque signis et aquilis per superbiam inluserit, 1.61). There are hints of German brutality from the battle: the son of Segimerus is said to have insulted the corpse of Varus (2.71). We may compare Florus’ mention of the consul’s disinterred body (2.30.38).

Indeed Varus’ death in Tacitus’ text may earn him a little pity. According to Tacitus, he was wounded before committing suicide (1.61), perhaps suggesting that he at least put up some of a fight and that his suicide was not entirely cowardly as other authors seem to insinuate. The suicide itself is done infelici dextera, by his unlucky hand. The adjective infelici carries a tone of wretchedness and ill fortune. This is another instance where the role of fate is implied. The word certainly injects sympathy into this suicide scene and portrays Varus as an unfortunate victim.

Tacitus communicates the seriousness of Varus’ disaster through his description of its impact on Augustus, the loss of the military standards and eagles, and the mourning of the soldiers at the Teutoburg forest. The only war Augustus had on his hands was against the Germans and that was only to erase the shame of his loss of the army under Varus (bellum ea tempestate nullum nisi adversus Germanos supererat, abolendae magis infamiae ob amissum cum Quintilio Varo exercitum quam cupidine proferendi imperii aut dignum ob praemium, 1.3). Tacitus mentions the Varian disaster as one of only two disasters to mark Augustus’ reign (1.10). These two passages alone describe the effect of Varus and his disaster on Augustus. Unlike Suetonius and Dio, Tacitus records no over dramatic reaction of the emperor.

Tacitus also communicates the seriousness of disaster through the loss of standards and loot to the Germans. The capture and insult of the standards and eagles
by Arminius punctuates the end of *Annals* 1.61. Thereafter the recoveries of these standards and eagles as well as other loot become steps in which Germanicus can erase the shame of the Varian disaster. At *Annals* 1.57 loot that had been lost in the defeat is recovered. At *Annals* 1.60 the eagle of the 19th legion is found. At *Annals* 2.25 the German leader Mallovendus gives Germanicus a tip about where another eagle is hidden. At *Annals* 2.41 the importance of such recoveries is shown in the consecration of an arch in Rome. The serious embarrassment suffered from the loss of these items becomes rectified when Germanicus retrieves them.

Tacitus also describes mourning as a response to the Varian disaster. When Germanicus and his men enter the Teutoburg forest, it is described as *maestos locos visuque ac memoria deformis* (mournful places loathsome in sight and memory, 1.61).

The beginning of *Annals* 1.62 when Germanicus and his troops bury the remains of the dead is heavy with mourning:

> Igitur Romanus qui aderat exercitus sextum post cladis annum trium legionum ossa, nullo noscente alienas reliquias an suorum humo tegeret, omnis ut coniunctos, ut consanguineos, aucta in hostem ira, maesti simul et infensi condebant. primum extruendo tumulo caespitem Caesar posuit, gratissimo munere in defunctos et praesentibus doloris socius.

And so the Roman army which was there in the sixth year after the disaster buried the bones of the three legions as if all were relatives and kinsmen, although nobody knew whether he was burying the remains of strangers or of his own relatives. Their anger against the enemy was increased, and they were mournful and enraged at the same time. Caesar was the first to place earth on the funeral mound that was about to be raised in a thankful tribute to the dead and sharing in the grief of those present. *Ann. 1.62*

The soldiers in this passage are *maesti* and Germanicus is *praesentibus doloris socius*.

They mourn for the dead through the act of burying the bones and they treat the
remains as if they belonged to family. But unlike in other authors, the men in Tacitus’
text react to the disaster also with anger (\textit{aucta...ira,...infensi}).

Varus in the \textit{Annals}, then, displays some of the features seen in other authors.
He is a character with a hint of negligence, victimized by fate while fighting a fierce foe,
falling into a serious disaster and causing sadness for many Romans. But Tacitus is not
as emphatic in his portrayal of Varus as some of the other authors who make their
opinions of him very plain. Tacitus paints a subtle portrait of Varus and his involvement
in the \textit{Annals}. Tacitus need not get carried away with characterizing him as a bad
general or a victim or a stain on Augustus’ career; his purpose is not to sway the verdict
on Varus. His purpose is rather to establish a contrast to his own general of Germania,
namely Germanicus. Tacitus is not interested in Varus for the sake of Varus. He is
interested in Varus for the sake of Germanicus.\footnote{Devillers (2003) 210 writes about the affect of Varus on Germanicus: “Quant au rappel fréquent de la défaite de Varus pendant les campagnes de Germanicus, il rehausse, en soulignant la valeur de l’ennemi, les mérites du fils adoptif de Tibère.”}

According to Strabo, the seriousness of Varus’ disaster afforded Germanicus a
great triumph. Germanicus, just as so many others, looks good in comparison with
Varus. He makes the Germans pay the penalty and he leads their famous men and
women in his triumph (7.1.4.18-25). This juxtaposition of Varus and Germanicus
effectively shows Germanicus as an anti-Varus. They fight the same foe, but while
Varus fails miserably, Germanicus wins the greatest glory possible.

The many authors who contribute to the literary tradition of Varus portray him as a
bad general characterized by poor judgment, lack of military skill, and negligence, or as
an unfortunate victim of deceit, ferocity, and fate. Germanicus can in no way be

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portrayed thus while he is general in Germania. Considering what we have left of the Varus tradition, Germanicus certainly is an anti-Varus. Once Germanicus crosses the Rhine with his troops at *Annals* 1.49, his behavior is characterized by anything but poor judgment, lack of military skill, or negligence. His first attack, against the Marsi, is carefully planned out. Instead of getting trapped in the dangerous German terrain like Varus, Germanicus establishes base on a barrier preexisting from Tiberius, then investigates the forest passes. He deliberates between a usual short path and a longer untried path which would be unguarded by the enemy and decides on the second. Germanicus had sent out scouts who reported that the Marsi were drunk from a feast. He sends ahead Caecina with some cohorts and follows at a moderate distance (*modico intervallo*, 1.50) with his legions. They surround and easily defeat the unsuspecting tribe. Germanicus carefully surveys and takes advantage of all factors in this mission: location, timing, and the condition of the enemy. If anyone in the passage is like Varus, it is the Marsi. They are careless and have no fear of war. Germanicus capitalizes on this. Although the Marsi may be an easy target, Germanicus moves in with a plan. He divides his men into four groups for the attack. The slaughter of the Marsi is so complete that no Romans are harmed, a statement which we have seen in context with Drusus but certainly not Varus. When surrounding tribes became aware of the Roman presence and began to fill the nearby woods, Germanicus was ready. His knowledge of the enemy is indicated by *quod gnarum duci incessitque itineri et proelio* (1.51). Tacitus describes the careful order of the different parts of the Roman army as

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84 *Ann. 1.50:* ...*nullo metu, non antepositis vigilis: adeo cuncta incuria disiecta erant neque belli timor,* ...*with no fear, without night watches posted: indeed everything was disorganized with neglect and there was no fear of war.*
they proceed through the woods. Under these circumstances Germanicus might have experienced a disaster like that of Varus. He proceeds with his troops through difficult forest filled with alert German tribes. But just when Germanicus perceives his men to be in trouble, he provides some solid leadership through encouraging words. The men are filled with courage and slaughter the enemy. Disaster is averted by Germanicus’ ability to take hold of the situation and lead his men.

Germanicus’ other encounters with the Germans are handled likewise. Nowhere can we find the traits of Varus: the poor judgment, lack of military skill, and negligence. Germanicus follows Arminius into the wilderness and sends out his cavalry to scout out the area. Arminius uses the German forests and swamps to his advantage against the Roman forces, and just when he seems to be gaining an upper hand against the cavalry and some reinforcement cohorts, Germanicus arrives with his legions drawn up. This inspires fear in the Germans and confidence in the Romans. Like Varus and the men in Florus’ text, Germanicus and his troops in this passage are at risk of getting trapped in dangerous German terrain. But once again what could have been a grave disaster is

85 Ann. 1.51 cum Caesar adventus ad vicesimanos voce magna hoc illud tempus obliterandae seditionis clamitabat: pergerent, properarent culpam in decus vertere. exarsere animis unoque impetu perruptum hostem redigunt in aperta caeduntque, “when Germanicus rode up to the twentieth legion he cried out in a loud voice that this was the time to erase their sedition from memory: they should go forward, they should hurry to turn their guilt into honor. They fired up their spirits and in one charge they broke through the enemy, drove them out into the open and slaughtered them.”

86 Tac. Ann. 1.63: tunc nova acie turbatus eques, missaeque subsidiariae cohortes et fugientium agmine impulsae auxerant confusione; trudebantque in paludem gnaram victimum, iniquam nesciis, ni Caesar productas legiones instruxisset: inde hostibus terror, fiducia militi; et manibus aequis abscessum, “Thereupon the cavalry was thrown into confusion by this new group, and subsidiary cohorts were sent and when they were pushed back by the stream of fleeing men they increased the disorder; they were driven into a swamp known to those who were winning, but disadvantageous to those who were unfamiliar with it, if Caesar had not drawn up the legions he brought forth: thence there was terror for the enemy and confidence for the troops.”
abruptly rectified by the appearance of Germanicus and the courage he inspires in his men.

Tacitus demonstrates further that Germanicus is not like Varus when he crosses the Weser to face Arminius in the plain of Idistavisus. His judgment is keen, he shows care for military strategy, and he leads his men through his words and actions. Germanicus discovers the intentions of Arminius and plans accordingly (2.12). To ascertain his own men’s true feelings, he decides to venture out into his camp in disguise. He is thus able to address them appropriately to inflame their courage (2.14). In detail he reveals the German’s weaknesses and advises his men on how to wound their opponents most effectively. He concludes with an incentive: this battle will pave the way to an end of service. Once again Germanicus’ words are successful: *orationem ducis secutus militum ardor* (“inspiration of the troops followed the speech of the leader,” 2.15). Germanicus’ ability to inspire his troops in the *Annals* stands in stark contrast to the mourning and sadness surrounding Varus throughout his literary tradition.

With this care taken to prepare his men, Germanicus is ready to face Arminius. The Romans form their battle line (2.16), and when the charge begins (2.17), Germanicus uses the appearance of eight eagles in the sky to rouse his troops. Unlike Varus in the texts of Manilius and Suetonius, Germanicus receives good omens in the *Annals* when he is about to fight Arminius. Not only are the eight eagles interpreted as positive (*Ann. 2.17*), but he has a favorable dream (*laetam...quietem*, *Ann. 2.14*) in which he makes a sacrifice and receives a robe from his grandmother Augusta. This

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87 See Devillers (2003) 148 concerning the “pure rhétorique” of this scene.
dream is considered propitious by Germanicus: *auctus omine, addicentibus auspiciis*, “he was encouraged by the omen, as the auspices were propitious” (*Ann. 2.14*).\(^{88}\)

Germanicus’ foe is the same one Varus faced in 9 CE: the fierce Cherusci and a brutal Arminius. Horror reminiscent of the Teutoburg forest colors the scene as Arminius rides across the battlefield with blood smeared on his face. In spite of this, Germanicus’ men achieve success.\(^{89}\) Many Germans are cut down either at the river or in the forest. Germanicus accomplishes against Arminius what Varus could not. Tacitus decisively states *magna ea victoria neque cruenta nobis fuit* (“it was a great victory and there was no bloodshed for us,” 2.18). It is, in effect, a Varian disaster for the Germans (2.18). The slaughter lasted from morning until night and the result was miles of land covered in dead bodies, plunder, and chains. This time the Romans get to vaunt over the scene. They raise a trophy with the names of the defeated tribes. Germanicus has turned the tables. He is not like Varus at all. He is the opposite of Varus. He makes his enemy like Varus instead.\(^{90}\)

The remaining Germans try to make a last stand, but once again Germanicus is not negligent. Germanicus displays military knowledge, careful judgment, and strong leadership:

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\(^{88}\) Pelling (1997) 207-8 observes that the dream at *Ann. 2.14* (*laetam quietem*) seems to link with Caecina’s dream at *Ann. 1.65* (*dira quies*) as its opposite: “The first dream presaged a dark crisis; this now presages the greatest success. The first was threatening; this one is taken by Germanicus to be wholly propitious.” Thus it seems that while the first dream implied Germanicus’ danger of re-enacting Varus’ disaster, the second dream may imply his escape from it. Devillers (2003) 132 notes the valuable effects of these two dreams.

\(^{89}\) See Devillers (2003) 162-3 concerning how Tacitus may favor Germanicus here by citing the treachery of the auxiliaries as the reason Arminius and Inguiomerus escaped, although Tacitus does distance himself from this idea by citing it as rumor (*tradiderunt, Ann. 2.17*).

\(^{90}\) Arminius is like Varus in description here as well. As Pagán (1997) 59-60 notes, Varus is described as *sanguine oblitum* at *Ann. 1.65.2*, and Arminius in this battle is *oblitus...cruore* (*Ann. 2.17.5*). She observes also that the word *oblino* occurs only once more in the entire Tacitean corpus (*Ann. 2.69.3*).
Nihil ex his Caesari incognitum: consilia locos, prompta occulta noverat astusque hostium in perniciem ipsis vertebat. Seio Tuberoni legato tradit equitem campumque; peditum aciem ita instruxit ut pars aequo in silvam aditu incederet, pars obiectum aggerem eniteretur; quod arduum sibi, cetera legatis permisit.

None of these things were unknown to Caesar: he knew their plans, their locations, things disclosed and concealed, and he was turning the stratagems of the enemy into their destruction. To the legate Seius Tubero he entrusted the cavalry and the field; he drew up his infantry in such a way that part might proceed into the forest on a level approach, and part might mount the mound that had been raised; what was difficult he kept for himself, other things he entrusted to his officers. Ann. 2.20

Germanicus knows his enemies and can use strategy against them. He knows how to arrange his men, how to delegate responsibilities, and what responsibilities to reserve for himself as general. In another act of inspiration, Germanicus makes a bold move as a leader by taking his helmet off and encouraging his men to the slaughter (2.21). The result again is gore of the Teutoburg type: *ceterae ad noctem cruore hostium satiatae sunt* (“the rest were sated on the blood of the enemy until nightfall,” 2.21).

**Conclusion**

Thus in the *Annals* Germanicus shows nothing of the poor judgment, lack of military skill, or negligence which the literary tradition suggests Varus had shown as commander in Germania. Instead Germanicus demonstrates leadership over his men through his actions and words, keeps a keen eye on his enemy, is wary of German terrain, and maneuvers himself and uses strategy accordingly. The result is Varian disaster for the Germans, not the Romans. Germanicus thus succeeds at erasing the stain of Varus. It is by Tacitus’ subtle integration of Varus into the background of his text that we can see that Germanicus is a stark contrast to Varus, that he truly is Rome’s revenge on the Germans as Strabo asserts.
Germainicus and Tiberius in the *Annals*

Drusus and Varus are of course already dead when the narrative of the *Annals* begins, but they nonetheless have a large impact on the characterization of Germanicus. Tiberius, however, is alive and well in the first hexad of the *Annals*, perfectly apt to influence Germanicus directly. Tacitus writes about Tiberius' career as emperor in the first hexad of the *Annals*. This has much to do with the chronological framework he has chosen, but as we have seen Tacitus occasionally breaks from a strict timeline and narrates past events in the present. Tacitus sometimes refers back to Tiberius' earlier career as a military man in Germania. These glimmers of Tiberius' earlier career are subtle and infrequent, but they still have an effect on the character of Tiberius, and by extension, the character of Germanicus as well.

The bulk of the references to Tiberius' career in Germany occur in books 1 and 2, most likely since the German activity of Germanicus and Drusus narrated within these books allows opportunities for Tacitus to reflect on Tiberius' background. Tiberius' accomplishments in Germania appear six separate times in the words of various characters: 1.12, 1.34, 1.50, 2.14, and twice in 2.26. The first reference is found in the speech of Asinius Gallus before the Senate. In an effort to dispel Tiberius' ill will against him for an earlier statement, Gallus brings up Tiberius' victories and distinguished accomplishments (*Ann. 1.12*). Tiberius' German campaign is not mentioned specifically but certainly is implied. Gallus tries to use the recollection of it to please the emperor and soften his attitude.
The most extensive reference to Tiberius’ career in Germany comes from the words of Tiberius himself. When he attempts to recall Germanicus from his campaign, Tiberius recollects that he had been sent into Germany several times and achieved more from policy than from war.¹ He wishes to persuade Germanicus of this strategy and encourages him to do the same. He uses himself as an example for Germanicus to follow. Germanicus, however, is not convinced. He understands that Tiberius has recalled him out of jealousy (per invidiam).² Perhaps Tiberius believes that Germanicus has matched his own success too closely.

Indeed, Germanicus seems quite eager to match Tiberius’ success in Germania. He speaks of Tiberius’ achievements in Germany twice before his own troops. When he arrives in front of the mutinous soldiers, he praises the victories of Tiberius and his deeds accomplished in Germania with those same armies.³ Germanicus hopes to encourage the men back into obedience by appealing to their sense of pride and accomplishment but also by picking at their sense of shame in his comparison between them and a dutiful, victorious army. The effect Germanicus is trying to achieve only works if all the troops there are familiar with the glorious reputation of Tiberius and his legions.

¹ Ann. 2.26: se novies a divo Augusto in Germaniam missum plura consilio quam vi perfecisse. sic Sugambros in deditionem acceptos, sic Suebos regemque Maroboduum pace obstrictum, “nine times he had been sent into Germania by divine Augustus and accomplished more by policy than by force. Thus the Sugambri were admitted into surrender, thus the Suebi and king Maroboduus were bound by peace.”

² Ann. 2.26: haud cunctatus est ultra Germanicus, quamquam fingi ea seque per invidiam parto iam decori abstrahi intellegeret, “Germanicus did not delay further, although he understood that these things were contrived and that he was being recalled through jealousy of his already noble achievements.”

³ Ann. 1.34: tunc a veneratione Augusti orsus flexit ad victorias triumphosque Tiberii, praecipuis laudibus celebrans quae apud Germanias illis cum legionibus pulcherrima fecisset, “then beginning with the veneration of Augustus he turned to the victories and triumphs of Tiberius, celebrating with particular praises the very illustrious things which he had done in Germania with those legions.”
Germanicus aims for the same effect when he mentions Tiberius in front of his troops at *Annals* 1.42:

primane et vicesima legiones, illa signis a Tiberio acceptis, tu tot proeliorum socia, tot praemiis aucta, egregiam duci vestro gratiam refertis? hunc ego nuntium patri laeta omnia aliis e provinciis audienti feram? ipsius tirones, ipsius veteranos non missione, non pecunia satiatos...?

First and twentieth legions, those whose standards have been received by Tiberius, you who have been companions of so many battles, honored by so many rewards, you give in return to your leader this great thanks? Am I to bring this news to my father when all he hears from other provinces are positive things? That his own recruits, his own veterans are not satisfied with discharge, with money? *Ann.* 1.42

He equates himself with Tiberius when he reminds the troops that they have served under both leaders, that they have been victorious under both leaders, and that they should feel shame in the eyes of both leaders for their mutiny. Germanicus again refers to Tiberius to re-instill obedience in his men and return their hunger for victory.

Similarly at *Annals* 2.14 he encourages his men to forget their weariness and fight hard to win a victory for him as he treads the same ground as his father and uncle.\(^4\)

Germanicus likens himself to Tiberius by portraying himself following in his footsteps and aspiring to the same goals. Germanicus points out that he is tracing Tiberius’ path through Germany as if he is re-enacting his career. Uncle and nephew have much in common. They likely travel through the same space: they cross the same rivers, stop at the same military outposts, and encounter the same tribes. Tacitus offers some

\(^4\) *Ann.* 2.14: *si taedio viarum ac maris finem cupiant, hac acie parari: propiorem iam Albim quam Rhenum neque bellum ultra, modo se patris patruique vestigia prementem isdem in terris victorem sisterent,* “if they should desire an end to the tedium of the marches and the sea, they should make it happen with this battle: now the Elbe was closer than the Rhine and there was no war beyond, if only they support him as he treads the footsteps of his father and uncle to be a victor in the same lands.”
evidence of this at *Annals* 1.50. When Germanicus is near the Caesian forest, he comes upon a barrier begun by Tiberius and he builds his camp in the same place.\(^5\)

Although Germanicus experiences the same type of success that Tiberius had in Germania, he is careful about how he acknowledges this publicly. When he is victorious against Arminius and Inguiomerus, he raises a trophy marked with Tiberius’ name instead of his own. It is again suggested by Tacitus that Germanicus perhaps fears Tiberius’ jealousy (*de se nihil addidit, metu invidiae*... *Ann. 2.22*). So the armies under Germanicus are labeled as armies of Tiberius and the two commanders are again equated.

There is one final passage in the *Annals* which recalls Tiberius’ power in Germania. When Maroboduus is threatened by the Cherusci and other tribes, he speaks about how he measures up against Arminius. To express his superiority, Maroboduus states that Arminius experienced victory against unprepared legions out of ambush, whereas he himself had managed to withstand Tiberius’ great forces:

\[
\text{vaecordem Arminium et rerum nescium alienam gloriam in se trahere, quoniam tres vagas legiones et ducem fraudis ignarum perfidia deceperit, magna cum clade Germaniae et ignominia sua, cum coniunx, cum fius eius servitium adhuc tolerent. at se duodecim legionibus petitum duce Tiberio inlibatam Germanorum gloriam servavisse, mox condicionibus aequis discessum.}
\]

The frenzied and ignorant Arminius drew the glory of another onto himself, since he deceived three wandering legions and a leader unaware of trickery, with great disaster for Germania and to his own disgrace, since his wife and son still endured servitude. But he was attacked by twelve legions when Tiberius was commander and had preserved the undiminished glory of the Germans and then marched away on equal terms. *Ann. 2.46*

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\(^5\) *Ann. 1.50*: *at Romanus agmine propero silvam Caesiam limitemque a Tiberio coeptum scindit, castra in limite locat, frontem ac tergum vallo, latera concaedibus munitus*, “but the Roman leader with a speedy column tore through the Caesian forest and the barrier begun by Tiberius and placed his camp on the barrier, defended at the front and back by a rampart, at the sides by barricades.”
Maroboduus uses Varus to downgrade Arminius and Tiberius to glorify himself. Tiberius is meant to look like a tough opponent, one whom Maroboduus can be proud to have matched.

The six passages mentioned above are the only references Tacitus makes in the *Annals* to Tiberius’ command in Germania. They are surprisingly few. Perhaps more telling is Tacitus’ silence about Tiberius’ military career. There are two places in particular where we might expect to encounter more information about his campaigns. When Tiberius is introduced at *Annals* 1.3, Tacitus writes that Tiberius was honored by Augustus and eventually came into his favor, but no mention of his military accomplishments in Germania is made. At *Annals* 1.4, Tacitus does characterize Tiberius as distinguished in war (*spectatum bello*), but he much prefers to focus on Tiberius’ negative qualities:

...Tiberium Neronem maturum annis, spectatum bello, sed vetere atque insita Claudiae familiae superbia, multaque indicia saevitiae, quamquam premantur, erumpere. hunc et prima ab infantia eductum in domo regnatrice; congestos iuveni consulatus, triumphos; ne iis quidem annis, quibus Rhodi specie secessus exul egerit, aliud quam iram et simulationem et secretas lubidines meditatum.

Tiberius Nero was mature in years, tested in war, but he had the old and innate arrogance of the Claudian family, and many signs of cruelty, although suppressed, broke forth. He also from earliest childhood was brought up in the imperial house; consulships, triumphs were heaped onto the young man; not even in those years which he spent in exile on Rhodes in the appearance of seclusion, did he practice anything other than rage and dissimulation and hidden desires. *Ann.* 1.4

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6 In contrast, Tacitus does mention at *Ann.* 1.3 Germanicus’ position as commander on the Rhine, as well as Varus’ disaster.
Similarly, the obituary of Tiberius reports nothing of his German victories, even though several events from his younger years are listed. The disasters and negative aspects of Tiberius’ life are emphasized instead. Tacitus thus makes it clear that he wished to write about Tiberius the gloomy emperor rather than Tiberius the successful military commander.

Although Germanicus may appear wholly unlike Tiberius the gloomy emperor, the other Tiberius, whom I have tried to excavate from the text, actually has much in common with Germanicus. I propose that while Germanicus may be quite dissimilar to Tiberius the emperor, he is strikingly similar to Tiberius the commander of Germania, the Tiberius who existed in the time preceding the starting point of the Annals, but whose image still haunts the Annals.

**Tiberius in Pre-Tacitean Authors**

Many ancient authors wrote about Tiberius the Emperor. Not many, however, wrote about Tiberius the Commander of Germania. But Tiberius spent nine campaign seasons there, after the deaths of Drusus and Varus. From both men, Tiberius inherited a precarious situation which could have greatly harmed the Roman state if not handled properly. Augustus called upon Tiberius to secure a territory filled with fierce, threatening tribes after the unexpected deaths of the previous commanders caused sudden lack of Roman control. According to the extant pre-Tacitean sources, Tiberius was up to the challenge.

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7 Concerning imperial obituaries in Tacitus, Pomeroy (1991) 193 writes, “The laudation of emperors is avoided and vituperation is also sidestepped by concentrating on acta, rather than mores.” Thus the omission of Tiberius’ deeds in Germania at Ann. 6.51 is very conspicuous.


9 According to Ann. 2.26, Augustus sent Tiberius to Germania nine times.
Tiberius the Superhuman Commander of Germania

Once again Velleius Paterculus offers the fullest account of Tiberius’ time in Germania (see Appendix C pp. 221-7); however, his encomium demands caution. The passages concerning Tiberius’ German campaign seems particularly tainted with bias. Velleius does not hide his affection for Tiberius. He clearly expresses the joy he felt to serve such a man. For example, Velleius begins his account of the German campaigns, “for nine continuous years as prefect of cavalry or as commander of a legion I was a spectator of his superhuman achievements (caelestissimorum eius operum), and further assisted in them to the extent of my modest ability” (2.104.3). And Velleius would have us believe that others were similarly enthusiastic about Tiberius. With overflowing excitement he describes veteran soldiers who rush to greet Tiberius as he travels through the lands: “I do not think that mortal man will be permitted to behold again a sight like that which I enjoyed” (2.104.3). His elation in unbridled: “Ye Heavens, how large a volume could be filled with the tale of our achievements in the following summer under the generalship of Tiberius Caesar!”

Velleius’ enthusiasm stems in part from his personal involvement with Tiberius and his German campaigns. Velleius himself tells us that he was present in Germania and serving under Tiberius at this time. One might argue, however, that this gives Velleius better insight or more accurate knowledge of affairs in Germania than authors who were

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10 Vell. Pat. 2.106.1: Pro dii boni! Quanti voluminis opera insequentis aestate sub duce Tiberio Caesare gessimus! This statement seems ironic because although of all the pre-Tacitean authors Velleius does offer the fullest account of Tiberius’ German campaign, it still only spans a few sections. Perhaps if Velleius had written a lengthier work he would have dedicated more space to these achievements. But Velleius never undertook the larger work to which he so often alludes. Unfortunately no other pre-Tacitean texts, at least none of the ones extant, offer the volume of information about which Velleius boasts either. Perhaps if Velleius had written an annalistic history, he would have been able to provide more detail about Tiberius’ accomplishments from year to year. However, since he writes a universal history, and an abbreviated one at that, he is forced to move quickly from one event to the next. Thus Velleius’ specific genre prevents him from saying too much.
not present. Praise notwithstanding, Velleius tells us which individual tribes Tiberius encountered, which locations he visited, and what he was engaged in at different times of the year. There is a valuable framework of facts to be found under Velleius’ subjective comments.

Although the great success attributed to Tiberius is likely enhanced by such subjectivity, nevertheless it is an important part of Velleius’ account that cannot be discarded from the literary tradition. He calls Tiberius’ deeds “superhuman” (*caelestissimorum eius operum*) and writes that Tiberius “by virtue of his services had long been a Caesar before he was such in name,”¹¹ thereby elevating him far above normal men. He then lists the several tribes Tiberius subjugated. The Cherusci are on this list, and Velleius makes sure he points out that Arminius, the man who caused great disaster for the Romans later, belonged to this tribe. Tiberius is thus subtly praised for his ability to subdue the tribe which produced such a fierce leader, the tribe which Varus was unable to subdue. Then he goes further: he crosses the Weser and presses into the territory beyond (2.105.1).

