
From the Selected Works of E. H. Campbell

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Tacitus' Germanorum Liber (Lines 1.1 - 10.6)

Mr. Edward H. Campbell



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TACITUS' *GERMANORUM LIBER*

A NEW TRANSLATION, WITH TEXT AND COMMENTARY

By E. H. Campbell

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ABBREVIATIONS

1st = first person

2nd = second person

3rd = third person

Abl. =ablative case

Acc. = accusative case

Act. = active voice

Adj. = adjective

Adv. = adverb

Aor. =aorist tense

Comp. = comparative

Dat. = dative case

Fem. = feminine gender

Fut. = future tense

Gen. = genitive case

I.e. = id est, that is

Impf. = imperfective tense

Ind. = indicative mood

Inf. = infinitive mood

Masc. = masculine gender

Neut. = neuter gender

Nom. = nominative case

Op. Cit. = Operas Citatas

Part. = participle

Pass. = passive voice

Perf. = perfective tense

Pl. = plural

Pluperf. = pluperfective tense

Prep. = preposition

Pres. = present tense

Sing. = singular

Subj. = subjunctive mood

Superl. = superlative

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DE ORIGINE ET SITU GERMANORUM,

BY CORNELIUS TACITUS¹

¹ Tacitus, Cornelius, *Opera Minora*, Henry Furneaux, Clarendon Press: Oxford: 1900.

GÉOGRAPHIE OF GERMANIA

[1.1] *Germania omnis a Gallis Raetisque et Pannoniis Rheno et Danubio fluminibus, a Sarmatis Dacisque mutuo metu aut montibus separatur*.² *cetera Oceanus ambit, latos sinus et insularum immensa spatia complectens*,³ *nuper*⁴ *cognitis*⁵ *quibusdam*⁶ *gentibus*⁷ *ac*⁸ *regibus*,⁹ *quos*¹⁰ *bellum aperuit*.¹¹ [2] *Rhenus*,¹² *Raeticarum Alpium*¹³ *inaccessus*¹⁴ *ac praecipiti*¹⁵ *vertice*¹⁶ *ortus*,¹⁷ *modico flexu*¹⁸ *in*¹⁹ *occidentem*²⁰ *versus*²¹ *septentrionali Oceano*²² *miscetur*.²³ [3] *Danubius*²⁴ *molli et*

² 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *separo*, 'to disjoin, sever, part, sunder, divide, separate.'

³ masc. nom. sing. pres. act. part. of *complector*, 'to clasp, embrace, grasp.'

⁴ adv., newly, lately, recently, freshly, not long ago, just.

⁵ masc./fem./neut. perf. pass. part. of *cognosco*, to become acquainted with, acquire knowledge of, ascertain, learn, perceive, understand ; perf., to know.

⁶ masc./fem./neut. dat./abl. pl. of *quidam*, a certain, a certain one, somebody, one, something.

⁷ fem. dat./abl. pl. of *gens*, a race, clan, house.

⁸ conj. *atque* = and.

⁹ masc. dat./abl. pl. of *rex*, an arbitrary ruler, absolute monarch, king.

¹⁰ masc. acc. pl. of *quis*, any one, anybody, anything, some one, somebody, something; who, which.

¹¹ 3rd sing. perf. act. ind. of *aperio*, to uncover, lay bare.

¹² masc. nom. sing., The Rhine; *Rhenus ortus* is the masc. nom. sing. Subject of the sentence.

¹³ *Raeticarum Alpium* is fem. gen. pl., of the Rhaetian Alps.

¹⁴ masc./neut. dat./abl. sing. of *inaccessus*, unapproached, unapproachable, inaccessible.

¹⁵ neut. gen. sing. of *praecipitium*, a steep place.

¹⁶ masc. abl. sing. of *vertex*, a whirl, eddy, whirlpool, vortex; The highest point, top, peak, summit of a mountain, house, tree, etc.

¹⁷ masc. nom. sing. perf. pass. part. of *orior*, to arise, rise, stir, get up; to come forth, become visible; to have one's origin or descent, to spring, descend from; to grow or spring forth; to rise, take its origin; arise, proceed, originate.

¹⁸ *modico flexu* is masc. abl. sing., hence *modico flexu in occidentem* = with a moderate bend into the West.

¹⁹ *in*, prep., in, or into + acc.

²⁰ masc. acc. sing. of *occidens*, the sunset, west, occident.

²¹ masc. nom. sing. perf. pass. part. of *verto*, to turn, to turn round or about.

²² *septentrionali Oceano* is masc. abl. sing. of *septentrionalis Oceanus*, of or belonging to the north, northern, north + the great sea, outer sea, ocean; hence *versus septentrionali Oceano miscetur* = having turned mixed with the northern sea.

²³ 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *misceo*, to mix, mingle, intermingle, blend.

²⁴ masc. nom. sing. Subject.

