

## LIVY'S COSSUS AND AUGUSTUS, TACITUS' GERMANICUS AND TIBERIUS: A HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ALLUSION\*

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*Abstract.* In his description of the German chieftain Inguiomerus (*Ann.* 2.21.1), Tacitus uses phrasing (*tota volitantem acie*) that recalls Livy's description of the king Lars Tolumnius in his account of Rome's struggles against Veii (4.19.2–3). Both passages use similar religious language to establish a sharp dichotomy between the religious Romans and their irreligious opponents, and the reference also illuminates the nature of political honours and power under Tiberius: by casting Inguiomerus as Tolumnius, Tacitus implicitly draws a comparison between Germanicus and Cossus, a figure best known for winning the *spolia opima*, and this recalls the controversial question of Cossus' political office at the time he dedicated these *spolia*, and Crassus' failure to dedicate *spolia opima* in the time of Augustus, an issue with special relevance for Tacitus' Germanicus, who must downplay his military successes to avoid angering Tiberius. This allusion has important implications not only for Tacitus' portrayal of the emperor, but also for the question of intertextuality in historiography more generally.

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In his account of a battle during Germanicus' campaigns in Germany in AD 16, Tacitus describes the German chieftain Inguiomerus as 'flying along the whole battle line' (*Ann.* 2.21.1: *tota volitantem acie*). Aside from Tacitus' usage, there is only one other instance of the phrase, in Livy, who uses it to describe Tolumnius, an Etruscan king with whom Rome is at war (4.19.2).<sup>1</sup> Beyond these two passages, the notion of 'flying along' or 'through' a battle line appears in Latin literature only twice, and on both occasions with *in* or

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Nipperdey and Andresen (1884) 148; Furneaux (1896) 311; Koestermann (1963) 289. Andresen (1916) gives a detailed treatment of Livian language in Tacitus; he considers most of the similarities between the two authors as coincidental and due to the fact that they were educated in similar rhetorical schools (758–9). Modern perspectives are naturally different.

*per* with the accusative rather than with the local ablative.<sup>2</sup> The Tacitean usage is striking, and may have appeared to ancient readers as a deliberate reminiscence of Tacitus' historiographical predecessor. In this essay, I explore the possible ramifications of this reference: what is at stake if the reader, alerted by the Livian phrasing, thinks about the Tolumnius episode during his reading of Tacitus' account of Germanicus' campaigns?

There are two important resonances of the comparison. Firstly, the struggle between Romans and Germans is assimilated to a fight between Romans and Veientes in the city's early history, a conflict portrayed by Livy in black-and-white terms far removed from the shades of grey in Tacitus' German campaigns. Secondly, and more specifically, the phrase invites comparison between Germanicus and Aulus Cornelius Cossus, Tolumnius' opponent in the Livy passage and a figure who would have been well known to Tacitus' readership via the literary tradition celebrating his fight with Tolumnius and the winning of the *spolia opima*.<sup>3</sup> These spoils consisted of the arms of a leading enemy combatant, slain in battle and dedicated by his slayer in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius in Rome. It was the city's highest military honour, though dedications were made only three times in its history. The use of this allusion to draw a comparison between the Livian version of this figure and Germanicus, known for having been kept by a jealous *princeps* from enjoying the full fruits of his military success, allows Tacitus to illuminate the nature of political honours and power under Tiberius. It also has important implications for the question of intertextuality in historiography more generally.

### 1. Slaughtering the Treaty-Breakers: Religious Vocabulary

The battle between Romans and Germans in Tacitus shares a religious vocabulary with the battle between Romans and Veientes in Livy; this vocabulary casts the enemy as a treaty-breaker who should be slaughtered like a sacrificial victim in return for his impious actions. Part of what makes Livy's

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<sup>2</sup> Sil. 15.41; Flor. 1.45.4. Compare also Sil. 17.127–130 (*ut in agmine primo | Massylus volitet*, 'how Massylus flies along in the front of his army'), where Roman soldiers see the Massylian king Syphax and contemplate his irreligiosity.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. D.S. 12.80.6–68; Virg. *Aen.* 6.841 (with Servius ad loc.); Prop. 4.10.23–38; D.H. *Ant. Rom.* 12.5; Man. 1.788; Val. Max. 3.2.4; Fron. *Str.* 2.8.9; Plut. *Rom.* 16, *Marc.* 8; Flor. 1.6.9; Serv. ad *Aen.* 6.841 and 855. Harrison (1989) argues that Augustan poets' interest in the *spolia opima* stems from the contemporary situation of Crassus' non-dedication of them (on which see below); this is plausible even if, as Rich (1996) 126 argues, writers were not required to toe the line by parroting an 'official' set of rules for the *spolia* at the behest of the regime.