Velleius writes that the accomplishments of the next summer could fill a large volume, and he then pours fourth more details of Tiberius’ success:

> perlustrata armis tota Germania est, uictae gentes paene nominibus incognitae, receptae Cauchorum nationes: omnis eorum iuventus infinita numero, immensa corporibus, situ locorum tutissima, traditis armis una cum ducibus suis saepta fulgenti armatoque militum nostrorum agmine ante imperatoris procurbit tribunal. Fracti Langobardi, gens etiam Germana feritate ferocior.

All Germany was traversed by our armies, races were conquered hitherto almost unknown, even by name; and the tribes of the Cauchi were again subdued. All the flower of their youth, infinite in number though they

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¹¹ Vell. Pat. 2.104.3: *ante meritis ac uirtutibus quam nomine Caesarem*. 
were, huge of stature and protected by the ground they held, surrendered their arms, and, flanked by a gleaming line of our soldiers, fell with their generals upon their knees before the tribunal of the commander. The power of the Langobardi was broken, a race surpassing even the Germans in savagery. 2.106.1-2

Although Velleius does not list individual tribes aside from the Cauchi and the Langobardi, he asserts the completeness of Tiberius’ conquests when he speaks of tota Germania and gentes paene nominibus incognitae. The verb perlustrata also implies thorough subjugation. The words nationes and omnis also communicate widespread success. Indeed Tiberius subdues everyone, even the especially fierce Langobardi. Furthermore, the fact that Tiberius’ enemy is not only fierce but also numerous, sturdy in stature, and topographically advantaged makes his success even more remarkable and praiseworthy. Like Drusus, Tiberius earns praise when the Germans are depicted as a challenging foe.

The completeness of Tiberius’ success is mentioned twice more by Velleius; briefly: “after proving victorious over many tribes (he) affected a junction with Caesar and the army, bringing with it a great abundance of supplies of all kinds” (plurimarum gentium victoria parta cum abundantissima rerum omnium copia exercitui Caesarique se iunxit, 2.106.3). In addition to another form of omnis (omnium), Velleius uses two superlative forms here to indicate thorough subjugation. The second example is longer:

Victor omnium gentium locorumque, quos adierat Caesar, incoluni inuiolatoque et semel tantummodo magna cum clade hostium fraude eorum temptato exercitu in hiberna legiones reduxit, eadem qua priore anno festinatione urbm petens. Nihil erat iam in Germania, quod uinci posset, praeter gentem Marcomannorum...

Victorious over all the nations and countries which he approached, his army safe and unimpaired, having been attacked but once, and that too through deceit on the part of the enemy with great loss on their side, Caesar led his legions back to winter quarters, and sought the city with the same haste as
in the previous year. Nothing remained to be conquered in Germany except the people of the Marcomanni... 2.107.3-108.1

This passage also describes the totality of Tiberius’ conquests: *victor* is prominently placed, and *omnis* appears again, this time modifying *gentium* and *locorum*, peoples and places. Tiberius seems unstoppable, finding success at everything that he does. Velleius confirms this far-reaching dominance when he writes *nihil erat in Germania quod vinci posset*. Although he has to concede one exception, it is still quite an accomplishment to subdue all German tribes but one. And as we will see, this one last foe is certainly a worthy one.

Aside from communicating the totality of Tiberius’ conquests in Germania, the passages above share many features with some of Velleius’ comments on the achievements of Drusus and Tiberius against the Rhaeti and Vindelici (2.95.1-2): the Romans come out unscathed (*maiore cum periculo quam damno Romani exercitus*, 2.95.2; *incolumi inuiolatoque*, 2.107.3) while the enemy suffers great defeat (*plurimo cum earum sanguine*, 2.95.2; *magna cum clade hostium*, 2.107.3) in spite of the fact that they were numerous (*numero frequentes*, 2.95.2; *infinita numero*, 2.106.1), protected by the land (*gentes locis tutissimas*, 2.95.2; *situ locorum tutissima*, 2.106.1), and fierce (*feritate truces*, 2.95.2; *Germana feritate ferocior*, 2.106.2). The Romans enjoy thorough victory (*perdomuerunt*, 2.95.2; *perlustrata*, 2.106.1). The similarities in these passages perhaps illustrate that Tiberius can carry on successfully after Drusus’ death and that the torch can be passed smoothly from Drusus to Tiberius. As we have seen, Germanicus also becomes an acceptable replacement for Drusus.

In addition to praising Tiberius’ campaign for its completeness, Velleius also praises Tiberius’ deeds for their novelty. Tiberius accomplishes feats which no Roman
had managed before. For example, Velleius says that at the end of the first campaign season Tiberius travels to the Lippe and becomes the first to pitch a winter camp there (2.105.3). In the next season he conquers many tribes, some of which are barely known by name (2.106.1) and then marches his army far past the Rhine towards the Elbe (2.106.2). Velleius remarks specifically on the exceptional nature of this last accomplishment, saying “this is something which had never before been entertained even as a hope, much less actually attempted” (2.106.2). Tiberius then explores with his fleet waters previously unknown (2.106.3). The fact that Tiberius achieves new feats makes him look even greater, like a daring Roman pioneer.

Velleius also depicts Tiberius engaged in careful planning, strategy, and leadership. As a good leader, Tiberius takes the most dangerous undertakings on himself and gives less dangerous tasks to Saturninus (2.105.1). Later on, Velleius specifically mentions how Tiberius’ careful planning and vigilance of the seasons helps the Roman cause: “with the same wonderful combination of careful planning and good fortune on the part of the general, and a close watch upon the seasons, the fleet which had skirted the windings of the sea coast sailed up the Elbe...” (2.106.3). At the end of his account of this stint in Germania, Velleius shows that Tiberius is more concerned about good leadership than glory. When the Pannonian revolt breaks out, Tiberius pulls out of Germany: “Thereupon glory was sacrificed to necessity; and it did not seem to Tiberius a safe course to keep his army buried in the interior of the country and thus leave Italy unprotected from an enemy so near at hand.” (2.110.3). Thus Tiberius

12 Syme (1971) 33 n. 23 and Wells (1972) 218-9 have objected to this statement by Velleius, stating that Drusus and L. Domitius Ahenobarbus had both reached the Elbe before (in 9 BC and 1 CE). Woodman (1977) 144 believes that this is not a deliberate falsification, but that the statement refers to the entire passage, not just a single clause. At first glance, however, the statement does give the impression that Velleius has gotten carried away in his effort to emphasize the novelty of Tiberius’ accomplishments.
employs good leadership as well as solid planning and strategy to make the right decisions for the Roman people and state.

It is also worth noting how the people surrounding Tiberius affect his image. Velleius speaks several times about the joy he felt while serving Tiberius, and he certainly regards Tiberius as far superior to a normal man, including himself (e.g., 2.104.3). Indeed the behavior of others elevates Tiberius to a very high status. The soldiers treat him like a celebrity when they eagerly strive to see him, call out to him, and touch his hand (2.104.4-105.1). Even the Germans admire him and treat him like a god. Velleius describes at length a scene in which a high-ranking barbarian requests to see Caesar. The old man is in awe of Tiberius: he quietly looks at him for a long while before he begins to speak (diu tacitus contemplatus Caesarem, 2.107.2), and his eyes remain fixed on him as he departs (sine fine respectans Caesarem ripae suorum adpulsus est, 2.107.2). When he finally addresses Tiberius, he says of the young German men “they worship you as divine when absent” (cum uestrum numen absentium colat, 2.107.2), then he himself calls Tiberius a god and expresses the greatest happiness at their meeting (hodie uidi deos, nec feliciorem ullam uitae meae aut optaui aut sensi diem, 2.107.2). Like the soldiers at 2.104.4, he desires to touch Tiberius’ hand, and then he departs. This story in particular raises Tiberius to god-like status.

Saturninus, the leader to whom Tiberius assigns his less dangerous tasks, is praised as a virtuous man of action capable of balancing duty and leisure (2.105.2). Saturninus is a great man, but since he is Tiberius’ inferior, it is understood that Tiberius is even greater. Similarly Maroboduus is described as “A man of noble family, strong in
body and courageous in mind, a barbarian by birth but not in intelligence” (2.108.2), a man with an understanding of power and military strategy. Velleius leads us to believe that only he is a worthy enemy for a man as great as Tiberius: “Such was the man and such the region that Tiberius Caesar resolved to attack” (2.109.5). All other tribes and leaders had been defeated. Only the greatest remained. By praising his enemy, Velleius praises Tiberius.

So Velleius paints Tiberius as a superhuman character by emphasizing his popularity with the troops, the completeness of his success in Germania, the novelty of his accomplishments, his good leadership skills, and his prominence in relation to those around him. These are features which can be attached to Tacitus’ Germanicus as well. The Tiberius in Velleius’ text has much in common with the Germanicus in the *Annals*. The scene at 2.104.4 when the troops rush to greet Tiberius and grasp his hand seems similar to *Annals* 1.34. Although the Tiberius passage is full of pomp and excitement and Germanicus’ passage is solemn and almost unsettling, in both passages the troops look to their general as the young imperial hero in whom they can place their hope. The men turn all attention to Germanicus, crowd around him, and attempt to grab his hand. Perhaps a better example of Germanicus’ celebrity with the troops, however, is demonstrated at *Annals* 2.13 when he disguises himself to learn the minds of his soldiers. The soldiers praise various aspects of his character and demonstrate supreme reverence by showing anger at the idea of defecting from him.

Resounding victory is something Tiberius, Drusus, and Germanicus all have in common. Germanicus thoroughly dominates his enemies at passages like *Annals* 1.50-
1, 2.18, 2.21, and 2.25. Thus Velleius’ Tiberius and Tacitus’ Germanicus are both characterized as successful military commanders.

The novelty of Tiberius’ deeds in Velleius’ text also remind us of Germanicus’ deeds in the Annals. Tiberius is portrayed as a vibrant young Roman pioneer as he travels farther into Germania and manages new feats at 2.105.3 and 2.106.1-3. Tacitus’ Germanicus is also a dynamic character. He is not afraid to try new things: at Annals 1.51 he takes the path less traveled in order to take the Marsi by surprise. He also pushes the boundaries of the empire to their greatest extent: like Tiberius at 2.106.2, Germanicus takes his troops to the distant Elbe at Annals 2.14. At Annals 2.24 Germanicus sails so far in the northern waters that when his men become shipwrecked they encounter strange new creatures. In the annalistic format as analyzed by Ginsburg, Germanicus inhabits the res externae; throughout the narrative he is most often seen on the frontiers of the empire, not in Rome. Indeed, when Germanicus dies his presence on the edges of Roman territory is marked by various monuments.

Just as Tiberius displays careful planning, strategy, and leadership in Velleius’ text, so Germanicus reveals these characteristics in the Annals. Tiberius shows concern for the care of his men at 2.97.4, and at Annals 1.71 Germanicus demonstrates similar concern when he visits his injured troops. He greets the men individually offering hope and support which heightens their willingness to support him in turn. Tiberius is depicted

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13 Pagán (1999) 312-4 discusses Germanicus as a character who pushes boundaries and asserts that Germanicus at the periphery of the empire opposes Tiberius at the center. Although Germanicus may have a “paradoxical relationship” with Tiberius the Emperor in the Annals, he has much in common with the dynamic Tiberius the commander of Germany as he is portrayed by pre-Tacitean authors like Velleius.


offering similar personal care to his own ailing men. Velleius writes of Tiberius’ great kindness, saying that during both the Pannonian and German wars Tiberius looked after the sick “as though this were the chief occupation of his mind” (2.114.1). He offered his personal comforts to them to ease their recovery. To both commanders the well-being of their soldiers is of the utmost importance. Finally when Tiberius sacrifices glory for safety and quits Germania at 2.110.3 to fight the Pannonian War at Augustus’ command, just so Germanicus at Annals 2.26 saves the glory of Germania for Drusus and leaves his campaign at the emperor’s request in order to straighten out affairs in the East. Both commanders perform selfless acts for the good of Rome.

As Velleius elevates Tiberius far above the people who surround him, so the same can be said about Germanicus. Although Tacitus is not as obviously enthusiastic about Germanicus as Velleius is about Tiberius, Tacitus still gives Germanicus enough of a sheen that scholars for a long time labeled Germanicus the hero of the hexad. He is popular, young, and active. Not even Drusus the Younger comes close to the celebrity status of Germanicus. In particular Annals 2.13 shows the men praising various features of Germanicus’ character and asserting that they should all fight fiercely for him. This is a way in which Tacitus can extol Germanicus without making himself vulnerable to accusations of subjectivity. Such passages, particularly those communicating the thoughts of the Roman people, are scattered throughout the Annals and attach to Germanicus an admiration resembling the enthusiasm surrounding Tiberius in Velleius’ text.

16 See Walker (1952) 118-20; Syme (1958) 418; Daitz (1960) 37, 48.
The Familial Piety of Tiberius

Ovid, like Velleius, offers enthusiastic, yet short, praise about Tiberius in Germany (see Appendix C p. 229). When discussing the Temple of Concord in the Fasti, Ovid ranks Tiberius' success over the Germans above the victory of Camillus over Veii.\(^\text{17}\) He calls Tiberius *dux venerande* (1.646), recognizes Germania’s submission to him, and mentions spoils brought back and dedicated to the goddess. Tiberius is certainly displayed favorably as a benefactor of the Romans and a conqueror of the Germans, but detail is not to be found here.

The Temple of Concord mentioned in Ovid’s Fasti was dedicated to Drusus by Tiberius after his success in Germania. Thus in a way Tiberius wins closure for his brother when he achieves success in the campaign which Drusus began. This very concept of closure for Drusus is brought up in the *Consolatio ad Liviam* 271-82 (see Appendix C p. 229). Although Tiberius is not specifically named, one is tempted to infer that Tiberius is the commander in mind when the author of this consolatio envisions the German people being utterly subdued and laden with chains (273-4). Since Tiberius was the commander immediately succeeding Drusus in Germany, the responsibility for fulfilling such desires is his. If this consolatio was written just after the death of Drusus and just as Tiberius was about to set out on his new command, or perhaps just as Tiberius was returning victoriously, then we could count this passage among the few which contribute to the literary tradition of Tiberius the general of Germania. Unfortunately the date, and indeed the authorship, of the consolatio are unknown, and so we cannot be sure of a reference to Tiberius. But if Tiberius is in fact meant, then just

\(^{17}\) Green (2004) 295 suggests, however, that this may be “a flattering exaggeration.”
as Varus’ death leads to Germanicus’ triumph at Strabo 7.1.4, here Drusus’ death creates an opportunity for Tiberius to succeed.

According to our sources, however, Tiberius does not seem too greedy for success in Germania. It appears he would have preferred that his brother live than that he take his place. We have already seen that the brotherly love between Tiberius and Drusus was evident all throughout the pre-Tacitean tradition. Tiberius makes his first trip to Germania because of Drusus. As Valerius Maximus describes, Tiberius rushes to his ailing brother’s side, then accompanies the body on foot back to Rome (5.5.3.3-17). Pliny the Elder attests to the urgency with which Tiberius traveled (7.84, see Appendix C p. 228). Tiberius’ relationship with his brother was strong, and after Drusus’ death he continues to show his bond with him through the dedication of the Temple of Concord. He likely kept his brother’s memory in mind when he replaced him as the commander of Germania. The thought of taking Drusus’ death out on the Germans, like that seen in the Consolatio ad Liviam, may have also crossed his mind.

The Scarcity of the Pre-Tacitean Tradition

Unlike Velleius, Strabo does not contribute much to the literary tradition of Tiberius (see Appendix C p. 221). He makes two short references to Tiberius at 7.1.5 when he describes the Hercynian forest and its nearby lake. He states that Tiberius once used an island in the lake as a base for naval operations against the Vindelici (7.1.5.8-10). He then remarks that Tiberius had traveled a day’s journey from the lake when he came upon the sources of the Ister (7.1.5.15-6). Aside from these two notes, Strabo has nothing more to say about Tiberius. To be fair, however, Strabo did not write at length about Drusus or Varus, either. Drusus’ death draws some attention, and a short cameo concerning the slaughter of Varus affords Strabo the opportunity to mention
Germanicus’ triumph, but otherwise the German commanders do not enjoy much attention in Strabo’s geographical discussion. Perhaps this is due to the genre of his work. Long treatments of military figures and affairs lie outside of Strabo’s purpose. He is interested in information concerning the land and the peoples of Germany and not so much the Roman politics which touch upon them. On the other hand, Roman politics sometimes help elucidate the information which Strabo does wish to communicate; he admits that more information would be known about certain tribes if Augustus had allowed his generals to pursue them (7.1.4.1-9).

Thus perhaps the lack of press Tiberius receives for his accomplishments in Germany relates to Augustus’ German policy. After all, according to Tacitus, Augustus advises Tiberius either through fear or jealousy to act with restraint in regards to expanding the empire.\textsuperscript{18} In the case of Germany, Augustus may have given this advice through fear. Based on his reaction to the Pannonian revolt he seemed aware of the great threat the peoples to the north of Italy posed to Rome (Suet. Tib. 16.1), and he was deeply affected by the Varian disaster (Suet. Aug. 23.2). Perhaps Augustus’ approach to German affairs, especially after suffering the Lollian disaster and losing Drusus there, was always taken with caution. Thus as Strabo says, Augustus restrains his generals in Germania and consequently the attention the accomplishments of these generals receives in the contemporary literature is sparse. Or perhaps the restraints Augustus puts on his generals dampened their accomplishments so much so that they

\textsuperscript{18} Ann. 1.11; Tiberius seems to show a willingness to obey the words of Augustus for various reasons throughout the Annals, as demonstrated by Cowan (2009) 181-3. In this situation he perhaps forfeits military glory in Germania because of Augustus’ fear of disaster in that province.
simply were not worth writing about. Heaping praise on minor successes would just have been embarrassing.

On the other hand, perhaps there were other pre-Tacitean authors who narrated Tiberius’ endeavors in Germany, but for whatever reason their work simply is not extant. Pliny the Elder, for example, would not have been able to avoid discussion of Tiberius’ military exploits in his work *Bellum Germanicum*, but that information is lost to us now.¹⁹

Tiberius himself perhaps recounted his own military activities in his writings. Tiberius composed two or possibly even three pieces which could have influenced Tacitus: one perhaps apologetic work after the fall of Sejanus,²⁰ and the *commentarii et acta Tiberii*, which may have been two works instead of one.²¹ The latter certainly survived into Tacitus’ day, since Domitian is said to have read it.²² How they may have affected Tacitus’ work is of course unknown, but Durry believes that they would have reinforced the historian’s position against the emperor.²³ Yet perhaps Tacitus could have found factual information concerning Tiberius’ time in Germania in these works.

The same is true for the *commentarii* of Agrippina the Younger. Although this memoir also would presumably have had a pro-imperial bias, it may have contained insider information about Tiberius, Germanicus, and Agrippina the Elder, as well as information

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¹⁹ Of Tacitus’ sources Syme (1958) 271 writes, “In the books about Tiberius Caesar the author appeals to the historians of the period, but only in general terms, alluding to their character and credit, their concordance or discrepancies. No names, however.” He notes, however, that Tacitus does cite Pliny the Elder (1.69) and Agrippina the Younger (4.53).

²⁰ Suet. *Tib*. 61

²¹ Devillers (2003) 34-5. For the *commentarii et acta Tiberii* as two pieces instead of one, see Durry (1958) 221.


about life inside the Julio-Claudian house.\textsuperscript{24} Especially since her memoirs are cited by Tacitus at \textit{Annals} 4.53, Agrippina the Younger cannot be discounted as a possible source. Her impressions of Tiberius, moreover, were not likely to have been positive, considering that her family suffered so much under his reign.\textsuperscript{25}

Because not all sources were likely to be positive towards Tiberius, it seems possible that some of the information concerning Tiberius’ younger years was not lost by accident.\textsuperscript{26} Tiberius was known for being extremely sensitive about what people thought, said, and wrote, especially about him.\textsuperscript{27} His \textit{maiestas} trials are a testament to that.\textsuperscript{28} Clutorius Priscus and Cremutius Cordus lost their lives because their work did not please the emperor.\textsuperscript{29} Others surely were afraid to write because of this reason.\textsuperscript{30} There is indeed a strange gap in historical literature which survives from the beginning

\textsuperscript{24} Devillers (2003) 35-7.

\textsuperscript{25} Devillers (2003) 36-7.

\textsuperscript{26} Augustus had practiced book burning (Syme [1939] 486-7) and Cramer (1945) writes in detail about book burning under both Augustus and Tiberius.

\textsuperscript{27} Tiberius showed such sensitivity at a young age when men spoke against Augustus, Suet. \textit{Aug.} 51.3 reports Augustus’ reply to Tiberius: \textit{Aetati tuae, mi Tiberi, noli in hac re indulgere et nimium indignari quemquam esse, qui de me male loquatur; satis est enim, si hoc habemus ne quis nobis male facere possit, “My dear Tiberius, do not be carried away by the ardour of youth in this matter, or take it too much to heart that anyone speak evil of me; we must be content if we can stop anyone from doing evil to us” (text and translation from Rolfe [1913]). In the \textit{Annals}, Tiberius’ first encounters with the senate as their new emperor are centered on negative reactions to their words, for example \textit{Ann.} 1.8 with Valerius Messala, \textit{Ann.} 1.12 with Asinius Gallus, and \textit{Ann.} 1.13 with Lucius Arruntius, Quintus Haterius, and Mamericus Scaurus.

\textsuperscript{28} For more freedom of speech under Augustus and Tiberius, see Cramer (1945), Rutledge (2001) and McHugh (2004). For more on Tiberius’ \textit{maiestas} trials, see Syme (1958) 420-34.

\textsuperscript{29} According to Tacitus, authors Clutorius Priscus (\textit{Ann.} 3.49-51) and Cremutius Cordus (\textit{Ann.} 4.34-5) lost their lives for works they wrote during the reign of Tiberius.

\textsuperscript{30} Tacitus himself writes at \textit{Ann.} 1.1: \textit{Tiberii Gaique et Claudii ac Neronis res florentibus ipsis ob metum falsae, postquam occiderant, recentibus odioi compositae sunt, “the histories of Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius, and Nero while they were in power were falsified on account of fear, after they died, they were composed with recent hatred.” See also \textit{Hist.} 1.1.
of the first century CE.\textsuperscript{31} Is it a coincidence, then, that only Velleius’ account, which has notoriously been labeled pro-Tiberian over the years, survives? Writing history and annals was an admired pursuit in the eyes of the Romans, especially after Livy had written his famous \textit{Ab urbe condita}. Was there really no one else interested in taking up such a noble task at this time?\textsuperscript{32} What of the works of Aufidius Bassus and Servilius Nonianus? According to Quintilian, Aufidius wrote a \textit{Bellum Germanicum} that was worthy of high praise.\textsuperscript{33} Syme speculates that this work was “safe” and “splendid,” relating only positive aspects of Tiberius’ career.\textsuperscript{34} Devillers writes that it probably would have been difficult for Aufidius not to extol Tiberius in his work, and if there were kind words for Germanicus as well, they were likely hidden under a panegyric of Tiberius.\textsuperscript{35} As for Servilius Nonianus, Quintilian praises him along with Aufidius, and since he was a senator under Tiberius, he possibly wrote with some insider information.\textsuperscript{36} Yet

\begin{footnotes}
\item[\textsuperscript{31}] Syme (1950) 4; Thomas (2001) 27.
\item[\textsuperscript{32}] Several authors whose works have now been lost may have contributed to the literary tradition surrounding Tiberius, including Iulius Marathus, C. Drusus, Julius Saturninus, Aquilius Niger, and Baebius Macer. Memoirs written by Maecenas may also have been available (Bramble [1982] 492-3). Devillers (2003) 28-32 names a few others who were writing around the beginning of the first century CE, and Wilkes (1972) 178 writes, “A lengthy catalogue of upper class Romans who wrote history or memoirs...can be compiled, although virtually nothing has survived from their works.” Wilkes (1972) 184 later adds, “Ten consulars are recorded as having written works which may have commended themselves as sources for the history of the Julio-Claudians. Two, M. Servilius Nonianus (cos. 35) and Cluvius Rufus (\textit{cos. suff.} ? 39), may have written full scale histories of recent events.”
\item[\textsuperscript{33}] Quint. \textit{Inst.} 10.1.102-3.
\item[\textsuperscript{34}] Syme (1958) 274-5; the account of the German wars in Bassus’ history was brief and that this scarcity of information is reflected in Dio.
\item[\textsuperscript{35}] Devillers (2003) 14. This idea of praise for Germanicus hidden under praise for Tiberius is addressed by Stiles (2010). Concerning Aufidius’ other lost work, the \textit{Histories}, Devillers (2003) 14 speculates that Tiberius would not have been a focus, but rather Germanicus, due to the period in which Aufidius was writing this later work.
\item[\textsuperscript{36}] Quint. \textit{Inst.} 10.1.102. Syme (1958) 275-6.
\end{footnotes}
Devillers warns that Servilius’ exact allegiance is unknown. It is not clear if he was a supporter of Tiberius and thus wrote favorably about him.\textsuperscript{37}

Surely there were other pre-Tacitean authors who wrote or considered writing about the reign of Tiberius, but this was a dangerous undertaking, even after Tiberius was dead.\textsuperscript{38} The case of Cremutius Cordus helps illustrate the tone of the literary environment during the early empire.\textsuperscript{39} According to Tacitus, Cordus was attacked by cronies of Sejanus for his praise of Brutus and Cassius and therefore starved himself to death, but not before delivering an impassioned speech on literary freedom of expression, which Tacitus recreates.\textsuperscript{40} The speech implies that times have changed under Tiberius. Caesar and Augustus allowed authors to make political comments, but Cordus cannot be excused for his words even when they are not against Tiberius or his mother.\textsuperscript{41}

\textsuperscript{37} Devillers (2003) 16.

\textsuperscript{38} Wilkes (1972) 186: “Great men did write memoirs on their achievements under the Julio-Claudians. They were usually ‘safe’ and dealt with their achievements as consular commanders in remote parts of the Roman World.” The literary environment was so dangerous at the time that only certain “safe” works could be written.

\textsuperscript{39} It is uncertain what part of Tiberius’ reign, if any, is covered by Cordus’ history, but it seems he at least covered part of Augustus’ reign, and Devillers (2003) 28-9 suggests that perhaps Tacitus took inspiration from Cordus when writing about Augustus at the beginning of the \textit{Annals}. Regardless of whether or not he wrote \textit{about} the reign of Tiberius, he certainly wrote \textit{under} the reign of Tiberius, and thus serves as a good example of what writers of the age had to endure.

\textsuperscript{40} \textit{Ann.} 4.34-5; Whether or not Tacitus wrote from a copy of an actual speech delivered by Cordus is unknown. Devillers (2003) 28-9 acknowledges the possibility but also suggests that Tacitus may have identified with Cordus, may have known his descendants, and may have embellished the story. McHugh (2004) 391-2 believes the speech is Tacitus’ invention and that Cordus is used as a negative example to show that good men can live under bad emperors if they use figured speech correctly.

