

**Chapter 1 : Annals (Tacitus) - Wikipedia**

*Tacitus wrote the Annals in at least 16 books, but books and parts of books 5, 6, 11 and 16 are missing. [3] The period covered by the Histories (written before the Annals) starts at the beginning of the year AD 69, i.e. six months after the death of Nero and continues to the death of Domitian in [3].*

Freedom and the consulship were established by Lucius Brutus. Dictatorships were held for a temporary crisis. The power of the decemvirs did not last beyond two years, nor was the consular jurisdiction of the military tribunes of long duration. The despotisms of Cinna and Sulla were brief; the rule of Pompeius and of Crassus soon yielded before Caesar ; the arms of Lepidus and Antonius before Augustus ; who, when the world was wearied by civil strife, subjected it to empire under the title of Princeps. But the successes and reverses of the old Roman people have been recorded by famous historians; and fine intellects were not wanting to describe the times of Augustus, till growing sycophancy scared them away. The histories of Tiberius , Gaius , Claudius , and Nero , while they were in power, were falsified through terror, and after their death were written under the irritation of a recent hatred. Hence my purpose is to relate a few facts about Augustus—more particularly his last acts, then the reign of Tiberius, and all which follows, without either bitterness or partiality, from any motives to which I am far removed. He was wholly unopposed, for the boldest spirits had fallen in battle, or in the proscription, while the remaining nobles, the readier they were to be slaves, were raised the higher by wealth and promotion, so that, aggrandised by revolution, they preferred the safety of the present to the dangerous past. Nor did the provinces dislike that condition of affairs, for they distrusted the government of the Senate and the people, because of the rivalries between the leading men and the rapacity of the officials, while the protection of the laws was unavailing, as they were continually deranged by violence, intrigue, and finally by corruption. Tiberius Nero and Claudius Drusus, his stepsons, he honoured with imperial titles, although his own family was as yet undiminished. For she had gained such a hold on the aged Augustus that he drove out as an exile into the island of Planasia, his only grandson, Agrippa Postumus, who, though devoid of worthy qualities, and having only the brute courage of physical strength, had not been convicted of any gross offence. He had no war at the time on his hands except against the Germans, which was rather to wipe out the disgrace of the loss of Quintilius Varus and his army than out of an ambition to extend the empire, or for any adequate recompense. At home all was tranquil, and there were magistrates with the same titles; there was a younger generation, sprung up since the victory of Actium, and even many of the older men had been born during the civil wars. How few were left who had seen the republic! Latin 4[ edit ] Thus the State had been revolutionised, and there was not a vestige left of the old sound morality. Stript of equality, all looked up to the commands of a sovereign without the least apprehension for the present, while Augustus in the vigour of life, could maintain his own position, that of his house, and the general tranquillity. When in advanced old age, he was worn out by a sickly frame, and the end was near and new prospects opened, a few spoke in vain of the blessings of freedom, but most people dreaded and some longed for war. The popular gossip of the large majority fastened itself variously on their future roasters. Tiberius Nero was of mature years, and had established his fame in war, but he had the old arrogance inbred in the Claudian family, and many symptoms of a cruel temper, though they were repressed, now and then broke out. He had also from earliest infancy been reared in an imperial house; consulships and triumphs had been heaped on him in his younger days; even in the years which, on the pretext of seclusion he spent in exile at Rhodes, he had had no thoughts but of wrath, hypocrisy, and secret sensuality. They must, it seemed, be subject to a female and to two striplings besides, who for a while would burden, and some day rend asunder the State. For a rumour had gone abroad that a few months before he had sailed to Planasia on a visit to Agrippa, with the knowledge of some chosen friends, and with one companion, Fabius Maximus; that many tears were shed on both sides, with expressions of affection, and that thus there was a hope of the young man being restored to the home of his grandfather. This, it was said, Maximus had divulged to his wife Marcia, she again to Livia. Whatever the fact was, Tiberius as he was just entering Illyria was summoned home by an urgent letter from his mother, and it has not been thoroughly ascertained whether at the city of Nola he found Augustus still breathing or quite lifeless. For Livia had

surrounded the house and its approaches with a strict watch, and favourable bulletins were published from time to time, till, provision having been made for the demands of the crisis, one and the same report told men that Augustus was dead and that Tiberius Nero was master of the State. Latin 6[ edit ] The first crime of the new reign was the murder of Postumus Agrippa. Though he was surprised and unarmed, a centurion of the firmest resolution despatched him with difficulty. Tiberius gave no explanation of the matter to the Senate; he pretended that there were directions from his father ordering the tribune in charge of the prisoner not to delay the slaughter of Agrippa, whenever he should himself have breathed his last. But he never was hard-hearted enough to destroy any of his kinsfolk, nor was it credible that death was to be the sentence of the grandson in order that the stepson might feel secure. When the centurion reported, according to military custom, that he had executed the command, Tiberius replied that he had not given the command, and that the act must be justified to the Senate. Latin As soon as Sallustius Crispus who shared the secret he had, in fact, sent the written order to the tribune knew this, fearing that the charge would be shifted on himself, and that his peril would be the same whether he uttered fiction or truth, he advised Livia not to divulge the secrets of her house or the counsels of friends, or any services performed by the soldiers, nor to let Tiberius weaken the strength of imperial power by referring everything to the Senate, for "the condition," he said, "of holding empire is that an account cannot be balanced unless it be rendered to one person. Then the Senate, the soldiers and the people did the same. For Tiberius would inaugurate everything with the consuls, as though the ancient constitution remained, and he hesitated about being emperor. Even the proclamation by which he summoned the senators to their chamber, he issued merely with the title of Tribune, which he had received under Augustus. The wording of the proclamation was brief, and in a very modest tone. He had the guard under arms, with all the other adjuncts of a court; soldiers attended him to the forum; soldiers went with him to the Senate House. He sent letters to the different armies, as though supreme power was now his, and showed hesitation only when he spoke in the Senate. His chief motive was fear that Germanicus, who had at his disposal so many legions, such vast auxiliary forces of the allies, and such wonderful popularity, might prefer the possession to the expectation of empire. It was subsequently understood that he assumed a wavering attitude, to test likewise the temper of the nobles. For he would twist a word or a look into a crime and treasure it up in his memory. Latin 8[ edit ] On the first day of the Senate he allowed nothing to be discussed but the funeral of Augustus, whose will, which was brought in by the Vestal Virgins, named as his heirs Tiberius and Livia. The latter was to be admitted into the Julian family with the name of Augusta; next in expectation were the grand and great-grandchildren. In the third place, he had named the chief men of the State, most of whom he hated, simply out of ostentation and to win credit with posterity. Next followed a deliberation about funeral honours. Of these the most imposing were thought fitting. The procession was to be conducted through "the gate of triumph," on the motion of Gallus Asinius; the titles of the laws passed, the names of the nations conquered by Augustus were to be borne in front, on that of Lucius Arruntius. Messala Valerius further proposed that the oath of allegiance to Tiberius should be yearly renewed, and when Tiberius asked him whether it was at his bidding that he had brought forward this motion, he replied that he had proposed it spontaneously, and that in whatever concerned the State he would use only his own discretion, even at the risk of offending. This was the only style of adulation which yet remained. The Senators unanimously exclaimed that the body ought to be borne on their shoulders to the funeral pile. The emperor left the point to them with disdainful moderation, and he then admonished the people by a proclamation not to indulge in that tumultuous enthusiasm which had distracted the funeral of the Divine Julius, or express a wish that Augustus should be burnt in the Forum instead of in his appointed resting-place in the Campus Martius. People extolled too the number of his consulships, in which he had equalled Valerius Corvus and Caius Marius combined, the continuance for thirty-seven years of the tribunitian power, the title of Imperator twenty-one times earned, and his other honours which had been either frequently repeated or were wholly new. Sensible men, however, spoke variously of his life with praise and censure. Some said "that dutiful feeling towards a father, and the necessities of the State in which laws had then no place, drove him into civil war, which can neither be planned nor conducted on any right principles. When the latter sank into feeble dotage and the former had been ruined by his profligacy, the only remedy for his distracted country was the rule of a single man. Yet the

State had been organized under the name neither of a kingdom nor a dictatorship, but under that of a prince. The ocean and remote rivers were the boundaries of the empire; the legions, provinces, fleets, all things were linked together; there was law for the citizens; there was respect shown to the allies. The capital had been embellished on a grand scale; only in a few instances had he resorted to force, simply to secure general tranquillity. Citizens were proscribed, lands divided, without so much as the approval of those who executed these deeds. Even granting that the deaths of Cassius and of the Bruti were sacrifices to a hereditary enmity though duty requires us to waive private feuds for the sake of the public welfare, still Pompeius had been deluded by the phantom of peace, and Lepidus by the mask of friendship. Subsequently, Antonius had been lured on by the treaties of Tarentum and Brundisium, and by his marriage with the sister, and paid by his death the penalty of a treacherous alliance. No doubt, there was peace after all this, but it was a peace stained with blood; there were the disasters of Lollius and Varus, the murders at Rome of the Varros, Egnatii, and Juli. No honour was left for the gods, when Augustus chose to be himself worshipped with temples and statues, like those of the deities, and with flamens and priests. He had not even adopted Tiberius as his successor out of affection or any regard to the State, but, having thoroughly seen his arrogant and savage temper, he had sought glory for himself by a contrast of extreme wickedness. However, when his obsequies had been duly performed, a temple with a religious ritual was decreed him. Latin 11[ edit ] After this all prayers were addressed to Tiberius. He, on his part, urged various considerations, the greatness of the empire, his distrust of himself. Consequently, in a state which had the support of so many great men, they should not put everything on one man, as many, by uniting their efforts would more easily discharge public functions. The Senators, however, whose only fear was lest they might seem to understand him, burst into complaints, tears, and prayers. They raised their hands to the gods, to the statue of Augustus, and to the knees of Tiberius, when he ordered a document to be produced and read. This contained a description of the resources of the State, of the number of citizens and allies under arms, of the fleets, subject kingdoms, provinces, taxes, direct and indirect, necessary expenses and customary bounties. All these details Augustus had written with his own hand, and had added a counsel, that the empire should be confined to its present limits, either from fear or out of jealousy. Latin 12[ edit ] Meantime, while the Senate stooped to the most abject supplication, Tiberius happened to say that although he was not equal to the whole burden of the State, yet he would undertake the charge of whatever part of it might be intrusted to him. Then Gallus again, who had inferred anger from his looks, said that the question had not been asked with the intention of dividing what could not be separated, but to convince him by his own admission that the body of the State was one, and must be directed by a single mind. He further spoke in praise of Augustus, and reminded Tiberius himself of his victories, and of his admirable deeds for many years as a civilian. Latin 13[ edit ] Next, Lucius Arruntius, who differed but little from the speech of Gallus, gave like offence, though Tiberius had no old grudge against him, but simply mistrusted him, because he was rich and daring, had brilliant accomplishments, and corresponding popularity. For Augustus, when in his last conversations he was discussing who would refuse the highest place, though sufficiently capable, who would aspire to it without being equal to it, and who would unite both the ability and ambition, had described Marcus Lepidus as able but contemptuously indifferent, Gallus Asinius as ambitious and incapable, Lucius Arruntius as not unworthy of it, and, should the chance be given him, sure to make the venture. About the two first there is a general agreement, but instead of Arruntius some have mentioned Cneius Piso, and all these men, except Lepidus, were soon afterwards destroyed by various charges through the contrivance of Tiberius. Tiberius instantly broke out into invective against Haterius; Scaurus, with whom he was far more deeply displeased, he passed over in silence. Yet the peril of so great a man did not make him relent, till Haterius went with entreaties to Augusta, and was saved by her very earnest intercessions. The same request was not made for Drusus, because he was consul elect and present at Rome. Latin 15[ edit ] It was then for the first time that the elections were transferred from the Campus Martius to the Senate. Nor did the people complain of having the right taken from them, except in mere idle talk, and the Senate, being now released from the necessity of bribery and of degrading solicitations, gladly upheld the change, Tiberius confining himself to the recommendation of only four candidates who were to be nominated without rejection or canvass. Meanwhile the tribunes of the people asked leave to exhibit at their own expense games to be named