Tolumnius such a striking figure is his murder of some Roman legates, an impious act<sup>4</sup> for which Cossus censures him before the Roman troops (4.19.2–3):

is cum ... insignem ... eum regio habitu uolitantem tota acie cognosset, 'hicine est' inquit, 'ruptor foederis humani uiolatorque gentium iuris? iam ego hanc mactatam uictimam, si modo sancti quicquam in terris esse di uolunt, legatorum manibus dabo'.

When he recognised him flying along the whole battle line, conspicuous in his royal dress, he said, 'Is that the breaker of human treaty and the violator of the law of nations? Now I will give him as a sacrificed victim to the spirits of the legates, if the gods allow there to be anything sacred on earth.'

Cossus' language here not only establishes a sharp dichotomy between the religious Romans and irreligious Etruscans,<sup>5</sup> but also resonates with the attitude of Tacitus' soldiers towards the Germans. They earlier asserted, in strongly religious terms, that the Germans needed to be sacrificed to atone for their destruction of Varus and his legions in AD 9: *perfidios et ruptores pacis ultioni et gloriae mactandos* (2.13.1, 'treacherous men and breakers of the peace should be sacrificed to Vengeance and Glory').<sup>6</sup> The collocation of *ruptor* and *mactare*, which appears only in these two instances in Latin literature, is another strong argument that Tacitus was thinking of Livy here.

This language is complicated by the fact that *mactare* is generally used of sacrificing a victim to a god, making it a striking way to express the killing of

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<sup>4</sup> For violence against envoys as a violation of the *ius gentium*, see Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.85, Caes. *BG* 3.9.3, Liv. 30.25.10, Tac. *Hist.* 3.80.2.

<sup>5</sup> Levene (1993) 170.

<sup>6</sup> Religious language recurs throughout Tacitus' narrative of the German campaigns: the mutiny in Book 1 is described by Germanicus in religious terms as he prays to the divine Augustus and beseeches his troops to turn their anger against the Germans: 1.43.1–2, *mortem ... Vari tamen et trium legionum ulcisceretur. neque enim di sinant ut Belgarum ... decus istud et claritudo sit, subuenisse Romano nomini, compressisse Germaniae populos* ('Nevertheless, he would avenge the death of Varus and the three legions. For may the gods not allow that that glory and fame of having rescued the Roman name and subdued the peoples of Germany should belong to the Belgae'); 1.43.3: ... *cum militibus, quos iam pudor et gloria intrat, eluant hanc maculam irasque civilis in exitium hostibus vertant* ('[May Drusus and *divus Augustus*], along with the soldiers, whom shame and the hope of glory are already entering, wash away this stain and turn their civil anger to the destruction of the enemy'). Compare the striking personification (Goodyear (1981) 220) of *ultio* and *gloria* in this passage. On the mutiny narrative, see recently Fulkerson (2006); Woodman (2006); Ash (2010).

human beings. Tacitus' usage in particular gains a layer of meaning because it is the same word recently used to describe the Germans' slaughter of Varus' soldiers in their barbaric rites of human sacrifice (1.61.3: *locis propinquis barbarae arae, apud quas tribunos ac primorum ordinum centuriones mactaverant*, 'in the neighbouring groves were barbarian altars, at which they had sacrificed the tribunes and the centurions of the leading orders').<sup>7</sup> The sacrificial language draws a problematic parallel between the slaughter they are about to inflict and the grisly human sacrifice in the Teutoburg Forest. And Germanicus' troops are themselves guilty of atrocious acts in their attack on Munatius Plancus during the mutiny (1.39; cf. 1.42.2: *hostium quoque ius et sacra legationis et fas gentium rupistis*, 'you have broken the rights due even to enemies, the sanctity of an embassy, and the law of nations'), a violation not unlike Tolumnius' murder of the Roman legates. Furthermore, the very notion of divinely sanctioned punishment that the sacrificial language implies is problematised by the role played by the notoriously unpredictable *fortuna* in the battle that follows.<sup>8</sup> The Germans had brought along chains to put on the Romans they supposed they would capture, as if the battle's outcome had already been decided (2.18.1: *ut non dubio eventu*, 'as though the outcome were not in doubt'). Making assumptions about the way things will turn out is a classic error in ancient historiography,<sup>9</sup> since chance is always at work, as Tacitus himself observes in the case of Inguiomerus: *quin et Inguiomerum, tota volitantem acie, fortuna magis quam virtus deserebat* (2.21.1: 'Indeed, it was fortune rather than valour that deserted Inguiomerus, flying along the whole battle line'). Thus in calling to mind the Livy episode here, Tacitus draws attention to the problems of such rhetoric. The Roman victory over Inguiomerus has less to do with skill or moral superiority than it does with mere chance, *fortuna*. The Germans and their chains should perhaps serve as a cautionary

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<sup>7</sup> The reminiscence of Virg. *Aen.* 8.196–7 here, which deepens the Germans' barbarism, has been discussed by Woodman (1979) 148–9. For *mactare*, cf. *Ann.* 4.52.2 (of sacrifices to Divus Augustus).