\textsuperscript{41} \textit{Ann.} 4.34: \textit{sed ipse divus Iulius, ipse divus Augustus et tulere ista et reliquere, haud facile dixerim, moderatione magis an sapientia, “But divine Julius, divine Augustus themselves both bore these things and let them lie, whether with their self restrain or their wisdom I cannot easily say.” For more on Cordus’ claim that his words were not against Tiberius or his mother, see McHugh (2004) 399.
Writing about Tiberius under the later Julio-Claudian emperors surely would have been dangerous, too. Even men who wrote as late as the reign of Domitian might have felt unsafe in such an endeavor, since Domitian supposedly admired Tiberius.⁴² We know that Tacitus himself felt restrained in his writing under this emperor, and that his words only flowed freely after Domitian was gone.⁴³ Wilkes explains that writing during the early imperial era was “hazardous” for many: “For the historian the change from Republic to Empire was considerable and was still very apparent to Cassius Dio writing in the early third century (53.19.2f).”⁴⁴ Dio writes that once the Empire began:

οὐ μέντοι καὶ ὠμοίως τοῖς πρὸσθεν τὰ μετὰ ταῦτα πραχθέντα λεχθῆναι δύναται... α μέν πλείω κρύφα καὶ δι’ ἀπορρήτων γίγνεσθαι ἥρξατο, εἰ δὲ πού τινα καὶ δημοσιευθεῖη, ἀλλὰ άνεξέλεγκτα γε δόντα ἀπιστεῖται καὶ γὰρ λέγεσθαι καὶ πράττεσθαι πάντα πρὸς τὰ τῶν ἀεὶ κρατοῦντων τῶν τε παραδυναστευόντων σφίς βουλήματα ὑποπτεύεται.

the events occurring after this time can not be recorded in the same manner as those of previous times...most things that happened began to be kept secret and concealed, and even though some things are per chance made public, they are distrusted just because they can not be verified; for it is suspected that everything is said and done with reference to the wishes of the men in power at the time and their associates. Dio 53.19.2-3

The first century CE was a difficult time for writers as they struggled to learn how to write history in the new imperial environment, under emperors and their successors.⁴⁵

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⁴² According to Suet. *Dom.* 20 Domitian was supposedly fond of reading the memoirs of Tiberius, and Walker (1952) 210 even suggests that Domitian may have modeled certain aspects of his reign after Tiberius.

⁴³ *Agr.* 2, 3; Tacitus praises the reigns of Nerva and Trajan as a rare time when one can think what one wants and say what one thinks (*rara temporum felicitate ubi sentire quae velis et quae sentias dicere licet, Hist.* 1.1).

⁴⁴ Wilkes (1972) 186.

⁴⁵ As an example, Pliny the Elder tells us at *HN* pref. 20 that he withheld his histories from the public until after his death so he could not be accused of ambition while still living.
Since Tiberius’ reign was so early in this learning process, the body of historical literature which survives from his period is relatively small.

In addition to acknowledging lost information on Tiberius, we must wonder how much information was available to authors to begin with. Even when Tiberius went to Rhodes, no one seems to know why exactly he left. Speculation is all we have.\(^{46}\) In truth, Tiberius was a mysterious figure from early on. Even the ancient authors seemed to have had trouble deciphering the story of his life.\(^{47}\) Details concerning his German campaigns may have been obscured as well, thus making it difficult for ancient historians to write with any length on the subject.

**Tiberius in Parallel and Post-Tacitean Authors**

As is the case with pre-Tacitean authors, the parallel and post-Tacitean authors write more about Tiberius the emperor than the young Tiberius or Tiberius as the commander of Germania. Some information is offered by Suetonius, Dio, Eutropius, and Orosius, however. As we will see, these authors mention the military success Tiberius experienced early on, but they seem to place a curious amount of emphasis on the relationships Tiberius had with other imperial figures.

Suetonius first refers to Tiberius’ military prowess in Germania at *Tiberius* 9.1-2 along with his campaigns against the Rhaeti and Vindelici and the Pannonians (see Appendix C pp. 230-2). He even gives a number as a testament to Tiberius’ accomplishment. He states that he relocated forty thousand German war prisoners (*Tib.* 9.2). Tiberius’ connection to Germania is not mentioned again until *Tiberius* 16.1 when

\(^{46}\) *Ann.* 1.4; Suet. *Tib.* 10.

\(^{47}\) Thus Shotter (1992) 1 begins his book, “Tiberius Caesar was an enigma to his contemporaries; subsequent generations found this taciturn and reclusive figure no easier to fathom.”
Suetonius simply writes that Tiberius was put in charge of subduing the Germans, but that the Illyrian revolt required his attention instead. Suetonius manages to tie Tiberius’ victory over the Illyrians back to Germania, however, when he writes:

*cui gloriae amplior adhuc ex oportunitate cumulus accessit. nam sub id fere tempus Quintilius Varus cum tribus legionibus in Germania perit, nemine dubitante quin uictores Germani iuncti se Pannoniis fuerint, nisi debellatum prius Illyricum esset.*

Circumstances gave this exploit a larger and crowning glory; for it was at just about that time that Quintilius Varus perished with three legions in Germany, and no one doubted that the victorious Germans would have united with the Pannonians, had not Illyricum been subdued first. *Tib. 17.1*

Suetonius makes it sound as though Tiberius prevented a very serious and potentially devastating war with the Germans by being victorious in Illyricum.

Suetonius also describes Tiberius’ strict policy of caution as he plays clean-up after Varus’ disaster. He takes extra counsel and personally sees to it that orders are followed. For example, Tiberius makes sure that no extra baggage crosses the Rhine to weigh down the train (*Tib. 18.1*). Suetonius then notes Tiberius’ personal behavior while on campaign: he would eat while sitting on the ground, would often sleep without a tent, and insisted on giving orders in writing. He also encouraged good communication, requesting that his men consult with him immediately if ever they were in doubt about something (*Tib. 18.2*). As a leader, Tiberius was a strict disciplinarian and once punished a commander (*Tib. 19.1*). Finally, Suetonius remarks that Tiberius did not trust much in chance or fortune, but he did observe a military superstition handed down from his ancestors. Aside from this anecdote, Suetonius describes Tiberius as an austere, cautious general.

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48 Tiberius shows military foresight by making sure he does not suffer from the bulk of equipment. Dio makes much of how baggage added to the chaos when Varus’ legions were attacked (56.20.2, 5, 21.1).
When Tiberius returns from Germania, he celebrates his victory with others. He is accompanied in his triumph by his generals, he bows to Augustus before the Capitol, feasts with the people, and includes his brother in the dedication of the Temple of Concord and the Temple of Castor and Pollux (Tib. 20.1). Tiberius does not dominate the limelight alone but shares it with several others. His familial devotion and generosity in particular are emphasized.

Dio, however, does not depict Tiberius sharing the limelight with others (see Appendix C pp. 233-8). The young Tiberius oftentimes seems to be overshadowed by other family members. For example, when Tiberius first travels to Germania, he goes in order to take care of his brother (55.2). The focus of the passage is on Drusus. Even though Tiberius is credited with transporting the body and delivering a eulogy, and his success over the Dalmatians and Pannonians is mentioned, these are not the central messages of the passage. Even when he celebrates his success, the feasts are held also in the names of Livia, Julia, and Drusus.

When Dio directly describes the campaigns in Germania, he either minimizes the accomplishments, or he downplays Tiberius’ involvement in them: all Dio writes is “when there was some disturbance in the province of Germany, he took the field” (κινηθέντων τινῶν ἐν τῇ Γερμανίᾳ ἐξωρμηθῆ, 55.8). No details are given. When Dio has finished relating the events of the year 7 BCE, he concludes “for nothing worthy of mention happened in Germany” (ἐν γὰρ δὴ τῇ Γερμανίᾳ οὐδὲν ἄξιον μνήμης συνέβη, 55.9). Dio tells us that Tiberius campaigned in Germania, crossed the Weser and reached the Elbe, but again he notes “but nothing noteworthy was accomplished at this time” (οὗ μέντοι καὶ ἄξιομνημόνευτόν τι τότε γε ἐπράχθη, 55.28). He mentions that
Tiberius began his second campaign in Germania at 55.29, but the rest of the passage is about troubles in Dalmatia and Pannonia. At the beginning of 55.30 Tiberius leaves Germania to deal with these disturbances. No further information is given. Thus Dio writes of Tiberius’ time in Germania only a few sporadic times, with little or no detail.

When Dio does expand on affairs in Germany, Tiberius is more of a secondary character in the narrative, while Augustus takes a prominent position. Augustus campaigned against the Germans, but stayed in Rome while Tiberius crossed the Rhine (55.6). Tiberius is just a subordinate, a mere agent dispatched by the emperor. Indeed, Augustus is the subject throughout most of this passage. Augustus refuses to make a truce, Augustus arrests the envoys of the Sugambri, Augustus grants money to the soldiers. When Tiberius appears toward the end of this passage, he is the object while Augustus is the subject. Augustus gives him titles, Augustus places him as commander in place of Drusus, Augustus has him post a proclamation concerning his new office, and Augustus grants him a triumph. Augustus certainly takes first place in this passage, while Tiberius takes a distant, uncommanding second. Augustus as the subject takes action and makes decisions. In actuality the reader knows that Augustus is in Rome and Tiberius is the one really implementing orders in Germania, but Dio has not written his passage from that point of view.

Although there are no hostilities evident between Tiberius and Augustus in this passage, the emperor certainly overshadows the young general. Tensions exist between the two later. Tiberius is said to be engaged in military affairs, but he frequently visits Rome, chiefly because he fears that Augustus will shift favor to someone else while he is away (55.27). Indeed, Tiberius always had tough competition; the sons of
Drusus celebrate their father by dedicating gladiatorial games to him, and the people show their approval (55.27). In what Dio seems to depict as retaliation through his juxtaposition of the two events, Tiberius dedicates the Temple of Concord in Drusus’ name and his own, only he uses the form of his name which asserts his adoption by Augustus. Dio seems to show Tiberius striving to keep up with Germanicus and his brother who are already gaining favor in Rome.

Augustus perhaps realizes Tiberius’ efforts to remain number one behind the emperor at 55.31. He suspects that Tiberius is drawing out his military command so he can maintain some power for as long as possible. He therefore sends out Germanicus, although he was still young and only a quaestor. This surely magnified Tiberius’ worries.

Tiberius struggles for attention with other characters in Dio’s text as well. Tiberius and Livia dedicate a sacred precinct, and both stage banquets (55.8). Tiberius has to return to Germania, so Gaius takes his place in a ceremony. Unlike in Velleius’ text where Tiberius seems to stand alone and reign supreme, in Dio’s text he is almost always mentioned in connection with someone else, either sharing attention, competing for attention, or in the case of Augustus, acting as a complete subordinate.

A similar tone can be detected in the later text of Eutropius, who writes that Rome flourished under Augustus and then lists the places added to the empire and the peoples conquered (see Appendix C p. 239). Concerning Germany he writes:

Vicit autem multis proeliis Dacos. Germanorum ingentes copias cecidit, ipsos quoque trans Albim fluvium summovit, qui in Barbarico longe ultra Rhenum est. Hoc tamen bellum per Drusum, privignum suum, administravit, sicut per Tiberium, privignum alterum, Pannonicum, quo bello XL captivorum milia ex Germania transtulit et supra ripam Rheni in Gallia conlocavit.

He also conquered the Dacians in battle; put to the sword numerous forces of the Germans; and drove them beyond the river Elbe, which is in the
country of the barbarians far beyond the Rhine. This war however he
carried on by the agency of his step-son Drusus, as he had conducted the
Pannonian war by that of his other step-son Tiberius, in which he
transplanted forty thousand prisoners from Germany, and settled them in
Gaul on the bank of the Rhine. 7.9 49

Augustus is the subject of cecidit and summovit, and so Augustus is seemingly depicted
as the mastermind responsible for the success in Germania. Drusus and Tiberius are
then mentioned almost as afterthoughts, and indeed their names appear as objects of
per. Augustus is still the subject, this time of the verb administravit. All the credit
belongs to Augustus in this passage.

Eutropius must have had access to Dio, Suetonius, Tacitus, and perhaps even
the pre-Tacitean authors. He perpetuates a tradition about the emperors which by his
time had been growing for a few hundred years. A citation in Orosius stands as
evidence of this (see Appendix C p. 240). He, like Eutropius, mentions that Tiberius led
forty thousand people out of Germania (6.21.22-5). In this same passage he cites
Suetonius as a source. When he uses the phrase cruentissima caede deleuit, Orosius
seemingly perpetuates the tradition in which Tiberius is cruel. Yet Orosius has his own
motives for this: the objective of his work is to highlight the hardships of the past. 50 All
the same, Orosius shows that Tiberius’ persona does not lighten as the tradition moves
on; if anything, his character seems to get darker with time.

Conclusion

The tradition, then, portrays Tiberius as a successful general in Germania, but no
authors offer much detail except Velleius, who had first-hand knowledge of Tiberius’
military career. A large piece of the tradition is certainly missing, most notably Pliny the

49 Text and translations of Eutropius are from Watson (1876).

50 Laistner (1940) 251.
Elder’s work, so it is difficult to know precisely what information about Tiberius actually circulated. However, much of the tradition does not seem to let Tiberius stand alone, but instead he is mentioned alongside Drusus or Augustus. Tiberius really only gets his own spotlight in Velleius’ text. Thus when Tiberius shares space with Germanicus in the *Annals*, it is not surprising. Throughout the tradition, the character of Tiberius commonly had the attention deflected away from him and placed onto another.

The difference, perhaps, is this: in the earlier texts Tiberius does not seem to mind sharing attention. He embraces his relationship with his brother and even encourages association of himself and Drusus by dedicating the Temple of Concord in both their names. Nowhere can we find animosity between Tiberius and Augustus. In later authors, however, and indeed in Tacitus’ text, Tiberius does not seem comfortable with competition. Especially in Suetonius’ biography, suspicions grow between Tiberius and Augustus. So somewhere between the pre-Tacitean tradition and the parallel/post-Tacitean tradition the portrayal of Tiberius changed, and we can see it happening in Tacitus’ *Annals*. Although Tiberius gains favor at *Annals* 1.3, Augustus only settled on him after many others were dead. Even so, Augustus requires Tiberius to adopt Germanicus, who already had been assigned to Germania, in spite of the fact that Tiberius had his own adult son. With this slap in the face one might sympathize with Tiberius, but in *Annals* 1.4 Tacitus attests that Tiberius was born with arrogance and also had a cruel streak.

The character we see in the *Annals* is mostly Tiberius the emperor, not Tiberius the commander of Germania. Tacitus traces for us the transition of Tiberius from a private citizen to emperor, when he leaves behind his military persona and inhabits the
res internae of the Annals.\textsuperscript{51} He does not go out on campaign, but rather stays sedentary in Italy, particularly in Rome. Germanicus takes his place, as attested by Dio (55.31), as the vibrant general in Germania. Thus Germanicus becomes what Tiberius would have been had he remained as commander in the north. Indeed, as we have seen, Germanicus himself speaks about following in Tiberius’ footsteps (Ann. 2.14). Perhaps this is why Tiberius is oftentimes so critical of what Germanicus does while in Germania (e.g., Ann. 1.62). Tiberius has personal experience with the province and surely thinks about what he did or would have done in certain situations. He reminds Germanicus at Annals 2.26 of his experience and advises him accordingly. Germanicus responds by attributing jealousy to Tiberius. Thus even Germanicus recognizes that Tiberius harbors animosity and that this animosity stems from Germanicus’ military success in Germania. Once Tiberius removes Germanicus from Germania and the troops he is familiar with, his animosity decreases. He is sure Germanicus’ success will not last once he is transferred to the East (Ann. 2.5).

Tiberius does not demonstrate such jealousy when he shares military responsibilities with his brother in the pre-Tacitean tradition, but in the Annals his jealousy and hostility are openly noted on more than one occasion (i.e. 1.7, 1.63, 2.5, 2.22, 2.26). In Suetonius and Dio he is likewise a hostile, suspicious character. The Annals marks the turning point in the Tiberius tradition, much like it shows the turning point in Tiberius’ career.

Although the contrast between Tiberius the emperor and Germanicus is sharp, Tiberius the commander of Germania, particularly the one from the pre-Tacitean

\textsuperscript{51} I derive the concept of Tiberius as a res internae character from Ginsburg (1981) Chapter 4.
tradition, has much in common with Germanicus. Tiberius the commander of Germania is glorified for his military achievement in the pre-Tacitean tradition, much like Germanicus.

Once we look past Tiberius the emperor and are attentive to traces of Tiberius the commander of Germania, we can understand more not only about Tiberius but also about Germanicus. Once again Tiberius sits by while someone else succeeds in his province and earns the affection of the people. As for Germanicus, he is what Tiberius would have become had he continued his command in Germania instead of becoming emperor. Perhaps if Tiberius had not met with so much hardship in his younger years, he could have been the vibrant and admired commander which Germanicus becomes in the *Annals*. Instead the tradition shows him constantly playing second fiddle. Germanicus lets us see what Tiberius might have been if he had been allowed to flourish on his own in Germania. What is more, perhaps Tiberius the emperor lets us see what Germanicus might have been if he had lived longer and gained *imperium*. 
CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSION

Tacitus is very conscious of the Roman past. Although the narrative of the *Annals* formally begins in 14 CE, characters and events from previous time are repeatedly brought into the text and connected with characters like Germanicus.¹ Thus the *Annals* is not solely concerned with the Julio-Claudian era but it in fact embraces a wider span of Roman history and addresses how the Julio-Claudian era fits into a grander scheme. Similarly, Germanicus is not just an individual; he belongs to a long line of famous Roman commanders who campaigned in Germania. He is part of a special group and part of a tradition. His character in the *Annals*, when viewed with this tradition in mind, thus has a timeless quality. He can speak to other generations and add to the puzzling conversation of what it means to be human.

So how does Germanicus fit into the line of famous Roman commanders of Germania? Germanicus is what Drusus was, he is the opposite of what Varus was, and he is what Tiberius would have been. While becoming a successful general like his father, Germanicus avoids disaster of the Varian type and ultimately carries out the work that had been destined for Tiberius. When we carefully excavate these characters from the *Annals*, these relationships become clear. Intertextualities from pre-Tacitean sources further emphasize these relationships, and post-Tacitean sources confirm them. Although some sources of the literary traditions surrounding Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius may be missing, the extant sources reinforce the messages in the *Annals*.

¹ For elements of the past in the *Annals*, see Syme (1958) 364-77. For Germanicus as a character tied to the past, see Pelling (1993) 77-8.
How, then, does Germanicus’ portrayal alongside Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius alter the traditional scholarly interpretation of Germanicus? Although it does not elevate him to the lofty status of hero, which perhaps is a status that does not exist in Tacitus’ text anyway, Germanicus does manage live up to the example set by his father Drusus. We have seen through our comparison of sources that Drusus certainly set the bar high for future commanders, but as we have seen especially in the words and thoughts of the people of Rome, Germanicus met expectations and filled his father’s shoes rather nicely. Thus when he is viewed alongside the shadows of Drusus that lurk in the *Annals*, Germanicus looks like quite the competent military man. When the *Annals* is put into the context of the larger portrait of Drusus from the pre- and post-Tacitean tradition, Germanicus inherits the popularity and republican qualities of his father, as well as the tragedy.

Varus makes Germanicus look more than just competent; he makes him look absolutely praiseworthy. In the *Annals* Germanicus not only succeeds in areas where Varus failed, like avoiding treachery and facing Arminius, but he goes above and beyond. Germanicus effectively repairs all the damage Varus had done by burying the dead, recovering lost spoils and standards, and reasserting Roman control to extents of Germania reached previously by Drusus. Germanicus is certainly the opposite of Varus, existing in the minds of the Romans as a leader whom they wish to honor rather than forget.

Germanicus and Tiberius perhaps share the most complex relationship. In the past scholars have argued that Germanicus and Tiberius are opposites, and Germanicus
has been labeled the “Tiberian foil.”² Perhaps this is true of Germanicus and the emperor Tiberius, that is, the old, sedentary, gloomy Tiberius. The younger Tiberius, however, the commander Tiberius who took the field in Germania and won military success and popularity among the troops, may in fact have had much in common with the vibrant Germanicus. Perhaps Tacitus suggests the similarities between a military-minded Tiberius and Germanicus when he portrays Tiberius giving strategic advice to Germanicus at places like *Annals* 2.26, or showing displeasure with Germanicus’ decisions and actions at places like *Annals* 1.52 and 1.62. In these scenes it appears as though Tiberius knows what he would have done as the commander in these situations. Yet the references to Tiberius’ military career are scarce in the *Annals*, so we must turn to the larger literary tradition to get a fuller portrait of him. Velleius’ Tiberius seems very similar to Germanicus: popular, esteemed, talented, and caring of his men. A few other sources agree, yet since the literary tradition surrounding Tiberius is so incomplete, questions will remain.

The literary traditions gleaned from both pre- and post-Tacitean sources can help us better understand the characters of Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius and thus can help us better understand their effect on Tacitus’ characterization of Germanicus. Knowledge of the traditions can also help us identify intertextualities and understand the place of the *Annals* within the tradition of Roman historiography. In the case of Drusus, Tacitus’ portrayal of him fits right in with the rest of the tradition. As the other sources do, Tacitus offers a glowing image of Germanicus’ father: he is talented in the field, popular with the

² Walker (1952) 118; Daitz (1960) 48; Ross (1973) 214, 220, 227; Rutland (1987) 154 also acknowledge the idea of Germanicus as a foil, although Ross sees it as problematic. See Pelling (1993) 78-81 for a re-evaluation.
people and the troops, kind, handsome, and charismatic. Tacitus certainly paints Drusus as a model Roman, one who was revered long after his death. Thus Tacitus sustains the literary tradition of Drusus. He does not add much to it, but it is interesting to note his attentiveness to Drusus’ movement in Germania when he mentions such specific sites as Drusus’ camp (Annals 1.56), altar (Annals 2.7), and fosse (Annals 2.8).

When it comes to Varus, Tacitus actually portrays him less harshly than others. In other sources, Varus is shown in a negative light. Some authors even attack his character, calling him greedy, careless, and lazy. Although Tacitus does acknowledge the severity of Varus’ disaster, he does not blacken Varus’ character. It does not fit his purpose. Tacitus uses Varus just enough to provide a scapegoat which will contrast with Germanicus and to bring past historical fact into the textual present. After all, the tradition seems to suggest that Tacitus would be amiss if he did not mention Varus. If authors like Manilius can find a place for Varus in their work, certainly Tacitus can. Tacitus takes what would seem to be a requirement and turns it into an advantage: Varus serves the purpose of modifying the portrayal of one of Tacitus’ most important characters.

As for Tiberius, Tacitus does not paint him a very flattering portrait. Tiberius’ campaigns in Germania are certainly not a topic of concern. Tacitus minimizes his military success from his younger years and focuses instead on the gloomy emperor. Compared to Velleius’ sparkling visage of his commander, Tacitus offers a harsh portrayal of Tiberius. It is difficult, however, to determine Tacitus’ exact place in the literary tradition of Tiberius since so much of that tradition is lost.
Thus Tacitus follows the literary tradition of Drusus fairly closely, but he seems to deviate from the existing traditions when it comes to Varus and Tiberius. He treats Varus less harshly than many other sources and Tiberius perhaps more harshly than other sources. His portrayals of these characters certainly affect the portrayal of Germanicus in that they ultimately make him look successful, talented, charismatic, and popular.

So how do Tacitus’ characterizations stack up against ancient ideas about characterization? Aristotle’s *Poetics* raises three particular questions. First, Aristotle explains at 2.1-5 that an author represents his characters as better than in real life, or as worse, or as they are. It is impossible to know what Drusus, Varus, Tiberius, and Germanicus were truly like in real life, but we can attempt to reconstruct facsimiles of them by examining the extant records concerning their lives. In doing so, we can speculate that Tacitus seems to portray Drusus as the wonderful person that he likely was in real life (according to the information we have left about him), but he seems to portray Varus as better and Tiberius as worse. Do these characterizations help Tacitus idealize, discredit, or fairly portray Germanicus? Drusus and Varus elevate our esteem for Germanicus, so that he looks like an ideal Roman leader. Tiberius, however, has a double effect on Germanicus; as gloomy emperor, he casts Germanicus in a positive light, such that Germanicus is a “Tiberian foil” and a “hero” in the text. However, to the young Tiberius, commander of Germania, Germanicus is quite similar. Like Drusus, the young commander, Tiberius displays virtue and promise which are reflected in

_3 For Germanicus as an opposite or foil of Tiberius, see Walker (1952) 118; Daitz (1960) 48; Ross (1973) 214, 227; Rutland (1987) 154. For Germanicus as a hero, see Walker (1952) 118-20; Daitz (1960) 37. Ross (1973) 215-7, 220 questions Germanicus’ status as a hero and thus questions whether he is such a good foil for Tiberius._
Germanicus. On the other hand, the reader of the *Annals* knows that this young Tiberius eventually grows old to become the gloomy emperor Tiberius. Would Germanicus have done the same if he had lived longer and fulfilled Augustus’ expectation that he should someday rule Rome? Perhaps this way of thinking places Germanicus in a bad light and foreshadows doom in the character of Germanicus. One must remember that he is a Julio-Claudian. His family holds a certain reputation, and even Tacitus asserts that at *Annals* 1.4 when he refers to Tiberius having “the chronic and innate arrogance of the Claudian family” (*vetere atque insita Claudiae familiae superbia*) just before he mentions Tiberius’ *saevitia*.\(^4\) So perhaps Tacitus does not always use Tiberius to make Germanicus into the gleaming white horse of the *Annals* after all.\(^5\)

And so does Germanicus appear better than he was in real life, or worse, or as he really was? Again it is impossible to know what Germanicus was truly like in real life, but we can attempt to reconstruct a facsimile of him from the extant records and then compare Tacitus’ characterization to that result.\(^6\) The work of Stiles has already taken up this task. After examining various sources from the reign of Tiberius, Stiles concludes that the contemporary literary tradition surrounding Germanicus was quite positive.\(^7\) Tacitus, then, seems to follow suit with what was already in place among

\(^4\) *Ann. 1.4*: *pars multo maxima inminentis dominos variis rumoribus differebant:...Tiberium Neronem maturum annis, spectatum bello, set vetere atque insita Claudiae familiae superbia, multaque indicia saevitiae, quamquam premantur, erumpere,* “the greatest part by far compared the imminent rulers with various gossip:...Tiberius Nero was mature in years, distinguished in war, but he had the chronic and innate arrogance of the Claudian family, and many signs of cruelty, although suppressed, broke out.”

\(^5\) Ross (1973) 227 while examining Germanicus’ faults sees the potential for Germanicus to be both a foil and a counterpart of Tiberius: “...the heroic Germanicus is continually underminded, the ‘lichte Gestalt’ grows greyer, and opposites begin to merge and diverse paths to approach the same undesirable ends.”

\(^6\) For an examination of the literary tradition of Germanicus, see Stiles (2010).

\(^7\) Stiles (2010) 167-70.
earlier authors by portraying Germanicus in a fairly favorable light. Whether Germanicus really was so praiseworthy in real life cannot be known for certain, but it is quite possible that the literature has taken a good man and raised him up to greatness.

At Poetics 9.1-3 Aristotle explains that historians write about things that have actually happened while poets write about things that may possibly or probably happen. It would be difficult to argue, however, that Tacitus, or any historian for that matter, actually upholds these boundaries. As Dio recognizes at 53.19.1-6, it is often challenging for a historian to find out what actually happened in the past, so even if an author wanted to stick strictly to the facts, he would find the task difficult, if not impossible. Thus many authors like Dio, Suetonius, and even Tacitus will frequently present the reader with various versions of a story and allow the reader to make their own decision. Sometimes an author may even offer his opinion on the matter. Some inventio is quite acceptable in ancient historical texts, and so the line between history and poetry is not as clear as Aristotle might have us believe. Devillers reminds us that some passages may be more Tacitus’ own invention than truth. Tacitus has certain messages to relay and purposes to fulfill as he writes, and in order to achieve certain effects, he may sometimes act both as a poet and as a historian by writing about the probable and the possible along with the factual. Furthermore, writing about the probable or possible future of characters like Germanicus is perhaps tempting to Tacitus since he is looking back from the future.

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We have seen that the characterizations of Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius allow the reader to imagine what Germanicus might have become had he lived his life differently or had he not died so young. Perhaps Germanicus could have become greater than his father, finally conquering Germania for the Romans. On the other hand, perhaps he could have become worse than Varus, falling into a trap in northern Germania and losing more Roman lives and honor. Or perhaps he could have become like Tiberius, outliving his military glory, lasting to inherit the principate, and growing into a monster of an emperor. Would he have had a bright future ahead of him, or a dark one? The shadows of Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius cast over Germanicus play with the reader’s perception not only of who Germanicus is but who he could become. The possibilities and probabilities of Germanicus’ fate materialize. Perhaps in the end the reader’s appreciation for Germanicus is heightened: although he does not get the chance to become greater than his father, he does manage to avoid the fates of Varus and Tiberius.