after Augustus and added to the Calendar as the Augustales. Money was, however, voted from the exchequer, and though the use of the triumphal robe in the circus was prescribed, it was not allowed them to ride in a chariot. Latin 16[ edit ] This was the state of affairs at Rome when a mutiny broke out in the legions of Pannonia, which could be traced to no fresh cause except the change of emperors and the prospect it held out of license in tumult and of profit from a civil war. This was the beginning of demoralization among the troops, of quarreling, of listening to the talk of every pestilent fellow, in short, of craving for luxury and idleness and loathing discipline and toil. In the camp was one Percennius, who had once been a leader of one of the theatrical factions, then became a common soldier, had a saucy tongue, and had learnt from his applause of actors how to stir up a crowd. By working on ignorant minds, which doubted as to what would be the terms of military service after Augustus, this man gradually influenced them in conversations at night or at nightfall, and when the better men had dispersed, he gathered round him all the worst spirits. Latin 17[ edit ] At last, when there were others ready to be abettors of a mutiny, he asked, in the tone of a demagogue, why, like slaves, they submitted to a few centurions and still fewer tribunes. We have blundered enough by our tameness for so many years, in having to endure thirty or forty campaigns till we grow old, most of us with bodies maimed by wounds. If a soldier survives so many risks, he is still dragged into remote regions where, under the name of lands, he receives soaking swamps or mountainous wastes. Assuredly, military service itself is burdensome and unprofitable; ten ases a day is the value set on life and limb; out of this, clothing, arms, tents, as well as the mercy of centurions and exemptions from duty have to be purchased. But indeed of floggings and wounds, of hard winters, wearisome summers, of terrible war, or barren peace, there is no end. Our only relief can come from military life being entered on under fixed conditions, from receiving each the pay of a denarius, and from the sixteenth year terminating our service. We must be retained no longer under a standard, but in the same camp a compensation in money must be paid us. We do not disparage the guards of the capital; still, here amid barbarous tribes we have to face the enemy from our tents. At last, in their fury they went so far as to propose to combine the three legions into one. Driven from their purpose by the jealousy with which every one sought the chief honour for his own legion, they turned to other thoughts, and set up in one spot the three eagles, with the ensigns of the cohorts. At the same time they piled up turf and raised a mound, that they might have a more conspicuous meeting-place.

*The senators were then convoked, and Sullius proceeded to find new victims in two knights of the first rank who bore the surname of Petra. The real cause of their destruction was that they had lent their house for the meetings of Mnester and PoppÁia. But it was a vision of the night that was the.*

Buy this Book at Amazon. Annals Book 11 [20] Corbulo was actually preparing to encamp on hostile soil when the despatch reached him. Surprised, as he was, and many as were the thoughts which crowded on him, thoughts of peril from the emperor, of scorn from the barbarians, of ridicule from the allies, he said nothing but this, "Happy the Roman generals of old," and gave the signal for retreat. To keep his soldiers free from sloth, he dug a canal of twenty-three miles in length between the Rhine and the Meuse, as a means of avoiding the uncertain perils of the ocean. The emperor, though he had forbidden war, yet granted him triumphal distinctions. Soon afterwards Curtius Rufus obtained the same honour. He had opened mines in the territory of the Mattiaci for working certain veins of silver. The produce was small and soon exhausted. The toil meanwhile of the legions was only to a loss, while they dug channels for water and constructed below the surface works which are difficult enough in the open air. Worn out by the labour, and knowing that similar hardships were endured in several provinces, the soldiers wrote a secret despatch in the name of the armies, begging the emperor to give in advance triumphal distinctions to one to whom he was about to entrust his forces. *Iam castra in hostili solo molienti Corbuloni eae litterae redduntur. Nec multo post Curtius Rufus eundem honorem adipiscitur, qui in agro Mattiaco recluserat specus quaerendis venis argenti; unde tenuis fructus nec in longum fuit:* Of the birth of Curtius Rufus, whom some affirm to have been the son of a gladiator, I would not publish a falsehood, while I shrink from telling the truth. On reaching manhood he attached himself to a quaestor to whom Africa had been allotted, and was walking alone at midday in some unfrequented arcade in the town of Adrumetum, when he saw a female figure of more than human stature, and heard a voice, "Thou, Rufus, art the man who will one day come into this province as proconsul. There he died, and so fulfilled the presage of his destiny. *De origine Curtii Rufi, quem gladiatore genitum quidam prodidere, neque falsa prompserim et vera exequi pudet.* At Rome meanwhile, without any motive then known or subsequently ascertained, Cneius Nonius, a Roman knight, was found wearing a sword amid a crowd who were paying their respects to the emperor. The man confessed his own guilt when he was being torn in pieces by torture, but gave up no accomplices, perhaps having none to hide. During the same consulship, Publius Dolabella proposed that a spectacle of gladiators should be annually exhibited at the cost of those who obtained the quaestorship. At first there were no distinctions even of age, which prevented a man in his early youth from becoming a consul or a dictator. The quaestors indeed were appointed while the kings still ruled, and this the revival by Brutus of the *lex curiata* plainly shows. The consuls retained the power of selecting them, till the people bestowed this office as well as others. The first so created were Valerius Potitus and Aemilius Mamercus sixty-three years after the expulsion of the Tarquins, and they were to be attached to the war-department. As the public business increased, two more were appointed to attend to affairs at Rome. This number was again doubled, when to the contributions of Italy was added the tribute of the provinces. Subsequently Sulla, by one of his laws, provided that twenty should be elected to fill up the Senate, to which he had intrusted judicial functions. *Interea Romae, nullis palam neque cognitis mox causis, Cn. Nonius eques Romanus ferro accinctus reperitur in coetu salutantum principem. Dolabella censuit spectaculum gladiatorum per omnis annos celebrandum pecunia eorum qui quaesturam adipiscerentur.* In the consulship of Aulus Vitellius and Lucius Vipstanus the question of filling up the Senate was discussed, and the chief men of Gallia Comata, as it was called, who had long possessed the rights of allies and of Roman citizens, sought the privilege of obtaining public offices at Rome. There was much talk of every kind on the subject, and it was argued before the emperor with vehement opposition. Once our native-born citizens sufficed for peoples of our own kin, and we are by no means dissatisfied with the Rome of the past. To this day we cite examples, which under our old customs the Roman character exhibited as to valour and renown. Is it a small thing that Veneti and Insubres have already burst into the Senate-house, unless a mob of foreigners, a troop of captives,

so to say, is now forced upon us? What distinctions will be left for the remnants of our noble houses, or for any impoverished senators from Latium? Every place will be crowded with these millionaires, whose ancestors of the second and third generations at the head of hostile tribes destroyed our armies with fire and sword, and actually besieged the divine Julius at Alesia. These are recent memories. Let them enjoy indeed the title of citizens, but let them not vulgarise the distinctions of the Senate and the honours of office. Vipstano consulibus cum de supplendo senatu agitaretur primoresque Galliae, quae Comata appellatur, foedera et civitatem R???. These and like arguments failed to impress the emperor. He at once addressed himself to answer them, and thus harangued the assembled Senate. And indeed I know, as facts, that the Julii came from Alba, the Coruncanii from Camerium, the Porcii from Tusculum, and not to inquire too minutely into the past, that new members have been brought into the Senate from Etruria and Lucania and the whole of Italy, that Italy itself was at last extended to the Alps, to the end that not only single persons but entire countries and tribes might be united under our name. We had unshaken peace at home; we prospered in all our foreign relations, in the days when Italy beyond the Po was admitted to share our citizenship, and when, enrolling in our ranks the most vigorous of the provincials, under colour of settling our legions throughout the world, we recruited our exhausted empire. Are we sorry that the Balbi came to us from Spain, and other men not less illustrious from Narbon Gaul? Their descendants are still among us, and do not yield to us in patriotism. Our founder Romulus, on the other hand, was so wise that he fought as enemies and then hailed as fellow-citizens several nations on the very same day. Strangers have reigned over us. But, it will be said, we have fought with the Senones. I suppose then that the Volsci and Aequi never stood in array against us. Our city was taken by the Gauls. Well, we also gave hostages to the Etruscans, and passed under the yoke of the Samnites. On the whole, if you review all our wars, never has one been finished in a shorter time than that with the Gauls. Thenceforth they have preserved an unbroken and loyal peace. United as they now are with us by manners, education, and intermarriage, let them bring us their gold and their wealth rather than enjoy it in isolation. Everything, Senators, which we now hold to be of the highest antiquity, was once new. Plebeian magistrates came after patrician; Latin magistrates after plebeian; magistrates of other Italian peoples after Latin. This practice too will establish itself, and what we are this day justifying by precedents, will be itself a precedent. His atque talibus haud permotus princeps et statim contra disseruit et vocato senatu ita exorsus est: This compliment was paid to their ancient alliance, and to the fact that they alone of the Gauls cling to the name of brothers of the Roman people. About the same time the emperor enrolled in the ranks of the patricians such senators as were of the oldest families, and such as had had distinguished ancestors. There were now but scanty relics of the Greater Houses of Romulus and of the Lesser Houses of Lucius Brutus, as they had been called, and those too were exhausted which the Dictator Caesar by the Cassian and the emperor Augustus by the Saenian law had chosen into their place. These acts, as being welcome to the State, were undertaken with hearty gladness by the imperial censor. Anxiously considering how he was to rid the Senate of men of notorious infamy, he preferred a gentle method, recently devised, to one which accorded with the sternness of antiquity, and advised each to examine his own case and seek the privilege of laying aside his rank. Permission, he said, would be readily obtained. He would publish in the same list those who had been expelled and those who had been allowed to retire, that by this confounding together of the decision of the censors and the modesty of voluntary resignation the disgrace might be softened. For this, the consul Vipstanus moved that Claudius should be called "Father of the Senate. He closed the lustrum, the census for which gave a total of 5,, citizens. Then too ended his blindness as to his domestic affairs. Orationem principis secuto patrum consulto primi Aedui senatorum in urbe ius adepti sunt. Isdem diebus in numerum patriciorum adscivit Caesar vetustissimum quemque e senatu aut quibus clari parentes fuerant, paucis iam reliquis familiarum, quas Romulus maiorum et L. Brutus minorum gentium appellaverant, exhaustis etiam quas dictator Caesar lege Cassia et princeps Augustus lege Saenia sublegere; laetaque haec in rem publicam munia multo gaudio censoris inibantur. Messalina, now grown weary of the very facility of her adulteries, was rushing into strange excesses, when even Silius, either through some fatal infatuation or because he imagined that, amid the dangers which hung over him, danger itself was the best safety, urged the breaking off of all concealment. Harmless measures were for the innocent. Crime once exposed had no refuge but in audacity. They had