<sup>8</sup> For the unpredictability of *fortuna* cf. Davies (2004) 119, 122–3. Tacitus' attitude toward fate and fortune is complex and shifting, leaving the question open as to whether men's actions are preordained or the result of free will, with different options being emphasised in different cases, as Cupaiuolo (1984) 30–31 has pointed out. Livian attitudes to fortune display similar slippage/inconsistency (Levene (1993) 30–33), as do Polybian (Hau (2011)).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Hdt. 1.66.3–4, where the Lacedaemonians are chained with the bonds they intend to put on the Tegeans they suppose they will conquer (part of a 'pattern [of] thoughtful and wary interpretation leading to success, hasty and thoughtless interpretation leading to failure', Mikalson (2003) 56), and Pol. 3.82.8, where Flaminius carries fetters to Lake Trasimene, 'showing the tempting of *Tyche*' (Walbank (1957) 414).

tale for the Romans: being convinced that the gods will support the rightness of your cause does not guarantee that you will be victorious.

## 2. Germanicus, Cossus, and *Spolia*

Another effect of this Livian phrase paralleling Inguiomerus and Tolumnius is to draw an implicit comparison between Germanicus and Cossus; this throws into sharp relief the difference between the nature of military honours in the two texts. Tacitus' invocation of Cossus' exploits has special impact given the description of Germanicus' dedication of spoils which follows (2.22.1):

Laudatis pro contione victoribus Caesar congeriem armorum struxit, superbo cum titulo: 'debellatis inter Rhenum Albimque nationibus exercitum Tiberii Caesaris ea monimenta Marti et Iovi et Augusto sacrauisse.' de se nihil addidit, metu invidiae an ratus conscientiam facti satis esse.

After praising the victors in a public meeting, Caesar built a pile of weapons with a bold<sup>10</sup> inscription: 'When the nations between the Rhine and the Elbe had been subjugated, the army of Tiberius Caesar dedicated this monument to Mars, Jupiter, and Augustus.' He added nothing about himself, whether out of fear of jealousy or thinking that knowledge of the deed was enough.

This is a dedication laden with political baggage. Tacitus appears to have no opinion as to whether *metus invidiae* or *conscientia* was more influential in determining Germanicus' behaviour; but given Tiberius' extremely hostile reaction to the re-burial of Varus' troops (1.62.2) and the apparent influence of that reaction on Germanicus' decision not to carry out a second re-burial (2.7.3), we must take *metus invidiae* seriously as a motive.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Germanicus' inscription is 'bold' in the sense that he makes 'a proud, but untenable claim' (Goodyear (1981) 241) to have completely subjugated all the tribes in the region. I have chosen this translation because it is less obviously negative than 'proud' or 'haughty', either of which would seem to imply an attempt to vaunt his superiority vis-à-vis Tiberius, an interpretation that is at odds with the last sentence of the quoted passage. For positive meanings of *superbus* see *OLD* 3; since we are dealing with a built structure, the meaning here possibly also abuts on *OLD* 4, '(esp. of buildings or their appointments) grand, proud, sumptuous'.

<sup>11</sup> For the alternative explanations see Whitehead (1979) 483. On corpses and ritual pollution see Lindsay (2000) 154–6. Literary evidence indicates emperors could take such things quite seriously: cf. Sen. *Marc.* 15.3; Dio 54.28.4–5, 56.31.3.

The situation of Cossus, a famous dedicator of spoils, is similar to Germanicus', in that Germanicus is a commander distinguishing himself under the auspices of Tiberius just as Cossus won his *spolia* while fighting under a dictator. Cossus' achievement in winning the *spolia opima* was so great that it eclipsed the dictator's triumph (Livy 4.20.1–2). But his status was much debated in the literary tradition: was he a consul (and thus fighting under his own auspices, which, according to some, was a precondition for the dedication of *spolia opima*) or merely a military tribune at the time of his single combat with Tolumnius?<sup>12</sup> In a long excursus on the issue, Livy tells how Augustus himself, having discovered the original spoils in the temple of Jupiter Feretrius, affirmed that the original dedicatory inscription listed Cossus as a consul (4.20.5–6). Livy then appears to accept this version, in contradiction of his own recent assertion that Cossus was a military tribune: *prope sacrilegium ratus sum Cosso spoliatorum suorum Caesarem, ipsius templi auctorem, subtrahere testem* (4.20.6: 'I thought it almost sacrilege to deprive Cossus of Caesar, restorer of that very temple, as witness to his spoils').<sup>13</sup> In Livy's time, the Cossus story is likely to have been relevant to contemporary discussion about Crassus' right to dedicate the *spolia opima*, and scholars have suspected that Augustus perpetrated a fabrication in order to block Crassus' dedication on the ground that he was not a consul at the time of winning them.<sup>14</sup> Even if, as seems more plausible, Augustus persuaded Crassus privately not to seek the *spolia* instead of getting the senate to reject his request for them,<sup>15</sup> the