*clementer edito*²⁵ *montis Abnoba* *iugo effusus*²⁶ *plures populos*²⁷ *adit*,²⁸ *donec*²⁹ *in Ponticum*³⁰
*mare*³¹ *sex meatibus*³² *erumpat*;³³ *septimum os*³⁴ *paludibus*³⁵ *hauritur*.³⁶

[1.1] Germany total³⁷ is all the way from³⁸ the Gauli, and the Raeti, and the Pannonia, which is the country lying between Dacia, Noricum, and Illyria, and the Rhine and Danube Rivers, from the Sarmatia, on the Black Sea, and the Dacia; separated either by mutual fear³⁹ or mountains: the Great Sea encompasses everything else,⁴⁰ embracing broad peninsulas and immense spaces of islands;⁴¹ some of those peoples and kings have lately become known to us, whom war has uncovered. [2] The Rhine originates on a steep inaccessible peak of the Raetian Alps, with a moderate bend into the sunset having been turned mixes with the northern sea. [3] The River Danube having issued

²⁵ masc. abl. sing. perf. pass. part. of *edo*, to give out, put forth, bring forth, raise, set up.

²⁶ masc. nom. sing. perf. pass. part. of *effundo*, to pour out, pour forth, shed, spread abroad.

²⁷ *plures populos* is masc. acc. pl. Direct Object.

²⁸ 3rd sing. pres. act. ind. of *adeo*, to go to.

²⁹ conj. as long as, while, during the time in which; until, till at length.

³⁰ masc. gen. pl.

³¹ neut. acc. sing. hence *in Ponticum mare* = into the sea of the Ponticii.

³² masc. abl. pl. of *meatus*, a going, passing, motion, course; a way, path, passage.

³³ 3rd sing. pres. subj. act. of *erumpo*, to break out, to burst forth.

³⁴ neut. nom. sing. Subject, hence *septimum os* = the seventh mouth.

³⁵ fem. dat. pl. of *palus*, a swamp, marsh, morass, bog, fen, pool.

³⁶ 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *haurio*, to drain, drink up; to spill, shed, hence *septimum os paludibus hauritur* = the seventh mouth spills into swamps, marshes, bogs, fens, and pools.

³⁷ *Germania omnis* is the fem. nom. sing. Subject of the sentence, thus, 'all Germany,' or 'the whole Germany.'

³⁸ *a*, prep. + abl.

³⁹ *mutuo metu* is masc. abl. sing., hence, 'by mutual fear.'

⁴⁰ *ambit* is the 3rd sing. pres. act. ind. of *ambio*, 'to go round or about a thing; to surround, encircle, encompass.' *Oceanus* as masc. nom. sing. is Subject, hence 'the Great Sea encompasses everything else,' where *cetera* is a neut. acc. pl.

⁴¹ Thus, embracing, *complectens*, extensive hollows, *latus sinus*, and immense spaces, *immense spatia*, of islands, *insularum*; where *latus sinus...immense spatia* is neut. acc. pl. and *insularum* is fem. gen. pl.

gently and calmly from the heights of the Abnoba mountain range, it mixes together, and goes to many nations, and at length by six pathways to the sea of the Ponticii, the seventh mouth spills into swamps, marshes, bogs, fens, and pools.

THE GENS OF THE GERMANS

[2.1] *Ipsos Germanos indigenas crediderim*⁴² *minimeque aliarum gentium adventibus et hospitibus mixtos*,⁴³ *quia nec terra olim sed classibus advehebantur*⁴⁴ *qui mutare sedes quaerebant*,⁴⁵ *et immensus ultra*⁴⁶ *utque sic dixerim*⁴⁷ *adversus Oceanus raris ab orbe nostro navibus aditur*.⁴⁸

[2] *Quis porro, praeter periculum horridi et ignoti maris*,⁴⁹ *Asia aut Africa aut Italia relict*⁵⁰ *Germaniam peteret*,⁵¹ *informem terris, asperam caelo, tristem cultu aspectuque nisi si patria sit?*⁵² [3] *Celebrant*⁵³ *carminibus antiquis, quod unum apud illos memoriae et annalium genus est, Tuistonem deum terra*⁵⁴ *editum*.⁵⁵ *Ei filium Mannum originem gentis conditoresque Manno*

⁴² 1st sing. perf. act. subj. of *credo*, to give as a loan, lend; trust, have confidence in.

⁴³ masc. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *misceo*, mix, mingle, blend.

⁴⁴ 3rd pl. imperf. pass. ind. of *adveho*, to conduct, carry, convey, bear, bring, etc., a person or thing to a place; and pass., to be carried, to ride, to come to a place upon a horse, in a carriage, ship, etc.

⁴⁵ 3rd sing. imperf. act. ind. of *quaero*, to seek, look for; to seek to get or procure, to seek or search for a thing.