accomplices in all who feared the same fate. For himself, as he had neither wife nor child, he was ready to marry and to adopt Britannicus. Messalina would have the same power as before, with the additional advantage of a quiet mind, if only they took Claudius by surprise, who, though unsuspecting of treachery, was hasty in his wrath. But she craved the name of wife, for the sake of the monstrous infamy, that last source of delight to the reckless. She waited only till Claudius set out for Ostia to perform a sacrifice, and then celebrated all the solemnities of marriage. *Iam Messalina facilitate adulteriorum in fastidium versa ad incognitas libidines profluebat, cum abrumpi dissimulationem etiam Silius, sive fatali vaecordia an imminentium periculorum remedium ipsa pericula ratus, urgebat:* But this is no story to excite wonder; I do but relate what I have heard and what our fathers have recorded. *Haud sum ignarus fabulosum visum iri tantum ullis mortalium securitatis fuisse in civitate omnium gnara et nihil reticente, nedum consulem designatum cum uxore principis, praedicta die, adhibitis qui obsignarent, velut suscipiendorum liberorum causa convenisse, atque illam audisse auspicum verba, subisse, sacrificasse apud deos; discubitum inter convivas, oscula complexus, noctem denique actam licentia coniugali.* From secret whisperings they passed to loud complaints. Now, a young noble of stately beauty, of vigorous intellect, with the near prospect of the consulship, is preparing himself for a loftier ambition. There can be no secret about what is to follow such a marriage. On the other hand, the very good nature of the emperor inspired confident hope that if they could overpower him by the enormity of the charge, she might be condemned and crushed before she was accused. The critical point was this, that he should not hear her defence, and that his ears should be shut even against her confession. *Igitur domus principis inhorruerat, maximeque quos penes potentia et, si res verterentur, formido, non iam secretis conloquiis, sed aperte fremere, dum histrio cubiculum principis insultaverit, dedecus quidem inlatum, sed excidium procul afuisse:* At first Callistus, of whom I have already spoken in connection with the assassination of Caius Caesar, Narcissus, who had contrived the death of Appius, and Pallas, who was then in the height of favour, debated whether they might not by secret threats turn Messalina from her passion for Silius, while they concealed all else. Then fearing that they would be themselves involved in ruin, they abandoned the idea, Pallas out of cowardice, and Callistus, from his experience of a former court, remembering that prudent rather than vigorous counsels insure the maintenance of power. Narcissus persevered, only so far changing his plan as not to make her aware beforehand by a single word what was the charge or who was the accuser. *Ac primo Callistus, iam mihi circa necem G. Caesaris narratus, et Appianae caccdis molitor Narcissus fagrantissimaque eo in tempore gratia Pallas agitavere, num Messalinam secretis minis depellerent amore Sili, cuncta alia dissimulantes.*

Chapter 3 : Tacitus - ANNALS

*(Vol. IV) Tacitus Annals Book XII (beginning) p 1 1 The execution of Messalina shook the imperial household: for there followed a conflict among the freedmen, who should select a consort for Claudius, with his impatience of celibacy and his docility under wifely government.*

Augustus, introduced through his funeral; note summing up of his achievements in Annals 1. Paullus Fabius Maximus 1. Sallustius Crispus, adopted son of the historian 1. Aelius Seianus Sejanus 1. Claudius is emperor in books 11 and 12 and Tacitus seems to lose no chance to portray him as unaware of what his wives are doing, and of many other things. Junius Silanus descendant of Augustus and brother of L. Cassius and execution of an entire household of slaves; prosecution of Tarquinius Priscus cf. Cassius sent into exile; deaths of L. Silanus, L. Vetus and his mother-in-law Sextia and daughter Pollutia cf. First mention of Julius Civilis in section First mention of Julius Classicus in 2. In section 31 talk of mutual insults between generals leads to faults of Otho and Vitellius; cf. Tacitus marks the decisions made here as the beginning of the end. Section 38 is a famous summing-up of the degeneracy of a military society under its generals, from the time of Marius and Sulla. Example of Tacitean irony at end of section Verginius Rufus once more offered the empire. The dilemma of the senators who had accompanied Otho. An attack on Eprius Marcellus his first appearance in the Histories in section Amazing reaction at Rome but they were celebrating a festival anyway. Various administrators murdered in Mauretania, including Lucceius Albinus encountered also in Josephus BJ, beginning of chapter 8, p. Junius Blaesus helps Vitellius but has no joy of it see 3. The soldiers from Germany grow soft and demoralized in Rome, and all soldiers seem to give up on military discipline of any sort. Caecina and Valens are openly hostile to each other and effectively sabotage anything Vitellius tries to do. There is little enthusiasm in the western provinces some of which have military problems anyway to support Vitellius. While Valens stays at Rome because of illness, Caecina leaves with the army to prepare against Vespasian, but evidently starts to plot to desert Vitellius. To this detailed narrative of the invasion of Italy, up to the retaking of Rome, cf. The Pannonian and Moesian soldiers riot, suspicious of treachery, against Tampius Flavianus and Aponius Saturninus, the two governors. Antonius Primus is left in charge; he does seem to be able to control the troops, but Tacitus says some thought he encouraged the riots to rid himself of superiors. Vitellius; then gives away many offices, immunities, grants of rights. Vitellius takes some soldiers to Campania to restore order; Vitellius is buoyed up by the shouts of the urban plebs. It begins as a discussion of the pros and cons of writing poetry vs practicing as an orator, but soon becomes a criticism of oratory and political freedom. Barbara Rodgers, bsaylor zoo.

**Chapter 4 : Tacitus: Annals: Book 12 [20]**

*Tacitus: Annals Book 11 [20] Corbulo was actually preparing to encamp on hostile soil when the despatch reached him. Surprised, as he was, and many as were the.*

Though most has been lost, what remains is an invaluable record of the era. The first half of the Annals survived in a single copy of a manuscript from Corvey Abbey, and the second half from a single copy of a manuscript from Monte Cassino, and so it is remarkable that they survived at all. In an early chapter of the Agricola, Tacitus asserts that he wishes to speak about the years of Domitian, Nerva and Trajan. In the Histories the scope has changed; Tacitus says that he will deal with the age of Nerva and Trajan at a later time. Instead, he will cover the period from the civil wars of the Year of Four Emperors and end with the despotism of the Flavians. Only the first four books and twenty-six chapters of the fifth book survive, covering the year 69 and the first part of the work is believed to have continued up to the death of Domitian on September 18. He wrote at least sixteen books, but books 7-10 and parts of books 5, 6, 11 and 16 are missing. Book 6 ends with the death of Tiberius and books 7 to 12 presumably covered the reigns of Caligula and Claudius. The remaining books cover the reign of Nero, perhaps until his death in June 68 or until the end of that year to connect with the Histories. The second half of book 16 is missing, ending with the events of We do not know whether Tacitus completed the work; he died before he could complete his planned histories of Nerva and Trajan and no record survives of the work on Augustus Caesar and the beginnings of the Roman Empire, with which he had planned to finish his work. Agricola, a biography of his father-in-law Gnaeus Julius Agricola; the Germania, a monograph on the lands and tribes of barbarian Germania; and the Dialogus, a dialogue on the art of rhetoric. Germania book The Germania Latin title: De Origine et situ Germanorum is an ethnographic work on the Germanic tribes outside the Roman Empire. The Germania fits within a classical ethnographic tradition which includes authors such as Herodotus and Julius Caesar. The book begins chapters 1-27 with a description of the lands, laws, and customs of the various tribes. Later chapters focus on descriptions of particular tribes, beginning with those who lived closest to the Roman empire, and ending with a description of those who lived on the shores of the Baltic Sea, such as the Fenni. Tacitus had written a similar, albeit shorter, piece in his Agricola chapters 10-11 Agricola De vita et moribus Iulii Agricolae [edit] Main article: Agricola book The Agricola written c. As in the Germania, Tacitus favorably contrasts the liberty of the native Britons with the tyranny and corruption of the Empire; the book also contains eloquent polemics against the greed of Rome, one of which, that Tacitus claims is from a speech by Calgacus, ends by asserting that *Auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium, atque ubi solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant. To ravage, to slaughter, to usurp under false titles, they call empire; and where they make a desert, they call it peace.* There is uncertainty about when Tacitus wrote Dialogus de oratoribus. Many characteristics set it apart from the other works of Tacitus, so that its authenticity has at various times been questioned. It lacks for example the incongruities that are typical of his mature historical works. Sources[edit] Tacitus makes use of the official sources of the Roman state: He is generally seen[by whom? The minor inaccuracies in the Annals may be due to Tacitus dying before he had finished and therefore before he had proof-read his work. Tacitus cites some of his sources directly, among them Cluvius Rufus, Fabius Rusticus and Pliny the Elder, who had written *Bella Germaniae* and a historical work which was the continuation of that of Aufidius Bassus. Tacitus also uses collections of letters *epistolarium*. He also took information from *exitus illustrium virorum*. These were a collection of books by those who were antithetical to the emperors. They tell of sacrifices by martyrs to freedom, especially the men who committed suicide. When he writes about a near-defeat of the Roman army in Ann. I, 63 he does so with brevity of description rather than embellishment. In most of his writings he keeps to a chronological narrative order, only seldom outlining the bigger picture, leaving the readers to construct that picture for themselves. Nonetheless, where he does use broad strokes, for example, in the opening paragraphs of the Annals, he uses a few condensed phrases which take the reader to the heart of the story. His historiography offers penetrating—often pessimistic—insights into the psychology of power politics, blending straightforward descriptions of events, moral lessons, and tightly focused dramatic

accounts. Throughout his writing, he is preoccupied with the balance of power between the Senate and the Emperors, and the increasing corruption of the governing classes of Rome as they adjusted to the ever-growing wealth and power of the empire. Tacitus noted the increasing dependence of the emperor on the goodwill of his armies. The Julio-Claudians eventually gave way to generals, who followed Julius Caesar and Sulla and Pompey in recognizing that military might could secure them the political power in Rome. His experience of the tyranny, corruption, and decadence of that era 81â€”96 may explain the bitterness and irony of his political analysis. He draws our attention to the dangers of power without accountability, love of power untempered by principle, and the apathy and corruption engendered by the concentration of wealth generated through trade and conquest by the empire. Nonetheless, the image he builds of Tiberius throughout the first six books of the Annals is neither exclusively bleak nor approving: The entrance of Tiberius in the first chapters of the first book is dominated by the hypocrisy of the new emperor and his courtiers. In the later books, some respect is evident for the cleverness of the old emperor in securing his position. In general, Tacitus does not fear to praise and to criticize the same person, often noting what he takes to be their more-admirable and less-admirable properties. Prose[ edit ] His Latin style is highly praised. The style has been both derided as "harsh, unpleasant, and thorny" and praised as "grave, concise, and pithily eloquent". A passage of Annals 1. Tiberii Gaique et Claudii ac Neronis res florentibus ipsisâ€”ob metumâ€”falsae,.