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<sup>12</sup> Flower (2000) 44–5. Rich (1996) 104 argues that auspices were no precondition, on the grounds that that 'the term [*auspicium*] is being used loosely to mean no more than "independent command"'.

<sup>13</sup> Later in the narrative Livy again identifies Cossus as a military tribune (4.32.4), giving rise to questions about how far he actually accepts the story. For an analysis of the passage, see Miles (1995) 41–7, who says it 'is characterised not just by the alternation and counterbalancing of two competing points of view. Even the conclusion that certainty is impossible seems to be qualified.' See also Sailor (2006).

<sup>14</sup> This view was first articulated by Dessau (1906), based on Dio 51.24.4, and has been accepted as orthodox by most, including Syme (1959) 43–7; Miles (1995) 40–1; Liou-Gille (1998) 46–7; Chaplin (2000) 188–9 n. 91; Flower (2000) 49–53; Sailor (2006) 332–4. Note, however, the dissenting view of Rich (1996), who plausibly argues against the consulship as a requirement for the *spolia*, and asserts that Augustus would not have wished to publicly humiliate Crassus and that his interest in the corselet was antiquarian rather than political. See also next n.

<sup>15</sup> So Rich (1996) 107–8: If Crassus had formally requested dedication of the *spolia opima* and been rejected at Augustus' behest, the humiliation that this would have constituted would probably have left some trace in our sources; 'however, some discussion of the point may well have taken place at the time even if Crassus made no formal application to make the dedication.' Certainly, the celebration of so rare and ancient a ceremony by

*princeps* was attempting to exert some control over who had access to traditional public recognition of their military achievements – and, as we have seen, Germanicus’ lesser *spolia* are fraught with similar issues. In contrast to the time of Cossus, we are in a world where men who achieve military glory cannot claim the credit for it, whether out of fear, or because, in a society where the emperor has a monopoly on rewards, expectations have changed so much that it is possible for Germanicus to think that *conscientia facti* is the only recognition there is.<sup>16</sup>

Similar issues are at stake in Tiberius’ letters recalling Germanicus from his campaign in Germany (2.26.2–4).<sup>17</sup> He is ordered to return to celebrate a triumph (2.26.2) and leave Germany to Drusus as an arena for winning his own triumphs (2.26.4: *relinqueret materiem Drusi fratris gloriae, qui nullo tum alio hoste non nisi apud Germanias adsequi nomen imperatorium et deportare lauream posset*, ‘He was to leave material for the glory of Drusus his brother, who could not attain the name of commander and carry off the laurel branch except in Germany, since there was no other enemy’). He also declares that vengeance for Varus has been sufficiently exacted (2.26.3: *quoniam Romanae ultioni consultum es<se>t*, ‘for enough consideration had been given to Roman vengeance’); in so doing, Tiberius claims a monopoly on deciding when a campaign is over, and his rehearsal of his own exploits in Germany (2.26.3) amounts to a redefinition of military success as diplomacy. Certainly, Tiberius’ motives for calling Germanicus home may not have been sinister: he may simply never have wanted a big war in Germany, or he may have had doubts about Germanicus’ competence, or both.<sup>18</sup> But in the context of the

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someone other than Augustus would have been damaging to his reputation (*ibid.* (1996) 106).

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Ag.* 39, where it is Domitian’s *conscientia* of the importance of Agricola’s *factum* that leads him to heap upon him honours which fall short of his achievements (40.1: *quidquid pro triumpho datur*, ‘whatever is given for’ or ‘in place of a triumph’). The equanimity with which Agricola subsequently behaves (40.3–4) shows he has fully internalised the need to accept such an unequal reward. Despite Tacitus’ statement, an actual triumph would have been an unrealistic expectation: by this point it had been over a century since anyone outside the imperial family had celebrated a triumph. *Ornamenta triumphalia* were the normal reward, and the triumphal statue which Agricola is also awarded (40.1: *inlustri statuæ honorem*, ‘the honour of a conspicuous statue’) actually ‘ranked higher than *ornamenta*’ (*OLD*, s.v. ‘*triumphalis*’, 1c); cf. *Ann.* 4.23.1. I am grateful to Prof. A. J. Woodman for discussion of these points. See also n. 22 below.