⁴⁶ *ultra*, the transalpine, or that which is beyond or on the other side, i.e., the hinterland.

⁴⁷ 1st sing. perf. subj. act. of *dico*, to say, speak, tell, mention, relate, affirm, declare, state, assert.

⁴⁸ 3rd sing. pers. pass. ind. of *adeo*, to go to.

⁴⁹ *horridi et ignoti maris* is neut. gen. sing. *ignoti* = *ignotus*, unknown, strange, unfamiliar.

⁵⁰ fem. nom. sing. perf. pass. part. of *relinquo*, to leave behind, not take along, not stay with, leave, move away from, quit, abandon. *Asia aut Africa aut Italia relict* is fem. nom. sing. thus, having left behind either Asia, or Africa, or Italy.

⁵¹ 3rd sing. imperf. subj. act. of *peto*, to strive for, seek, aim at, repair to, make for, travel to.

⁵² 3rd sing. pres. act. subj. of *sum*, to be.

⁵³ 3rd pl. pres. act. ind. of *celebro*, celebrate.

⁵⁴ *terra* here is a fem. abl. sing. Hence *deum terra editum* = having been born, begotten, or produced by/with/from the Earth.

*tres filios adsignant, e quorum nominibus proximi Oceano Ingaevones, medii Herminones, ceteri Istaevones vocentur.*⁵⁶ [4] *Quidam, ut in licentia vetustatis, plures deo ortos*⁵⁷ *pluresque gentis appellationes, Marsos Gambrivios Suebos Vandilios adfirmant, eaque vera et antiqua nomina.* [5] *Ceterum Germaniae vocabulum recens et nuper additum, quoniam qui primi Rhenum transgressi Gallos expulerint ac nunc Tungri, tunc Germani vocati sint: ita nationis nomen, non gentis, evaluisse*⁵⁸ *paulatim, ut omnes primum a victore ob metum, mox et a se ipsis invento*⁵⁹ *nomine Germani vocarentur.*⁶⁰

[2.1] The Germans themselves, I do believe, are sprung from the soil,⁶¹ and have mixed very little with other races, with those who came and were entertained, because long ago men who desired to change abodes bore themselves about not by land but by ship and because the hinterlands are so vast, and as I have said, the Ocean hostile, it was with rarity visited by ships from our world. [2] Who moreover, aside from the peril of a rough and unfamiliar sea, would have left behind either Asia, or Africa, or Italy⁶² to travel to Germany; to its misshapen lands, to its hopeless sky, to its mournful sights and

⁵⁵ masc. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *edo*, to give out, put forth, bring forth, raise, set up.

⁵⁶ 3rd pl. pres. pass. subj. of *voco*, to call, summon, invoke, convoke.

⁵⁷ masc. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *orior*, arise or descend from.

⁵⁸ perf. inf. act. of *evalesco*, to become strong, increase in strength, to increase, grow.

⁵⁹ masc./neut. dat./abl. sing. perf. pass. part. of *invenio*, to acquire, get, earn.

⁶⁰ 3rd pl. imperf. subj. pass. of *voco*.

⁶¹ *indigena*, sprung from the land, native, indigenous.

⁶² Either...or...or is Polysyndeton, or the unnecessary use of copulative conjunctions. Thus something to the effect: 'Who having left behind either Asia, or having left behind Africa, or having left behind Italy would seek out Germany?'

scenery, unless it should be his fatherland? [3] They celebrate Tuisto,⁶³ a God having been born from the Earth, with ancient songs, which is the only way the race among themselves remembers and marks years, and to his son Mannus they assign the origin and founders of the tribes to three sons from Mannus, whom are called by these names; next to the Ocean the Ingaevones, in the middle the Irmiones, the rest the Istaevones. [4] There are some, with the freedom ancient times, who hold that a very great many descended from the God and a very great many names of the race, Marsi, Gambrivii, Suebi, Vandilii,⁶⁴ and these are true and ancient names. [5] At any rate, the name Germany is recent and has been recently applied, since then those who first crossed the Rhine, expelling the Gauls, and are now the Tungri, should now be called the Germans; in such a way, little by little, the name of a people, not of a race, grew strong, which by first conquering everyone through fear, and through them they all came to earn and would soon call themselves by the same name, the Germans.⁶⁵

⁶³ Although there has been a great deal of discussion about the origin and exact nature of this God, by those who have made it their task to debate things unknowable, the meaning of the word *Tuisto* and the exact nature of the God this word represents remains, as it were, unknown aside from the plain fact that he was the principal God of the Germans, thus to understand the Germans would be the pathway to understanding *Tuisto*.

⁶⁴ Ingaevones were tribe settled on the North Sea coast, the Irmiones on the Elb, the Istaevones on the Rhine, the Marsi between the Rhine, Lippe, and Ems rivers in northwest Germany, Gambrivii on the northern bank of the Lower Rhine in the vicinity of the Chamavi, Suebi in the north-eastern part of Germany, Vandilii in the northern part of Germany.