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*The Annals by Publius Cornelius Tacitus. Book 12 - (A.D. ) [] In answer to these and like arguments Claudius began to speak of the grandeur of Rome.*

With Suilius was associated Sosibius, tutor to Britannicus, who was to give Claudius an apparently friendly warning to beware of a power and wealth which threatened the throne. Thus grown famous in the capital, and with a renown widely spread through the provinces, he was planning a journey to the armies of Germany. Born at Vienna, and supported by numerous and powerful connections, he would find it easy to rouse nations allied to his house. Latin 2[ edit ] No hearing before the Senate was granted him. It was at this last that the accused broke silence, and burst out with the words, "Question thy own sons, Suilius; they will own my manhood. Claudius he moved profoundly, and he even drew tears from Messalina. But as she left the chamber to wipe them away, she warned Vitellius not to let the man escape. He then briefly reviewed the services of Asiaticus to the State, his recent campaign in the invasion of Britain, and everything else which seemed likely to win compassion, and suggested that he should be free to choose his death. Some friends urged on Asiaticus the quiet death of self-starvation, but he declined it with thanks. So complete was his calmness even to the last. Latin 4[ edit ] The senators were then convoked, and Suilius proceeded to find new victims in two knights of the first rank who bore the surname of Petra. But it was a vision of the night that was the actual charge against one of them. He had, it was alleged, beheld Claudius crowned with a garland of wheat, the ears of which were turned downwards, and, from this appearance, he foretold scanty harvests. Some have said that it was a vine-wreath, of which the leaves were white, which he saw, and that he interpreted it to signify the death of the emperor after the turn of autumn. It is, however, beyond dispute that in consequence of some dream, whatever it was, both the man and his brother perished. Vitellius bestowed a million on Sosibius, for giving Britannicus the benefit of his teaching and Claudius that of his counsels. Latin 5[ edit ] Suilius after this plied his accusations without cessation or pity, and his audacity had many rivals. By assuming to himself all the functions of laws and magistrates, the emperor had left exposed everything which invited plunder, and of all articles of public merchandise nothing was more venal than the treachery of advocates. Upon this, following the lead of Silius, consul-elect, whose elevation and fall I shall in due course relate, the senators rose in a body, and demanded the enforcement of the Cincian law, an old enactment, which forbade any one to receive a fee or a gift for pleading a cause. Latin 6[ edit ] When the men, at whom this strong censure was levelled, loudly protested, Silius, who had a quarrel with Suilius, attacked them with savage energy. He cited as examples the orators of old who had thought fame with posterity the fairest recompense of eloquence. And, "apart from this," he said, "the first of noble accomplishments was debased by sordid services, and even good faith could not be upheld in its integrity, when men looked at the greatness of their gains. As it was, quarrels, accusations, hatreds and wrongs were encouraged, in order that, as the violence of disease brings fees to the physician, so the corruption of the forum might enrich the advocate. A resolution was being framed to bring the guilty under the law of extortion, when Suilius and Cossutianus and the rest who saw themselves threatened with punishment rather than trial, for their guilt was manifest, gathered round the emperor, and prayed forgiveness for the past. Latin 7[ edit ] When he had nodded assent, they began to plead their cause. It is for the needs and the business of life that the resource of eloquence is acquired, thanks to which no one for want of an advocate is at the mercy of the powerful. But eloquence cannot be obtained for nothing; private affairs are neglected, in order that a man may devote himself to the business of others. Some support life by the profession of arms, some by cultivating land. No work is expected from any one of which he has not before calculated the profits. We have examples at hand. How great were the fees for which Publius Clodius and Caius Curio were wont to speak! We are ordinary senators, seeking in the tranquillity of the State for none but peaceful gains. You must consider the plebeian, how he gains distinction from the gown. Take away the rewards of a profession, and the profession must perish. He limited the fee which might be taken to ten thousand sesterces, and those who exceeded this limit were to be liable to the penalties of extortion. Gotarzes, among his many cruelties, had caused the death of his brother Artabanus, with his wife and son. Hence his

people feared for themselves and sent for Vardanes. Ever ready for daring achievements, Vardanes traversed miles in two days, and drove before him the surprised and terrified Gotarzes. Rage against the place, which indeed had also revolted from his father, rather than considerations of policy, made him embarrass himself with the siege of a strong city, which the defence of a river flowing by it, with fortifications and supplies, had thoroughly secured. Latin 9[ edit ] Then it was that while the forces of the East were divided, and hesitated which side they should take, the opportunity of occupying Armenia was presented to Mithridates, who had the vigorous soldiers of Rome to storm the fortified heights, while his Iberian cavalry scoured the plain. The Armenians made no resistance after their governor, Demonax, had ventured on a battle and had been routed. Cotys, king of Lesser Armenia, to whom some of the nobles inclined, caused some delay, but he was stopped by a despatch from Claudius, and then everything passed into the hands of Mithridates, who showed more cruelty than was wise in a new ruler. The Parthian princes however, just when they were beginning battle, came to a sudden agreement, on discovering a plot among their people, which Gotarzes revealed to his brother. At first they approached each other with hesitation; then, joining right hands, they promised before the altars of their gods to punish the treachery of their enemies and to yield one to the other. Vardanes seemed more capable of retaining rule. Gotarzes, to avoid all rivalry, retired into the depths of Hyrcania. When Vardanes returned, Seleucia capitulated to him, seven years after its revolt, little to the credit of the Parthians, whom a single city had so long defied. Latin 10[ edit ] He then visited the strongest governments, and was eager to recover Armenia, but was stopped by Vibius Marsus, governor of Syria, who threatened war. Meanwhile Gotarzes, who repented of having relinquished his throne, at the solicitation of the nobility, to whom subjection is a special hardship in peace, collected a force. There his successes terminated. The Parthians, victorious though they were, rebelled against distant service. So after erecting monuments on which he recorded his greatness, and the tribute won from peoples from whom no Arsacid had won it before, he returned covered with glory, and therefore the more haughty and more intolerable to his subjects than ever. They arranged a plot, and slew him when he was off his guard and intent upon the chase. He was still in his first youth, and might have been one of the illustrious few among aged princes, had he sought to be loved by his subjects as much as to be feared by his foes. The murder of Vardanes threw the affairs of Parthia into confusion, as the people were in doubt who should be summoned to the throne. Many inclined to Gotarzes, some to Meherdates, a descendant of Phraates, who was a hostage in our hands. Established in the palace, he drove the Parthians by his cruelty and profligacy to send a secret entreaty to the Roman emperor that Meherdates might be allowed to mount the throne of his ancestors. Latin 11[ edit ] It was during this consulship, in the eight hundredth year after the foundation of Rome and the sixty-fourth after their celebration by Augustus that the secular games were exhibited. While Claudius sat to witness the games of the circus, some of the young nobility acted on horseback the battle of Troy. The stronger popular enthusiasm which greeted him was taken to presage his greatness. It was commonly reported that snakes had been seen by his cradle, which they seemed to guard, a fabulous tale invented to match the marvels of other lands. Nero, never a disparager of himself, was wont to say that but one snake, at most, had been seen in his chamber. Latin 12[ edit ] Something however of popular favour was bequeathed to him from the remembrance of Germanicus, whose only male descendant he was, and the pity felt for his mother Agrippina was increased by the cruelty of Messalina, who, always her enemy, and then more furious than ever, was only kept from planning an accusation and suborning informers by a new and almost insane passion. She had grown so frantically enamoured of Caius Silius, the handsomest of the young nobility of Rome, that she drove from his bed Junia Silana, a high-born lady, and had her lover wholly to herself. Silius was not unconscious of his wickedness and his peril; but a refusal would have insured destruction, and he had some hope of escaping exposure; the prize too was great, and so he consoled himself by awaiting the future and enjoying the present. As for her, careless of concealment, she went continually with a numerous retinue to his house, she haunted his steps, showered on him wealth and honours, and, at last, as though empire had passed to another, the slaves, the freedmen, the very furniture of the emperor were to be seen in the possession of the paramour. Latin 13[ edit ] Claudius meanwhile, who knew nothing about his wife, and was busy with his functions as censor, published edicts severely rebuking the lawlessness of the people in the theatre, when they insulted Caius Pomponius, an