<sup>17</sup> For a discussion of Tiberius’ letters and their centrality to his exercise of power, and especially their defining role in his relationship with Germanicus, see Morello (2006) 336–7.

<sup>18</sup> Goodyear (1981) 258. Cf. Pelling (1993) 76–7: ‘His motives are clearly suspect ... but still *what Tiberius says* is completely right, and Tacitus cares enough about bearing him out to vary his narrative technique’ by ‘going out of his way to ensure that the insight of Ti-

Cossus allusion, the triumph comes off as a consolation prize for the further glories Germanicus is sure he could attain, if he were allowed to continue campaigning. Germanicus realises the reasons behind his removal (2.26.5),<sup>19</sup> but cannot protest against it.

In Tacitus' description of Germanicus' triumphal procession, an episode providing another point of contact with Cossus, other people notice the perilousness of Germanicus' position (2.41.2–3):

C. Caelio L. Pomponio consulibus Germanicus Caesar a. d. VII. Kal. Iunias triumphavit de Cheruscis Chattisque et Angrivariis quaeque aliae nationes usque ad Albim colunt. vecta spolia, captivi, simulacra montium, fluminum, proeliorum; bellumque, quia conficere prohibitus erat, pro confecto accipiebatur. augebat intuentium visus eximia ipsius species currusque quinque liberis onustus. 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.

In the consulship of C. Caecilius and L. Pomponius, on 26 May Germanicus Caesar celebrated a triumph over the Cherusci, Chatti, and Angrivarii, and all the other nations which dwell as far as the Elba. Spoils, captives, representations of mountains, rivers, and battles were paraded; and the war, because he had been prevented from finishing it, was accepted as finished. His own remarkable appearance and his chariot weighed down with five children increased the spectacle for those looking on. But under the surface there was a hidden fear among those who considered that the favour of the people had not turned out well for his father Drusus, and that his uncle Marcellus had been snatched away during his youth from the ardent support of the *plebs*: brief and ill-omened were the loves of the Roman people.

Germanicus' *spolia* are linked with a war explicitly stated to be unfinished: the contrast with the campaign in which Cossus fights, with *omnibus locis re bene gesta*, is clear. And just as Cossus drew everyone's eyes away from the dictator's chariot in that earlier triumph, Germanicus too is a sight to behold and the focus of everyone's attention; there is no dictator present in his

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berius, along with some reservations about Germanicus, should be sensed'. Tacitus' discussion of the wars of Arminius against Maroboduus and Inguioomerus (2.44–46) makes Tiberius' suggestion that the Germans can indeed be left to their internal discords without need for further Roman military involvement (2.26.3) not so far-fetched as a solution.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Sinclair (1995) 64.



parade, but, as the implied agent of the passive *prohibitus erat*, Tiberius lurks in the background as the engineer of this sham triumph. The visual spectacle of Germanicus' own person and his promising brood of children increases the crowd's emotional response,<sup>20</sup> but these onlookers' thoughts turn from the apparent inheritors of Germanicus' fortune to his predecessors in the same, neither of whom fared well. *Infaustus* could signify that the Roman people's affection is 'not blessed with good fortune' (*OLD* 1), i.e. that their hopes for Germanicus are destined to be frustrated by his death; but it could also mean that their affection itself is what brings about his downfall (*OLD* 2, 'bringing ill fortune', or, applied to omens, 'of evil presage').<sup>21</sup> Being the centre of attention at a triumph, even one that was not his, was unproblematic for Cossus,<sup>22</sup> but for Germanicus it becomes a harbinger of doom. Germanicus is a man suited for a different era, a man who has energetically entered upon a military command, the traditional arena for winning glory, in an era whose political system attributes all such glory to the *princeps* rather than the man who actually earns it on campaign; 'the grimy and stifling realities of imperial politics are not the stuff for the noble and brilliant Germanicus ... He belongs to a simpler, older world.'<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> *augebat ... visus* is a difficult phrase; see the discussion of Goodyear (1981) 317–8.

<sup>21</sup> The ambiguity of *infaustus* is compounded by an ambiguity in the meaning of *amores*. Goodyear (1981) 318 and Woodman (2004) 60 take it in the abstract sense to mean the emotion (*OLD* 3a), but *amores* in the sense of the objects of that emotion (*OLD* 3d) would not be impossible, even if 'the Roman people's favourites were' not, *pace* Goodyear 'all ill-visaged dwarfs'. *Brevis*, as well as 'short in stature' (*OLD* 1b), can also mean 'short-lived' (*OLD* 7b) when applied to people; cf. Mart. 6.28.3 *cari deliciae breves patroni* ('the short-lived delight of his dear patron'). The first meaning of *infaustus* may apply to individuals as well. The translation of McCulloch (1984) 103 brings out the ambiguity well: 'The Roman people love men who die young and unlucky.' Are these men unlucky *in se* and thus destined to disappoint their admirers by dying early, or is it the admiration which proves fateful?