⁶⁵ *a se invento nomine*, from them came to earn the name, *mox et...ipsis...Germani vocarentur*, and soon thereafter called themselves, 'the Germans.'

CULT OF THE GERMANS

[3.1] *Fuisse et apud eos Herculem memorant, primumque omnium virorum fortium ituri*⁶⁶ *in proelia canunt. Sunt illis haec quoque carmina quorum relatu, quem baritum vocant, accendunt animos futuraeque pugnae*⁶⁷ *fortunam ipso cantu*⁶⁸ *augurantur;*⁶⁹ *terrent enim trepidantve, prout sonuit acies, nec tam vocis ille quam virtutis concentus videtur.* [2] *Adfectatur praecipue asperitas soni et fractum murmur, obiectis*⁷⁰ *ad os scutis, quo plenior et gravior vox re percussu* [3] *intumescat.*⁷¹ *Ceterum et Ulixen quidam opinantur longo illo et fabuloso errore in hunc Oceanum delatum*⁷² *adissee*⁷³ *Germaniae terras, Asciburgiumque, quod in ripa Rheni situm*⁷⁴ *hodieque incolitur,*⁷⁵ *ab illo constitutum nominatumque;*⁷⁶ *aram quin etiam Ulixi consecratam, adiecto*⁷⁷ *Laertae patris nomine, eodem loco olim repertam,*⁷⁸ *monumentaue et tumulos quosdam Graecis litteris inscriptos*⁷⁹ *in* [4] *confinio Germaniae Raetiaeque adhuc extare.*⁸⁰ *Quae neque confirmare argumentis neque refellere in animo est: ex ingenio suo quisque demat vel addat fidem.*

⁶⁶ masc. gen. sing. fut. act. part. of *eo*, to go.

⁶⁷ *futuraeque pugnae* is fem. gen sing.

⁶⁸ *ipso cantu* is masc. abl. sing.

⁶⁹ 3rd pl. pres. pass. ind. of *auguror*, to perform the services or fill the office of an augur, to take auguries, observe and interpret omens, to augur, prophesy, predict.

⁷⁰ part. of *obicio*.

⁷¹ 3rd sing. pres. subj. act. of *intumesco*

⁷² masc. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *defero*, was conveyed, brought to, carried to.

⁷³ perf. act. inf. of *adeo*, to come or go to.

⁷⁴ neut. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *sino*, stands.

⁷⁵ 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *incolo*, dwell in or inhabit.

⁷⁶ *constitutum nominatumque* are neut. acc. sing. perf. pass. participles.

⁷⁷ neut. abl. sing. perf. act. part. of *adicio*, place or set near.

⁷⁸ fem. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *reperio*, be found.

⁷⁹ masc. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *inscribe*, inscribed.

⁸⁰ *exsto* (*exto*), -are, to stand out, project; to still be in existence.

[3.1] They tell us⁸¹ Hercules to have been among them; and the primary they sing is about all brave men who will go into battle.⁸² There are for them also these songs which are related by way of recital, which they call *Barditus*,⁸³ inflaming their souls and fate of the future battle would be foretold by the song itself; for they terrify or tremble according to the sharpness of the sound, that appears not so much from the cry rather than of concord in their resolve. [2] A particularly unevenness of sound and a broken murmur being affected by covering their mouths with their shields, by which the voice would swell, being fuller and deeper from the reverberation. [3] And others are of the opinion that a certain Odysseus, in that long and fabulous wandering about was carried into this ocean and to German lands, and *Asciburgium*,⁸⁴ which stands on the bank of the Rhine, and is to this day inhabited, was by him founded and named, wherefore indeed an altar was consecrated to Odysseus nearby, the name of his father Laertes was once found in the same place, and monuments and burial mounds which were inscribed with Greek letters [4] still as yet exist within the confines of Germany and

⁸¹ According to Church and Brodribb *memorant* refers not to the Germans, but to authors who had written about them, thus: 'they tell us.' Op. Cit. 33n.2. Robinson relates variant readings of the line *Fuisse et apud eos Herculem* as being *et apud eos et Herculem* and *Fuisse apud eos et Herculem*. Op. Cit. 276n.3

⁸² *omnium virorum fortium ituri* is masc. gen. pl. *primumque* is neut. acc. sing. Thus: and the first thing they sing, *primumque...canunt*, is about all the brave men who will go, *omnium virorum fortium ituri*, into battle, *in proelia*.

⁸³ 'a battle-cry.' Robinson suggests *barditus*, the war-song of the Germans, as opposed to *barritus*, the cry of an elephant. Op. Cit. 276n.3.

⁸⁴ Now the city of Asburg.

Raetia; which I have resolved to neither confirm nor refute by arguments, let everyone according to his temperament add or subtract credibility.