ex-consul, who furnished verses for the stage, and certain ladies of rank. He also conveyed by an aqueduct into Rome the waters which flow from the hills of Simbrua. And he likewise invented and published for use some new letters, having discovered, as he said, that even the Greek alphabet had not been completed at once. Latin 14[ edit ] It was the Egyptians who first symbolized ideas, and that by the figures of animals. These records, the most ancient of all human history, are still seen engraved on stone. According to one account, it was Cecrops of Athens or Linus of Thebes, or Palamedes of Argos in Trojan times who invented the shapes of sixteen letters, and others, chiefly Simonides, added the rest. And so the Latin letters have the same form as the oldest Greek characters. At first too our alphabet was scanty, and additions were afterwards made. Following this precedent Claudius added three letters, which were employed during his reign and subsequently disused. These may still be seen on the tablets of brass set up in the squares and temples, on which new statutes are published. Latin 15[ edit ] Claudius then brought before the Senate the subject of the college of "haruspices," that, as he said, "the oldest of Italian sciences might not be lost through negligence. It had often happened in evil days for the State that advisers had been summoned at whose suggestion ceremonies had been restored and observed more duly for the future. The nobles of Etruria, whether of their own accord or at the instigation of the Roman Senate, had retained this science, making it the inheritance of distinct families. It was now less zealously studied through the general indifference to all sound learning and to the growth of foreign superstitions. At present all is well, but we must show gratitude to the favour of Heaven, by taking care that the rites observed during times of peril may not be forgotten in prosperity. They had lost all their nobles in their civil wars, and there was left but one scion of the royal house, Italicus by name, who lived at Rome. The youth himself was of distinguished beauty, a skilful horseman and swordsman both after our fashion and that of his country. So the emperor made him a present of money, furnished him with an escort, and bade him enter with a good heart on the honours of his house. He was winning fame among his neighbours and even far beyond them, when some who had found their fortune in party feuds, jealous of his power, fled to the tribes on the border, protesting that Germany was being robbed of her ancient freedom, and that the might of Rome was on the rise. It is idle to put forward the name of Arminius. Had even the son of Arminius come to the throne after growing to manhood on a hostile soil, he might well be dreaded, corrupted as he would be by the bread of dependence, by slavery, by luxury, by all foreign habits. No less numerous were the partisans of Italicus. Superior as he was to all others in noble birth, should they not put his valour to the test, and see whether he showed himself worthy of his uncle Arminius and his grandfather Catumerus? He need not blush because his father had never relinquished the loyalty which, with the consent of the Germans, he had promised to Rome. The name of liberty was a lying pretext in the mouths of men who, base in private, dangerous in public life, had nothing to hope except from civil discord. After a fierce conflict among the barbarians, the king was victorious. Latin 18[ edit ] It was during the same period that the Chauci, free, as it happened, from dissension at home and emboldened by the death of Sanquinius, made, while Corbulo was on his way, an inroad into Lower Germany, under the leadership of Gannascus. This man was of the tribe of the Canninefates, had served long as our auxiliary, had then deserted, and, getting some light vessels, had made piratical descents specially on the coast of Gaul, inhabited, he knew, by a wealthy and unwarlike population. Corbulo meanwhile entered the province with careful preparation and soon winning a renown of which that campaign was the beginning, he brought his triremes up the channel of the Rhine and the rest of his vessels up the estuaries and canals to which they were adapted. No one was to fall out of the line; no one was to fight without orders. At the outposts, on guard, in the duties of day and of night, they were always to be under arms. One soldier, it was said, had suffered death for working at the trenches without his sword, another for wearing nothing as he dug, but his poniard. We may be sure that he was strict and implacable to serious offences, when such sternness in regard to trifles could be believed of him.

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Book 12 - A. The ladies were fired with no less jealousy. Each insisted on her rank, beauty, and fortune, and pointed to her claims to such a marriage. But the keenest competition was between Lollia Paulina, the daughter of Marcus Lollius, an ex-consul, and Julia Agrippina, the daughter of Germanicus. Callistus favoured the first, Pallas the second. Aelia Paetina however, of the family of the Tiberones, had the support of Narcissus. The emperor, who inclined now one way, now another, as he listened to this or that adviser, summoned the disputants to a conference and bade them express their opinions and give their reasons. Callistus argued that she was compromised by her long separation, and that were she to be taken back, she would be supercilious on the strength of it. It would be far better to introduce Lollia, for, as she had no children of her own, she would be free from jealousy, and would take the place of a mother towards her stepchildren. He hoped that a woman who was the mother of many children and still in the freshness of youth, would not carry off the grandeur of the Caesars to some other house. This could not be accomplished without a crime, for the emperor had betrothed Octavia to Lucius Silanus, a young man otherwise famous, whom he had brought forward as a candidate for popular favour by the honour of triumphal distinctions and by a magnificent gladiatorial show. But no difficulty seemed to be presented by the temper of a sovereign who had neither partialities nor dislikes, but such as were suggested and dictated to him. Here was a starting point for an accuser. Vitellius put an infamous construction on the somewhat incautious though not criminal love between the brother and sister. The emperor listened, for his affection for his daughter inclined him the more to admit suspicions against his son-in-law. Silanus meanwhile, who knew nothing of the plot, and happened that year to be praetor, was suddenly expelled from the Senate by an edict of Vitellius, though the roll of Senators had been recently reviewed and the lustrum closed. Claudius at the same time broke off the connection; Silanus was forced to resign his office, and the one remaining day of his praetorship was conferred on Eprius Marcellus. It was positively incest, and if disregarded, it would, people feared, issue in calamity to the State. These scruples ceased not till Vitellius undertook the management of the matter in his own way. He asked the emperor whether he would yield to the recommendations of the people and to the authority of the Senate. When Claudius replied that he was one among the citizens and could not resist their unanimous voice, Vitellius requested him to wait in the palace, while he himself went to the Senate. Protesting that the supreme interest of the commonwealth was at stake, he begged to be allowed to speak first, and then began to urge that the very burdensome labours of the emperor in a world-wide administration, required assistance, so that, free from domestic cares, he might consult the public welfare. How again could there be a more virtuous relief for the mind of an imperial censor than the taking of a wife to share his prosperity and his troubles, to whom he might intrust his inmost thoughts and the care of his young children, unused as he was to luxury and pleasure, and wont from his earliest youth to obey the laws. She has given proof too that she is not barren, and she has suitable moral qualities. It is, again, a singular advantage to us, due to divine providence, for a widow to be united to an emperor who has limited himself to his own lawful wives. We have heard from our fathers, we have ourselves seen that married women were seized at the caprice of the Caesars. This is quite alien to the propriety of our day. Rather let a precedent be now set for the taking of a wife by an emperor. True; but it is common in other countries, and there is no law to forbid it. Marriages of cousins were long unknown, but after a time they became frequent. Custom adapts itself to expediency, and this novelty will hereafter take its place among recognized usages. A promiscuous throng assembled, and kept exclaiming that the same too was the prayer of the Roman people. There was, however, found only one person who desired such a marriage, Alledius Severus, a Roman knight, who, as many said, was swayed by the influence of Agrippina. Then came a revolution in the State, and everything was under the control of a woman, who did not, like Messalina, insult Rome by loose manners. It was a stringent, and, so to say, masculine despotism;

there was sternness and generally arrogance in public, no sort of immodesty at home, unless it conduced to power. A boundless greed of wealth was veiled under the pretext that riches were being accumulated as a prop to the throne. His sister, Calvina, was banished from Italy. Claudius further added that sacrifices after the ordinances of King Tullius, and atonements were to be offered by the pontiffs in the grove of Diana, amid general ridicule at the idea devising penalties and propitiations for incest at such a time. Agrippina, that she might not be conspicuous only by her evil deeds, procured for Annaeus Seneca a remission of his exile, and with it the praetorship. She thought this would be universally welcome, from the celebrity of his attainments, and it was her wish too for the boyhood of Domitius to be trained under so excellent an instructor, and for them to have the benefit of his counsels in their designs on the throne. For Seneca, it was believed, was devoted to Agrippina from a remembrance of her kindness, and an enemy to Claudius from a bitter sense of wrong. Memmius Pollio, the consul-elect, was induced by great promises to deliver a speech, praying Claudius to betroth Octavia to Domitius. The match was not unsuitable to the age of either, and was likely to develop still more important results. Pollio introduced the motion in much the same language as Vitellius had lately used. Between the Parthians and ourselves there was an ancient friendship, founded on a state alliance, and we ought to support allies who were our rivals in strength, and yet yielded to us out of respect. He compared himself to the Divine Augustus, from whom, he reminded them, they had sought a king, but omitted to mention Tiberius, though he too had sent them sovereigns. He added some advice for Meherdates, who was present, and told him not to be thinking of a despot and his slaves, but rather of a ruler among fellow citizens, and to practise clemency and justice which barbarians would like the more for being unused to them. Then he turned to the envoys and bestowed high praise on the young foster-son of Rome, as one whose self-control had hitherto been exemplary. Rome, sated with her glory, had reached such a height that, she wished even foreign nations to enjoy repose. The profession of the soldier is forgotten in a quiet period, and peace reduces the enterprising and indolent to an equality. But Cassius, as far as it was possible without war, revived ancient discipline, kept exercising the legions, in short, used as much diligence and precaution as if an enemy were threatening him. This conduct he counted worthy of his ancestors and of the Cassian family which had won renown even in those countries. He then summoned those at whose suggestion a king had been sought from Rome, and having encamped at Zeugma where the river was most easily fordable and awaited the arrival of the chief men of Parthia and of Acbarus, king of the Arabs, he reminded Meherdates that the impulsive enthusiasm of barbarians soon flags from delay or even changes into treachery, and that therefore he should urge on his enterprise. The advice was disregarded through the perfidy Acbarus, by whom the foolish young prince, who thought that the highest position merely meant self-indulgence, was detained for several days in the town of Edessa. Although a certain Carenes pressed them to come and promised easy success if they hastened their arrival, they did not make for Mesopotamia, which was close to them, but, by a long detour, for Armenia, then ill-suited to their movements, as winter was beginning. In their march they captured the city of Ninos, the most ancient capital of Assyria, and a fortress, historically famous, as the spot where the last battle between Darius and Alexander the power of Persia fell. Gotarzes meantime was offering vows to the local divinities on a mountain called Sambulos, with special worship of Hercules, who at a stated time bids the priests in a dream equip horses for the chase and place them near his temple. When the horses have been laden with quivers full of arrows, they scour the forest and at length return at night with empty quivers, panting violently. Again the god in a vision of the night reveals to them the track along which he roamed through the woods, and everywhere slaughtered beasts are found. Meherdates, stript of his powerful auxiliaries and suspecting treachery in the rest, resolved, as his last resource, to risk everything and try the issue of a battle. They fought with terrible courage and doubtful result, till Carenes, who having beaten down all resistance had advanced too far, was surprised by a fresh detachment in his rear. Gotarzes taunted him with being no kinsman of his or of the Arsacids, but a foreigner and a Roman, and having cut off his ears, bade him live, a memorial of his own clemency, and a disgrace to us. After this Gotarzes fell ill and died, and Vonones, who then ruled the Medes, was summoned to the throne. He was memorable neither for his good nor bad fortune; he completed a short and inglorious reign, and then the empire of Parthia passed to his son Vologeses. At last he collected an army, drove out the king of the Dandaridae, and possessed himself of his dominions. When this