<sup>22</sup> Triumphal insignia may still be unproblematic in Tiberian Rome, but only for a relatively obscure figure such as Furius Camillus, mentioned at the end of Tacitus' narrative of the year AD 17: *et decrevere patres triumphalia insignia, quod Camillo ob modestiam vitae impune fuit* (2.52.5, 'And the senators decreed triumphal insignia which for Camillus went unpunished on account of the moderate nature of his life'). As Goodyear (1981) 348 has noted, 'mention of a Camillus regaining military glory for his family, by reminding us of a distant and very different past, makes a fittingly evocative conclusion.' Germanicus, it is implied, as a member of *too* significant a family—the imperial house—has no such *modestia vitae* and so cannot conform to this old-fashioned template without danger to himself. For the significance of end-of-year notices in Tacitean narrative see Ginsburg (1981) 31–52, especially 36, 46. On triumphal insignia see Beard (2007) 70.

<sup>23</sup> Pelling (1993) 72.

Furthermore, his *spolia* fall far short of the *spolia opima*. Tacitus implies that the visual impact of the *spolia* was great (*intuentium visus*), yet Germanicus himself had criticised the crudeness of German weapons in a pre-battle speech (*Ann.* 2.14.2–3), though these are no doubt the same *arma* used to make up the *congeries* of *Ann.* 2.22.1.<sup>24</sup> And this dedication of *spolia* is situated in Germany rather than the temple of Jupiter Feretrius at Rome. Even more importantly, both enemy commanders (Arminius and Inguiomerus) remain, unlike Tolumnius, very much alive. Cossus, to whom Tacitus fleetingly refers with this oblique allusion, gives us a glimpse not only into an older world of superior military achievement, but also into the process by which that world's values began to be undermined, in the form of Augustus' 'reception' of the story of Cossus.

There are hints, too, that Augustus may lie behind the limiting of Germanicus' military activity in a more concrete way. In Tacitus' report of his triumph, the Elbe represents the limit of his conquest, the same river celebrated as an outer limit of Roman rule by Augustus (*RG* 26.2: *Germaniam ... ad ostium Albis fluminis pacavi*, 'I pacified Germany as far as the mouth of the Elbe'). This need not mean that Augustus ever *intended* to make the Elbe into a boundary, yet it seems still to have had some sort of psychological hold over commanders who campaigned in Germany.<sup>25</sup> As Tacitus presents it, Augustan precedent certainly set some kind of limit, at least in the mind of Tiberius: he had inherited an empire already in a state of non-expansion (1.3.6: *abolendae magis infamiae ... quam cupidine proferendi imperii*, 'with a desire rather to erase infamy ... than to extend the empire'),<sup>26</sup> and was given instructions not to extend its bounds further (1.11.4: *addideratque consilium coercendi intra terminus imperii*, 'and he had added a policy of confining the empire within its borders'), a policy he was notorious for following (4.32.2: *princeps*

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<sup>24</sup> I owe this point to Dr Rhiannon Ash.

<sup>25</sup> Wells (1972) 5–6, 249 notes that the concept of a defensive border is an anachronism for the Augustan period, and points out that in any case the Elbe would have been a boundary too difficult to defend. Furthermore, 'never once ... does any ancient source suggest that the search was on for a frontier' (Whittaker (2000) 301). For the difficulties of definitively establishing an Augustan policy for Germany as either defensive or offensive, see Gruen (1990) 409. Germanicus' father Drusus was famously turned back from the Elbe by a divine apparition (Suet. *Cl.* 12.1; Dio 55.1), a story Gruen (1990) 405–6 identifies as a positive, propagandist spin on Drusus' failure to cross the river. Germanicus fails to feel the resonance of this event, as he himself invokes Drusus while approaching the Elbe (*Ann.* 2.14.4).

<sup>26</sup> Similar observations are made by the pro-Augustan *prudentes* of *Ann.* 1.9.5 (*mari Oceano aut amnibus longinquis saeptum imperium*, 'an empire fenced in by the ocean or by long rivers'); these unnamed rivers probably include the Elbe (cf. Goodyear (1972) 159). See Levick (1976) 145–6.

*proferendi imperi incuriosus erat*, ‘he was a *princeps* indifferent to extending the empire’).<sup>27</sup> Augustus’ effect on military honours thus extends into both the Livian past, where he could rule on the factual details of Cossus’ *spolia opima*, and into the Tacitean future, where an Augustan cast of mind is responsible for the assertion of similar control by his successor.