Germanicus’ fate instead is to die young, much like his father, but far away in the East rather than in the province from which he took his name and his military glory. This fate naturally makes Germanicus into a tragic character, and so Aristotle’s discussion of tragedy and the tragic character, particularly at Poetics 6.1-4, tempts us to ask how Tacitus may use past characters to paint Germanicus as tragic. Aristotle explains that tragedy “is a representation of an action that is heroic and complete and of

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a certain magnitude."\textsuperscript{11} He writes that “it represents men in action,” but most importantly, it evokes pity.\textsuperscript{12} Do these characters from the past amplify Germanicus as a man of action who evokes pity? Germanicus’ similarity to Drusus certainly renders him more tragic, since Drusus is a very tragic character himself according to the extant literary tradition: he dies young, unexpectedly, and while still at the height of his success; he is mourned greatly by his brother, mother, wife, and the Roman people. Drusus’ tragic elements are frequently projected onto Germanicus to make him appear tragic as well. For example, at \textit{Annals} 2.41, when the people see Germanicus in his triumph and recall his father’s success and subsequent tragic death, Germanicus’ tragic death is foreshadowed, and at \textit{Annals} 3.5 the people remember Drusus’ funeral honors and wonder why Germanicus does not receive similar rites. Such a comparison of Germanicus to Drusus renders Germanicus more tragic than his father because although he similarly dies a tragic death, he is not similarly honored. Pity is the emotion tied to these mighty men who were brought down in their primes.

Varus may not bring the tragic qualities of Germanicus’ character into high relief, but he does demonstrate how Germanicus grows and develops in the \textit{Annals}. At \textit{Rhetoric} 2.12-14, Aristotle discusses the differences among the young man, the old man, and the man in prime of life. At the beginning of the \textit{Annals} Germanicus is a young man attempting to reach his prime. When examining Germanicus’ character,

\textsuperscript{11} Arist. \textit{Poet.} 6.2: ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας καὶ τελείας μέγεθος ἐχούσης, “Tragedy is, then, a representation of an action that is heroic and complete and of a certain magnitude.” Text and translations of the Poetics are from Fyfe (1932).

\textsuperscript{12} Arist. \textit{Poet.} 6.2: ἔστιν οὖν τραγῳδία μίμησις...δρώντων καὶ οὐ δι’ ἀπαγγελίας, δι’ ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαίνουσα τὴν τῶν τοιούτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν, “It (tragedy) represents men in action and does not use narrative, and through pity and fear it effects relief to these and similar emotions.”
scholars like Ross and Rutland often point out Germanicus’ naiveté, rashness, or lack of experience, focusing especially on the mutiny episode of *Annals* 1.33-49. But once Germanicus begins his campaigns in Germania in the shadow of Varus, he changes. At the start of the campaigns Germanicus runs the risk of becoming the new Varus, a foolhardy leader who falls victim to the fierce Germans. As he moves forward, however, his continual successes decrease his chances of meeting a Varian fate. He gains experience, loses his naivety, and eventually ceases to be a candidate for Varian failure. At the beginning of Germanicus’ journey, Tacitus’ insertion of Varus into the text seemed only to presage gloom for the German campaigns, but once Germanicus accumulates a list of accomplishments in the province, Varus’ appearance emphasizes the young leader’s growth into a seasoned general who has come into his prime.

My argument for this change in the character of Germanicus demands that his portrayal be reevaluated. In the past, Germanicus was labeled as hero, failure, and many levels in between. Based on my conclusions, where does Tacitus’ characterization of Germanicus fall on the scale of success and failure? Germanicus does not utterly sink to the bottom or rise completely to the top. Rather he wavers between the two extremes over the course of the *Annals*, and perhaps in the end he is raised a bit aloft on the successful side. Drusus pulls Germanicus upward on the scale towards success, but even Drusus was not perfect, and so his character can only do so much to elevate his son. Association with Varus first causes Germanicus to sink a bit

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13 Ross (1973) 211-20 considers Germanicus’ actions during the mutiny in Germania. His initial reactions to the mutiny are “theatrical in the extreme” and he is called “a figure of almost comic failure” (215). Ross (1973) 220 also mentions the slaughter at *Ann.* 1.49 and remarks, “It is not the first time, nor will it be the last, that the hero’s plans leave him reduced to tears.” Rutland (1987) 155-6 likewise notes the humiliation of Germanicus’ suicide threat at *Ann.* 1.35 and says of his lack of involvement in the bloodshed of *Ann.* 1.44, “Surely a general of more experience or determination or courage would have found a more acceptable manner of dealing with the rebels.”

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towards failure, but once it becomes clear that Germanicus is not like Varus, Varus actually makes Germanicus appear successful, and so Germanicus manages to remain above even. If Germanicus is viewed as comparable to Tiberius when he was the commander of Germania, then Tiberius pulls Germanicus upwards towards success, but he is not able to raise him as high as Drusus. However, if Germanicus’ similarities to the young Tiberius open him up to the possibility of becoming like the old Tiberius, then he may suffer towards failure. Overall, Germanicus teeters between success and failure. There are positives and negatives, and the end result is not easy to tally up, as scholarly debate has demonstrated.\(^\text{14}\) Germanicus is not a success or a failure, but a combination of the two. Moreover he is not constantly the same combination of the two, but throughout the \textit{Annals} he displays wavering degrees of success and failure. When he dies the scale on which he wavers freezes with unequivocal results.

According to Aristotle, the mean is the goal of a good man, but it is difficult to attain.\(^\text{15}\) When Germanicus is viewed in the \textit{Annals} with Drusus, Varus, and Tiberius in mind, he ultimately hits somewhere near Aristotle’s mean. He does not soar higher than Drusus, but he certainly does not sink like Varus. Neither hero or a failure, Germanicus is a very real, very human character who experiences ups and downs, and perhaps this is why we keep reading his story and pondering his nature.

\(^{14}\) Santoro L’Hoir (2006) 134 writes, “To picture the portrayals of Germanicus (or Agrippina) as either totally positive or negative is to undervalue Tacitus’ genius for the portrayal of character.”

APPENDIX A
THE LITERARY TRADITION OF DRUSUS

Periochae

138


The Raeti were overcome by Tiberius Nero and Drusus, the stepsons of Caesar. Agrippa, Caesar’s son-in-law, died. Drusus conducted the census.¹

139

Civitates Germaniae cis Rhenum et trans Rhenum positae oppugnantur a Druso, et tumultus, qui ob censum exortus in Gallia erat, componitur; ara dei Caesaris ad confluentem Araris et Rhodani dedicata, sacerdote creato C. Iulio Vercondaridubno Aeduo.

The states of Germany situated on the near and farther sides of the Rhine were attacked by Drusus, and the uprising that arose in Gaul over the census was settled. An altar of the divine Caesar was dedicated at the confluence of the Arar and the Rhone, Gaius Julius Vercondaridubnus, an Aeduan, being appointed the priest.

140

Thraces domiti a L. Pisone, item Cherusci, Tencteri, Chauci aliaeque Germanorum trans Rhenum gentes subactae a Druso referuntur...

The Thracians were subdued by Lucius Piso; an account is also given of the subjugation by Drusus of the Cherusci, Tencteri, Chauci, and other German tribes across the Rhine...

141

Bellum adversus transrhenanas gentes a Druso gestum refertur...

An account is given of the war conducted by Drusus against the tribes across the Rhine...

142

Bellum adversus Germanorum trans Rhenum civitates gestum a Druso refertur. Ipse ex fractura, equo super crus eius conlapso, XXX die, quam id

¹ Text and translations of the Periochae are from Schlesinger (1959).

An account is given of the war waged by Drusus against the German states across the Rhine. Drusus himself died of a broken leg, sustained when his horse fell on it, on the thirtieth day after the accident. His body was conveyed to Rome by his brother Nero, who had arrived posthaste on news of his illness; burial was in the tomb of Gaius Julius. The eulogy was pronounced by Caesar Augustus, his stepfather, and many distinctions were conferred on him at his funeral. Disaster to Quintilius Varus.

Strabo

7.1.3.8-13

μετὰ δὲ τοὺς παραποταμίους τὰλλὰ ἐστιν ἑθνη τὰ μεταξύ τοῦ Ῥήνου καὶ τοῦ Ἀλβίας ποταμοῦ, ὃς παράλληλος πως ἐκείνω ἑνεῖ πρὸς τὸν ὦκεανόν, οὐκ ἔλαττώ χώραν διεξών ὕπερ ἑκείνος. εἰς δὲ μεταξύ καὶ ἄλλοι ποταμοὶ πλωτοὶ (ὡν ἐν τῷ Ἀμασίᾳ Δρούσος Βρουκτέρους κατεναυμάχησε), βέοντες ωσαύτως ἀπὸ νότου πρὸς βορρᾶν καὶ τὸν ὦκεανόν.

After the people who live along the river come the other tribes that live between the Rhenus and the River Albis, which latter flows approximately parallel to the former, towards the ocean, and traverses no less territory than the former. Between the two are other navigable rivers also (among them the Amasias, on which Drusus won a naval victory over the Bructeri), which likewise flow from the south towards the north and the ocean;²

7.1.3.52-6

ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ Σάλας ποταμός, οὗ μεταξύ καὶ τοῦ Ῥήνου πολεμῶν καὶ κατορθῶν Δρούσος ἐτελεύτησεν ὁ Γερμανικός. ἔχειρώσατο δὲ οὐ μόνον τῶν ἑθνῶν τὰ πλεῖστα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὰς ἐν τῷ παράπλω νήσους, ὃν ἐστὶ καὶ Ἡ Βυρχανίς, ἃν ἐκ πολιορκίας εἶλε.

And it was between the Salas and the Rhenus that Drusus Germanicus, while he was successfully carrying on the war, came to his end. He had subjugated, not only most of the tribes, but also the islands along the coast, among which is Burchanis, which he took by siege.

² Text and translations of Strabo are from Jones (1924).
Velleius Paterculus

2.95.1-2

Reversum inde Neronem Caesar haud mediocris belli mole experiri statuit, adiutore operis dato fratre ipsius Druso Claudio, quem intra Caesaris penates enixa erat Livia. Quippe uterque e diversis partibus Raetos Vindelicosque adgressi, multis urbium et castellorum oppugnationibus nec non directa quoque acie feliciter functi gentes locis tutissimas, aditu difficillimas, numero frequentes, feritate truces maiore cum periculo quam damno Romani exercitus plurimo cum earum sanguine perdomuerunt.

On Nero’s return Caesar resolved to test his powers in a war of no slight magnitude. In this work he gave him as a collaborator his own brother Drusus Claudius, to whom Livia gave birth when already in the house of Caesar. The two brothers attacked the Raeti and Vindelici from different directions, and after storming many towns and strongholds, as well as engaging successfully in pitched battles, with more danger than real loss to the Roman army, though with much bloodshed on the part of the enemy, they thoroughly subdued these races, protected as they were by the nature of the country, difficulty of access, strong in numbers, and fiercely warlike.

2.97.2-3

Cura deinde atque onus Germanici belli delegata Druso Claudio, fratri Neronis, adulescenti tot tantarumque virtutum, quot et quantas natura mortalis recipit vel industria perficit. Cuius ingenium utrum bellicis magis operibus an civilibus suffecerit artibus, in incerto est: morum certe dulcedo ac suavitas et adversus amicos aequa ac par sui aestimatio inimitabilis fuisse dicitur; nam pulchritudo corporis proxima fraternae fuit. Sed illum magna ex parte domitorem Germaniae, plurimo eius gentis variis in locis profuso sanguine, fatorum iniquitas consulem, agentem annum tricesimum, rapuit.

The burden of responsibility for this war was then entrusted to Drusus Claudius, the brother of Nero, a young man endowed with as many great qualities as men’s nature is capable of receiving or application developing. It would be hard to say whether his talents were the better adapted to a military career or the duties of civil life; at any rate, the charm and the sweetness of his character are said to have been inimitable, and also his modest attitude of equality towards his friends. As for his personal beauty, it was second only to that of his brother. But, after accomplishing to a great extent the subjection of Germany, in which much blood of that people was shed on various battle-fields, an unkind fate carried him off during his consulship, in his thirtieth year.

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3 Text and translations of Velleius are from Shipley (1924).
Horace

*Carm. 4.4.1-28*

Qualem ministrum fulminis alitem,
cui rex deorum regnum in auis uagas
permisit expertus fidelem
Iuppiter in Ganymede flauo,
olim iuuentas et patrius uigor
nido laborum protulit inscium
urnique iam nimbis remotis
insolitos docuere nisus
uenti pauentem, mox in ouilia
demisit hostem uiuidus impetus,
nunc in reluctantis dracones
egit amor dapis atque pugnae;
qualemue laetis caprea pascuis
intenta fuluae matris ab ubere
iam lacte depulsum leonem
dente nouo peritura uidit,
uidere Raeti bella sub Alpibus
Drusum gerentem Vindelici -- quibus
mos unde deductus per omne
tempus Amazonia securi
dextras obarmet, quaerere distuli,
nec scire fas est omnia -- sed diu
lateque uictrices cateruae
consiliis iuuenis reuictae
sensere, quid mens rite, quid indoles
nutrita faustis sub penetrabilis
posset, quid Augusti paternus
in pueros animus Nerones.

Like the winged servant of the
thunderbolt, to whom the king of
gods gave royal sway over the
roving birds, having found him
faithful in the case of fair-haired
Ganymede – at first youth and
native strength drove him forth from
the nest ignorant of toil, and the
spring winds, now that the storm
showers are gone, have taught him
unaccustomed efforts despite his
fear; next eager impulse
despached him as a foe against
the sheep-pens; now love of
feasting and fight has driven him
against struggling snakes; or like a
lion newly weaned from the rich
milk of his tawny mother which a
(female) goat intent on rich
pastures has seen, about to perish
by its untried tooth; even so did the
Vindelici see Drusus waging war
beneath the Raetian Alps – whence
came the custom which through all
time arms their right hands with the
Amazonian axe I have postponed
finding out, nor is it right to know all
things – but their hordes victorious
for a long time far and wide were
conquered by the young man’s
counsels, and felt what a mind and
character duly nurtured under
favouring auspices could achieve,
felt what the fatherly spirit of
Augustus towards the young Neros
could achieve.\(^4\)

*Carm. 4.14.1-13*

quae cura patrum quaeue Quiritium
plenis honorum munere tuas,

What care of Fathers, or what care
of citizens shall with full service of

\(^{4}\) Text and translations of Horace are from Lyne (1995).
Auguste, virtutes in aevum
per titulos memoresque fastus
honours immortalize through time
your feats of virtue by inscriptions
and commemorative records,
and commemorative records,
oh greatest of statesmen, wherever the
sun shines on habitable shores? –
you whose power in war the
Vindelici, free of Latin law, have
recently learnt to know. For with
your troops keen Drusus with more
than simple requital hurled down
the Genauni, an implacable people,
and the swift Breuni, and their
citadels set upon the awesome
Alps;

Valerius Maximus

5.5.3.3-17

Tantum amorem princeps paresque noster insitum animo fratris Drusi
habuit, ut cum Ticini, quo victor hostium ad conplectendos parentes
venerat, gravi illum et periculovalitudine in Germania fluctuare
cognosset, protinus inde metu attonitus erumperet. Iter quoque quam
rapidum et praecess velut uno spiritu corripuerit eo patet, quod Alpes
Rhenumque transgressus die ac nocte mutato subinde equo CC milia
passuum per modo devictam barbariamNamantabagius ducesole comite
contentus evasit.

Our emperor and father, Tiberius, had a very strong natural love in his heart
for his brother, Drusus. After defeating our enemies, Tiberius had come to
Ticinum to embrace his parents, when he learned that the health of Drusus,
who was in Germany, was in a serious and dangerous condition, and that
he might not live. He was panic-stricken and rushed away immediately. He
obviously made the journey in wild haste, almost in a single breath, since
he crossed the Alps and the Rhine riding day and night, changing his horse
repeatedly, and then was happy to carry out a journey of two hundred miles
through a barbarous region that had only recently been pacified, with
Namantabagius as his sole guide and companion.⁵

⁵ The text of Valerius Maximus is from Smith (1985). The translation is from Walker (2004).
Seneca the Younger

Polyb. 15.5

Ti. Caesar patruus meus Drusum Germanicum patrem meum, minorem natu quam ipse erat fratrem, intima Germaniae recludentem et gentes feroeissimas Romano subcientem imperio in complexu et in osculis suis amisit. Modum tamen lugendi non sibi tantum sed etiam aliis fecit ac totum exercitum non solum maestum sed etiam attonitum corpus Drusi sui sibi vindicantem ad morem Romani luctus redegit iudicavitque non militandi tantum disciplinam esse servandam sed etiam dolendi. Non potuisset ille lacrimas alienas compescere, nisi prius pressisset suas.

“Tiberius Caesar, my uncle, lost his younger brother Drusus Germanicus, my father, just when he was opening up the remote parts of Germany, and was bringing the fiercest tribes under the power of Rome, and, holding him in his arms, he gave him a last kiss. Yet, not only for himself but for others, he set a limit upon mourning, and when the whole army was not only disconsolate but even distraught, and claimed the body of the loved Drusus for itself, he forced it to return to the Roman fashion of mourning, and ruled that discipline must be maintained, not only in fighting, but also in grieving. But he would not have been able to check the tears of others if he had not first repressed his own. 6

Marc. 3.1-2

Liuia amiserat filium Drusum, magnum futurum principem, iam magnum ducem; intraverat penitus Germaniam et ibi signa Romana fixerat, ubi uix ullos esse Romanos notum erat. In expeditione decesserat ipsis illum hostibus aegrum cum veneratione et pace mutua prosequentibus nec optare quod expediebat audientibus. Accedebat ad hanc mortem, quam ille pro re publica obierat, ingens ciuium provinciarumque et totius Italae desiderium, per quam effusis in officium lugubre municipiis coloniisque usque in urbem ductum erat funus triumpho simillimum. Non licuerat matri ultima filii oscula gratumque extremi sermonem oris haurire. Longo itinere reliquias Drusi sui prosecuta, tot per omnem Italiam ardentibus rogis, quasi totiens illum amitteret, irritata, ut primum tamen intulit tumulo, simul et illum et dolorem suum posuit, nec plus doluit quam aut honestum erat Caesare aut aequom Tiberio saluo. Non desiit denique Drusi sui celebrare nomen, ubique illum sibi privatim publiceque repraesentare, libentissime de illo loqui, de illo audire: cum memoria illius vixit; quam nemo potest retinere et frequentare, qui illam tristem sibi reddidit.

And Livia lost her son Drusus, who would have made a great emperor, and had already shown himself a great leader. For he had penetrated far into

6 Text and translations of Seneca are from Basore (1932).
Germany, and had planted the Roman standards in a region where it was scarcely known that any Romans existed. He had died on the campaign, and his very foes had reverently honoured his sick-bed by maintaining peace along with us; nor did they dare to desire what their interests demanded. And to these circumstances of his death, which he had met in the service of his country, there was added the unbounded sorrow of his fellow-citizens, of the provinces, and of all Italy, through the length of which crowds poured forth from the towns and colonies, and, escorting the funeral train all the way to the city, made it seem more like a triumph. His mother had not been permitted to receive her son’s last kisses and drink in the fond words of his dying lips. On the long journey through which she accompanied the remains of her dear Drusus, her heart was harrowed by the countless pyres that flamed throughout all Italy – for on each she seemed to be losing her son afresh –, yet as soon as she had placed him in the tomb, along with her son she laid away her sorrow, and grieved no more than was respectful to Caesar or fair to Tiberius, seeing that they were alive. And lastly, she never ceased from proclaiming the name of her dear Drusus. She had him pictured everywhere, in private and in public places, and it was her greatest pleasure to talk about him and to listen to the talk of others – she lived with his memory. But no one can cherish and cling to a memory that he has rendered an affliction to himself.

Marc. 6.4.1-6.5.3

Non dubito quin Iuliae Augustae, quam familiariter coluisti, magis tibi placeat exemplum: illa te ad suum consilium vocat. Illa in primo fervore, cum maxime inpatientes ferocesque sunt miseri, accessum Areo, philosopho viri sui, praebuit et multum eam rem profuisse sibi confessa est, plus quam populum Romanum, quem nolebat tristem tristitia sua facere, plus quam Augustum, qui subducto albero adminiculo titubabat nec luctu suorum inclinandus erat, plus quam Tiberium filium, cuius pietas efficiebat ut in illo acerbo et defleto gentibus funere nihil nisi numerum deesse sentiret. Hic, ut opinor, aditus illi fuit, hoc principium apud feminam opinionis suae custodem diligentissimam: ‘usque in hunc diem, Iulia, quantum quidem ego sciam, adsiduus viri tu i comes, cui non tantum quae in publicum emittuntur nota, sed omnes sunt secretores animorum vestrorum motus – dedisti operam, ne quid esset quod in te quisquam reprenderet; nec id in maioribus modo observasti, sed in minimis, ne quid faceres cui famam, liberrimam principum iudicem, uelles ignoscere. Nec quicquam pulchriori existimo quam in summo fastigio collocatos multarum rerum ueniam dare, nullius petere; servandus itaque tibi in hac quoque re tuus mos est, ne quid committas, quod minus aliterve factum velis. Deinde oro atque obseco, ne te difficilem amicis et intractabilem praestes. Non enim quod ignores omnes hos nescire, quemadmodum se gerat, loquantur aliqud coram te de Druso an nihil, ne aut oblivio clarissimi iuvenis illi faciat injuriam aut mentio tibi. Cum secessimus et in unum convenimus, facta eius dictaque quanto meruit suspectu celebramus; coram te altum nobis de illo
silentium est. Cares itaque maxima voluptate, filii tui laudibus, quas non
dubito quin uel inpendio uitae, si potestas detur, in aevum omne sis
prorogatura. Quare patere, imo arcerse sermones, quibus ille narretur, et
apertas aures praebe ad nomen memoriamque filii tui;

I doubt not that the example of Julia Augusta, whom you regarded as an
intimate friend, will seem more to your taste than the other; she summons
you to follow her. She, during the first passion of grief, when its victims are
most unsubmitive and most violent, made herself accessible to the
philosopher Areus, the friend of her husband, and later confessed that she
had gained much help from that source – more than from the Roman
people, whom she was unwilling to sadden with this sadness of hers; more
than from Augustus, who was staggering under the loss of one of his main
supports, and was in no condition to be further bowed down by the grief of
his dear ones; more than from her son Tiberius, whose devotion at that
untimely funeral that made the nations weep kept her from feeling that she
had suffered any loss except in the number of her sons. It was thus, I fancy,
that Areus approached her, it was thus he commenced to address a woman
who clung most tenaciously to her own opinion: “Up to this day, Julia, at
least so far as I am aware – and, as the constant companion of your
husband, I have known not only everything that was given forth to the
public, but all the more secret thoughts of your minds – you have taken
pains that no one should find anything at all in you to criticize; and not only
in the larger matters, but in the smallest trifles, you have been on your
guard not to do anything that you could wish public opinion, that most frank
judge of princes, to excuse. And nothing, I think, is more admirable than the
rule that those who have been placed in high position should bestow
pardon for many things, should seek pardon for none. And so in this matter
also you must still hold to your practice of doing nothing that you could wish
undone, or done otherwise. Furthermore, I beg and beseech you, do not
make yourself unapproachable and difficult to your friends. For surely you
must be aware that none of them know how to conduct themselves –
whether they should speak of Drusus in your presence or not – wishing
neither to wrong so distinguished a youth by forgetting him, or to hurt you
by mentioning him. When we have withdrawn from your company and are
gathered together, we extol his deeds and words with all the veneration he
deserved; in your presence there is deep silence about him. And so you are
missing a very great pleasure in not hearing the praises of your son, which I
doubt not, you would be glad, if you should be given the opportunity, to
prolong to all time even at the cost of your life. Wherefore submit to
conversation about your son, nay, encourage it, and let your ears be open
to his name and memory.”
Consolatio ad Liviam

13-20

Occidit exemplum iuvenis venerabile morum:
Maximus ille armis, maximus ille toga.
Ille modo eripuit latebrosas hostibus Alpes
Et titulum belli dux duce fratre tulit:
Ille genus Suevos acre indomitosque
Sicambros
Contudit inque fugam barbara terga dedit,
Ignotumque tibi meruit, Romane, triumphum,
Protulit in terras imperiumque novas.

A youth is dead, whose life was a pattern
that all might reverence; great in arms
was he, and great in peace. He wrested
of late from the foe their Alpine hiding-
places, and won renown, sharing with his
brother the captaincy of the war; he
crushed the fierce tribe of Suevi and the
untamed Sicambri, and turned their
barbarous backs to flight, and won for
thee, O Roman, a triumph before
unknown, and extended thy sway to new
lands.  

85-94

Vidimus attonitum fraterna morte Neronem
Pallida promissa flere per ora coma,
Dissimilemque sui, vultu profitente dolorem:
Ei mihi, quam toto luctus in ore fuit!
Tu tamen extremo moriturum tempore
fratrem
Vidisti, lacrimas vidit et ille tuas,
Affigique suis moriens tua pectora sensit
Et tenuit vultu lumina fixa tuo,
Lumina caerulea iam iamque natantia
morte,
Lumina fraternas iam subitura manus.

We beheld Nero dazed by his
brother's death, and weeping pale-
fac ed with disheveled hair, unlike
himself in his grief-proclaiming
countenance; alas, how that grief
was shown in every line! Yet thou
didst see thy brother in death's last
hour, and he saw thy tears, and
dying he felt thy breast pressed
close to his, and kept his eyes fixed
upon thy face, his eyes, all but
merged in darksome death, his
eyes, soon to be closed by his
brother's hand.

Florus

2.30.23-8

Missus in eam provinciam Drusus primos domuit Vsipetes, inde Tencteros
percurrit et Catthos. Nam Marcomannorum spoiliis et insignibus quendam
editum tumulum in tropaei modum excoluit. Inde validissimas nationes
Cheruscos Suebosque et Sicambros pariter adgressus est, qui viginti
centurionibus in crucem actis hoc velut sacramento sumpserant bellum,
adeo certa victoriae spe, ut praedam in antecessum pactione diviserint.
Cherusci equos, Suebi aurum et argentum, Sicambri captivos elegerant;

7 Text and translations of the Consolatio ad Liviam are from Mozley (1929).

Drusus was sent into the province and conquered the Usipetes first, and then overran the territory of the Tecturi and Catthi. He erected, by way of a trophy, a high mound adorned with the spoils and decorations of the Marcomanni. Next he attacked simultaneously those powerful tribes, the Cherusci, Suebi and Sicambri, who had begun hostilities after crucifying twenty of our centurians, an act which served as an oath binding them together, and with such confidence of victory that they made an agreement in anticipation for dividing the spoils. The Cherusci had chosen the horses, the Suebi the gold and silver, the Sicambri the captives. Everything, however, turned out contrariwise; for Drusus, after defeating them, divided up their horses, their herds, their necklets and their own persons as spoil and sold them. Furthermore, to secure the province he posted garrisons and guard-posts all along the Meuse, Elbe and Wesser. Along the banks of the Rhine he disposed more than fifty forts. He built bridges at Borma and Gesoriacum, and left fleets to protect them. He opened a way through the Hercynian forest, which had never before been visited or traversed. In a word, there was such peace in Germany that the inhabitants seemed changed, the face of the country transformed, and the very climate milder and softer than it used to be. Lastly, when the gallant young general had died there, the senate itself, not from flattery but as an acknowledgement of his merit, did him the unparalleled honour of bestowing upon him a surname derived from the name of a province.  