was known, and the invasion of Bosphorus was every moment expected, Aquila and Cotys, seeing that hostilities had been also resumed by Zorsines, king of the Siraci, distrusted their own strength, and themselves too sought the friendship of the foreigner by sending envoys to Eunones, who was then chief of the Adorsi. There was no difficulty about alliance, when they pointed to the power of Rome in contrast with the rebel Mithridates. It was accordingly stipulated that Eunones should engage the enemy with his cavalry, and the Romans undertake the siege of towns. Thus the enemy was defeated, and they reached Soza, a town in Dandarica, which Mithridates had abandoned, where it was thought expedient to leave a garrison, as the temper of the people was uncertain. Next they marched on the Siraci, and after crossing the river Panda besieged the city of Uspe, which stood on high ground, and had the defence of wall and fosses; only the walls, not being of stone, but of hurdles and wicker-work with earth between, were too weak to resist an assault. Towers were raised to a greater height as a means of annoying the besieged with brands and darts. Had not night stopped the conflict, the siege would have been begun and finished within one day. As it would have been inhuman to slay the prisoners, and very difficult to keep them under guard, the conquerors rejected the offer, preferring that they should perish by the just doom of war. The signal for massacre was therefore given to the soldiers, who had mounted the walls by scaling ladders. The destruction of Uspe struck terror into the rest of the people, who thought safety impossible when they saw how armies and ramparts, heights and difficult positions, rivers and cities, alike yielded to their foe. In their return however fortune was not equally favourable; some of their vessels, as they were sailing back, were driven on the shores of the Tauri and cut off by the barbarians, who slew the commander of a cohort and several centurions. He feared his brother Cotys, who had once been a traitor, then become his open enemy. No Roman was on the spot of authority sufficient to make his promises highly valued. So he turned to Eunones, who had no personal animosity against him, and had been lately strengthened by his alliance with us. Adapting his dress and expression of countenance as much as possible to his present condition, he entered the palace, and throwing himself at the feet of Eunones he exclaimed, "Mithridates, whom the Romans have sought so many years by land and sea, stands before you by his own choice. Deal as you please with the descendant of the great Achaemenes, the only glory of which enemies have not robbed me. He raised the suppliant, and commended him for having chosen the nation of the Adorsi and his own good faith in suing for mercy. He sent at the same time envoys to Caesar with a letter to this effect, that friendship between emperors of Rome and sovereigns of powerful peoples was primarily based on a similarity of fortune, and that between himself and Claudius there was the tie of a common victory. Wars had glorious endings, whenever matters were settled by an amnesty. The conquered Zorsines had on this principle been deprived of nothing. For Mithridates, as he deserved heavier punishment, he asked neither power nor dominions, only that he might not be led in triumph, and pay the penalty of death. To this last he was urged by resentment at his wrongs, and by thirst for vengeance. On the other hand it was argued that it would be undertaking a war in a country without roads, on a harbourless sea, against warlike kings and wandering tribes, on a barren soil; that a weary disgust would come of tardy movements, and perils of precipitancy; that the glory of victory would be small, while much disgrace would ensue on defeat. Why should not the emperor seize the offer and spare the exile, whose punishment would be the greater, the longer he lived in poverty? Moved by these considerations, Claudius wrote to Eunones that Mithridates had certainly merited an extreme and exemplary penalty, which he was not wanting in power to inflict, but it had been the principle of his ancestors to show as much forbearance to a suppliant as they showed persistence against a foe. As for triumphs, they were won over nations and kings hitherto unconquered. To Cilo and Aquila were voted, respectively, the consular and praetorian decorations. Upon this, Claudius, without hearing the accused, first reminded the Senate of her illustrious rank, that the sister of Lucius Volusius was her mother, Cotta Messalinus her granduncle, Memmius Regulus formerly her husband for of her marriage to Caius Caesar he purposely said nothing, and then added that she had mischievous designs on the State, and must have the means of crime taken from her. Consequently, her property should be confiscated, and she herself banished from Italy. Thus out of immense wealth only five million sesterces were left to the exile. Calpurnia too, a lady of high rank, was ruined, simply because the emperor had praised her beauty in a casual remark, without any passion for her. A tribune was despatched to Lollia, who was to force her to suicide. Next on the prosecution

of the Bithynians, Cadius Rufus, was condemned under the law against extortion. Ituraea and Judaea, on the death of their kings, Sohaemus and Agrippa, were annexed to the province of Syria.

**Chapter 7 : Tacitus - Wikipedia**

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Nothing is known of his parentage. Though Cornelius was the name of a noble Roman family, there is no proof that he was descended from the Roman aristocracy; provincial families often took the name of the governor who had given them Roman citizenship. In any event he grew up in comfortable circumstances, enjoyed a good education, and found the way open to a public career. Tacitus studied rhetoric, which provided a general literary education including the practice of prose composition. This training was a systematic preparation for administrative office. In 77 Tacitus married the daughter of Gnaeus Julius Agricola. Agricola had risen in the imperial service to the consulship, in 77 or 78, and he would later enhance his reputation as governor of Britain. Moving through the regular stages, he gained the quaestorship often a responsible provincial post, probably in 81; then in 88 he attained a praetorship a post with legal jurisdiction and became a member of the priestly college that kept the Sibylline Books of prophecy and supervised foreign-cult practice. After this it may be assumed that he held a senior provincial post, normally in command of a legion, for four years. By 93 Agricola was dead, but by this time Tacitus had achieved distinction on his own. This distinction not only reflected his reputation as an orator but his moral authority and official dignity as well. First literary works In 98 Tacitus wrote two works: *De vita Julii Agricolae* and *De origine et situ Germanorum* the *Germania*, both reflecting his personal interests. It is laudatory yet circumstantial in its description, and it gives a balanced political judgment. The *Germania* is another descriptive piece, this time of the Roman frontier on the Rhine. Tacitus emphasizes the simple virtue as well as the primitive vices of the Germanic tribes, in contrast to the moral laxity of contemporary Rome, and the threat that these tribes, if they acted together, could present to Roman Gaul. Here his writing goes beyond geography to political ethnography. Tacitus still practiced advocacy at law—in he, along with Pliny the Younger, successfully prosecuted Marius Priscus, a proconsul in Africa, for extortion—but he felt that oratory had lost much of its political spirit and its practitioners were deficient in skill. This decline of oratory seems to provide the setting for his *Dialogus de oratoribus*. The work refers back to his youth, introducing his teachers Aper and Secundus. It has been dated as early as about 80, chiefly because it is more Ciceronian in style than his other writing. But its style arises from its form and subject matter and does not point to an early stage of stylistic development. The date lies between 98 and ; the theme fits this period. Tacitus compares oratory with poetry as a way of literary life, marking the decline of oratory in public affairs: The work reflects his mood at the time he turned from oratory to history. There were historians of imperial Rome before Tacitus, notably Aufidius Bassus, who recorded events from the rise of Augustus to the reign of Claudius, and Pliny the Elder, who continued this work a fine Aufidii Bassi to the time of Vespasian. The work contained 12 or 14 books it is known only that the *Histories* and *Annals*, both now incomplete, totaled 30 books. Only books iv and part of book v, for the years 69–70, are extant. The narrative as it now exists, with its magnificent introduction, is a powerfully sustained piece of writing that, for all the emphasis and colour of its prose, is perfectly appropriate for describing the closely knit set of events during the civil war of As he approached the reign of Domitian, he faced a Roman policy that, except in provincial and frontier affairs, was less coherent and predictable. It called for sharper analysis, which he often met with bitterness, anger, and pointed irony. Perhaps his picture of the emperor Tiberius in the *Annals* owed something to his exercise on Domitian. He had won distinction under Nerva and enjoyed the effects of liberal policy; at the same time, he had lived through the crisis of imperial policy that occurred when Nerva and Trajan came to the succession. Under Trajan he retained his place in public affairs, and in he crowned his administrative career with the proconsulate of Asia, the top provincial governorship. His personal career had revealed to him, at court and in administration, the play of power that lay behind the imperial facade of rule. From what can be reconstructed from his personal career along with the implications of his subsequent historical thought, it is possible to mark an intellectual turning point in his life after which he began to probe deeper into the nature of the Roman Empire. Although in the

Agricola he had lightly promised to continue his writing from the Flavian years into the new regime, he now moved not forward but backward. Only books iv, part of book v, most of book vi treating the years 14–29 and 31–37 under Tiberius, and books xi–xvi, incomplete on Claudius from 47 to 51 and Nero from 51 to 66, are extant. In casting back to the early empire Tacitus did not wish necessarily to supersede his predecessors in the field, whose systematic recording he seemed to respect, judging from the use he made of their subject matter. In effect, the *Annals* represents a diagnosis in narrative form of the decline of Roman political freedom, written to explain the condition of the empire he had already described in the *Histories*. Tacitus viewed the first imperial century as an entity. There was in his eyes a comparison to be made, for example, between the personal conduct of Tiberius and that of Domitian, not that they were the same kind of men but that they were corrupted by similar conditions of dynastic power. Yet he did not begin with Augustus, except by cold reference to his memory. The modern world tends to think of Augustus as the founder of the empire. The Romans one may cite Appian of Alexandria and Publius Annus Florus alongside Tacitus regarded him, at least during the first part of his career, as the last of the warlords who had dominated the republic. In opening the *Annals*, Tacitus accepts the necessity of strong, periodic power in Roman government, providing it allowed the rise of fresh talent to take over control. That was the aristocratic attitude toward political freedom, but to secure the continuity of personal authority by dynastic convention, regardless of the qualifications for rule, was to subvert the Roman tradition and corrupt public morality. One may, indeed, believe that Tiberius was prompted to assume imperial power because he was anxious about the military situation on the Roman frontier; but Tacitus had no doubts about the security of the Roman position, and he considered the hesitation that Tiberius displayed on taking power to be hypocritical; hence, the historical irony, in interpretation and style, of his first six books. Here, perhaps, Tacitus had some support for his interpretation. A strong, dour soldier and a suspicious man, Tiberius had little to say in his court circle about public affairs. On his death he was blamed for never saying what he thought nor meaning what he said, and Tacitus elaborated this impression. His criticism of dynastic power also stressed the effect of personality: With regard to provincial administration, he knew that he could take its regular character for granted, in the earlier period as well as his own. Sources For the period from Augustus to Vespasian, Tacitus was able to draw upon earlier histories that contained material from the public records, official reports, and contemporary comment. It has been noted that the work of Aufidius Bassus and its continuation by Pliny the Elder covered these years; both historians also treated the German wars. In the light of his administrative and political experience, Tacitus in the *Histories* was able to interpret the historical evidence for the Flavian period more or less directly. Yet contemporary writing may lack perspective. He recognized this problem when, in the *Annals*, he revived the study of the Julio-Claudian dynasty. But to go back a century raises additional problems of historical method. Tacitus first had to determine the factual reliability and political attitude of his authorities and then to adjust his own general conception of the empire, in case it was anachronistic, to the earlier conditions. The strength of his conviction limited his judgment at both points. He underplayed the effect of immediate circumstances and overplayed the personal factor, a tendency that influenced his use of the historical sources. In particular Tiberius, who in spite of his political ineptness struggled with real difficulties, suffered in reputation from this treatment. But Tacitus did not spare any man in power. He controls the performance of his characters; it is magnificent writing, but it is not necessarily strict history. Style and importance Because he was a conscious literary stylist, both his thought and his manner of expression gave life to his work. Greek historiography had defined ways of depicting history: Each method had its technique, and the greater writer could combine elements from all three. Tacitus knew the techniques and controlled them for his political interpretations; as a model he had studied the early Roman historiographer Sallust. It is finally his masterly handling of literary Latin that impresses the reader. He wrote in the grand style, helped by the solemn and poetic usage of the Roman tradition, and he exploited the Latin qualities of strength, rhythm, and colour. His style, like his thought, avoids artificial smoothness. His writing is concise, breaking any easy balance of sentences, depending for emphasis on word order and syntactical variation and striking hard where the subject matter calls for a formidable impact. He is most pointed on the theme of Tiberius, but his technique here is only a concentrated form of the stylistic force that can be found throughout his narrative. On the

literary side they are appreciated as stylistic masterpieces.