COUNTENANCE OF THE GERMAN PEOPLE

[4.1] *Ipse eorum opinionibus accedo qui Germaniae populos nullis aliarum nationum conubiis infectos propriam et sinceram et tantum sui similem gentem extitisse⁸⁵ arbitrantur.⁸⁶ [2] Unde habitus quoque corporum, tamquam in tanto hominum numero, idem omnibus: truces et caerulei oculi, rutilae comae, magna corpora et tantum ad impetum valida. [3] Laboris atque operum non eadem patientia, minimeque sitim aestumque tolerare, frigora atque inediam caelo solove adsueverunt.*

[4.1] I myself go to the opinions of those who testify the German people have been mixed by marriage with no other nation and are special and pure.⁸⁷ [2] Whence just as there is such a great number of men, so to all the same body; eyes fierce and blue, hair blonde, body huge, and on the attack powerful. [3] Patience for work and works, not the same, and little tolerance for thirst and heat. And on account of either sky or bottom of the sky,⁸⁸ to cold and hunger accustomed they have grown.

⁸⁵ perf. act. inf. of *existo* (*exsisto*), to stand forth, come forth, appear; arise.

⁸⁶ 3rd pl. pres. pass. ind. of *arbitror*, testify.

⁸⁷ I myself go to the opinion of those who, *Ipse eorum opinionibus accedo qui* (Synchysis), testify, *arbitrantur*, the German people, *Germaniae populos*, having been mixed, *infectos*, by marriage, *conubiis*, with no other nations, *nullis aliarum nationum*, are special, *propriam*, and pure, *sinceram*.

⁸⁸ *solum*, the bottom or lowest part of anything, the floor of heaven; soil, ground, earth, land.

GERMAN CLIMATE AND MONEY

[5.1] *Terra etsi aliquanto specie differt, in universum tamen aut silvis horrida aut paludibus foeda, humidior qua Gallias, ventosior qua Noricum ac Pannoniam aspicit; satis ferax, frugiferarum arborum impatiens, pecorum fecunda, sed [2] plerumque improcera. ne armentis quidem suus honor aut gloria frontis: numero gaudent, eaeque solae et gratissimae [3] opes sunt. argentum et aurum propitiine an irati dii negaverint dubito. nec tamen adfirmaverim nullam Germaniae venam argentum aurumve gignere: quis enim scrutatus est? [4] Possessione et usu haud perinde adficiuntur: est videre apud illos argentea vasa, legatis et principibus eorum muneri data, non in alia vilitate quam quae humo finguntur. quamquam proximi ob usum commerciorum aurum et argentum in pretio habent formasque quasdam nostrae pecuniae agnoscunt atque eligunt: interiores simplicius et antiquius [5] permutatione mercium utuntur. Pecuniam probant veterem et diu notam, serratos bigatosque. Argentum quoque magis quam aurum sequuntur, nulla adfectione animi, sed quia numerus argenteorum facilius usui est promisca ac vilia mercantibus.*

[5.1] Although in appearance the land differs considerably, still as a whole is bristling with forests, or filthy with swamps; that which is facing Gaul, more wet; that which is facing Noricum and Pannonia, more windy;⁸⁹ fertile enough, but for fruit-bearing trees, intolerant; abounding in herds, [2] but in stature, for the most part, small. Indeed, in appearance, there is no honor or glory for their cattle. In their number, their only

⁸⁹ This is *Anaphora*, or parallel construction.

wealth, they rejoice [3] and are most grateful. I do not know whether out of mercy, or anger, the Gods deny them silver and gold. Still I should not affirm Germany bears no vein of silver or gold, for whom has searched? [4] They are not in like manner subverted by its possession and its use. One sees silver vases among them given as gifts to their leaders and representatives not in a manner other than with the cheapness of earthenware. Although out of need for commerce, with a neighbor gold and silver have value. And they recognize the beauty of our money and collect certain ones, in the interior a simpler and older means [5] of exchange of merchandise is used, the money they like is old and well known, serrated and stamped with a pair of horses. That which is silver is more sought after; the soul not being predisposed, but because of the number of silver coins for common or cheap merchandise it is easier to be used.

THE GERMAN MILITARY

[6.1] *Ne ferrum quidem superest, sicut ex genere telorum colligitur. rari gladiis aut maioribus lanceis utuntur: hastas vel ipsorum vocabulo frameas gerunt angusto et brevi ferro, sed ita acri et ad usum habili, ut eodem telo, prout ratio [2] poscit, vel comminus vel eminus pugnent. Et eques quidem scuto frameaque contentus est, pedites et missilia spargunt, pluraque singuli, atque in immensum vibrant, nudi aut sagulo leves. nulla cultus iactatio: scuta tantum lectissimis [3] coloribus distinguunt. Paucis loricae, vix uni alterive cassis aut galea. Equi non forma, non velocitate conspicui. sed nec variare gyros in morem nostrum docentur: in rectum*