Suetonius

Claud. 1.2-5

Is Drusus in quaesturae praeturaeque honore dux Raetici, deinde Germanici belli Oceanum septemtrionalem primus Romanorum ducum navigavit transque Rhenum fossas navi et immensi operis effecit, quae nunc adhuc Drusinae vocantur. Hostem etiam frequenter caesum ac penitus in intimas solitudines actum non prius destitit insequi, quam species barbarae mulieres humana amplior victorem tendere ultra sermone Latino

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8 Text and translations of Florus are from Forster (1929).
prohibuisset. Quas ob res ovandi ius et triumphalia ornamenta percepit; ac post praeturam confestim inito consulatu atque expeditione repetita supremum diem morbo obiit in aestivis castris, quae ex eo Scelerata sunt appellata. Corpus eius per municipiorum coloniarumque primores suscipientibus obvii scribarum decuriis ad urbem depectum sepultumque est in campo Martio. Ceterum exercitus honorarium ei tumulum excitavit, circa quem deinceps stato die quotannis miles decurreret Galliarumque civitates publice supplicarent. Praeterea senatus inter alia complura marmoreum arcum cum tropaeis via Appia decrevit et Germanici cognomen ipsi posterisque eius. Fuisset autem creditur non minus gloriis quam civilis animi; nam ex hoste super victorias opima quoque spolia captasse summoque saepius discrimine duces Germanorum tota acie insectatus; nec dissimulasse umquam pristinum se rei p. statum, quandoque posset, restituturum. Unde existimo nonnullos tradere ausos, suspectum eum Augusto revocatumque ex provincia et quia cunctaretur, interceptum veneno. Quod equidem magis ne praetermitterem rettuli, quam quia verum aut veri similiter metum, cum Augustus tanto opere et vivum dilexerit, ut coheredem semper filia instituerit, sicut quondam in senatu professus est, et defunctum ita pro contione laudaverit, ut deos precatus sit, similes ei Caesares suos facerent sibique tam honestum quandoque exitum darent quam illi dedissent. Nec contentus elogium tumulo eius versibus a se composisse, etiam vitae memoriam prosa oratione composuit.

This Drusus, while holding the offices of quaestor and praetor, was in charge of the war in Raetia and later of that in Germany. He was the first of Roman generals to sail the northern Ocean, and beyond the Rhine with prodigious labour he constructed the huge canals which to this very day are called by his name. Even after he had defeated the enemy in many battles and driven them far into the wilds of the interior, he did not cease his pursuit until the apparition of a barbarian woman of greater than human size, speaking in the Latin tongue, forbade him to push his victory further. For these exploits he received the honour of an ovation with the triumphal regalia; and immediately after his praetorship he became consul and resumed his campaign, but died in his summer camp, which for that reason was given the name of "Accursed." The body was carried by the leading men of the free towns and colonies to Rome, where it was met and received by the decuries of scribes, and buried in the campus Martius. But the army reared a monument in his honour, about which the soldiers should make a ceremonial run each year thereafter on a stated day, which the cities of Gaul were to observe with prayers and sacrifices. The senate, in addition to many other honours, voted him a marble arch adorned with trophies on the Appian Way, and the surname Germanicus for himself and his descendants. It is the general belief that he was as eager for glory as he was democratic by nature; for in addition to victories over the enemy he greatly desired to win the "noble trophies," often pursuing the leaders of the Germans all over the field at great personal risk; and he made no secret of his intention of restoring the old-time form of government, whenever he
should have the power. It is because of this, I think, that some have made bold to write that he was an object of suspicion to Augustus; that the emperor recalled him from his province, and when he did not obey at once, took him off by poison. This I have mentioned, rather not to pass it by, than that I think it true or even probable; for as a matter of fact Augustus loved him so dearly while he lived that he always named him joint-heir along with his sons, as he once declared in the senate; and when he was dead, he eulogized him warmly before the people, praying the gods to make his Caesars like Drusus, and to grant him, when his time came, as glorious a death as they had given that hero. And not content with carving a laudatory inscription on his tomb in verses of his own composition, Augustus also wrote a memoir of his life in prose.\footnote{Text and translations of Suetonius’ \textit{Claudius} are from Rolfe (1914).}

**Cassius Dio**

\begin{quote}
54.22.1, 3-4

...Δροῦσος δὲ ἐν τούτῳ καὶ Τιβέριος τάδε ἔπραξαν. Ῥαιτοὶ οἰκοῦντες μεταξὺ τοῦ τε Νωρίκου καὶ τῆς Γαλατίας, πρὸς ταῖς Ἀλπεῖς ταῖς πρὸς τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ ταῖς Τριδεντίναις, τῆς τε Γαλατίας τῆς προσόρου σφίσι πολλά κατέτρεχον καὶ ἐκ τῆς Ἰταλίας ἄρπαγὰς ἐποιούντο, τοὺς τε ὀδῷ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἢ καὶ τῶν συμμάχων ἀυτῶν διὰ τῆς σφετέρας γῆς χρωμένους ἐλυμαίωντο... δι’ οὖν ταῦτα ὁ Αὔγουστος πρῶτον μὲν τὸν Δροῦσον ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἐπέμψε· καὶ ὃς τούς προαπαντήσαντας οἱ αὐτῶν περὶ τὰ Τριδεντίνα ὄρη διὰ ταχέων ἐτρέψατο, ὥστε καὶ τιμὰς στρατηγικὰς ἐπὶ τούτῳ λαβεῖν. ἔπειτα δὲ ἐπειδὴ τῆς μὲν Ἰταλίας ἀπεκρούσθησαν, τῇ δὲ Γαλατίᾳ καὶ ὣς ἐνέκειντο, τὸν Τιβέριον προσαπέστειλεν. ἐσβαλόντες οὖν ἐς τὴν χώραν πολλαχόθεν ἁμαρτοῦν ἃμφοτέροι, αὐτοὶ τε καὶ διὰ τῶν ὑποστρατήγων, καὶ ὁ γε Τιβέριος καὶ διὰ τῆς λίμνης πλοίων κομισθεῖσι... Drusus and Tiberius in the meantime were engaged in the following exploits. The Rhaetians, who dwell between Noricum and Gaul, near the Tridentine Alps which adjoin Italy, were overrunning a large part of the neighboring territory of Gaul and carrying off plunder even from Italy; and they were harassing such of the Romans or their allies as travelled through their country...For these reasons, then, Augustus first sent against them Drusus, who speedily routed a detachment of them which came to meet him near the Tridentine mountains, and in consequence received the rank of praetor. Later, when the Rhaetians had been repulsed from Italy, but were still harassing Gaul, Augustus sent out Tiberius also. Both leaders then invaded Rhaetia at many points at the same time, either in person or through their lieutenants, and Tiberius even crossed the lake with ships.\footnote{Text and translations of Cassius Dio are from Cary (1917).}
He also waited for the Germans to cross the Rhine, and then repulsed them. Next he crossed over to the country of the Usipetes, passing along the very island of the Batavians, and from there marched along the river to the Sugambrian territory, where he devastated much country. He sailed down the Rhine to the ocean, won over the Frisians, and crossing the lake, invaded the country of the Chauci, where he ran into danger, as his ships were left high and dry by the ebb of the ocean. He was saved on this occasion by the Frisians, who had joined his expedition with their infantry, and withdrew, since it was now winter. Upon arriving in Rome he was appointed praetor urbanus, in the consulship of Quintus Aelius and Paulus Fabius, although he already had the rank of praetor. At the beginning of spring he sent out again for the war, crossed the Rhine, and subjugated the Usipetes. He bridged the Lupia, invaded the country of the Sugambri, and advanced through it into the country of the Cherusci, as far as the Visurgis. He was able to do this because the Sugambri, in anger at the Chatti, the only tribe among their neighbours that had refused to join their alliance, had made a campaign against them with all their population; and seizing this opportunity, he traversed their country unnoticed. He would have crossed the Visurgis also, had he not run short of provisions, and had not the winter set in and, besides, a swarm of bees been seen in his camp.
ἀνθρώπου φύσιν ἀπαντήσασα αὐτῷ ἔφη “ποί δῆτα ἐπείγῃ, Δροῦσε ἀκόρεστε; οὐ πάντα σοι ταῦτα ίδεῖν πέπρωται. ἀλλ’ ἀπιστεῖ καὶ γάρ σοι καὶ τῶν ἑργῶν καὶ τοῦ βίου τελευτή ὡς τάραστον. ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ προτεθέντος διπλοῦς ἐλέχθη· ὅ τε γὰρ Τιβέριος εἰς τὸ ἐπάθος αὐτοῦ ἐκόμισε καὶ τῶν ἑκατοντάρχων καὶ τῶν χιλιάρχων, καὶ τῶν καθ’ ἑκάστην πόλιν πρῶτον βαστάσας·

The Albis rises in the Vandalic Mountains, and empties, a mighty river, into the northern ocean. Drusus undertook to cross this river, but failing in the attempt, set up trophies and withdrew. For a woman of superhuman size met him and said: “Whither, pray, art thou hastening, insatiable Drusus? It is not fated that thou shalt look upon all these lands. But depart; for the end alike of thy labours and of thy life is already at hand.” It indeed is marvellous that such a voice should have come to any man from the Diety, yet I cannot discredit the tale; for Drusus immediately departed, and as he was returning in haste, died on the way of some disease before reaching the Rhine. And I find confirmation of the story in these incidents: wolves were prowling about the camp and howling just before his death; two youths were seen riding through the midst of the camp; a sound as of women lamenting was heard; and there were shooting stars in the sky. So much for these events. Augustus, upon learning of Drusus' illness before it was far advanced (for he was not far off), had sent Tiberius to him in haste. Tiberius found him still breathing, and on his death carried the body to Rome, causing the centurions and military tribunes to carry it over the first stage of the journey, - as far as the winter quarters of the army, - and after that the foremost men of each city. When the body had been laid in state in the Forum, two funeral orations were delivered: Tiberius pronounced a eulogy there in the Forum, and Augustus pronounced one in the Circus Flaminius.
Drusus, together with his sons, received the title of Germanicus, and he was given the further honours of statues, an arch, and a cenotaph on the bank of the Rhine itself.

Orosius

6.21.12-7

Post hoc Claudius Drusus, priuignus Caesaris, Galliam Raetiamque sortitus maximas fortissimasque gentes Germaniae armis subegit. nam tunc, ueluti ad constitutum pacis diem festinarent, ita omnes ad experientiam belli decisionemue foederis undatim gentes commouebantur aut susceputurae condicioes pacis, si uincerentur, aut usurae quieta libertate, si uincerent. Norici Illyrii Pannonii Dalmatae Moesi Thraces et Daci Sarmatae plurimique et maximi Germaniae populi per diversos duces uel superati uel repressi uel etiam obiectu maximorum fluminum, Rheni Danuuiique, seclusi sunt. Drusus in Germany primum Usipetes, deinde Tencteros et chattos perdomuit. Marcomannos paene ad internecionem cecidit. postea fortissimas nationes et quibus natura uires, consuetudo experientiam uirium dabat, Cheruscos Suebos et Sygambros pariter uno bello sed etiam suis aspero superauit. quorum ex eo considerari uirtus ac feritas potest, quod mulieres quoque eorum, siuando praeuentu Romanorum inter plaustra suae concludebantur, deficientibus telis uel qualibet re, qua uelut telo uti furor possit, paruos filios conlisos humi in hostium ora iaciebant, in singulis filiorum necibus bis parricideae.

After this, Claudius Drusus, the stepson of Caesar, was allotted Gaul and Raetia, and with his troops subdued the bravest tribes of Germany. For at that time, as if they were hastening to a day established for peace, all the tribes like waves were moved to try war or an agreement of peace, either to accept the conditions of peace if they were conquered, or to enjoy tranquil peace if they conquered. The Norici, Illyrii, Pannonii, Dalmatae, Moesi, Thraces, and the Daci Sarmatae, the largest and strongest peoples of Germany, were either overcome or checked by different generals or even shut off by the largest of rivers, the Rhine and the Danube. Drusus in Germany first conquered the Usipetes, and then the Tencteri and Chatti. He slaughtered the Marcomanni almost to a man. Afterwards, he overcame the bravest nations, to whom nature gave strength and practice experience in the use of this strength, namely, the Cheruscii, Suebi, and Sugambri, all in one battle, but also a severe one for his men. The bravery and ferocity of
these men can be judged from the fact that, if ever their women were enclosed in the midst of their carts by an advance of the Romans, and if their weapons or anything that their fury might use as a weapon failed them, dashing their little children on the ground, they would throw them into the faces of the enemy, in the individual slaughters of their children committing murder twice.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} The text of Orosius is from Zangemeister (1889). The translation is from Deferrari (1964).
In dealing with these peoples distrust has been a great advantage, whereas those who have been trusted have done the greatest harm, as, for instance, the Cherusci and their subjects, in whose country three Roman legions, with their general Quintilius Varus, were destroyed by ambush in violation of the treaty. But they all paid the penalty, and afforded the younger Germanicus a most brilliant triumph – that triumph in which their most famous men and women were led captive, I mean Segimuntus, son of Segestes and chieftain of the Cherusci, and his sister Thusnelda, the wife of Armenius, the man who at the time of the violation of the treaty against Quintilius Varus was commander-in-chief of the Cheruscan army and even to this day is keeping up the war, and Thusnelda’s three-year-old son Thumelicus.

Seneca the Elder

Controv. 1.3.10


1 Text and translations of Strabo are from Jones (1924).
Quintilius Varus, then son-in-law of Germanicus and only a very young man, had declaimed this very *controversia* before Cestius. After describing the indignation of those standing around because the penalty was so swiftly snatched from before their eyes, he said: “The immortal gods heard the prayers and entreaties of the people. They called the unchaste woman back, so that she should not hurry through her execution so quickly.” Cestius had a lot of abuse for that epigram. “Did they call her back like a chariot-and-four? You used that image before, as well, by saying that she too had left the prison.” And after a lot more, he finally added something we all disapproved: “It was by that sort of carelessness that your father lost his army.” In telling off the son, he slandered the father.  

**Velleius Paterculus**

2.117-20

Tantum quod Gerdinam imposuerat Pannonico ac Delmatico bello Caesar manum, cum infra quinque consummati tanti operis dies funestae ex Germania epistulae nuntium attulere caesi Vari trucidatarumque legionum trium totdemque alarum et sex cohortium, uelut in hoc saltem tantummodo indulgente nobis fortuna, ne occupato duce tanta clades inferretur. Sed et causa et persona moram exigit. Vari Quintilius inlustri magis quam nobili ortus familia, uir ingenio mitis, moribus quietus, ut corpore, ita animo immobiliior, otio magis castrorum quam bellicae adsuetus militiae, pecuniae uero quam non contemper, Syria, cui praefuerat, declarauit, quam pauper diuitem ingressus diues pauperem reliquit; is, cum exercitu, qui erat in Germania, praesesset, concept es esse homines, qui nihil praeter uocem membraque hab erent hominum, quique gladiis domari non poterant, posse iure mulceri. Quo proposito mediam ingressus Germaniam ulul inter iuros pacis gaudentes dulcedine iurisdictionibus agendoque pro tribunali ordine trahebat aestiu.

At illi, quod nisi expertus uix credat, in summa feritate uersutissimi natumque mendacio genus, simulantes fictas litium series et nunc prouocantes alter alterum in iurgia, nunc agentes gratias quod ea Romana iustitia finiret feritasque sua noutate incognitae disciplinae mitesceret et solita armis discriui iure terminarentur, in summam socordiam perduxere Quintilium, usque eo, ut se praetorem urbanum in foro ius dicere, non in mediis Germaniae finibus exercitu praesesse crederet. Tum iuuenis genere nobilis, manu fortis, sensu celer, ultra barbarum promptus ingenio, nomine Armii, Sigimeri principis gentis eius filius, ardoerem animi vultu oculosque praeferen, adsiduu militiae nostrae prioris comes, iure etiam ciuitatis Romanae decus equestris consecutus gradus, seinitia ducis in occasionem

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2 Text and translations of Seneca the Elder are from Winterbottom (1974).

Ordinem atrociissimae calamitatis, qua nulla post Crassi in Parthis damnum in externis gentibus grauior Romanis fuit, iustis uoluminibus ut alii, ita nos conabimur exponere: nunc summa defienda est. Exercitus omnium fortissimus, disciplina, manu experientiaque bellorum inter Romanos milites princeps, marcore ducis, perfidia hostis, iniquitate fortunae circumuentus, cum ne pugnandi quidem egrediendive occasio nisi inique, nec in quantum uoluerant, data esset immunis, castigatis etiam quibusdam graui poena, quia Romanis et armis et animis usi fuissent, inclusus siluis, paludibus, insidiis ab eo hoste ad internecionem trucidatus est, quam ita semper more pecudum trucidauerat, ut uitam aut mortem eius nunc ira nunc uenia temperaret. Duci plus ad moriendum quam ad pugnandum animi fuit: quippe paterni auitique successor exempli se ipse transfixit. At e praefectis castrorum duobus quam clarum exemplum L. Eggius, tam turpe Ceionius prodidit, qui, cum longe maximam partem absumpsisset acies, auctor deditionis supplicio quam proelio mori maluit. At Vala Numonius, legatus Vari, cetera quietus ac probus, diri auctor exempli, spoliatum equite peditem relinquens fuga cum aliis Rhenum petere ingressus est. Quod factum eius fortuna ulta est; non enim desertis superfuit, sed desertor occidit. Vari corpus semiustum hostilis lacerauerat feritas; caput eius abscisum latumque ad Maroboduum et ab eo missum ad Caesarem gentilicibus tamen tumuli sepultura honoratum est.

His auditis reolat ad patrem Caesar; perpetuus patronus Romani imperii adsuetam sibi causam suscipit. Mittitur ad Germaniam, Gallias confirmat, disponit exercitus, praeediam munit et se magnum saepe hostis metiens, qui Cimbricam Teutonicamque militiam Italiae minabatur, ultro Rhenum cum exercitu transgreditur. Arma infert hosti quem aceruisse pater et patria contenti erant; penetrat interius, aperit limites, uastat agros, urit domos, fundit obuios maximaque cum gloria, incolumi omnium, quos transduxerat, numero in hiberna reueruitur. Reddatur uerum L. Asprenati testimonium, qui legatus sub auunculo suo Varo militans gnaua uirilique opera duarum legiunum, quibus praerat, exercitum immunem tanta calamitate seruauit matureque ad inferiorea hiberna descendendo uacillantium etiam cis Rhenum sitarum gentium animos confirmauit. Sunt
tamen, qui ut uiuos ab eo uindicatos, ita iugulatorum sub Varo occupata
crediderint patrimonia hereditatemque occisi exercitus, in quantum uluerit,
ab eo aditam. L. etiam Caedicii praefecti castrorum eorumque, qui una
circumdati Alisone immensis Germanorum copis obsidebantur, laudanda
uirtus est, qui omnibus difficultatibus superatis, quas inopia rerum
intolerabilis, uis hostium faciebat inexsuperabilis, nec temerario consilio nec
segni prouidentia usi speculatique opportunatatem ferro sibi ad suos
peperere reditum. Ex quo apparret Varum, sane grauem et bonae uoluntatis
uirum, magis imperatoris defectum consilio quam uirtute destitutum militum
se magnificentissimumque perdidisse exercitum. Cum in captiuos
saemiret ura Germanis, praecleri facinoris auctor fuit Caldus Caefilus,
adolescens uetustate familiae suae dignissimus, qui complexus catenarum,
quibus uinctus erat, seriem, ita illas inlisit capiti suo, ut protinus pariter
sanguinis cerebrique effluuo expiraret.

Scarcely had Caesar put the finishing touch upon the Pannonian and
Dalmatian war, when, within five days of the completion of this task,
dispatches from Germany brought the baleful news of the death of Varus,
and of the slaughter of three legions, of as many divisions of cavalry, and of
six cohorts – as though fortune were granting us this indulgence at least,
that such a disaster should not be brought upon us when our commander
was occupied by other wars. The cause of this defeat and the personality of
the general require of me a brief digression. Varus Quintilius, descended
from a famous rather than a high-born family, was a man of mild character
and of a quiet disposition, somewhat slow in mind as he was in body, and
more accustomed to the leisure of the camp than to actual service in war.
That he was no despiser of money is demonstrated by his governorship of
Syria: he entered the rich province a poor man, but left it a rich man and the
province poor. When placed in charge of the army in Germany, he
entertained the notion that the Germans were a people who were men only
in limbs and voice, and that they, who could not be subdued by the sword,
could be soothed by the law. With this purpose in mind he entered the heart
of Germany as though he were going among a people enjoying the
blessings of peace, and sitting on his tribunal he wasted the time of a
summer campaign in holding court and observing the proper details of legal
procedure. But the Germans, who with their great ferocity combine great
craft, to an extent scarcely credible to one who has had no experience with
them, and are a race to lying born, by trumping up a series of fictitious
lawsuits, now provoking one another to disputes, and now expressing their
gratitude that Roman justice was settling these disputes, that their own
barbarous nature was being softened down by this new and hitherto
unknown method, and that quarrels which were usually settled by arms
were now being ended by law, brought Quintilius to such a complete degree
of negligence, that he came to look upon himself as a city praetor
administering justice in the forum, and not a general in command of an
army in the heart of Germany. Thereupon appeared a young man of noble
birth, brave in action and alert in mind, possessing an intelligence quite
beyond the ordinary barbarian; he was, namely, Arminius, the son of Sigimer, a prince of that nation, and he showed in his countenance and in his eyes the fire of the mind within. He had been associated with us constantly on private campaigns, and had even attained the dignity of equestrian rank. This young man made use of the negligence of the general as an opportunity for treachery, sagaciously seeing that no one could be more quickly overpowered than the man who feared nothing, and that the most common beginning of disaster was a sense of security. At first, then, he admitted but a few, later a large number, to a share in his design; he told them, and convinced them too, that the Romans could be crushed, added execution to resolve, and named a day for carrying out the plot. This was disclosed to Varus through Segestes, a loyal man of that race and of illustrious name, who also demanded that the conspirators be put in chains. But fate now dominated the plans of Varus and had blindfolded the eyes of his mind. Indeed, it is usually the case that heaven perverts the judgement of the man whose fortune it means to reverse, and brings it to pass — and this is the wretched part of it — that that which happens by chance seems to be deserved, and accident passes over into culpability. And so Quintilius refused to believe the story, and insisted upon judging the apparent friendship of the Germans toward him by the standard of his merit. And, after this first warning, there was no time left for a second. The details of this terrible calamity, the heaviest that had befallen the Romans on foreign soil since the disaster of Crassus in Parthia, I shall endeavour to set forth, as others have done, in my larger work. Here I can merely lament the disaster as a whole. An army unexcelled in bravery, the first of Roman armies in discipline, in energy, and in experience in the field, through the negligence of its general, the perfidy of the enemy, and the unkindness of fortune was surrounded, nor was as much opportunity as they had wished given to the soldiers either of fighting or of extricating themselves, except against heavy odds; nay, some were even heavily chastised for using the arms and showing the spirit of Romans. Hemmed in by forests and marshes and ambuscades, it was exterminated almost to a man by the very enemy whom it had always slaughtered like cattle, whose life or death had depended solely upon the wrath or the pity of the Romans. The general had more courage to die than to fight, for, following the example of his father and grandfather, he ran himself through with his sword. Of the two prefects of the camp, Lucius Eggius furnished a precedent as noble as that of Ceionius was base, who, after the greater part of the army had perished, proposed its surrender, preferring to die by torture at the hands of the enemy than in battle. Vala Numonius, lieutenant of Varus, who, in the rest of his life, had been an inoffensive and an honourable man, also set a fearful example in that he left the infantry unprotected by the cavalry and in flight tried to reach the Rhine with his squadrons of horse. But fortune avenged his act, for he did not survive those whom he had abandoned, but died in the act of deserting them. The body of Varus, partially burned, was mangled by the enemy in their barbarity; his head was cut off and taken to
Maroboduus and was sent by him to Caesar; but in spite of the disaster it was honoured by burial in the tomb of his family. On hearing of this disaster, Caesar flew to his father’s side. The constant protector of the Roman empire again took up his accustomed part. Dispatched to Germany, he reassured the provinces of Gaul, distributed his armies, strengthened the garrison towns, and then, measuring himself by the standard of his own greatness, and not by the presumption of an enemy who threatened Italy with a war like that of the Cimbri and Teutones, he took the offensive and crossed the Rhine with his army. He thus made aggressive war upon the enemy when his father and his country would have been content to let him hold them in check, he penetrated into the heart of the country, opened up military roads, devastated fields, burned houses, routed those who came against him, and, without loss to the troops with which he had crossed, he returned, covered with glory, to winter quarters. Due tribute should be paid to Lucius Asprenas, who was serving as lieutenant under Varus his uncle, and who, backed by the brave and energetic support of the two legions under his command, saved his army from this great disaster, and by a quick descent to the quarters of the army in Lower Germany strengthened the allegiance of the races even on the hither side of the Rhine who were beginning to waver. There are those, however, who believed that, though he had saved the lives of the living, he had appropriated to his own use the property of the dead who were slain with Varus, and that inheritances of the slaughtered army were claimed by him at pleasure. The valour of Lucius Caedicius, prefect of the camp, also deserves praise, and of those who, pent up with him at Aliso, were besieged by an immense force of Germans. For, overcoming all their difficulties which want rendered unendurable and the forces of the enemy almost insurmountable, following a design that was carefully considered, and using a vigilance that was ever on the alert, they watched their chance, and with the sword won their way back to their friends. From all this it is evident that Varus, who was, it must be confessed, a man of character and of good intentions, lost his life and his magnificent army more through lack of judgement in the commander than of valour in his soldiers. When the Germans were venting their rage upon their captives, an heroic act was performed by Caldus Caelius, a young man worthy in every way of his long line of ancestors, who, seizing a section of the chain with which he was bound, brought it down with such force upon his own head as to cause his instant death, both his brains and his blood gushing from the wound.}

\[3\] Text and translations of Velleius are from Shipley (1924).
Manilius

Astron. 1.896-905

quin et bella canunt ignes subitosque tumultus
et clandestinis surgentia fraudibus arma,
externas modo per gentes ut, foedere rupto
cum fera ductorem rapuit Germania Varum
infecitque trium legionum sanguine campos,
arserunt toto passim minitantia mundo
lumina, et ipsa tulit bellum natura per ignes
opposuitque suas vires finemque minata est.
ne mirere gravis rerumque hominumque ruinas,
saepe domi culpa est: nescimus credere caelo.

Wars, too, the fires portend, and sudden insurrection,
and arms uplifted in stealthy treachery;
so of late in foreign parts, when, its oaths forsworn,
barbarous Germany made away with our commander Varus
and stained the fields with three legions' blood,
did menacing lights burn in every quarter of the skies;
nature herself waged war with fire,
marshalling her forces against us and threatening our destruction.
Wonder not at the grievous disasters which betide man and man's affairs,
for the fault oft lies within us: we have not sense to trust heaven's message.  

Pliny the Elder

HN 7.150

...iuxta haec Variana clades et maiestatis eius foeda suggillatio,...

...next the disaster of Varus and the foul slur upon his dignity;...  

Frontinus

Str. 3.15.4

Reliqui ex Variana clade, cum obsiderentur, quia defici frumento videbantur,
horrea tota nocte circumduxerunt captivos, deinde praecisis manibus
dimiserunt; hi circumsedentibus suis persuaserunt, ne spem maturae
expugnationis reponerent in fame Romanorum, quibus ingens alimentorum
copia superesset.

4 Text and translations of Manilius are from Goold (1977).

5 Text and translations of Pliny the Elder are from Rackham (1942).
When the survivors of the Varian disaster were under siege and seemed to be running short of food, they spent an entire night in leading prisoners round their store-houses; then, having cut off their hands, they turned them loose. These men persuaded the besieging force to cherish no hope of an early reduction of the Romans by starvation, since they had an abundance of food supplies.\(^6\)

\textit{Str. 4.7.8}

Caedicius primipilaris, qui in Germania post Varianam cladem obsessis nostris pro duce fuit, veritus, ne barbari ligna quae congesta erant vallo admoverent et castra eius incenderent, simulata lignorum inopia, missis undique qui ea furarentur effecit, ut Germani universos trucnos amolirentur.

Caedicius, a centurion of the first rank, who acted as leader in Germany, when, after the Varian disaster, our men were beleagured, was afraid that the barbarians would bring up to the fortifications the wood which they had gathered, and would set fire to his camp. He therefore pretended to be in need of fuel, and sent out men in every direction to steal it. In this way he caused the Germans to remove the whole supply of felled trees.