**Chapter 8 : Study Guide for Tacitus**

*The Annals by Tacitus, part of the Internet Classics Archive.*

Buy this Book at Amazon. Annals Book 12 [20] Claudius, though merciful to foreign princes, was yet in doubt whether it were better to receive the captive with a promise of safety or to claim his surrender by the sword. To this last he was urged by resentment at his wrongs, and by thirst for vengeance. On the other hand it was argued that it would be undertaking a war in a country without roads, on a harbourless sea, against warlike kings and wandering tribes, on a barren soil; that a weary disgust would come of tardy movements, and perils of precipitancy; that the glory of victory would be small, while much disgrace would ensue on defeat. Why should not the emperor seize the offer and spare the exile, whose punishment would be the greater, the longer he lived in poverty? Moved by these considerations, Claudius wrote to Eunones that Mithridates had certainly merited an extreme and exemplary penalty, which he was not wanting in power to inflict, but it had been the principle of his ancestors to show as much forbearance to a suppliant as they showed persistence against a foe. As for triumphs, they were won over nations and kings hitherto unconquered. At Claudius, *quamquam nobilitatibus externis mitis, dubitavit tamen accipere captivum pacto salutis an repetere armis rectius foret.* To Cilo and Aquila were voted, respectively, the consular and praetorian decorations. *Traditus posthac Mithridates vectusque Romam per Iunium Cilonem, procuratorem Ponti, ferocius quam pro fortuna disseruisse apud Caesarem ferebatur, elataque vox eius in vulgum hisce verbis:* Upon this, Claudius, without hearing the accused, first reminded the Senate of her illustrious rank, that the sister of Lucius Volusius was her mother, Cotta Messalinus her granduncle, Memmius Regulus formerly her husband for of her marriage to Caius Caesar he purposely said nothing, and then added that she had mischievous designs on the State, and must have the means of crime taken from her. Consequently, her property should be confiscated, and she herself banished from Italy. Thus out of immense wealth only five million sesterces were left to the exile. Calpurnia too, a lady of high rank, was ruined, simply because the emperor had praised her beauty in a casual remark, without any passion for her. A tribune was despatched to Lollia, who was to force her to suicide. Next on the prosecution of the Bithynians, Cadius Rufus, was condemned under the law against extortion. *Isdem consulibus atrox odii Agrippina ac Lolliae infensa, quod secum de matrimonio principis certavisset, molitur crimina et accusatorem qui obiceret Chaldaeos, magos interrogatumque Apollinis Clarii simulacrum super nuptiis imperatoris. Caesaris nuptiis consulto reticebat, addidit perniciose in rem publicam consilia et materiem sceleri detrahendam:* Narbon Gaul, for its special reverence of the Senate, received a privilege. Ituraea and Judaea, on the death of their kings, Sohaemus and Agrippa, were annexed to the province of Syria. It was also decided that the augury of the public safety, which for twenty-five years had been neglected, should be revived and henceforth observed. The emperor likewise widened the sacred precincts of the capital, in conformity with the ancient usage, according to which, those who had enlarged the empire were permitted also to extend the boundaries of Rome. But Roman generals, even after the conquest of great nations, had never exercised this right, except Lucius Sulla and the Divine Augustus. *Galliae Narbonensi ob egregiam in patres reverentiam datum ut senatoribus eius provinciae non exquisita principis sententia, iure quo Sicilia haberetur, res suas invisere liceret. Ituraeique et Iudaei defunctis regibus Sohaemo atque Agrippa provinciae Syriae additi. Salutis augurium quinque et septuaginta annis omissum repeti ac deinde continuari placitum. Sulla et divus Augustus.* There are various popular accounts of the ambitious and vainglorious efforts of our kings in this matter. Still, I think, it is interesting to know accurately the original plan of the precinct, as it was fixed by Romulus. From the ox market, where we see the brazen statue of a bull, because that animal is yoked to the plough, a furrow was drawn to mark out the town, so as to embrace the great altar of Hercules; then, at regular intervals, stones were placed along the foot of the Palatine hill to the altar of Consus, soon afterwards, to the old Courts, and then to the chapel of Larunda. The Roman forum and the Capitol were not, it was supposed, added to the city by Romulus, but by Titus Tatius. The boundaries now fixed by Claudius may be easily recognized, as they are specified in the public records. *Regum in eo ambitio vel gloria varie vulgata: In the consulship of Caius Antistius and Marcus Sullius, the adoption of Domitius was hastened on by the*

influence of Pallas. Bound to Agrippina, first as the promoter of her marriage, then as her paramour, he still urged Claudius to think of the interests of the State, and to provide some support for the tender years of Britannicus. Claudius also would do well to strengthen himself with a young prince who could share his cares with him. It was noted by learned men, that no previous example of adoption into the patrician family of the Claudii was to be found; and that from Attus Clausus there had been one unbroken line. Suillio consulibus adoptio in Domitium auctoritate Pallantis festinatur, qui obstrictus Agrippinae ut conciliator nuptiarum et mox stupro eius inligatus, stimulabat Claudium consuleret rei publicae, Britannici pueritiam robore circumdaret: However, the emperor received formal thanks, and still more elaborate flattery was paid to Domitius. A law was passed, adopting him into the Claudian family with the name of Nero. Agrippina too was honoured with the title of Augusta. When this had been done, there was not a person so void of pity as not to feel keen sorrow at the position of Britannicus. Gradually forsaken by the very slaves who waited on him, he turned into ridicule the ill-timed attentions of his stepmother, perceiving their insincerity. For he is said to have had by no means a dull understanding; and this is either a fact, or perhaps his perils won him sympathy, and so he possessed the credit of it, without actual evidence. Ceterum actae principi grates, quaesitiore in Domitium adulatione; rogataque lex qua in familiam Claudiam et nomen Neronis transiret. Agrippina, to show her power even to the allied nations, procured the despatch of a colony of veterans to the chief town of the Ubii, where she was born. The place was named after her. Agrippa, her grandfather, had, as it happened, received this tribe, when they crossed the Rhine, under our protection. During the same time, there was a panic in Upper Germany through an irruption of plundering bands of Chatti. Thereupon Lucius Pomponius, who was in command, directed the Vangiones and Nemetes, with the allied cavalry, to anticipate the raid, and suddenly to fall upon them from every quarter while they were dispersed. These were divided into two columns; and those who marched to the left cut off the plunderers, just on their return, after a riotous enjoyment of their spoil, when they were heavy with sleep. Sed Agrippina quo vim suam sociis quoque nationibus ostentaret in oppidum Vbiorum, in quo genita erat, veteranos coloniamque deduci impetrat, cui nomen inditum e vocabulo ipsius. Isdem temporibus in superiore Germania trepidatum adventu Chattorum latrocinia agitantium. Pomponius legatus auxiliaris Vangionas ac Nemetas, addito equite alario, [immittit, monitos ut anteirent populatores vel dilapsis improvisi circumfunderentur. The column which took the right-hand and the shorter route, inflicted greater loss on the enemy who met them, and ventured on a battle. With much spoil and glory they returned to Mount Taunus, where Pomponius was waiting with the legions, to see whether the Chatti, in their eagerness for vengeance, would give him a chance of fighting. They however fearing to be hemmed in on one side by the Romans, on the other by the Cherusci, with whom they are perpetually at feud, sent envoys and hostages to Rome. To Pomponius was decreed the honour of a triumph; a mere fraction of his renown with the next generation, with whom his poems constitute his chief glory. At qui dextris et propioribus compendiis ierant, obvio hosti et aciem auso plus cladis faciunt, et praeda famaue onusti ad montem Taunum revertuntur, ubi Pomponius cum legionibus opperiebatur, si Chatti cupidine ulciscendi casum pugnae praeberent. At this same time, Vannius, whom Drusus Caesar had made king of the Suevi, was driven from his kingdom. In the commencement of his reign he was renowned and popular with his countrymen; but subsequently, with long possession, he became a tyrant, and the enmity of neighbours, joined to intestine strife, was his ruin. Vibillius, king of the Hermunduri, and Vangio and Sido, sons of a sister of Vannius, led the movement. Claudius, though often entreated, declined to interpose by arms in the conflict of the barbarians, and simply promised Vannius a safe refuge in the event of his expulsion. He wrote instructions to Publius Atellius Hister, governor of Pannonia, that he was to have his legions, with some picked auxiliaries from the province itself, encamped on the riverbank, as a support to the conquered and a terror to the conqueror, who might otherwise, in the elation of success, disturb also the peace of our empire. For an immense host of Ligii, with other tribes, was advancing, attracted by the fame of the opulent realm which Vannius had enriched during thirty years of plunder and of tribute. Consequently, he determined to maintain himself in fortified positions, and protract the war. Per idem tempus Vannius Suebis a Druso Caesare impositus pellitur regno, prima imperii aetate clarus acceptusque popularibus, mox diuturnitate in superbiam mutans et odio accolarum, simul domesticis discordiis circumventus.