### 3. Conclusions: Intertextuality in Historical Texts

I hope to have drawn out some of the implications of Tacitus’ allusion to Livy in this passage: its comparison between Cossus and Germanicus invites the informed reader to consider the ways in which Tiberius’ autocratic tendencies form a lamentable contrast with the freedom of Cossus to dedicate *spolia opima* in the Republic. In addition to its implications for Tacitus’ narrative, the Cossus allusion also sheds light on the nature of the relationship between historical texts. Since most scholarly studies of allusion in classical texts have treated primarily poetic genres dealing with fictional or mythical events,<sup>28</sup> recent scholarship has debated whether allusion to other texts works differently in historiography, where, when they refer directly or obliquely to past situations, events, and figures, authors must consider not only previous textual representations of the past but also ‘what really happened’. On one side, Pelling maintains that ‘historiographic intertextuality need not be “different from” intertextuality in other genres, even if it is used more directly and less obliquely “for” real-life events and we therefore care about our inferences in a different way’.<sup>29</sup> Levene, on the other hand, asserts that the inability or unwillingness of a historical author to deviate from what is perceived as ‘hard-core fact’ makes historiographical intertextuality fundamentally different, especially in cases where one author uses another as a

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<sup>27</sup> Cf. *Ag.* 13.3 on Tiberius’ non-annexation of Britain: *consilium id divus Augustus vocabat, Tiberius praeceptum* (‘divine Augustus called that a policy, Tiberius a precept’); see also Dio 56.33.5 with Swan (2004) 319, and cf. 53.10.4, 54.9.1 56.41.7. For an assessment of the historicity of this anti-imperialist policy see Ober (1982), who argues that it was actually a piece of propaganda generated by Tiberius. If properly Augustan, it ‘should probably be explained as the result of a purely temporary pragmatism’, as Cooley (2009) 219 notes. Cf. Wells (1972) 8: ‘Had Augustus died eight or nine years earlier, let us suppose in the winter of AD 5/6, with his armies assembled to strike into Bohemia, and Illyricum and Germany to all appearances pacified, can we imagine that his ‘consilium’ would still have been the same?’ L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, who received triumphal insignia for crossing the Elbe in around 2 BC and ‘penetrating further into Germany than anyone before him’ (*Ann.* 4.44.2), is a figure parallel to Camillus (see above n. 22) as someone for whom it was permissible to do what would not have been permissible for Germanicus.

<sup>28</sup> For an introduction to allusion and intertextuality in poetic genres see Hinds (1998).

<sup>29</sup> Pelling (2011) 19.

source.<sup>30</sup> The allusion I have considered here, since Tacitus is not using Livy as a source for the subject matter about which he writes, naturally falls more in line with the Pelling model of historiographical intertextuality.

Yet because of the subject matter and the concerns of historiography in general, and of Tacitus' *Annals* in particular, the genre in which this Cossus allusion occurs lends it a particular importance. Describing one character or situation in terms of another is to make an implicit assertion about its nature. In historiography in particular, this often has political overtones, as Barchiesi notes: 'The exasperated and cryptical Callimacheanism of Augustan poets is also a political gesture, just as Livy's allusions to Sallust count as an ideological program.'<sup>31</sup> O'Gorman makes similar observations about Sallust's imitations of Thucydides: 'There is a specific ideological charge ... to Roman historians' engagement with their Greek predecessors.'<sup>32</sup> The same can be said of a Roman historian's engagement with a Roman predecessor, especially when the two authors do not live under the same political system: reference to a work written about, or under, the Republic<sup>33</sup> has definite political implications when it appears in a work written about, and under, the principate. A clear example relevant to our theme: the similarities between *Sal. Cat.* 10.1 (*saevire fortuna ac miscere omnia coepit*, 'Fortune began to be savage and to throw everything into confusion') and *Tac. Ann.* 4.1.1 (*cum repente turbare fortuna coepit, saevire ipse aut saevientibus vires praebere*, 'when suddenly Fortune began to disrupt, and the emperor himself to be savage or lend strength to others who were being savage') show a difference in who controls happenings: 'Tiberius' own savagery has now taken fortune's place as the disruptive force ... And that is a difference that the principate has made.'<sup>34</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Levene (2010) 82–163, especially 147–63, and (2011).

<sup>31</sup> Barchiesi (2001) 149.

<sup>32</sup> O'Gorman (2009) 240.