\textit{Florus}

\textit{2.30.29-39}

Sed difficilius est provincias obtinere quam facere; viribus parantur, iure retinentur. Igitur breve id gaudium. Quippe Germani victi magis quam domiti erant, moresque nostros magis quam arma sub imperatore Druso suspiciebant; postquam ille defunctus est, Vari Quintili libidinem ac superbiam haud secus quam saevitiam odisse coeperunt. Ausus ille agere conventum, et in Cathhos edixerat, quasi violentiam barbarorum lictoris virgis et praeconis voce posset inhibere. At illi, qui iam pridem robigine obsitos enses inertesque maererent equos, ut primum togas et saeviora armis iura viderunt, duce Armenio arma corripiunt; cum interim tanta erat Varo pacis fiducia, ut ne profita quidem per Segestem unum principum coniuratione commoveretur. Itaque injudicandum et nihil tale metuentem ex improviso adorti, cum ille – o securitas – ad tribunal citaret, undique invadunt; castra rapiuntur, tres legiones opprimuntur. Varus perditas res eodem quo Cannensem diem Paulus et fato est et animo secutus. Nihil illa caede per paludes perque silvas cruentius, nihil insultatione barbarorum intolerabilius, praecipe tamen in causarum patronos. Aliis oculos, alios manus amputabant, uni os obsatum, recisa prius lingua, quam in manu tenens barbarus “tandem” ait “vipera sibilare desisti.” Ipsius quoque consulis corpus, quod militum pietas humi abdiderat, effossum. Signa et

\(^6\) Text and translations of Frontinus are from Bennett (1925).
aquilas duas adhuc barbari possident, tertiam signifer, prius quam in manus hostium veniret, evolit mersamque intra baltei sui latebras gerens in cruenta palude sic latuit. Hac clade factum, ut imperium, quod in litore Oceani non steterat, in ripa Rheni fluminis staret.

But it is more difficult to retain than to create provinces; they are won by force, they are secured by justice. Therefore our joy was short-lived; for the Germans had been defeated rather than subdued, and under the rule of Drusus they respected our moral qualities rather than our arms. After his death they began to detest the licentiousness and pride not less than the cruelty of Quintilius Varus. He had the temerity to hold an assembly and had issued an edict against the Catthi, just as though he could restrain the violence of barbarians by the rod of a lictor and the proclamation of a herald. But the Germans who had long been regretting that their swords were rusted and their horses idle, as soon as they saw the toga and experienced laws more cruel than arms, snatched up their weapons under the leadership of Armenius. Meanwhile Varus was so confident of peace that he was quite unperturbed even when the conspiracy was betrayed to him by Segestes, one of the chiefs. And so when he was unprepared and had no fear of any such thing, at a moment when (such was his confidence) he was actually summoning them to appear before his tribunal, they rose and attacked him from all sides. His camp was seized, and three legions were overwhelmed. Varus met disaster by the same fate and with the same courage as Paulus on the fatal day of Cannae. Never was there slaughter more cruel than took place there in the marshes and woods, never were more intolerable insults inflicted by barbarians, especially those directed against the legal pleaders. They put out the eyes of some of them and cut off the hands of others; they sewed up the mouth of one of them after first cutting out his tongue, which one of the barbarians held in his hand, exclaiming, “At last, you viper, you have ceased to hiss.” The body too of the consul himself, which the dutiful affection of the soldiers had buried, was disinterred. As for the standards and eagles, the barbarians possess two to this day; the third eagle was wrenched from its pole, before it could fall into the hands of the enemy, by the standard-bearer, who, carrying it concealed in the folds round his belt, secreted himself in the blood-stained marsh. The result of this disaster was that the empire, which had not stopped on the shores of the Ocean, was checked on the banks of the Rhine. 

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7 Text and translations of Florus are from Forster (1929).
Suetonius

**Aug. 23.1-2**

Graves ignominias cladesque duas omnino nec alibi quam in Germania accepit, Lollianam et Varianam, sed Lollianam maioris infamiae quam detrimenti, Varianam paene exitiabilem tribus legionibus cum duce legatisque et auxiliis omnibus caesis. hac nuntiata excubias per urbem indixit, ne quis tumultus exsistaret, et praevidit provinciarum propagavit imperium, ut a peritis et assuetis socii continerentur. Vovit et magus ludos Loui Optimo Maximo, si res p. in meliorem statum vertisset: quod factum Cimbrico Marsicoque bello erat. Adeo denique consternatum ferunt, ut per continuos menses barba capilloque summis interdum foribus illideret vociferans: “Quintili Vare, legiones redde!” diemque cladis quotannis maestam habuerit ac lugubrem.

He suffered but two severe and ignominious defeats, those of Lollius and Varus, both of which were in Germany. Of these the former was more humiliating than serious, but the latter was almost fatal, since three legions were cut to pieces with their general, his lieutenants, and all the auxiliaries. When the news of this came, he ordered that watch be kept by night throughout the city, to prevent any outbreak, and he prolonged the terms of the governors of the provinces, that the allies might be held to their allegiance by experienced men with whom they were acquainted. He also vowed great games to Jupiter Optimus Maximus, in case the condition of the commonwealth should improve, a thing which had been done in the Cimbric and Marsic wars. In fact, they say that he was so greatly affected that for several months in succession he cut neither his beard nor his hair, and sometimes he would dash his head against a door, crying: "Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions!" And he observed the day of the disaster each year as one of sorrow and mourning.8

**Tib. 16.2.3-18.1.6**

Ac perseverantiae grande pretium tuit, toto Illyrico, quod inter Italam regnumque Noricum et Thraciam et Macedoniam interque Danuvium flumen et sinum maris Hadriatici patet, perdito et in dicionem redacto. Cui gloriam amplior adhuc ex opportunitate cumulus accessit. Nam sub id fere tempus Quintilius Varus cum tribus legionibus in Germania perit, nemine dubitante quin victores Germani iuncti se Pannoniis fuerint, nisi debellatum prius Illyricum esset. Quas ob res triumphus ei decretus est multique et magni honores. Censuerunt etiam uidam ut Pannonicus, alii ut Invictus, nonnulli ut Pius cognominaretur. Sed de cognomine intercessit Augustus, eo contentum repromittens, quod se defuncto suscepturus esset. Triumphum ipse distult maesta civitate clade Variana; nihil minus urbem

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8 Text and translations of Suetonius’ *Augustus* are from Rolfe (1913).
praetextatus et laurea coronatus intravit positumque in Saeptis tribunal senatu astante conscendit ac medius inter duos consules cum Augusto simul sedit; unde populo consalutato circum templum deductus est. Proximo anno repetita Germania cum animadverteret Varianam cladem temeritate et negligentia ducis accidisse, nihil non de consilii sententia egit; semper alias sui arbitrii contentusque se uno, tunc praeter consuetudinem cum compluribus de ratione belli communicavit. Curam quoque solito exactiorem praestitit.

He reaped an ample reward for his perseverance, for he completely subdued and reduced to submission the whole of Illyricum, which is bounded by Italy and the kingdom of Noricum, by Thrace and Macedonia, by the Danube, and by the Adriatic sea. Circumstances gave this exploit a larger and crowning glory; for it was at just about that time that Quintilius Varus perished with three legions in Germany, and no one doubted that the victorious Germans would have united with the Pannonians, had not Illyricum been subdued first. Consequently a triumph was voted him and many high honours. Some also recommended that he be given the surname of Pannonicus, others of Invictus, others of Pius. Augustus however vetoed the surname, reiterating the promise that Tiberius would be satisfied with one which he would receive at his father's death. Tiberius himself put off the triumph, because the country was in mourning for the disaster to Varus; but he entered the city clad in the purple-bordered toga and crowned with laurel, and mounting a tribunal which had been set up in the Saepta, while the senate stood alongside, he took his seat beside Augustus between the two consuls. Having greeted the people from this position, he was escorted to the various temples. The next year he returned to Germany, and realising that the disaster to Varus was due to that general's rashness and lack of care, he took no step without the approval of a council; while he had always before been a man of independent judgment and self-reliance, then contrary to his habit he consulted with many advisers about the conduct of the campaign. He also observed more scrupulous care than usual.⁹

Calig. 31.1

Queri etiam palam de condicione temporum suorum solebat, quod nullis calamitatibus publicis insignirentur; Augusti principatum clade Variana, Tiberi ruina spectaculorum apud Fidenas memorabilem factum, suo oblivionem imminere prosperitate rerum; atque identidem exercituum caedes, famem, pestilentiam, incendia, hiatum aliquem terrae optabat.

⁹ Text and translations of Suetonius' Tiberius are from Rolfe (1913).
He even used openly to deplore the state of his times, because they had been marked by no public disasters, saying that the rule of Augustus had been made famous by the Varus massacre, and that of Tiberius by the collapse of the amphitheatre at Fidenae, while his own was threatened with oblivion because of its prosperity; and every now and then he wished for the destruction of his armies, for famine, pestilence, fires, or a great earthquake.¹⁰

Cassius Dio

56.18-25

ἀρτι τε ταύτα ἐδέδοκτο, καὶ ἀγγελία δεινή ἐκ τῆς Γερμανίας ἐλθούσα ἐκώλυσε σφας διερτάσαι. ἐν γὰρ τῷ αὐτῷ ἐκείνῳ χρόνῳ καὶ ἐν τῇ Κελτικῇ τάδε συνηνέχθη. εἰχόν τινα τῆς Ῥωμαίου αὐτῆς, οὐκ ἄθροά ἀλλ’ ὡς καὶ ἐτυχε χειρωθέντα, διὸ οὐδὲ ἐς ἱστορίας μνήμην ἀφίκετο· καὶ στρατιῶταί τε αὐτῶν ἐκεί ἐχείμαζον καὶ πόλεις συνωκίζοντο, ἐς τὸν κόσμον σφόν οἱ βάρβαροι μετερρυθμίζοντο καὶ ἄγορας ἐνόμιζον συνόδους τε εἰρηνικάς ἔποιοντο. οὐ μέντοι καὶ τῶν πατρίων ἱστορίας μνήμην ἀφίκετο· καὶ στρατιῶταὶ τε αὐτῶν ἐχείμαζον καὶ πόλεις συνωκίζοντο, ἐς τοὺς κόσμους οἱ βάρβαροι μετερρυθμίζοντο καὶ ἀγοραὶ ἐνόμιζον συνόδους τε εἰρηνικάς ἔποιοντο. οὐ μέντοι καὶ τῶν πατρίων ἱστορίας μνήμην ἀφίκετο· καὶ στρατιῶταί τε αὐτῶν ἐχείμαζον καὶ πόλεις συνωκίζοντο, ἐς τοὺς κόσμους οἱ βάρβαροι μετερρυθμίζοντο καὶ ἀγοραὶ ἐνόμιζον συνόδους τε εἰρηνικάς ἔποιοντο.

¹⁰ Text and translations of Suetonius’ Caligula are from Rolfe (1913).
τῶν συνέβαινε τοῖς καὶ τοῖς ἀντέδρων οἷα σφαλερώτατα καὶ ὑπηκόων τάς εὐαλωτότερός πλείους ὑλάς τοὺς τῆς ἔσχεν ῥῦμαίους, καὶ πρὶν τοὺς πολεμίους σφίσι προσπεσεῖν, ἐκεῖνα τὸ τέμνοντας καὶ ὁδοποιοῦντας γεφυροῦντάς τε τὰ τοῦτο δεόμενα πονηθῆναι. ἤγον δὲ καὶ ἁμάξας πολλάς καὶ νωτοφόρα πολλάς ὡς ἐν εἰρήνῃ· παῖδες τε ὡς ὅλιγοι καὶ γυναῖκες ἢ τῇ ἀλλῇ θεραπείᾳ συγκῆ αὐτοῖς συνεπέτειτο, ὡστε καὶ κατὰ τοὺς ἐσκεδασμένη τῇ ὁδοποιρίᾳ χρήσθαι. κἂν τοῦτο καὶ ὑπὸς καὶ ἄνεμος πολὺς ἐπιγενόμενοι ἐπὶ καὶ μᾶλλον σφᾶς διέστειραν· τὸ τοῦ ἐδαφοῦς ὀλιθηρῶν περὶ τὰς ρίζας καὶ περὶ τοῖς στελέχησαν γενόμενον σφαλερώτατα αὐτοὺς βαδίζειν ἐποίει, καὶ τὰ ἀκρα τῶν δένδρων καταβραυόμενα καὶ καταπιπτόντα διετάρασσεν. ἐν τοιαύτῃ ὡστε στὸς τῶν ῥωμαίων ὄντων, ὁί βάρβαροι πανταχόθεν ἁμα αὐτοὺς ἐξαπιναῖς δι’ αὐτῶν τῶν λοχμωδεστάτων, ἀτε καὶ ἐμπειρο τῶν τριμμῶν ὄντες, περιεστοιχίσας, καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον πορρωθέν ἐβαλλόν, ἔπειτα δὲ, ὦς ἡμύνετο μὲν ὑδεις ἐπιτρώκοντο δὲ πολλοί, ὀμός αὐτοῖς ἐξέφυγεν· οὐα γὰρ ὡστε ἐν τάξει τοῦ ἀλλὰ ἀναμιξές τοῖς τοῖς αὐτῶς ἀνάπλοιοι πορευόμενοι, οὔτε συστραφῆσαι τῇ ῥαδίως δυνάμενοι, ἐλάττους τὰς ταυτίς ἔκατοσ τῶν αὐτοῖς προσμιγνύντων σφίσιν ὄντς, ἔπαχον μὲν πολλά, ἀντέδρων δὲ ὕδεις. αὐτοὶ τε ὡς ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο, χωρίου πινὸς ἐπιπεθείου, ὡς γέ ἐν ὅρει ὑλωδεῖ ἐνεδέχετο, λαβόμενοι, καὶ μετὰ τούτῳ τὰς τὲ πλεῖσσο ἁμαξάς καὶ τάλλα τὰ ὡς πάνι σφίσιν ἀναγκαία τὰ μὲν κατακαύσαντες τὰ δὲ καὶ καταλιπόντες, συντεταγμένοι μὲν τῇ μᾶλλον τῇ ὡστεραίᾳ ἐπορεύθησαν, ὠστε καὶ ἐς ψυλλιον τὸ χωρίον προχωρήσαι, οὐ μὲντοι καὶ ἀναμιμτὶ ἀπήλλαξαν. ἐντεύθεν δὲ ἄραντες ἐς τῇ ὑλας αὐθίς ἐσέπεσαν, καὶ ἡμύνοντο μὲν πρὸς τοὺς προστέποντος σφίσιν, οὐκ ἐλάχιστο δὲ ὑπ’ αὐτὸ προτέρου ἐπιτρέψαντο· ὑπερφέρομενοι γὰρ ἐν στενοχωρίᾳ, ὡπως ἄθροι ἢττης τῷ ὤμῳ καὶ ὁμήθαν επιτρέχουσιν αὐτοῖς, πολλὰ μὲν περὶ ἀλλῆλος πολλὰ δὲ καὶ περὶ τοῖς δένδροις ἐσφαλλόντο· τετάρτῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ πορευόμενοι σφίσιν έγένετο, καὶ αὐτοῖς ὑπὸς τὰς αὐθίς λάβρους καὶ ἀδελείμοι μέγας προστρέξαν ὡστε ποι ἱσταθεί παιγής ἐπέτρεπεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν χρήσιν σφας τῶν ὁπλῶν ἀφείλετο· ὡστε γὰρ τοῖς τοις τος παγίως· ὡστε τοῖς ἀκοντίοις, ἢ ταῖς γε ἀστός ἀτε καὶ διαβροχοισ ὡσίας, καλῶς χρῆσαν ἐξοντε κως τὸς γὰρ παλεοῦς, ψυλλίς τὸ τὸ πλεῖστον ὤμοι καὶ τὴν ἐξουσίαν καὶ τῶς ἐφόδου καὶ τῆς ἀναχωρήσεως ἀδεὰ ἔχουσιν, ἦττον που ταῦτα συνέβαινεν. πρὸς δὲ ἐπὶ αὐτοὶ τὸ πολὺ πλεῖστοι γεγονότες (καὶ γὰρ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν πρότερον περισκοποῦντων συχνὶ ἄλλως τε καὶ ἐπὶ τῇ λείᾳ συνήλθον) καὶ ἐκεῖνοις ἐλάττους ἤδη ὅντας (πολλοὶ γὰρ ἐν ταῖς πρὶν μάχαις ἀπολύσας) καὶ ἐκκυκλουτὸς βάς καὶ κατεφόνους, ὡστε καὶ τὸν Οὐάρον καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς λογισμωτάτους, φοβηθέντας μὴ ἤτοι ἔςωθυβίωμεν ἢ καὶ
πρός τῶν ἐχθίστων ἀποθάνωσι (καὶ γὰρ τετρωμένοι ἦσαν), ἔργων δεινῶν μὲν ἀναγκαίον δὲ τολμῆσαι· αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰποῦσι άπτεκέτειναν. ώς δὲ τούτῳ δηηγέλθη, οὐδὲ τῶν ἀλλῶν οὐδείς ἔτη, εἰ καὶ ἔρρωτο τις, ἡμύνατο, ἀλλὰ οἱ μὲν τὸν ἄρχοντά φυλών ἐμισῆσαν, οἱ δὲ καὶ τὰ ὀπλα παρενέπησον σφας τῷ βουλομένῳ φονεύειν· φυγεῖν γὰρ οὐδ' εἰ τὰ μάλιστα τις ήθελεν ἐδύνατο. ἐκόπτετο τε τὸ οὐν ἀδεώς πᾶς καὶ ἀνήκριτος, καὶ τὰ τε...καὶ τὰ ἑρώματα πάντα κατέσχον οἱ βάρβαροι ἄτερ ἐνός, περὶ δὲ ἀσχοληθέντες οὔτε τὸν Ῥήνον δείβασιν οὔτ' ές τὴν Γαλατίαν εἰσέβαλον. ἀλλ' οὔτ' ἐκεῖνο χειρώσασθαι ήδυνηθήσαν, ἐπεί μήτε πολιορκεῖν ἡπίσταντο καὶ τοξόταις οἱ Ῥωμαῖοι συγνοὶ ἔχρωντο, εξ' ὧν καὶ ἀνεκόπτοντο καὶ πλείτοις ἀπώλετο. μετὰ δὲ τούτῳ πυθόμενοι φυλακὴν τοῦ Ῥήνου τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ποιήσασθαί καὶ τὸν Τιβέριον σὺν βαρεί προσελάουσιν στρατεύματι, οἱ μὲν πολλοὶ ἀπανέστησαν τοῦ ἑρώματος, οἱ δ' ὑπολειπθέντες ἀποστάντες αὐτοῦ, ὡστε μὴ αἰφνιδίως ἐπεξελέγησαν τῶν ἑντὸς κακουθαί, τὰς ὄντος ἐπήρουν, σπάνεισι αἰρόντες ἐλπικότες αὐτοῦ. οἱ δ' ἔντος ὄντες Ῥωμαίους ἐως μὲν εὑπόρων τροφῆς, κατὰ χώραν ἔμεθεν βοήθειαν προσδεδομούσι· ώς δ' οὔτε τις ἔπεκουρεί αὐτοῖς καὶ λιῶμε συνείχοντο, ἐξῆλθον νῦκτα τηρήσαντες χειμέριον (ήσαν δὲ στρατιώται μὲν ὄλιγοι, ἀστολοὶ δὲ πολλοὶ), καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον τὸ δεύτερον σφων φυλακήριον παρῆλθαν, ἐπεί δὲ πρὸς τῷ τρίτῳ ἐγένοντο, ἐφωράθησαν, τῶν τε γυναίκων καὶ τῶν παῖδων συνεχῶς τοὺς ἐν τῇ ἡλικίᾳ διὰ τὸν κάματον καὶ διὰ τὸν φόβον τοῦ τὸ σκότους καὶ τὸ ψύχος ἀνακαλύπτων. κἂν πάντες ἀπώλοντο ἢ καὶ ἐᾶλωσαν, εἰ μὴ οἱ βάρβαροι περὶ τῆς τῆς λείας ἄρπαγην ἄσχολοι ἐγένοντο. οὕτω γὰρ οἱ τε ἐρρωμενέστατοι πολύ ἀπέστασαν, καὶ οἱ σαλπικάτοι οἱ σὺν αὐτοῖς ὄντες τροχαίον τι συμβοηθάντες δόξαν τοῖς ἐναντίοις ώς καὶ παρὰ τοῦ Ἀσπρήνου πεπερατόν καὶ τὸν Τιβέριον παρέσχατο παρέσχασιν. κάκ τούτος ἐκεῖνοι τοῦ ἐπέσχαθον τῆς διώξεως, καὶ ο Ἀσπρήνας μαθὼν τὸ γηγόμενον ὄντως σφίσαν ἐπεκουρήσῃ, καὶ τινες μετὰ τούτω καὶ τῶν ἐαυτοκότων ἀνεκομίζοντας, λυτρωθέντες ὑπὸ τῶν οἰκείων· ἐπιτρέπῃ γὰρ σφίσα τοῦτο ποιῆσαι ἐφ' ὃ τε ἔξω τῆς Ἰταλίας αὐτούς εἶναι. τοῦτο μὲν ὑστερὸν ἐγένετο· τότε δὲ μαθὼν ὁ Ἁὔγουστος τὰ τῷ Ὀὔρῳ συμβεβηκότα τὴν τῇ ἔσθητα, ώς τίνες φασι περισσήτωτο, καὶ πένθος μέγα ἔτι τοῖς ἀπολωλόσι καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ Γερμανίων καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν Γαλατίων δεῖ ἐποίησαι, τότε τὸ μεγίστον ὁτι καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν Ἰταλίαν τὴν τὴν τὴν Ρώμην αὐτὴν ὀρμήσει σφᾶς προσεδοκήσῃ, καὶ οὔτε πολιτικά η ἡλικία ἀξιολογοῦσα ὑπελέλειπτο, καὶ τὰ συμμαχικά, ὡς καὶ ὀφελός ἦν, ἐκεκάκωτο. ὡςμος δ' οὖν τά τὲ ἄλλα ώς ἐκ τῶν παρόντων παρασκευάσατο, καὶ έπειδή μηδεῖς τῶν τὴν στρατεύσμα αὐτοῖς, καὶ τῶν μὲν μηδέπω πέντε καὶ τρίακοντα ἔτη γεγονότων τοῦ πέμπτον, τῶν δὲ πρεσβυτέρων τὸν δέκατον ἀεὶ λαχόντα τὴν τῇ οὔσιν ἀφείλετο καὶ ἡτίμησε. καὶ τῆλος, ώς καὶ πάνω πολλοὶ οὔδ' οὔτω τί αὐτοῦ προείμων, ἀπέκτεινεν τίνας. ἀποκληρώσας δὲ ἐκ τοῦ τῶν ἐστρατευμένων ἄνὴρ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐξελευθέρων δούσιν ἡδυνηθήτω, κατέλεξε, καὶ εὐθὺς στουδῆ μετὰ τοῦ Τιβερίου εὖς τὴν Γερμανίαν ἔτεμεν. ἐπειδὴ τοις δυνατοὶ ήτοι τῇ Ρώμη καὶ Γαλατία καὶ Κελτοῖ, οἱ μὲν ἀλλοις ἐπιδημοῦντες οἱ δὲ καὶ ἐν τῷ δορυφορικῷ στρατεύμων, ἦσαν, ἐφοβήθη μή τι νεοχώρωσι, καὶ τοῦτοι μὲν ἐς νῆσος τίνας ἀπέστειλε, τοῖς δ' ἀόπλοις ἐκχωρήσας τῆς πόλεως προσέταξε.
Scarcely had these decrees been passed, when terrible news that arrived from the province of Germany prevented them from holding the festival. I shall now relate the events which had taken place in Germany during this period. The Romans were holding portions of it - not entire regions, but merely such districts as happened to have been subdued, so that no record has been made of the fact - and soldiers of theirs were wintering there and cities were being founded. The barbarians were adapting themselves to Roman ways, were becoming accustomed to hold mar