**Chapter 9 : Tacitus: Annals: Book 11 [20]**

*Tacitus (Cornelius), famous Roman historian, was born in 55, 56 or 57 CE and lived to about He became an orator, married in 77 a daughter of Julius Agricola before Agricola went to Britain, was quaestor in 81 or 82, a senator under the Flavian emperors, and a praetor in*

Book 11 - A. The four following books and the beginning of Book XI, which are lost, contained the history of a period of nearly ten years, from A. These years included the reign of Caius Caesar Caligula , the son of Germanicus by the elder Agrippina, and the first six years of the reign of Claudius. The power of his wife Messalina was then at its height. Messalina contrived to involve this lady and her lover, Valerius Asiaticus, in a ruinous charge. Asiaticus had been twice consul, once under Caius Caesar, a second time under Claudius in A. He was rich as well as noble. The Eleventh Book, as we have it, begins with the account of his prosecution by means Messalina, who with the help of Lucius Vitellius, Vitellius, father of the Vitellius, afterwards emperor, effected his ruin. At the same time she was looking greedily at the gardens which Lucullus had begun and which Asiaticus was now adorning with singular magnificence, and so she suborned Suilius to accuse both him and Poppaea. With Suilius was associated Sosibius, tutor to Britannicus, who was to give Claudius an apparently friendly warning to beware of a power and wealth which threatened the throne. Asiaticus, he said, had been the ringleader in the murder of a Caesar, and then had not feared to face an assembly of the Roman people, to own the deed, and challenge its glory for his own. Thus grown famous in the capital, and with a renown widely spread through the provinces, he was planning a journey to the armies of Germany. Born at Vienna, and supported by numerous and powerful connections, he would find it easy to rouse nations allied to his house. Claudius made no further inquiry, but sent Crispinus, commander of the Praetorians, with troops in hot haste, as though to put down a revolt. Crispinus found him at Baiae, loaded him with chains, and hurried him to Rome. There Suilius accused him of corrupting the troops, of binding them by bribes and indulgences to share in every crime, of adultery with Poppaea, and finally of unmanly vice. It was at this last that the accused broke silence, and burst out with the words, "Question thy own sons, Suilius; they will own my manhood. Claudius he moved profoundly, and he even drew tears from Messalina. But as she left the chamber to wipe them away, she warned Vitellius not to let the man escape. Caesar meanwhile was so unconscious that a few days afterwards he asked her husband Scipio, who was dining with him, why he sat down to table without his wife, and was told in reply that she had paid the debt of nature. He then briefly reviewed the services of Asiaticus to the State, his recent campaign in the invasion of Britain, and everything else which seemed likely to win compassion, and suggested that he should be free to choose his death. Some friends urged on Asiaticus the quiet death of self-starvation, but he declined it with thanks. He took his usual exercise, then bathed and dined cheerfully, and saying that he had better have fallen by the craft of Tiberius or the fury of Caius Caesar than by the treachery of a woman and the shameless mouth of Vitellius, he opened his veins, but not till he had inspected his funeral pyre, and directed its removal to another spot, lest the smoke should hurt the thick foliage of the trees. So complete was his calmness even to the last. The real cause of their destruction was that they had lent their house for the meetings of Mnester and Poppaea. But it was a vision of the night that was the actual charge against one of them. He had, it was alleged, beheld Claudius crowned with a garland of wheat, the ears of which were turned downwards, and, from this appearance, he foretold scanty harvests. Some have said that it was a vine-wreath, of which the leaves were white, which he saw, and that he interpreted it to signify the death of the emperor after the turn of autumn. It is, however, beyond dispute that in consequence of some dream, whatever it was, both the man and his brother perished. Fifteen hundred thousand sesterces and the decorations of the praetorship were voted to Crispinus. Vitellius bestowed a million on Sosibius, for giving Britannicus the benefit of his teaching and Claudius that of his counsels. I may add that when Scipio was called on for his opinion, he replied, "As I think what all men think about the deeds of Poppaea, suppose me to say what all men say. By assuming to himself all the functions of laws and magistrates, the emperor had left exposed everything which invited plunder, and of all articles of public merchandise nothing was more venal than the treachery of advocates. Upon this, following the lead of Silius,

consul-elect, whose elevation and fall I shall in due course relate, the senators rose in a body, and demanded the enforcement of the Cincian law, an old enactment, which forbade any one to receive a fee or a gift for pleading a cause. He cited as examples the orators of old who had thought fame with posterity the fairest recompense of eloquence. And, "apart from this," he said, "the first of noble accomplishments was debased by sordid services, and even good faith could not be upheld in its integrity, when men looked at the greatness of their gains. As it was, quarrels, accusations, hatreds and wrongs were encouraged, in order that, as the violence of disease brings fees to the physician, so the corruption of the forum might enrich the advocate. They should remember Caius Asinius and Messala, and, in later days, Arruntius and Aeserninus, men raised by a blameless life and by eloquence to the highest honours. A resolution was being framed to bring the guilty under the law of extortion, when Suilius and Cossutianus and the rest, who saw themselves threatened with punishment rather than trial, for their guilt was manifest, gathered round the emperor, and prayed forgiveness for the past. It is for the needs and the business of life that the resource of eloquence is acquired, thanks to which no one for want of an advocate is at the mercy of the powerful. But eloquence cannot be obtained for nothing; private affairs are neglected, in order that a man may devote himself to the business of others. Some support life by the profession of arms, some by cultivating land. No work is expected from any one of which he has not before calculated the profits. It was easy for Asinius and Messala, enriched with the prizes of the conflict between Antony and Augustus, it was easy for Arruntius and Aeserninus, the heirs of wealthy families, to assume grand airs. We have examples at hand. How great were the fees for which Publius Clodius and Caius Curio were wont to speak! We are ordinary senators, seeking in the tranquillity of the State for none but peaceful gains. You must consider the plebeian, how he gains distinction from the gown. Take away the rewards of a profession, and the profession must perish. He limited the fee which might be taken to ten thousand sesterces, and those who exceeded this limit were to be liable to the penalties of extortion. Gotarzes, among his many cruelties, had caused the death of his brother Artabanus, with his wife and son. Hence his people feared for themselves and sent for Vardanes. Ever ready for daring achievements, Vardanes traversed miles in two days, and drove before him the surprised and terrified Gotarzes. Rage against the place, which indeed had also revolted from his father, rather than considerations of policy, made him embarrass himself with the siege of a strong city, which the defence of a river flowing by it, with fortifications and supplies, had thoroughly secured. Gotarzes meanwhile, aided by the resources of the Dahae and Hyrcanians, renewed the war; and Vardanes, compelled to raise the siege of Seleucia, encamped on the plains of Bactria. The Armenians made no resistance after their governor, Demonax, had ventured on a battle and had been routed. Cotys, king of Lesser Armenia, to whom some of the nobles inclined, caused some delay, but he was stopped by a despatch from Claudius, and then everything passed into the hands of Mithridates, who showed more cruelty than was wise in a new ruler. The Parthian princes however, just when they were beginning battle, came to a sudden agreement, on discovering a plot among their people, which Gotarzes revealed to his brother. At first they approached each other with hesitation; then, joining right hands, they promised before the altars of their gods to punish the treachery of their enemies and to yield one to the other. Vardanes seemed more capable of retaining rule. Gotarzes, to avoid all rivalry, retired into the depths of Hyrcania. When Vardanes returned, Seleucia capitulated to him, seven years after its revolt, little to the credit of the Parthians, whom a single city had so long defied. Meanwhile Gotarzes, who repented of having relinquished his throne, at the solicitation of the nobility, to whom subjection is a special hardship in peace, collected a force. Vardanes marched against him to the river Charinda; a fierce battle was fought over the passage, Vardanes winning a complete victory, and in a series of successful engagements subduing the intermediate tribes as far as the river Sindes, which is the boundary between the Dahae and the Arians. There his successes terminated. The Parthians, victorious though they were, rebelled against distant service. So after erecting monuments on which he recorded his greatness, and the tribute won from peoples from whom no Arsacid had won it before, he returned covered with glory, and therefore the more haughty and more intolerable to his subjects than ever. They arranged a plot, and slew him when he was off his guard and intent upon the chase. He was still in his first youth, and might have been one of the illustrious few among aged princes, had he sought to be loved by his subjects as much as to be feared by his foes. The murder of Vardanes threw the affairs of Parthia into

confusion, as the people were in doubt who should be summoned to the throne. Many inclined to Gotarzes, some to Meherdates, a descendant of Phraates, who was a hostage in our hands. Established in the palace, he drove the Parthians by his cruelty and profligacy to send a secret entreaty to the Roman emperor that Meherdates might be allowed to mount the throne of his ancestors. I say nothing of the calculations of the two princes, which I have sufficiently discussed in my history of the emperor Domitian; for he also exhibited secular games, at which indeed, being one of the priesthood of the Fifteen and praetor at the time, I specially assisted. It is in no boastful spirit that I mention this, but because this duty has immemorially belonged to the College of the Fifteen, and the praetors have performed the chief functions in these ceremonies. While Claudius sat to witness the games of the circus, some of the young nobility acted on horseback the battle of Troy. The stronger popular enthusiasm which greeted him was taken to presage his greatness. It was commonly reported that snakes had been seen by his cradle, which they seemed to guard, a fabulous tale invented to match the marvels of other lands. Nero, never a disparager of himself, was wont to say that but one snake, at most, had been seen in his chamber. She had grown so frantically enamoured of Caius Silius, the handsomest of the young nobility of Rome, that she drove from his bed Junia Silana, a high-born lady, and had her lover wholly to herself. Silius was not unconscious of his wickedness and his peril; but a refusal would have insured destruction, and he had some hope of escaping exposure; the prize too was great, so he consoled himself by awaiting the future and enjoying the present. As for her, careless of concealment, she went continually with a numerous retinue to his house, she haunted his steps, showered on him wealth and honours, and, at last, as though empire had passed to another, the slaves, the freedmen, the very furniture of the emperor were to be seen in the possession of the paramour. He also conveyed by an aqueduct into Rome the waters which flow from the hills of Simbrua. And he likewise invented and published for use some new letters, having discovered, as he said, that even the Greek alphabet had not been completed at once. These records, the most ancient of all human history, are still seen engraved on stone. The Egyptians also claim to have invented the alphabet, which the Phoenicians, they say, by means of their superior seamanship, introduced into Greece, and of which they appropriated the glory, giving out that they had discovered what they had really been taught. Tradition indeed says that Cadmus, visiting Greece in a Phoenician fleet, was the teacher of this art to its yet barbarous tribes. According to one account, it was Cecrops of Athens or Linus of Thebes, or Palamedes of Argos in Trojan times who invented the shapes of sixteen letters, and others, chiefly Simonides, added the rest. And so the Latin letters have the same form as the oldest Greek characters. At first too our alphabet was scanty, and additions were afterwards made. Following this precedent Claudius added three letters, which were employed during his reign and subsequently disused. These may still be seen on the tablets of brass set up in the squares and temples, on which new statutes are published. It had often happened in evil days for the State that advisers had been summoned at whose suggestion ceremonies had been restored and observed more duly for the future. The nobles of Etruria, whether of their own accord or at the instigation of the Roman Senate, had retained this science, making it the inheritance of distinct families. It was now less zealously studied through the general indifference to all sound learning and to the growth of foreign superstitions. At present all is well, but we must show gratitude to the favour of Heaven, by taking care that the rites observed during times of peril may not be forgotten in prosperity. They had lost all their nobles in their civil wars, and there was left but one scion of the royal house, Italicus by name, who lived at Rome. The youth himself was of distinguished beauty, a skilful horseman and swordsman both after our fashion and that of his country. So the emperor made him a present of money, furnished him with an escort, and bade him enter with a good heart on the honours of his house. He was winning fame among his neighbours and even far beyond them, when some who had found their fortune in party feuds, jealous of his power, fled to the tribes on the border, protesting that Germany was being robbed of her ancient freedom, and that the might of Rome was on the rise.