aut uno flexu dextros agunt, ita coniuncto orbe ut nemo [4] posterior sit. In universum aestimanti plus penes peditem roboris; eoque mixti proeliantur, apta et congruente ad equestrem pugnam velocitate peditum, quos ex omni iuventute delectos ante aciem locant. [5] Definitur et numerus: centeni ex singulis pagis sunt, idque ipsum inter suos vocantur, et quod primo numerus fuit, iam nomen et honor [6] est. Acies per cuneos componitur. cedere loco, dummodo rursus instes, consilii quam formidinis arbitrantur. corpora suorum etiam in dubiis proeliis referunt. scutum reliquisse praecipuum flagitium, nec aut sacris adesse aut concilium inire ignominioso fas, multique superstites bellorum infamiam laqueo finierunt.

[6.1] Indeed iron does not abound, for example from the type of spears collected, swords and large lances are rarely used. They carry spears, or rather in their vocabulary ‘*Frameae*,’ with a majestic and iron point, but very sharp and easily used so they fight with that same spear as reason demands, [2] both in close combat and at a distance; and indeed the horseman is content with a *Scutum*⁹⁰ and a *Framea*, and foot-soldiers, either nude or in a light cloak, both individually and collectively, shower missiles in an immense volley. There is no boasting in their clothing in so far as only their shields are [3] decked out with colors, few breastplates, scarcely one or two with metal or leather helmets. Their horses are conspicuous neither for beauty nor speed, nor do they teach them to vary circles in the manner of ours; going in straight lines or by a turn to the right in unity in such a way from the circle no one [4] afterwards would

⁹⁰ A large rectangular shield made of wood and covered with hides.

be left out. In all estimation, their greatest strength is in the foot-soldier which battles mixed together, joining and harmonizing to the equestrian fight the speed of the foot-soldier, whom are selected out of the whole youth and are placed in the front. [5] The number is fixed from each district at one hundred and is among themselves called the same, and what was once a number is now a name and an honor. [6] The battle line is composed of wedges. To yield a place, so long as turning back you press on again, they deem to be of wise council rather than fear. Even in undecided battles they carry back the bodies of their dead. To have left behind a *Scutum* is a special disgrace, the law brands one ignominious, and one is not to undertake sacrifices or go to council, and many survivors of wars end their infamy with a noose.

THE GERMAN MONARCHY

[7.1] *Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex virtute sumunt. nec regibus infinita ac libera potestas, et duces exemplo potius quam imperio, si prompti, si conspicui, si ante aciem agant, [2] admiratione praesunt. ceterum neque animadvertere neque vincere, ne verberare quidem nisi sacerdotibus permissum, non quasi in poenam nec ducis iussu, sed velut deo imperante, quem adesse bellantibus⁹¹ credunt. [3] Effigiesque et signa quaedam detracta lucis in proelium ferunt; quodque praecipuum fortitudinis incitamentum est, non casus nec fortuita conglobatio turmam aut cuneum facit, sed familiae et propinquitates; et in proximo pignora, unde feminarum [4]*

⁹¹ masc./ fem./neut. pres. act. part. of *bellor* a rare form of *bello*, war.

Ululatus audiri,⁹² unde vagitus infantium. hi cuique sanctissimi testes, hi maximi laudatores: ad matres, ad coniuges vulnera ferunt; nec illae numerare et exigere plagas pavent, cibosque et hortamina pugnantibus gestant.

[7.1] Kings are selected out of the nobility,⁹³ commanders from virtue.⁹⁴ The power of kings is not infinite or arbitrary, and commanders rule with admiration, by example rather than authority, if prompt, if conspicuous, if they went to the front before. [2] With respect to other things, no punishment by death, nor confinement, not even flogging, unless by priests, is permitted. It is not as though punishment is on the order of a leader, but as ordered by the God for whom they believe the wars are undertaken. [3] And both effigies and certain symbols are taken from groves into battle. Neither accident nor chance gathers a crowd or makes a wedge, but the primary incentives are families both friends and families are nearby, hence the shrieks of women, [4] hence the squalling of babies are to be heard. And these are the most sacred witnesses to them, these the greatest eulogizers; to the mothers and wives they bear their wounds, neither are they terrified to count, or to discover the cuts, and they bring both food and encouragement to the fighters.

⁹² pres. pass. inf. of *audio*, to hear.

⁹³ I.e., on the basis of high birth.

⁹⁴ In this case, on the basis of bravery.