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ancestral habits, their native manners, their old life of independence, or the power derived from arms. Hence, so long as they were unlearning these customs gradually and by the way, as one may say, under careful watching, they were not disturbed by the change in their manner of life, and were becoming different without knowing it. But when Quintilius Varus became governor of the province of Germany, and in the discharge of his official duties was administering the affairs of these peoples also, he strove to change them more rapidly. Besides issuing orders to them as if they were actually slaves of the Romans, he exacted money as he would from subject nations. To this they were in no mood to submit, for the leaders longed for their former ascendancy and the masses preferred their accustomed condition to foreign domination. Now they did not openly revolt, since they saw that there were many Roman troops near the Rhine and many within their own borders; instead, they received Varus, pretending that they would do all he demanded of them, and thus they drew him far away from the Rhine into the land of the Cherusci, toward the Visurgis, and there by behaving in a most peaceful and friendly manner led him to believe that they would live submissively without the presence of soldiers. Consequently he did not keep his legions together, as was proper in a hostile country, but distributed many of the soldiers to helpless communities, which asked for them for the alleged purpose of guarding various points, arresting robbers, or escorting provision trains. Among those deepest in the conspiracy and leaders of the plot and of the war were Armenius and Segimerus, who were his constant companions and often shared his mess. He accordingly became confident, and expecting no harm, not only refused to believe all those who suspected what was going on and advised him to be on his guard, but actually rebuked them for being needlessly excited and slandering his friends. Then there came an uprising, first on the part of those who lived at a distance from him, deliberately so arranged, in order that Varus should march against them and so be more easily overpowered while proceeding through what was supposed to be friendly country, instead of putting himself on his guard as he would do in case all became hostile to him at once. And so it came to pass. They escorted him as he set out, and then begged to be excused from further attendance, in order, as they claimed, to assemble their allied forces, after which they would quietly come to his aid. Then they took charge of their troops, which were already in waiting somewhere, and after the men in each community had put to death the detachments of soldiers for which they had previously asked, they came upon Varus in the midst of forests by this time almost impenetrable. And there, at the very moment of revealing themselves as enemies instead of subjects, they wrought great and dire havoc. The mountains had an uneven surface broken by ravines, and the trees grew close together and very high. Hence the Romans, even before the enemy assailed them, were having a hard time of it felling trees, building roads, and bridging places that required it. They had with them many waggons and many beasts of burden as in time of peace; moreover, not a few women and children and a large retinue
of servants were following them - one more reason for their advancing in scattered groups. Meanwhile a violent rain and wind came up that separated them still further, while the ground, that had become slippery around the roots and logs, made walking very treacherous for them, and the tops of the trees kept breaking off and falling down, causing much confusion. While the Romans were in such difficulties, the barbarians suddenly surrounded them on all sides at once, coming through the densest thickets, as they were acquainted with the paths. At first they hurled their volleys from a distance; then, as no one defended himself and many were wounded, they approached closer to them. For the Romans were not proceeding in any regular order, but were mixed in helter-skelter with the waggons and the unarmed, and so, being unable to form readily anywhere in a body, and being fewer at every point than their assailants, they suffered greatly and could offer no resistance at all. Accordingly they encamped on the spot, after securing a suitable place, so far as that was possible on a wooded mountain; and afterwards they either burned or abandoned most of their waggons and everything else that was not absolutely necessary to them. The next day they advanced in a little better order, and even reached open country, though they did not get off without loss. Upon setting out from there they plunged into the woods again, where they defended themselves against their assailants, but suffered their heaviest losses while doing so. For since they had to form their lines in a narrow space, in order that the cavalry and infantry together might run down the enemy, they collided frequently with one another and with the trees. They were still advancing when the fourth day dawned, and again a heavy downpour and violent wind assailed them, preventing them from going forward and even from standing securely, and moreover depriving them of the use of their weapons. For they could not handle their bows or their javelins with any success, nor, for that matter, their shields, which were thoroughly soaked. Their opponents, on the other hand, being for the most part lightly equipped, and able to approach and retire freely, suffered less from the storm. Furthermore, the enemy's forces had greatly increased, as many of those who had at first wavered now joined them, largely in the hope of plunder, and thus they could more easily encircle and strike down the Romans, whose ranks were now thinned, many having perished in the earlier fighting. Varus, therefore, and all the more prominent officers, fearing that they should either be captured alive or be killed by their bitterest foes (for they had already been wounded), made bold to do a thing that was terrible yet unavoidable: they took their own lives. When news of this had spread, none of the rest, even if he had any strength left, defended himself any longer. Some imitated their leader, and others, casting aside their arms, allowed anybody who pleased to slay them; for to flee was impossible, however much one might desire to do so. Every man, therefore, and every horse was cut down without fear of resistance, and the...And the barbarians occupied all the strongholds save one, their delay at which prevented them from either crossing the Rhine or invading Gaul. Yet they found themselves
unable to reduce this fort, because they did not understand the conduct of sieges, and because the Romans employed numerous archers, who repeatedly repulsed them and destroyed large numbers of them. Later they learned that the Romans had posted a guard at the Rhine, and that Tiberius was approaching with an imposing army. Therefore most of the barbarians retired from the fort, and even the detachment still left there withdrew to a considerable distance, so as not to be injured by sudden sallies on the part of the garrison, and then kept watch of the roads, hoping to capture the garrison through the failure of their provisions. The Romans inside, so long as they had plenty of food, remained where they were, awaiting relief; but when no one came to their assistance and they were also hard pressed by hunger, they waited merely for a stormy night and then stole forth. Now the soldiers were but few, the unarmed many. They succeeded in getting past the foe's first and second outposts, but when they reached the third, they were discovered, for the women and children, by reason of their fatigue and fear as well as on account of the darkness and cold, kept calling to the warriors to come back. And they would all have perished or been captured, had the barbarians not been occupied in seizing the plunder. This afforded an opportunity for the most hardy to get some distance away, and the trumpeters with them by sounding the signal for a double-quick march caused the enemy to think that they had been sent by Asprenas. Therefore the foe ceased his pursuit, and Asprenas, upon learning what was taking place, actually did render them assistance. Some of the prisoners were afterwards ransomed by their relatives and returned from captivity; for this was permitted on condition that the men ransomed should remain outside of Italy. This, however, occurred later. Augustus, when he learned of the disaster to Varus, rent his garments, as some report, and mourned greatly, not only because of the soldiers who had been lost, but also because of his fear for the German and Gallic provinces, and particularly because he expected that the enemy would march against Italy and against Rome itself. For there were no citizens of military age left worth mentioning, and the allied forces that were of any value had suffered severely. Nevertheless, he made preparations as best he could in view of the circumstances; and when no men of military age showed a willingness to be enrolled, he made them draw lots, depriving of his property and disfranchising every fifth man of those still under thirty-five and every tenth man among those who had passed that age. Finally, as a great many paid no heed to him even then, he put some to death. He chose by lot as many as he could of those who had already completed their term of service and of the freedmen, and after enrolling them sent them in haste with Tiberius into the province of Germany. And as there were in Rome a large number of Gauls and Germans, some of them serving in the pretorian guard and others sojourning there for various reasons, he feared they might begin a rebellion; hence he sent away such as were in his body-guard to certain islands and ordered those who were unarmed to leave the city. This was the way he handled matters at that time; and none of the usual business was carried
on nor were the festivals celebrated. Later, when he heard that some of the soldiers had been saved, that the Germanies were garrisoned, and that the enemy did not venture to come even to the Rhine, he ceased to be alarmed and paused to consider the matter. For a catastrophe so great and sudden as this, it seemed to him, could have been due to nothing else than the wrath of some divinity; moreover, by reason of the portents which occurred both before the defeat and afterwards, he was strongly inclined to suspect some superhuman agency. For the temple of Mars in the field of the same name was struck by lightning, and many locusts flew into the very city and were devoured by swallows; the peaks of the Alps seemed to collapse upon one another and to send up three columns of fire; the sky in many places seemed ablaze and numerous comets appeared at one and the same time; spears seemed to dart from the north and to fall in the direction of the Roman camps; bees formed their combs about the altars in the camps; a statue of Victory that was in the province of Germany and faced the enemy's territory turned about to face Italy; and in one instance there was a futile battle and conflict of the soldiers over the eagles in the camps, the soldiers believing that the barbarians had fallen upon them. For these reasons, then, and also because...Tiberius did not see fit to cross the Rhine, but kept quiet, watching to see that the barbarians did not cross. And they, knowing him to be there, did not venture to cross in their turn. Germanicus was becoming endeared to the populace for many reasons, but particularly because he acted as advocate for various persons, and this quite as much before Augustus himself as before the other judges. Accordingly, on one occasion when he was going to lend assistance in this way to a quaestor who was charged with murder, his accuser became alarmed lest he should in consequence of this lose his suit before the judges who regularly heard such cases, and wished to have it tried before Augustus. But his efforts were all in vain, for he did not win the suit. ...holding it after his consulship. But the next year, in addition to the events already described, the temple of Concord was dedicated by Tiberius, and both his name and that of Drusus, his dead brother, were inscribed upon it. In the consulship of Marcus Aemilius and Statilius Taurus, Tiberius and Germanicus, the latter acting as proconsul, invaded Germany and overran portions of it. They did not win any battle, however, since no one came to close quarters with them, nor did they reduce any tribe; for in their fear of falling victims to a fresh disaster they did not advance very far beyond the Rhine, but after remaining in that region until late autumn and celebrating the birthday of Augustus, on which they held a horse-race under the direction of the centurions, they returned.\footnote{Text and translations of Cassius Dio 56 and 57 are from Cary (1924).}
When Tiberius held the consulship with Drusus, men immediately began to prophesy destruction for Drusus from this very circumstance. For not one of the men who had ever been consul with Tiberius failed to meet a violent death; but in the first place there was Quintilius Varus, and next Gnaeus Piso, and then Germanicus himself, all of whom died violent and miserable deaths. Tiberius was evidently doomed to exert some such fatal influence throughout his life; at all events, not only Drusus, his colleague at this time, but also Sejanus, who later shared the office with him, came to destruction.

Orosius

6.21.26-7

Sub eodem uero tempore Quintilius Varus cum tribus legionibus a Germanis rebellantibus, mira superbia atque auaritia in subiectos agens, funditus deletus est. quam reipublicae cladem Caesar Augustus adeo grauiiter tulit, ut saepe per uim doloris caput parieti conliden clamaret Quintili Vare, redde legiones.

Indeed, at this same time, Quintilius Varus, who treated conquered peoples with astounding haughtiness and avarice, together with three legions, was completely destroyed by the Germans who had rebelled. Caesar Augustus took this loss to the state so hard that, by the force of his grief, he again and again dashed his head against a wall and cried out: “O, Quintilius Varus, give me back my legions.”

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12 The text of Orosius is from Zangemeister (1889). The translation is from Deferrari (1964).
These tribes have become known through their wars with the Romans, in which they would either yield and then later revolt again, or else quit their settlements; and they would have been better known if Augustus had allowed his generals to cross the Albis in pursuit of those who emigrated thither. But as a matter of fact he supposed that he could conduct the war in hand more successfully if he should hold off from those outside the Albis, who were living in peace, and should not incite them to make common cause with the others in their enmity against him. ¹

There is also an island in it which Tiberius used as a base of operations in his naval battle with the Vindelici.

Tiberius had proceeded only a day’s journey from the lake when he saw the sources of the Ister.

Velleius Paterculus

2.97.4

Moles deinde eius belli translata in Neronem est: quod is sua et uirtute

¹ Text and translations of Strabo are from Jones (1924).
et fortuna administrauit peragratusque uictor omnis partis Germaniae sine ullo detrimento commissi exercitus, quod praecipue huic duci semper curae fuit, sic perdomuit eam, ut in formam paene stipendiariae redigeret provinciae. Tum alter triumphus cum altero consulatu el oblatus est.

The burden of responsibility for this war was then transferred to Nero. He carried it on with his customary valour and good fortune, and after traversing every part of Germany in a victorious campaign, without any loss of the army entrusted to him — for he made this one of his chief concerns — he so subdued the country as to reduce it almost to the status of a tributary province. He then received a second triumph, and a second consulship.²

2.104.3-110.3

Hoc tempus me, functum ante tribunatu, castrorum Ti. Caesaris militem fecit; quippe protinus ab adoptione missus cum eo praefectus equitum in Germaniam, successor officii patris mei, cælestissimorum eius operum per annos continuos novem praefectus aut legatus spectator, tum pro captu mediocratiae meae adiutor fui. Neque illi spectaculo, quo fructus sum, simile condicio mortalis recipere uidetur mihi, cum per celeberrimam Italiae partem tractumque omnem Galliae prouinciarum ueterem imperatorem et ante meritis ac uirtutibus quam nomine Caesarem reuisentes sibi quisque quam illi gratularentur pleni us. At uero militum conspectu eius elicite gaudio lacrimae alacritasque et salutationis noua exultatio et contingendi manum cupiditas non continuisse uix mereri fidem potest. Intrata protinus Germania, subacti Caninniefates, Attuarii, Bructeri, recepti Cherusci (gentes eius Arminius mox nostra clade Nobilis), transitus Visurgis, penetrata ulteriora, cum omnem partem asperrimi et periculosissimi belli Caesar uindicaret sibi, is quae minoris erant discriminis, Sentium Saturninum, qui iam legatus patris eius in Germania fuerat, praefecisset, ui rum multiplicem uirtutibus, gnaum, agilem, prodidum militariumque officiorum patientem ac peritum pariter, sed eundem, ubi negotia fecissent locum otio, liberaliter lauteque eo abutentem, ita tamen, ut eum splendidum atque hilarem potius quam luxuriosum aut desidem diceres. De cuius uiri claro ingenio celebrique consulatu praediximus. Anni eius aestiuusque in mensem Decembrem producta inmanis emolumentum fecere victoriae. Pia tales sua Caesarem paene obstructis hieme Alpibus in urbem traxit, at tutela imperii eum ueris initio reduxit in Germaniam, in cuius mediis finibus ad caput Lupiae fluminis hiberna digrediens princeps locauerat. Pro dii boni, quanti uoluminis opera

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² Text and translations of Velleius are from Shipley (1924).
insequenti aestate sub duce Tiberio Caesare gessimus! Perlustrata armis
tota Germania est, uictae gentes paene nominibus incognitae, receptae
Cauchorum nationes: omnis eorum iuventus infinita numero, immensa
corporibus, situ locorum tutissima, traditis armis una cum ducibus suis
saepta fulgenti armatoque militum nostrorum agmine ante imperatoris
procubuit tribunal. Fracti Langobardi, gens etiam Germana feritate ferocior;
denique, quod numquam antea spe conceptum, nedum opere temptatum
erat, ad quadringentesimum miliarium a Rheno usque ad flumen Albim, qui
Semnonum Hermundurorumque fines praeterfluit, Romanus cum signis
perductus exercitus. Et eadem mira felicitate et cura ducis, temporum
quoque obseruantia, classis, quae Oceani circumnavigauerat sinus, ab
inaudio atque incognito ante mari flumine Albi subuecta, plurimarum
gentium victoria parta cum abundantissima rerum omnium copia exercitui
Caesareique se iunxit. Non tempero mihi quin tanta rerum magnitudini hoc,
qualemque est, inseram. Cum citeriorem ripam praedicti fluminis castris
occupassem et ulterior armata hostium virtute fulgerat, sub omnem
motum conatumque nostrarum nautorum protinus refugientium, unus e
barbaris aetate senior, corpore excellens, dignitate, quantum ostendebat
cultus, eminens, cauatum, ut illis mos est, ex materia conscendit alueum
solusque id nauigii genus tempus eam medio processit fluminis et petiit,
liceret sibi sine periculo in eam, quam armis tenebamus, egredi ripam ac
udere Caesarem. Data petenti facultas. Tum
adpulso lintre et diu tacitus
contemplatus Caesar, n
ostra quidem, inquit, furit
iuuentus, quae
uestrum numen absentium colat, praesentium potius arma metu
sequitur fidem. Sed ego beneficio et permissu tuo, Caesar, quos ante
audiebam, hodie uidi deos, nec feliciorem ullum uitae meae a
ut optavi aut
sensi diem. Impetratoque ut manum contingeret, reuersus in nauiculam,
sine fine respectans Caesar ripae suorum adpsus est. Victor omnem
gentium locorumque, quos adierat Caesar, incolum inuiolatoque et semel
tantummodo magna cum clade hostium fraude eorum temptato exercitu in
hiberna legiones reduxit, eadem qua priore anno festinatione urbem petens.
Nihil erat iam in Germania, quod uinci posset, praeter gentem
Marcomannorum, quae Maroboduus duce excita sedibus suis atque in
interiora refugiens incipientos Hercynia silua campos incolobat. Nulla
festinatio huius uiri mentionem transgredi debet. Maroboduus, genere
nobilis, corpore praeualens, animo ferox, natione magis quam ratione
barbarus, non tumultuarium neque fortuitum neque mobilem et ex voluntate
parentium constantem inter suos occupauit principatum, sed certum
imperium uimque regiam complexus animo statuit avocata procul a
Romani gente sua eo progradri, ubi cum propter potentiora arma
refugisset, sua faceret potentissima. Occupatis igitur, quos praediximus,
locis finitimis omnis aut bello domuit aut conditionibus iuvis sui fecit.
Corpus suum custodium imperium, perpetuis exercitiis paene ad
Romanae disciplinae formam redactum, breui in eminens et nostro quoque
imperio timendum perduxit fastigium gerebatque se ita aduersus Romanos,
ut neque bello nos lacesseret et, et si lacessaretur, superesse sibi uim ac
uoluntatem resistendi ostenderet. Legati, quos mittebat ad Caesares, interdum ut supplicem commendabant, interdum ut pro pari loquebantur. Gentibus hominibusque a nobis desciscissent erat apud eum perfugium, in totumque ex male dissimulato agebat aemulum; exercitumque, quem septuaginta milium pedum, quattuor equitum fecerat, adsiduis aedibus suis patiebatur esse Italiam, quippe cum a summis Alpium iugis, quae finem Italiae terminant, initium eius finium haud multo plus ducentis milibus passuum abesset. Nec securam incrementi patiebatur esse Italiam, quippe cum a summis Alpium iugis, quae finem Italiae terminant, initium eius finium haud multo plus ducentis milibus passuum abesset. Hunc urum et hanc regionem proximo anno diuersis e partibus Ti. Caesar adgregi statuit. Sentio Saturnino mandatum, ut per Cattos excisis continentibus Hercyniae siluis legiones Boiohaemum (id regioni, quam inc olebat Marobodus, nomen est) duceret, ipse a Carnunto, qui locus Norici regni proximus ab hac parte erat, exercitum, qui in Illyrico merebat, ducere in Marcomannos orsus est. Rumpit interdum, interdum moratur proposita hominum fortuna. Praeparauerat iam hiberna Caesar ad Danubium admotoque exercitu non plus quam quinque dierum iter a primis hostium aberat, legionesque quas Saturninum admo uere placuerat, paene aequali diuiseae interuallo ab hoste intra puocos dies in praedicto loco cum Caesare se iuncturae erant, cum uni uersa Pannonia, insolens longae pacis bonis, adulta uiribus, Delmatia omnibusque tractus eius gentibus in societatem adductis consili, arma corripuit. Tum necessaria gloriosis praeposita neque tutum ius um abdito in interim exercitu uacuam tam uicino hosti relinquere Italiam. Gentium nationumque, quae rebellauerant, omnis numerus amplius octingentis milibus explebat; ducenta fere peditum collige bantur armis habilia, equitum novem.

It was at this time that I became a soldier in the camp of Tiberius Caesar, after having previously filled the duties of the tribunate. For, immediately after the adoption of Tiberius, I was sent with him to Germany as prefect of the cavalry, succeeding my father in that position, and for nine continuous years as prefect of cavalry or as commander of a legion I was a spectator of his superhuman achievements, and further assisted in them to the extent of my modest ability. I do not think that mortal man will be permitted to behold again a sight like that which I enjoyed, when, throughout the most populous parts of Italy and the full extent of the provinces of Gaul, the people as they beheld once more their old commander, who by virtue of his services had long been a Caesar before he was such in name, congratulated themselves in even heartier terms than they congratulated him. Indeed, words cannot express the feelings of the soldiers at their meeting, and perhaps my account will scarcely be believed — the tears which sprang to their eyes in their joy at the sight of him, their eagerness, their strange transports in saluting him, their longing to touch his hand, and their inability to restrain such cries as “Is it really you that we see, commander?” “Have we received you safely back among us?” “I served with you, general, in Armenia!” “And I
in Raetia!" “I received my decoration from you in Vindelicia!” “And I mine in Pannonia!” “And I in Germany!” He at once entered Germany. The Canninefates, the Attuarii, and Bructeri were subdued, the Cherusci (Arminius, a member of this race, was soon to become famous for the disaster inflicted upon us) were again subjugated, the Weser crossed, and the regions beyond it penetrated. Caesar claimed for himself every part of the war that was difficult or dangerous, placing Sentius Saturninus, who had already served as legate under his father in Germany, in charge of expeditions of a less dangerous character: a man many-sided in his virtues, a man of energy of action, and of foresight, alike able to endure the duties of a soldier as he was well trained in them, but who, likewise, when his labours left room for leisure, made a liberal and elegant use of it, but with this reservation, that one would call him sumptuous and jovial rather than extravagant or indolent. About the distinguished ability of this illustrious man and his famous consulship I have already spoken. The prolonging of the campaign of that year into the month of December increased the benefits derived from the great victory. Caesar was drawn to the city by his filial affection, though the Alps were almost blocked by winter’s snows; but the defence of the empire brought him at the beginning of spring back to Germany, where he had on his departure pitched his winter camp at the source of the river Lippe, in the very heart of the country, the first Roman to winter there. Ye Heavens, how large a volume could be filled with the tale of our achievements in the following summer under the generalship of Tiberius Caesar! All Germany was traversed by our armies, races were conquered hitherto almost unknown, even by name; and the tribes of the Cauchi were again subjugated. All the flower of their youth, infinite in number though they were, huge of stature and protected by the ground they held, surrendered their arms, and, flanked by a gleaming line of our soldiers, fell with their generals upon their knees before the tribunal of the commander. The power of the Langobardi was broken, a race surpassing even the Germans in savagery; and finally — and this is something which had never before been entertained even as a hope, much less actually attempted — a Roman army with its standards was led four hundred miles beyond the Rhine as far as the river Elbe, which flows past the territories of the Semnones and the Hermunduri. And with the same wonderful combination of careful planning and good fortune on the part of the general, and a close watch upon the seasons, the fleet which had skirted the windings of the sea coast sailed up the Elbe from a sea hitherto unheard of and unknown, and after proving victorious over many tribes effected a junction with Caesar and the army, bringing with it a great abundance of supplies of all kinds. Even in the midst of these great events I cannot refrain from inserting this little incident. We were encamped on the nearer bank of the aforesaid river, while on the farther bank glittered the arms of the enemies’ troops, who showed an inclination to flee at every movement and manoeuvre of our vessels, when one of the barbarians, advanced in years, tall of stature, of high rank, to judge by his dress, embarked in a canoe,
made as is usual with them of a hollowed log, and guiding this strange craft he advanced alone to the middle of the stream and asked permission to land without harm to himself on the bank occupied by our troops, and to see Caesar. Permission was granted. Then he beached his canoe, and, after gazing upon Caesar for a long time in silence, exclaimed: "Our young men are insane, for though they worship you as divine when absent, when you are present they fear your armies instead of trusting to your protection. But I, by your kind permission, Caesar, have to-day seen the gods of whom I merely used to hear; and in my life have never hoped for or experienced a happier day." After asking for and receiving permission to touch Caesar's hand, he again entered his canoe, and continued to gaze back upon him until he landed upon his own bank. Victorious over all the nations and countries which he approached, his army safe and unimpaired, having been attacked but once, and that too through deceit on the part of the enemy and with great loss on their side, Caesar led his legions back to winter quarters, and sought the city with the same haste as in the previous year. Nothing remained to be conquered in Germany except the people of the Marcomanni, which, leaving its settlements at the summons of its leader Maroboduus, had retired into the interior and now dwelt in the plains surrounded by the Hercynian forest. No considerations of haste should lead us to pass over this man Maroboduus without mention. A man of noble family, strong in body and courageous in mind, a barbarian by birth but not in intelligence, he achieved among his countrymen no mere chief's position gained as the result of internal disorders or chance or liable to change and dependent upon the caprice of his subjects, but, conceiving in his mind the idea of a definite empire and royal powers, he resolved to remove his own race far away from the Romans and to migrate to a place where, inasmuch as he had fled before the strength of more powerful arms, he might make his own all powerful. Accordingly, after occupying the region we have mentioned, he proceeded to reduce all the neighbouring races by war, or to bring them under his sovereignty by treaty. The body of guards protecting the kingdom of Maroboduus, which by constant drill had been brought almost to the Roman standard of discipline, soon placed him in a position of power that was dreaded even by our empire. His policy toward Rome was to avoid provoking us by war, but at the same time to let us understand that, if he were provoked by us he had in reserve the power and the will to resist. The envoys whom he sent to the Caesars sometimes commended him to them as a suppliant and sometimes spoke as though they represented an equal. Races and individuals who revolted from us found in him a refuge, and in all respects, with but little concealment, he played the part of a rival. His army, which he had brought up to the number of seventy thousand foot and four thousand horse, he was steadily preparing, by exercising it in constant wars against his neighbours, for some greater task than that which he had in hand. He was also to be feared on this account, that, having Germany at the left and in front of his settlements, Pannonia on the right, and Noricum in the rear of them, he was dreaded by all as one who might at
any moment descend upon all. Nor did he permit Italy to be free from concern as regards his growing power, since the summits of the Alps which mark her boundary were not more than two hundred miles distant from his boundary line. Such was the man and such the region that Tiberius Caesar resolved to attack from opposite directions in the course of the coming year. Sentius Saturninus had instructions to lead his legions through the country of the Catti into Boiohaemum, for that is the name of the region occupied by Maroboduus, cutting a passage through the Hercynian forest which bounded the region, while from Carnuntum, the nearest point of the kingdom of Noricum in this direction, he himself undertook to lead against the Marcomanni the army which was serving in Illyricum. Fortune sometimes breaks off completely, sometimes merely delays, the execution of men's plans. Caesar had already arranged his winter quarters on the Danube, and had brought up his army to within five days' march of the advanced posts of the enemy; and the legions which he had ordered Saturninus to bring up, separated from the enemy by an almost equal distance, were on the point of effecting a junction with Caesar at a predetermined rendezvous within a few days, when all Pannonia, grown arrogant through the blessings of a long peace and now at the maturity of her power, suddenly took up arms, bringing Dalmatia and all the races of that region into her alliance. Thereupon glory was sacrificed to necessity; and it did not seem to Tiberius a safe course to keep his army buried in the interior of the country and thus leave Italy unprotected from an enemy so near at hand. The full number of the races and tribes which had rebelled reached a total of more than eight hundred thousand. About two hundred thousand infantry trained to arms, and nine thousand cavalry were being assembled.

2.115.5

Nihil in hoc tanto bello, nihil in Germania aut uidere maius aut mirari magis potui, quam quod imperatori numquam adeo ulla opportuna uisa est victoriae occasio, quam damno amissi pensaret militis semperque uisum est gloriosum, quod esset tutissimum, et ante conscientiae quam famae consultum, nec umquam consilia ducis iudicio exercitus, sed exercitus prouidentia ducis rectus est.

Nothing in the course of this great war, nothing in the campaigns in Germany, came under my observation that was greater, or that aroused my admiration more, than these traits of its general; no chance of winning a victory ever seemed to him timely, which he would have to purchase by the sacrifice of his soldiers; the safest course was always regarded by him as the best; he consulted his conscience first and then his reputation, and, finally, the plans of the commander were never governed by the opinion of the army, but rather the army by the wisdom of its leader.
nunc quidem in circo quosdam CLX passuum tolerare non ignoramus, nuperque Fonteio et Vipstano coss. annos VIII genitum a meridie ad vesperam LXXV passuum cucurrisse. cuius rei admiratio ita demum solida perveniet, si quis cogitet nocte ac die longissimum iter vehiculis Tib. Neronem emensum festinantem ad Drusum fratem aegrotum in Germaniam; ea fuerunt CC passuum.

At the present day indeed we are aware that some men can last out 128 miles in the circus, and that recently in the consulship of Fonteius and Vipstanus a boy of 8 ran 68 miles between noon and evening. The marvellous nature of this feat will only get across to us in full measure if we reflect that Tiberius Nero completed by carriage the longest twenty-four hours’ journey on record when hastening to Germany to his brother Drusus who was ill: this measured 182 miles.3

...contumeliosus privigni Neronis secessus,...

...the insolent withdrawal of his stepson Nero,...

Valerius Maximus

Tantum amorem princeps paresque noster insitum animo fratris Drusi habuit, ut cum Ticini, quo victor hostium ad conplectendos parentes venerat, gravi illum et periculosu valuudine in Germania fluctuae cognosset, protinus inde metu attonitus erumperet. Iter quoque quam rapidum et praeceps velut uno spiru corripuerit eo patet, quod Alpes Rhenumque transgressus die ac nocte mutato subinde equo CC milia passuum per modo devictam barbariam Namantabagio duce solo comite contentus evasit.

Our emperor and father, Tiberius, had a very strong natural love in his heart for his brother, Drusus. After defeating our enemies, Tiberius had come to Ticinum to embrace his parents, when he learned that the health of Drusus, who was in Germany, was in a serious and dangerous condition, and that he might not live. He was panic-stricken and rushed away immediately. He obviously made the journey in wild haste, almost in a single breath, since he crossed the Alps and the Rhine riding day and night, changing his horse

3 Text and translations of Pliny the Elder are from Rackham (1942).
repeatedly, and then was happy to carry out a journey of two hundred miles through a barbarous region that had only recently been pacified, with Namantabagius as his sole guide and companion.\textsuperscript{4}

Ovid

\textit{Fast. 1.637-50}

\begin{quote}
Candida, te niveo posuit lux proxima templo,
qua fert sublimes alta Moneta gradus:
\textit{nunc bene prospicies Latiam, Concordia, turbam,}
\textit{ut te sacra tae constitue re manus.}
\textit{Furius antiquam populi superator Etrusci}
\textit{voverat et voti solverat ille fidem.}
\textit{causa, quod a patribus sumptis secesserat armis}
\textit{volgus, et ipsa suas Roma timebat opes.}
\textit{causa recens melior: passos Germania crines}
\textit{porrigit auspiciis, dux venerande, tuis;}
\textit{inde triumphatae libasti munera gentis}
\textit{templaque fecisti, quam colis ipse, deae.}
\textit{hanc tua constituit genetrix et rebus et ara,}
\textit{sola toro magni digna reperta lovis.}
\end{quote}

The next day, fair Concord, installed in you in snow-white temple where the steps of Moneta’s temple steeply rise.

Now, as you rightly keep an eye on the Roman multitude, hallowed hands have established you.

Camillus, who conquered the Etruscan town of Veii, had vowed the original temple and fulfilled his vow.

The occasion was a popular revolt against the ruling class when Rome lived in fear of her own manpower.

The latest occasion is better. Tiberius, general we revere, Germany, in mourning, surrenders to your command.

You offered up the conquered nation’s spoils and built a temple to the goddess you adore.

This your mother Livia seconded by her actions and an altar, the only spouse worthy of our Jove-like Augustus.\textsuperscript{5}

\textit{Consolatio ad Liviam}

\textit{271-82}

\textit{At tibi ius veniae superest, Germania, nullum:}

\textsuperscript{4} The text of Valerius Maximus is from Smith (1985). The translation is from Walker (2004).

\textsuperscript{5} The text of Ovid is from Frazer (1931); the translation is from Nagel (1995).
Postmodo tu poenas, barbarae, morte dabis.
Aepstriam regum iventia colla catenis
Duraque per saevas vincula nexe manus
Et tandem trepidos vultus inque illa fercum
Invitis lacrimas decidere ora genis.
Spiritus ille minax et Drusi morte superbus
Carnifici in maesto carcere dandus erit.
Consistam lentesque oculis laetusque videbo
Strata per obscenas corpora nuda vias.
Hunc Aurora diem spectacula tanta ferentem
Quam primum croceis roscida portet equis!

But for thee, Germania, no right of pardon remains; thou shalt atone hereafter, barbarian, by thy death. I shall see the necks of kings livid with chains, and ruthless fetters entwining cruel hands, and faces cowed at last, and the tears falling down unwilling, haughty cheeks. That threatening spirit, exulting in Drusus’ death, must be given to the executioner in the gloomy cell. I will stop, and leisurely with glad eyes gaze on naked bodies strewn on the unsightly roads. The day that brings so great a spectacle – let dewy Aurora speed it hither on her saffron car!