<sup>33</sup> I follow the view, expounded by Woodman (1988) 134–40, that Livy began to compose the first pentad before the battle of Actium in 31 BC rather than after 28 as Octavian was consolidating his position as *princeps*, as has been traditionally assumed; Woodman himself is influenced by Luce (1965), who claims (238), 'the first pentad ... can scarcely be termed "Augustan" either in inspiration or in execution; it was written in the years before the title was given to Octavian and before most of his policies and programs had been enacted.' Crucial here is the interpretation of the *remedia* of *Liv. praef.* 9 as referring to imminent one-man rule as the cure for civil wars; Tacitus' observation about Augustus as *remedium* (*Ann.* 1.9.4) 'suggests that Tacitus understood Livy's preface in this way' (Moles (1993) 152); to Tacitus, or at least to the *prudentes* through whom *Ann.* 1.9–10 are focalised, Livy emerges, at least in his early books, as a historian of the (admittedly) dying republic rather than of the principate. Since the composition date of Book 4 itself is uncertain, it can be counted as 'republican' historiography with correspondingly less certainty.

<sup>34</sup> Pelling (2011) 7.

Tacitus' use of Livy's Cossus works in similar general terms, yet it is also strengthened and complicated by the allusion's relationship to Livian notions of exemplarity. Livy's Cossus is certainly an exemplar of martial heroism whom the author might reasonably be thought to want his readers to take as an example to imitate (cf. *praef.* 10 *hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod uites*, 'It is especially salubrious and fruitful in thinking about affairs for you to consider evidence of every example placed upon a shining monument; from there, take for yourself and your country what you should imitate, and what, foul in its beginning and foul in its consequences, you should avoid'). But through the digression on Augustus and the linen breastplate, Livy also makes Cossus into an *exemplum* of the difficulties involved in interpreting that heroism, as Jaeger notes: 'the reader ... recognises not just specific historical events and names but significant patterns as well, from which he or she gains insight into ways of thinking about the past ... The idea that those who restore *monumenta* reinterpret them is as much the point of the passage as is the technical argument concerning ... eligibility for the [*spolia opima*].'<sup>35</sup> Since a *princeps* is involved in this particular *exemplum*, it is easy to see its relevance for Tacitus and his observations on Tiberius' limiting of Germanicus' honours.

For Tacitus' point is in the ultimate impossibility of mapping Germanicus onto Cossus, of assimilating his Rome to that of Livy. John Marincola has emphasised the paradoxical nature of *exempla* and historiographical allusions more broadly: on the one hand, the very fact of their use 'ha[s] the effect of collapsing time, or making the present equivalent to the past,' but in practice part of the historian's point is often in the mismatch between *exemplum* and contemporary reality: 'our historians ... seem to be questioning this collapse of past and present and to be emphasising not continuity but distance.'<sup>36</sup> Tacitus' use of the same religious language used by Livy implicitly links his battle between Romans and Germans and Livy's battle between good Romans and evil Veientes. But since Tacitus' Romans cannot be painted as entirely good and pious, the comparison is ultimately unsustainable, and that is an implicit comment about the morality of Roman imperialism under the principate as compared with the early days of Roman ex-

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<sup>35</sup> Jaeger (1997) 82.

<sup>36</sup> Marincola (2011) 27, arguing against O'Gorman (2009); 'our historians' refers to Salust and Xenophon, the subjects of his paper. Compare the observations of Clark (2011) 212 on Vologaeses' *cunctatio* and Roman past and present: 'As so often in Tacitus' work, the reader is reminded of how times and circumstances have changed.' See also Fox (2007) 271–2 on *Ann.* 4.33 as showing the failure of exemplary history in imperial times.

pansion. Likewise, in putting Cossus into the background of Germanicus, Tacitus invites his readers to consider the differences between the Rome of the Republic and the Rome of Tiberius, differences that are thrown into relief by the many similarities between the two figures. Alluding specifically to the Cossus of Livy, rather than to any of the myriad other literary versions of him, brings Augustus into the mix as another *auctor* (through his 're-writing' of Cossus, and his claims about German conquest in the *Res Gestae*) with whom Tacitus is implicitly engaged. Readers are invited to think about how in the case of Cossus he championed a similar separation between past and present. When Crassus, who lurks in the background as an unspoken third referent in the Germanicus–Cossus comparison, did not dedicate the *spolia opima*, they became a thing of the past that contemporary figures could not attain.<sup>37</sup> Tacitus' reader is invited to evaluate this manipulation of history, but also to recognise that proper rewards for military glory (for any but emperors themselves) *are* indeed something of the past. Reading Tacitus becomes an interpretation of historical interpretation itself.

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<sup>37</sup> It is certainly true that this way of looking at Cossus and the other winners of *spolia opima* is not unique to Livy, as Hutchinson (2006) 220–1 has observed in relation to Prop. 4.10: 'The poetic separation of the *spolia opima* from the present fits in neatly with Augustus' stance.' Yet in Propertius there is no question about Cossus' rank, and only in Livy does Augustus himself feature directly as arbiter of the *spolia opima*.

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