THE ROLE OF WOMEN

[8.1] *Memoriae*⁹⁵ *proditur*⁹⁶ *quasdam*⁹⁷ *acies inclinatas*⁹⁸ *iam et labantes*⁹⁹ *a feminis restitutas*¹⁰⁰ *constantia*¹⁰¹ *precum*¹⁰² *et obiectu pectorum et monstrata comminus captivitate, quam longe impatientius feminarum suarum nomine timent, adeo ut efficacius obligentur animi civitatum quibus inter obsides [2] puellae quoque nobiles imperantur. Inesse quin etiam sanctum aliquid et providum putant, nec aut consilia earum [3] aspernantur aut responsa neglegunt. vidimus sub divo Vespasiano Veledam diu apud plerosque numinis loco habitam; sed et olim Auriniam et complures alias venerati sunt, non adulatione nec tamquam facerent deas.*

[8.1] It is put forth to memory that some fronts just as they turned back and began to give way by women were restored on the strength of prayers¹⁰³ and by both showing breasts and indicating their nearness to captivity, which they fear much more for their women in so far as the spirit of the community effectively obliges those who are to be among the hostages [2] ordered to be also noble girls, to whom they indeed think

⁹⁵ fem. dat. sing. of *memoria*, memory.

⁹⁶ 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *prodeo*, to go forth, come forth, come forward; appear.

⁹⁷ fem. acc. pl. of *quidam*, some, certain.

⁹⁸ fem. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *incline*, to cause to lean, bend, incline, turn, divert.

⁹⁹ fem. acc. pl. pres. act. part. of *labo*, to totter, be ready to fall, begin to sink, give way, be loosened.

¹⁰⁰ fem. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *restituo*, to set up again, replace, restore, reconstruct, rebuild, revive, renew, reform, rearrange.

¹⁰¹ fem. abl. sing. of *constantia*, firm standing, steadiness, firmness, immutability, unchangeableness, constancy, perseverance.

¹⁰² fem. gen. pl. of *prex*, a prayer, request, entreaty.

¹⁰³ It is put forth to memory, *memoriae proditur*, that some fronts, *quasdam acies*, just as they turned back, *inclinatas iam*, and began to give way, *labantes*, by women, *a feminis*, were restored, *restitutes*, on the strength, *Constantia*, of prayers, *pecum*.

belongs some sanctity and foresight,¹⁰⁴ neither do they reject their council [3] nor fail to heed their answers. We saw under the divine Vespasian¹⁰⁵ Veleda for a longtime and among many in the place held to be possessed of divine power, but long ago both Aurinia and many others were worshiped not with obsequious flattery and not as Goddesses that were made.¹⁰⁶

CULT OF THE GERMANS REVISITED

[9.1] *Deorum maxime Mercurium colunt, cui certis diebus humanis quoque hostiis litare fas habent. Herculem ac Martem concessis animalibus placant. [2] Pars Sueborum et Isidi sacrificat: unde causa et origo peregrino sacro parum comperi nisi quod signum ipsum in modum liburnae figuratum [3] docet advectam religionem. ceterum nec cohibere parietibus deos neque in ullam humani oris speciem adsimulare ex magnitudine caelestium arbitrantur: lucos ac nemora consecrant deorumque nominibus appellant secretum illud, quod sola reverentia vident.*

[9.1] Of the Gods they cherish Mercury most, to whom on certain days they hold it lawful to also sacrifice humans, they permit satisfying Hercules and Mars with animals. [2] Part of the Suebi sacrifice to Isis: whence the reason and whence the origin of this foreign sacrifice I have learned little with certainty except that the symbol itself,

¹⁰⁴ Foresight, or foretelling, in both the mystical, and in the common, sense.

¹⁰⁵ Vespasian reigned from A.D. 69-79.

¹⁰⁶ We saw under the divine Vespasian, *vidimus sub divo Vespasiano*, Veleda, *Veledam*, for a longtime, *diu*, held, and among many, *apud plerosque*, in the place, *loco*, held to be, *habitam*, possessed of divine power *numinis*, but long ago, *sed et olim*, Aurinia, *Auriniam*, and many others, *complures alias*, were worshiped, *venerati sunt*, not with obsequious flattery, *adulation*, and not, *nec*, as Goddesses that were made, *tamquam facerent deas*.

being in the form of a *Liburnia*¹⁰⁷ [3] shows that the religion was brought to the place. On the other hand, the Gods are neither to be confined within walls nor do they regard any likeness of the human face to be compared to the greatness of the heavens. They consecrate meadows and groves, and invoke the Gods by names that are secret, which are the only things they revere.

[10.1] *Auspicia sortesque ut qui maxime observant. sortium consuetudo simplex. virgam frugiferae arbori decisam*¹⁰⁸ *in surculos amputant eosque notis quibusdam discretos*¹⁰⁹ *super* [2] *candidam vestem temere ac fortuito spargunt. Mox, si publice consultetur,*¹¹⁰ *sacerdos civitatis, sin privatim, ipse pater familiae, precatus*¹¹¹ *deos caelumque suspiciens ter singulos tollit, sublato*¹¹² *secundum impressam*¹¹³ *ante notam* [3] *interpretatur.*¹¹⁴ *Si prohibuerunt, nulla de eadem re in eundem diem consultatio; sin permissum,*¹¹⁵ *auspiciorum adhuc fides exigitur. Et illud quidem etiam hic notum,*¹¹⁶ *avium voces volatusque interrogare: proprium gentis equorum* [4] *quoque praesagia ac monitus experiri. publice aluntur isdem nemoribus ac lucis, Candidi et nullo mortali opere contacti; quos pressos sacro curru sacerdos ac rex vel princeps civitatis*

¹⁰⁷ A fast sailing vessel of the Liburnians—an Ilyrian people between Istria and Dalmatia.