Suetonius

_Tib._ 7.3

Drusum fratrem in Germania amisit, cuius corpus pedibus toto itinere praegrediens Romam usque pervexit.

He lost his brother Drusus in Germany and conveyed his body to Rome, going before it on foot all the way. 

_Tib._ 9.1-2


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6 Text and translations of the _Consolatio ad Liviam_ are from Mozley (1929).

7 Text and translations of Suetonius’ _Tiberius_ are from Rolfe (1913).
Next he carried on war with the Raeti and Vindelici, then in Pannonia, and finally in Germany. In the first of these wars he subdued the Alpine tribes, in the second the Breuci and Dalmatians, and in the third he brought forty thousand prisoners of war over into Gaul and assigned them homes near the bank of the Rhine. Because of these exploits he entered the city both in an ovation and riding in a chariot, having previously, as some think, been honoured with the triumphal regalia, a new kind of distinction never before conferred upon anyone.

**Tib. 16-20**

Data rursus potestas tribunicia in quinquennium, delegatus pacandae Germaniae status, Parthorum legati mandatis Augusto Romae redditis eum quoque adire in provincia iussi. Sed nuntiata Illyrici defectione transiti ad curam novi belli, quod gravissimum omnium externorum bellorum post Punica, per quindecim legiones paremque auxiliorum copiam triennio gessit in magnis omnium rerum difficultatibus summatique frugum inopia. Et quamquam saepius revocaretur, tamen perseveravit, metuens ne vicinus et praevalens hostis instaret ulterius cedentibus. Ac perseverantiae grande pretium tulit, toto Illyrico, quod inter Italiam regnumque Noricum et Thraciam et Macedoniam interque Danuvium flumen et sinum maris Hadriatici patet, perdomito et in dicionem redacto. Cui gloriae amplior adhuc ex opportunitate cumulus accessit. Nam sub id fere tempus Quintilius Varus cum tribus legionibus in Germania periti, nemine dubitante quin victores Germani iuncturi se Pannoniis fuerint, nisi debellatum prius Illyricum esset. Quas ob res triumphus ei decretus est multique et magni honores. Censuerunt etiam quidam ut Pannonicus, alii ut Invictus, nonnulli ut Pius cognominaretur. Sed de cognomine intercessit Augustus, eo contentum repromittens, quod se defuncto suscepturus esset. Triumphum ipse distulit maesta ciuitate clade Variana; nihil minus urbem praetextatus et laurea coronatus intravit positumque in Saeptis tribunal senatui astante conscendit ac medius inter duos consules cum Augusto simul sedit; unde populo consalutato circum templa deductus est. Proximo anno repetita Germania cum animadverteret Varianam cladem temeritate et neglegentia ducis accidisse, nihil non de consili sententia egit; semper alias sui arbitrii contentusque se uno, tunc praeter consuetudinem cum compluribus de ratione belli communicavit. Curam quoque solito exactior praestitit. Traiecturus Rhenum commeatum omnem ad certam formulam adstrictum non ante transmisit, quam consistens apud ripam explorasset vehiculorum onera, ne qua deportarentur nisi concessa aut necessaria. Trans Rhenum vero eum vitae ordinem tenuit, ut sedens in caespite nudo cibum caperet, saepe sine tentorio pernoctaret, praecepta sequentis diei omnia, et si quid subiti muneris iniungendum esset, per libellos daret; addita monitione ut, de quo quisque dubitaret, se nec alio interprete quacumque uel noctis hora uteretur. Disciplinam acerrime exegit animadversionum et ignominiarum generibus ex antiquitate repetitis atque etiam legato legionis, quod paucos milites cum liberto suo trans ripam venatum misisset, ignominia notato.
Proelia, quamvis minimum fortunae casibusque permitteret, aliquanto constantius inibat, quotiens lucubrante se subito ac nullo propellente decideret lumen et exstingueretur, confidens, ut aiebat, ostento sibi a maioribus suis in omni ducatu expertissimo. Sed re prospere gesta non multum afuit quin a Bructero quodam occideretur, cui inter proximos uersanti et trepidatione detecto tormentis expressa confessio est cogitati facinoris. A Germania in urbem post biennium regressus triumphum, quem distulerat, egit consequentibus etiam legatis, quibus triumphalia ornamenta impetrarit. Ac prius quam in Capitolium flecteret, descendit e curru seque praesidenti patri ad genua summisit. Batonem Pannonium ducem ingentibus donatum praemis Ravennam transtulit, gratiam referens, quod se quondam cum exercitu iniquitate loci circumclusum passus esset evadere. Prandium dehinc populo mille mensis et congiarium trecentos nummos viritim dedit. Dedicavit et Concordiae aedem, item Pollucis et Castoris suo fratriisque nomine de manubiis.

He was given the tribunician power for a second term of three years, the duty of subjugating Germany was assigned him, and the envoys of the Parthians, after presenting their instructions to Augustus in Rome, were bidden to appear also before him in his province. But when the revolt of Illyricum was reported, he was transferred to the charge of a new war, the most serious of all foreign wars since those with Carthage, which he carried on for three years with fifteen legions and a corresponding force of auxiliaries, amid great difficulties of every kind and the utmost scarcity of supplies. But though he was often recalled, he none the less kept on, for fear that the enemy, who were close at hand and very strong, might assume the offensive if the Romans gave ground. He reaped an ample reward for his perseverance, for he completely subdued and reduced to submission the whole of Illyricum, which is bounded by Italy and the kingdom of Noricum, by Thrace and Macedonia, by the Danube, and by the Adriatic sea. Circumstances gave this exploit a larger and crowning glory; for it was at just about that time that Quintilius Varus perished with three legions in Germany, and no one doubted that the victorious Germans would have united with the Pannonians, had not Illyricum been subdued first. Consequently a triumph was voted him and many high honours. Some also recommended that he be given the surname of Pannonicus, others of Invictus, others of Pius. Augustus however vetoed the surname, reiterating the promise that Tiberius would be satisfied with the one which he would receive at his father's death. Tiberius himself put off the triumph, because the country was in mourning for the disaster to Varus; but he entered the city clad in the purple-bordered toga and crowned with laurel, and mounting a tribunal which had been set up in the Saepta, while the senate stood alongside, he took his seat beside Augustus between the two consuls. Having greeted the people from this position, he was escorted to the various temples. The next year he returned to Germany, and realising that the disaster to Varus was due to that general's rashness and lack of care, he took no step without the approval of a council; while he had always
before been a man of independent judgment and self-reliance, then contrary to his habit he consulted with many advisers about the conduct of the campaign. He also observed more scrupulous care than usual. When on the point of crossing the Rhine, he reduced all the baggage to a prescribed limit, and would not start without standing on the bank and inspecting the loads of the wagons, to make sure that nothing was taken except what was allowed or necessary. Once on the other side, he adopted the following manner of life: he took his meals sitting on the bare turf, often passed the night without a tent, and gave all his orders for the following day, as well as notice of any sudden emergency, in writing; adding the injunction that if anyone was in doubt about any matter, he was to consult him personally at any hour whatsoever, even of the night. He required the strictest discipline, reviving bygone methods of punishment and ignominy, and even degrading the commander of a legion for sending a few soldiers across the river to accompany one of his freedmen on a hunting expedition. Although he left very little to fortune and chance, he entered battles with considerably greater confidence whenever it happened that, as he was working at night, his lamp suddenly and without human agency died down and went out; trusting, as used to say, to an omen in which he had great confidence, since both he and his ancestors had found it trustworthy in all of their campaigns. Yet in the very hour of victory he narrowly escaped assassination by one of the Bructeri, who got access to him among his attendants, but was detected through his nervousness; whereupon a confession of his intended crime was wrung from him by torture. After two years he returned to the city from Germany and celebrated the triumph which he had postponed, accompanied also by his generals, for whom he had obtained the triumphal regalia. And before turning to enter the Capitol, he dismounted from his chariot and fell at the knees of his father, who was presiding over the ceremonies. He sent Bato, the leader of the Pannonians, to Ravenna, after presenting him with rich gifts; thus showing his gratitude to him for allowing him to escape when he was trapped with his army in a dangerous place. Then he gave a banquet to the people at a thousand tables, and a largess of three hundred sesterces to every man. With the proceeds of his spoils he restored and dedicated the temple of Concord, as well as that of Pollux and Castor, in his own name and that of his brother.

Cassius Dio

55.2.1-5

ταῦτα μὲν οὕτως ἔσχε, προπυθόμενος δ᾿ ὁ Αὔγουστος διτ νοσεῖ (οὐ γὰρ ἦν πόρρω), τὸν Τιβέριον κατὰ τάχος ἔπεμψε· καὶ ὃς ἔμπνουν τε αὐτὸν κατέλαβε καὶ ἀποθανόντα ἐς τὴν Ῥώμην ἐκόμισε, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα μέχρι τοῦ χειμασίου τοῦ στρατοῦ διὰ τῶν ἐκατοντάρχων καὶ διὰ τῶν χιλιάρχων, ἐκείθεν δὲ διὰ τῶν καθ’ ἕκαστην πόλιν πρώτων βαστάσας, καὶ αὐτοῦ ἐν τῇ ἀγορᾷ προτεθέντος διπλοῦς ὁ ἐπιτάφιος ἔλεχθη· ὁ τε γὰρ Τιβέριος ἐνταύθα αὐτὸν ἐπῆνεσε, καὶ ὁ Αὔγουστος ἐν τῷ Φλαμινίῳ ἱπποδρόμῳ ἐξεστράτευτο
Augustus, upon learning of Drusus’ illness before it was far advanced (for he was not far off), had sent Tiberius to him in haste. Tiberius found him still breathing, and on his death carried the body to Rome, causing the centurions and military tribunes to carry it over the first stage of the journey, - as far as the winter quarters of the army,- and after that the foremost men of each city. When the body had been laid in state in the Forum, two funeral orations were delivered: Tiberius pronounced another eulogy there in the Forum, and Augustus pronounced one in the Circus Flaminius. The emperor, of course, had been away on a campaign, and it was not lawful for him to omit the customary rites in honour of his exploits at the time of his entrance inside the pomerium. The body was borne to the Campus Martius by the knights, both those who belonged strictly to the equestrian order and those who were of senatorial family; then it was given to the flames and the ashes were deposited in the sepulchre of Augustus. Drusus, together with his sons, received the title of Germanicus, and he was given the further honours of statues, an arch, and a cenotaph on the bank of the Rhine itself. Tiberius, while Drusus was yet alive, had overcome the Dalmatians and Pannonians, who had once more begun a rebellion, and he had celebrated the equestrian triumph, and had feasted the people, some on the Capitol and the rest in many other places. At the same time Livia, also, with Julia, had given a dinner to the women. And the same festivities were being prepared for Drusus,8

55.6.1-5

μετὰ δὲ δὴ ταῦτα τὴν τε ἡγεμονίαν, καίπερ ἄφιείς, ώς ἔλεγεν, ἐπειδὴ τὰ δέκα ἔτη ταῦτα ἔξελεκτο, ἄκων δὴ οὐκ ἔφη σφίσιν ἄνευ ἐκείνων σπείσεσθαι, καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς Κελτοὺς ἐστράτευσε. καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν ἐν τῇ οἰκείᾳ ὑπέμεινεν, ὁ δὲ δὴ Τιβέρις τὸν Ῥῆνον διέβη. φοβηθέντες οὖν αὐτούς οἱ Σύγαμβροι πρέσβεις, τοσούτου δὲ ἔδεησαν διαπράξασθαι καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Συνάγμβρων ἐπεκηρυκεύσαντο, καὶ οὔτε τότε ἔτυχον τινος (ὁ γὰρ Ἀὔγουστος οὐκ ἐφη σφίσιν ἄνευ ἐκείνων σπείσεσθαι) οὔθ’ ὑστερον. ἔπεμψαν μὲν γὰρ καὶ οἱ Σύγαμβροι πρέσβεις, τοσούτου δὲ ἐδέησαν διαπράξασθαι τι ὡστε καὶ

8 Text and translations of Cassius Dio are from Cary (1917).
55.8.1-3

After this, now that his second period of ten years had expired, Augustus once more accepted the supreme power, - though with a show of reluctance, - in spite of his oft-expressed desire to lay it down; and he made a campaign against the Germans. He himself remained behind in Roman territory, while Tiberius crossed the Rhine. Accordingly all the barbarians except the Sugambri, through fear of them, made overtures of peace; but they gained nothing either at this time, - for Augustus refused to conclude a truce with them without the Sugambri, - or, indeed, later. To be sure, the Sugambri also sent envoys, but so far were they from accomplishing anything that all of these envoys, who were both many and distinguished, perished into the bargain. For Augustus arrested them and placed them in various cities; and they, being greatly distressed at this, took their own lives. The Sugambri were thereupon quiet for a time, but later they amply requited the Romans for their calamity. Besides doing this, Augustus granted money to the soldiers, not as to victors, though he himself had taken the title of imperator and had also conferred it upon Tiberius, but because then for the first time they had Gaius taking part with them in their exercises. So he advanced Tiberius to the position of commander in place of Drusus, and besides distinguishing him with the title of imperator, appointed him consul once more, and in accordance with the ancient practice caused him to post up a proclamation before entering upon the office. He also accorded him the distinction of a triumph.
Tiberius on the first day of the year in which he was consul with Gnaeus Piso convened the senate in the Curia Octaviae, because it was outside the pomerium. After assigning to himself the duty of repairing the temple of Concord, in order that he might inscribe upon it his own name and that of Drusus, he celebrated his triumph, and in company with his mother dedicated the precinct called the precinct of Livia. He gave a banquet to the senate on the Capitol, and she gave one on her own account to the women somewhere or other. A little later, when there was some disturbance in the province of Germany, he took the field. The festival held in honour of the return of Augustus was directed by Gaius, in place of Tiberius, with the assistance of Piso.

55.9.1

tosai'ta men eti toiti eptraqiso en gar de ti Germania oidev axion mnemi'mis sunverb'

These were all events of that year, for nothing worthy of mention happened in Germany.

55.27.3-5

mexhiso ou dei sitodieia epausasto, ka mono'machias agowvnes eti toi Dro'sow
pros te toi' Germa'nikou toi' Kaissaro kai pros Ti'berio Klaudioi
Nerwvou, ton ievon avtoj, egenonto. touto te gar avtoj eti tii toi
Dro'sou mnem'ma paroxymheto, kai oti to Diosk'dreioi o Ti'berio
kathierwasa ou to eiatoj monon onoma avtoj, Klaudianon eauton anti toi
Klaudioi dia tii eis to Auygostou genos ekpoj site onomasa, alla kai
to ekinoi epгрase. ta te gar tivn pol'emyv anma diwkei, kai eis ti' polin,
opote parasoqi, sunevkis esefoita, to mien ti pragmatov tivov eneka, to
dex de de pleiston phosvmenos mi o Auygostos allov tiv par tii apousian
avtoj pro'thmisi.

This lasted until the scarcity of grain was at an end and gladiatorial games in honour of Drusus were given by Germanicus Caesar and Tiberius Claudius Nero, his sons. For this mark of honour to the memory of Drusus comforted the people, and also the dedication by Tiberius of the temple of Castor and Pollux, upon which he inscribed not only his own name,- calling himself Claudianus instead of Claudius, because of his adoption into the family of Augustus,- but also that of Drusus. Tiberius, it should be explained, continued to carry on the wars, and at the same time visited the city repeatedly whenever the opportunity offered; this was partly, to be sure, on account of various business, but chiefly because he was afraid that Augustus might take advantage of his absence to show preference to somebody else.
ταῦτα τε ἅμα ἐγίγνετο, καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς Κελτοὺς ἐστράτευσαν μὲν καὶ ἄλλοι τινὲς, ἐστράτευσε δὲ καὶ ὁ Τιβέριος. καὶ μέχρι γε τοῦ ποταμοῦ, πρότερον μὲν τοῦ Οὐισούργου, μετὰ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τοῦ Αἴλβου, προεχώρησεν, οὐ μέντοι καὶ ἄξιοννυμόνευτον τι τότε γε ἐπιράχθη, καίτοι καὶ αὐτοκράτορος μή ὅτι τοῦ Ἀὐγούστου ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ Τιβερίου ἐπὶ τοὺς Κελτοὺς ἐστράτευσεν μὲν καὶ οὐκ ἀξιομνημόνευτόν τι τότε γε ἐπράχθη, καίτοι καὶ αὐτοκράτορος μὴ ὅτι τοῦ Αὐγούστου ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῦ Τιβερίου ἐπ' αὐτοῖς κληθέντος, καὶ τιμὰς ἐπινικίους Γαΐου Σεντίου τοῦ τῆς Γερμανίας ἀρχοντος λαβόντος, ἐπειδή μὴ μόνον ἀπαξ ἀλλὰ καὶ δεύτερον, φοβηθέντες αὐτοὺς, ἐστείλαντο. αὕτη δὲ τοῦ καίπερ παραστονδήθησαί σφια δι' ὀλίγου αὖθις τὴν εἰρήνην δοθῆναι τὰ τε τῶν Δελματῶν καὶ τὰ τῶν Παννονίων, μειζόνως τε ταραχθέντα καὶ ὀξείας ἐπιστροφῆς δεηθέντα, ἐγένετο. ταῖς γὰρ ἐσφοραῖς τῶν χρημάτων οἱ Δελμάται βαρυνόμενοι τὸν μὲν ἔμπροσθε χρόνον καὶ ἄκοντες ἡσύχαζον· ὡς δ' ὅτε Τιβέριος ἐπὶ τοὺς Κελτοὺς τὸ δεύτερον ἐστράτευσε, καὶ Οὐαλέριος Μεσσαλῖνος ὁ τότε καὶ τῆς Δελματίας καὶ τῆς Παννονίας ἄρχων αὐτός τε σύν ἔμπροσθεν ἐπιράχθη τὸ πολὺ τοῦ στρατοῦ συνεξήγαγε, καὶ πινα καὶ σφεῖς δύναμιν πέμψαντες καὶ καὶ καὶ σφεῖς δύναμιν πέμψαντες καὶ καὶ καὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους καὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ἐπελθόντας σφίσιν ἔσφηλαν, ἔπειτα δὲ ἐκ τούτου καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι προσπέπτοταν. καὶ μετά τοῦτο καὶ Βρεύκοι Παννονικὸν ἔθνος, Βάτωνα καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔτερον προστητάμενοι, ἐπὶ τε τὸ Σίρμιον καὶ ἐπὶ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ὥρμησαν. καὶ ἐκεῖνο μὲν οὐκ ἐξεῖλον (αἰσθόμενος γὰρ τῆς ἐπαναστάσεως αὐτῶν Καικίνας Σεουῆρος ὁ τῆς πλησιοχώρου Μυσίας ἀρχων ἐπῆλθέ τε αὐτοῖς διὰ ταχέως περὶ τὸν Δράουον ποταμὸν οὖσι καὶ συμβαλὼν ἐνίκησεν), ἀναμαχέσεσθαι δὲ διὰ βραχέος, ἐπειδὴ καὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων συχνοὶ ἐπεπτώκεσαν, ἐλπίσαντε πρὸς παράκλησιν συμμάχων ἐτράποντο. καὶ οἱ μὲν συνίστων ὅσους ἐδύναντο, ἑτέρους δὲ τινας πέμψας πάντα τὰ παραθαλάσσια μέχρι τῆς Ἀπολλωνίας ἐλυμήνατο, καί τινι ἐνταῦθα μάχῃ δι' αὐτῶν τοὺς προσμείαντάς σφια Ρωμαίους, καίπερ προηπηθής, ἀντεπεκράτησε. πυθόμενος οὖν ταῦθ' οὐκ ἐκεῖ φροθέθηεις καὶ ἐς την Ἰταλίαν ἐσβάλωσιν, ἀλλ' ἐνακτήσαντες μὴ μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ Βάτωνος τοῦ Μεσσαλίνου ἐπείπετο. αἰσθόμενος δὲ τῆς προσόδου αὐτῶν ὁ Βάτων ἀπήντησε τῷ Μεσσαλίνῳ, καίπερ μηδέπω καλῶς ἔχων, καὶ ἐπικρατέστερος αὐτοῦ ἐν παρατάξει γενόμενος ἐπει' ε' ἐνέδρας ἐνικήθη, κάκ τούτου πρὸς τὸν Βάτωνα καὶ Βρεύκοι Ηλθε, καὶ κοινωνήσαμεν αὐτῷ τὸν νόους δρος τοῦ Ἀλμαν κατέλαβε· κἀκταὐθα πρὸς μὲν τοῦ Ῥυμητάλκου τοῦ Θρᾳκοῦ, προσμείαντάς σφια Ρωμαίους, καίπερ προηπηθής, ἀντεπεκράτησε. πυθόμενος οὖν ταῦθ' οὐκ ἐκεῖ φροθέθηεις καὶ ἐς την Ἕλληνικαν ἐσβάλωσιν, ἐπειδή καὶ τῶν Ρωμαίων συχον οὕτω επεπτύκωσαν, ἐπικρατέστερος αὐτοῦ ἐν παρατάξει γενόμενος ἐπει' ε' ἐνέδρας ἐνικήθη, κάκ τούτου πρὸς τὸν Βάτωνα καὶ Βρεύκοι ἠλθε, καὶ κοινωνήσαμεν αὐτῷ τὸν νόους δρος τοῦ Ἀλμαν κατέλαβε· κἀκταὐθα πρὸς μὲν τοῦ Μεσσαλίνου τοῦ Ῥυμητάλκου τοῦ Θρᾳκοῦ, προσμείαντάς σφια Ρωμαίους, καίπερ προηπηθής, ἀντεπεκράτησε. πυθόμενος οὖν ταῦθ' οὐκ ἐκεῖ φροθέθηεις καὶ ἐς την Ἕλληνικαν ἐσβάλωσιν, ἐπειδή καὶ τῶν Ρωμαίων συχον οὕτω επεπτύκωσαν, ἐπειδή καὶ τῶν Ρωμαίων συχον οὕτω επεπτύκωσαν.
While these events were occurring, expeditions against the Germans also were being conducted by various leaders, especially Tiberius. He advanced first to the river Visurgis and later as far as the Albis, but nothing noteworthy was accomplished at this time, although not only Augustus but also Tiberius was called imperator because of the campaign, and Gaius Sentius, the governor of Germany, received triumphal honours, inasmuch as the Germans, through their fear of the Romans, made a truce, not merely once, but twice. The reason that peace was granted them a second time, in spite of their having broken their truce so soon, was that the Dalmatians and Pannonians were in a state of great disturbance and required sharp attention. The Dalmatians, chafing under the levies of tribute, had hitherto kept quiet, though unwillingly. But when Tiberius made his second campaign against the Germans, and Valerius Messallinus, the governor of Dalmatia and Pannonia at the time, was sent out with him, taking most of his army along, the Dalmatians, too, were ordered to send a contingent; and on coming together for this purpose and beholding the strength of their warriors, they no longer delayed, but, under the vehement urging of one Bato, a Desidiatian, at first a few revolted and defeated the Romans who came against them, and then the rest also rebelled in consequence of this success. Next the Breucians, a Pannonian tribe, put another Bato at their head and marched against Sirmium and the Romans in that town. They did not capture the place, however, for Caecina Severus, the governor of the neighbouring province of Moesia, marched rapidly against them, when he heard of their uprising, and joining battle with them near the river Dravus, vanquished them; but hoping in some way to renew the struggle soon, since many of the Romans also had fallen, they turned their attention to summoning their allies and were getting together as many as they could. Meanwhile the Dalmatian Bato marched upon Salonae, where he was badly wounded by a stone missile and so accomplished nothing himself; but he sent out some others, who wrought havoc along the whole sea-coast as far as Apollonia, and at that point, in spite of having been first defeated, won a battle in turn against the Romans who engaged them. Now when Tiberius learned of this, fearing that they might invade Italy, he
returned from Germany, sending Messallinus ahead and following himself with most of his army. But Bato learned of their approach, and although not yet well, went to meet Messallinus; and though he proved stronger than Messallinus in open conflict, he was afterward defeated by an ambuscade. Thereupon he went to Bato, the Breucian, and making common cause with him in the war, occupied a mountain named Alma. Here they were defeated by Rhoemetalces, the Thracian, who had been sent ahead against them by Severus, but resisted Severus himself vigorously. Later, when Severus withdrew to Moesia, because the Dacians and Sarmatians were ravaging it, and Tiberius and Messallinus were tarrying in Siscia, the Dalmatians overran the territory of their allies and caused many more to revolt. And although Tiberius approached them, they would engage in no pitched battle with him, but kept moving from one place to another, causing great devastation; for, owing to their knowledge of the country and the lightness of their equipment, they could easily proceed wherever they pleased. And when winter set in they did much greater damage, for they even invaded Macedonia again. As for these forces, now, Rhoemetalces and his brother Rhascyporis checked them by a battle; and as for the others, they did not come to the defence of their country when it was later ravaged (in the consulship of Caecilius Metellus and Licinius Silanus), but took refuge in the mountain fortresses, from which they made raiding expeditions whenever the chance offered. When Augustus learned of these things, he began to be suspicious of Tiberius, who, as he thought, might speedily have overcome the Dalmatians, but was delaying purposely, in order that he might be under arms as long as possible, with the war as his excuse. He therefore sent out Germanicus, although he was only a quaestor, and gave him an army composed not only of free-born citizens but also of freedmen, including those whom he had freed from slavery by taking them from their masters and mistresses on payment of their value and the cost of their maintenance for six months.

Eutropius

7.9

ei dederunt. Reddiderunt etiam signa Romana, quae Crasso victo ademerant.

At no period was the Roman state more flourishing; for, to say nothing of the civil wars, in which he was unconquered, he added to the Roman empire Egypt, Cantabria, Dalmatia, often before conquered but only then entirely subdued, Pannonia, Aquitania, Illyricum, Rhaetia, the Vindelici and Salassi on the Alps, and all the maritime cities of Pontus, among which the two most noble were Bosporus and Panticapaeon. He also conquered the Dacians in battle; put to the sword numerous forces of the Germans; and drove them beyond the river Elbe, which is in the country of the barbarians far beyond the Rhine. This war however he carried on by the agency of his step-son Drusus, as he had conducted the Pannonian war by that of his other step-son Tiberius, in which he transplanted forty thousand prisoners from Germany, and settled them in Gaul on the bank of the Rhine. He recovered Armenia from the Parthians; the Persians gave him hostages, which they had given to no one before; and also restored the Roman standards, which they had taken from Crassus when he was defeated.⁹

Orosius

6.21.22-5

Quibus etiam diebus multa per se multaque per duces et legatos bella gessit. nam inter ceteros et Piso adversum Vindelicos missus est; quibus subactis uictor ad Caesarem Lugdunum uenit. Pannonios nouo motu intumescentes Tiberius pruignus Caesaris cruentissima caede deleuit. idemque continuo Germanos bello arripuit, e quibus quadraginta milia captivorum uictor abduxit. quod reuera bellum maximum et formidulosissimum quindecim legionibus per triennium gestum est, nec fere ullum maius bellum, sicut Suetionius adtestatur, post Punicum fuit.

In those days also Caesar fought many wars by himself and many through his generals and legates. Among others, Piso was sent against the Vindelici, and when these had been subdued, he went to Caesar at Lugdunum. Tiberius, the stepson of Caesar, with a very cruel slaughter destroyed the Pannonians who had risen in a new revolt. The same Tiberius immediately laid hold of the Germans in war, of whom as victor he carried off forty thousand captives. This very great and formidable war, indeed, was carried on by fifteen legions for three years, and since the Punic struggle, there had been almost no greater war, as Suetionius testifies.¹⁰

⁹ The text of Eutropius is from Rühl (1985). The translation of Eutropius is from Watson (1876).

¹⁰ The text of Orosius is from Zangemeister (1889). The translation is from Deferrari (1964).
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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Megan M. Daly was born in Illinois in 1984. She received her Bachelor of Arts in 2006, her Master of Arts in 2008, and her Doctor of Philosophy in 2013, all in Classical Studies from the University of Florida.