¹⁰⁸ fem. acc. sing. pres. pass. part. of *decido*, to cut off, cut away.

¹⁰⁹ masc. acc. pl. pres. pass. part. of *discerno*, to separate, set apart, mark off, bound, part, divide.

¹¹⁰ 3rd sing. pres. pass. subj. of *consultor*, one who gives counsel.

¹¹¹ masc. nom. sing. perf. pass. part. of *precor*, to ask, beg, entreat, pray, supplicate, request, call upon, beseech, sue.

¹¹² masc. acc. pl. perf. pass. part. of *tollo*, to lift, take up, raise, elevate, exalt.

¹¹³ fem. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *imprimo*, to press upon, press against, stamp impress, imprint.

¹¹⁴ 3rd sing. pres. pass. ind. of *interpretor*, to explain, expound, interpret, understand.

¹¹⁵ neut. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. *permitto*, permitted.

¹¹⁶ masc. acc. sing. perf. pass. part. of *nosco*, to get knowledge of, become acquainted with, come to know, learn, discern. Hence, *hic notum* = 'this is known.'

comitantur hinnitusque ac fremitus observant. [5] Nec ulli auspicio maior fides, non solum apud plebem, sed apud procures, apud sacerdotes; se enim ministros deorum, illos conscios putant. Est et alia observatio¹¹⁷ auspiciorum, qua gravium bellorum eventus explorant. [6] Eius gentis cum qua bellum est captivum quoquo modo interceptum cum electo popularium suorum, patriis quemque armis, committunt: victoria huius vel illius pro praeiudicio accipitur.

[10.1] They are very observant of divination and the drawing of lots. The custom of lots is simple. A slender green branch is cut off a fruit bearing tree and the twigs are cut off¹¹⁸ and these are distinguished by a certain mark [2] and thrown randomly and casually on a white garment. Presently, if for the public it is the priest of the citizenry who gives counsel, if however it is in a private capacity, the father of the family himself who calls upon the Gods and looking upward towards heaven takes up each one three times then, after they are lifted, interprets the sign impressed upon them before. [3] If they forbid, there is no consultation about this matter on that day, if however it was permitted the truth of the signs are examined. And this too indeed is known, to consult the calls and flights of birds; differing from other peoples [4] the warnings and forebodings of horses are also sought. Supported by the public in these same meadows and forests are horses, white and free from earthly labor, which are harnessed to a sacred wagon and accompanied by a priest, king or prince of the people who observe

¹¹⁷ *alia observatio* is fem. nom. sing.

¹¹⁸ a slender green branch is cut off a fruit bearing tree, *virgam frugiferae arbori...amputant*, and the twigs are cut off, *decisam in surculos*.

both their neighing and their snorting. [5] Not any augury is more trusted not only among the people, but among the leading men and the priests, for they think they are the ministers of the Gods and them¹¹⁹ accessories. And there is another observation of divination by which they explore the outcome of a burdensome war. [6] A captive of that tribe with which there is a war having been seized by whatever manner along with one selected from their people is put together, each one with the arms of his fatherland, the victory of this one or that one is accepted without prejudice.

[11.1] *De minoribus rebus principes consultant, de maioribus omnes, ita tamen ut ea quoque, quorum penes plebem [2] arbitrium est, apud principes praetractentur. Coeunt, nisi quid fortuitum et subitum incidit, certis diebus, cum aut incohatur luna aut impletur; nam agendis rebus hoc auspicatissimum initium credunt. Nec dierum numerum, ut nos, sed noctium computant. sic constituunt, sic condicunt: [3] nox ducere diem videtur. illud ex libertate vitium, quod non simul nec ut iussi conveniunt, sed et alter et tertius [4] dies cunctatione coeuntium absumitur. Ut turbae placuit, considunt armati. silentium per sacerdotes, quibus tum [5] et coercendi ius est, imperatur. Mox rex vel princeps, prout aetas cuique, prout nobilitas, prout decus bellorum, prout facundia est, audiuntur auctoritate suadendi magis [6] quam iubendi potestate. si displicuit sententia, fremitu aspernantur; sin placuit, frameas concutiant: honoratissimum adsensus genus est armis laudare.*

¹¹⁹ I.e., those the horses.

OPERAS CITATAS

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MAP OF GERMANIA



