

FOUR MUTINIES: TACITUS *ANNALS* 1.16–30; 1.31–49
AND AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS *RES GESTAE*
20.4.9–20.5.7; 24.3.1–8

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TWO MUTINIES OCCUR IN THE FIRST Book of Tacitus' *Annals*, one of which is quelled by Tiberius' son, Drusus, and the other by his adopted son, Germanicus. These two episodes, which comprise a large part of the opening of Tacitus' work, provide excellent character studies of these two potential heirs to the position of emperor as well as interesting information about the problems and concerns of the Roman legions in Pannonia and Germany. The position of the events and the lengths of each account indicate that they are programmatic and essential for understanding important themes of the entire work.¹ Consideration of both mutinies and comparison of them suggests that although some of the same basic problems confronted both generals, the two events were quite different and had dissimilar solutions. This is not to say, however, that the two generals were remarkably different in their responses or in their motives for attempting to quash the rebellions.

Two mutinies are also found in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus, although in that work, which was designed to continue the historical work of Tacitus himself,² it is Julian Caesar, later Augustus, who must confront his legions each time, once in Gaul and once in the East. These two episodes are of supreme importance within the context of Ammianus' account of the life of Julian, and comparison of them to the passages of Tacitus' *Annals* upon which they are stylistically modeled helps to explicate some of Ammianus' attitudes towards the emperor Julian.

These four mutinies, each of which contains at least one *adlocutio* by a general to his soldiers, form a pair of interconnected units that are unique in their numerous points of similarity and in their mirror-image contrasts. Although mutinies are occasionally found in other Roman sources, for example, in Tacitus' *Histories*, those situations are usually quite different and even if there are one or two points of similarity, they do not follow the more complex patterns which are discussed

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For the text of Tacitus I use the Teubner editions of Borzsák 1992 and Wellesley 1989. For Ammianus I use the Teubner edition of Seyfarth 1978.

¹ So Borzsák (1969: 588) and Goodyear (1972: 194–195), who says "The very generous scale of treatment which Tacitus accords to the mutinies in Pannonia and Germany cannot be adequately explained by supposing that he regarded them as exceptionally important historically."

² Blockley 1973: 63. Amm. Marc. 31.16.9.

here.³ In general, it appears that historical accounts of mutiny among the Roman legions are unusual.⁴ Thus, the connections between these episodes take on an added significance, particularly in regard to the evidence which they provide for links between the literary styles and techniques of composition of the two authors.

Tacitus, as a traditional Roman, writes from a predominantly Stoic perspective.⁵ Because he was an ancient historian he was concerned more with ethics and character than with economic motives and he declares that history has a moral purpose—to commemorate virtue (*Ann.* 3.65.1).⁶ A Stoic ethical basis pervades Tacitus' work and contributes to his definite opinions about what constitutes correct behavior. These ethical concepts were based on fixed models and Tacitus' perspective is constant throughout his narrative. Therefore, in investigating Tacitus' presentation of the two mutinies and of the actions of Germanicus and Drusus in halting them, I endeavor to ascertain Tacitus' opinion of the situations and the generals on the basis of his account and of his ethical outlook. I assume for the purpose of this study that Tacitus attempted to be accurate and that he is being factual about various incidents in his narration. At the same time, awareness of Tacitus' biases reveals the ways in which he intended the reader to be influenced. I use Tacitus' interest in concepts such as *ratio* and in decisions based on decisiveness or deliberation and his scorn for anger and disorder as guidelines for interpreting his attitude towards the mutinies. Tacitus' awareness of the importance of order, his dislike of injustice and brutality, and his ability to relate character and action all influence his presentation of the origins of the two mutinies and of the responses of the generals. Such an interpretation of the events in Pannonia and Germany coincides with Tacitus' personal comments and provides a model for determining Tacitus' opinion of the mutinies and of the two generals' actions.⁷ I then apply the same guidelines established for understanding Tacitus to Ammianus, who was strongly influenced by Tacitus and, to a lesser extent, by the Stoicism of late antiquity.

The accounts of the two mutinies in Book 1 of the *Annals* are more lengthy than those in Ammianus and have attracted more scholarship; therefore, more attention here is devoted to analysis of Tacitus. It is also necessary to examine Drusus and Germanicus in some detail because understanding of them forms the basis for interpretation of the actions of Julian in the *Res Gestae*. For this reason, I

³Tacitus *Hist.* 1.8; 1.25–47; 1.55–56; 1.80–82; 2.28–29; 2.49–52; 2.68–69; 3.10–11; 3.12–14; 4.46; 4.54–60; SHA, *Av. Cass.* 4.7. But *Hist.* 1.80–82 and *Hist.* 2.28–29 do have some similarities with the mutinies in the *Annals*.

⁴Messer (1920: 159–161) finds mutiny to be rarely discussed in ancient treatises on the Roman army, although he suggests that it was probably common in the Republican period. Watson (1969: 119–120) mentions the rarity of mutinies. There was disorder among the armies under Augustus, according to Koestermann (1963: 1.16.1).

⁵Mendell 1957: 62–63; Grimal 1990: 17, 45, 315, although elsewhere (195, 339) he does not find Tacitus to be completely Stoic.

⁶Auerbach 1953: 38–39; McCulloch 1984; Syme 1958: 520, 521, 526.

⁷It is important to note that I attempt to present Tacitus' interpretation, rather than my own.

include a good deal of narrative concerning each of the four mutinies. I hope that this will facilitate comparison between them for the reader. It is also necessary to take into account previous scholarly discussion about Germanicus since the figure of Germanicus in the *Annals* of Tacitus has caused a certain amount of controversy. Many scholars have considered Germanicus to be a complete hero: to them, he is a Republican and a foil for Tiberius.⁸ Some consider Tacitus to be partial to him and others also insist that Tacitus is trying to be as flattering as possible to Germanicus despite limited material.⁹ More recently, Shotter, Ross, and Rutland have attempted to attack the conception of Germanicus as hero.¹⁰ Of this later group of scholars, Ross has the most interesting argument and yet he may be criticized for incomplete analysis of the presentation of Germanicus. Nevertheless, it appears that Tacitus in his account of the mutinies depicts Drusus and Germanicus as being rather similar: as neither heroic nor ridiculous.¹¹ Tacitus, although he is quite complimentary towards Germanicus later in the *Annals* (*Ann.* 2.72–73), saves his most extensive praise for his favorite general Corbulo.¹² All the same, of the two generals Germanicus is the more consistently successful and the one who conforms more to Tacitus' ethical outlook. It is Germanicus, therefore, who provides the positive model for comparison with and interpretation of Julian.

TACITUS (*ANN.* 1.16–30; 1.31–49)

Drusus and Germanicus, the two potential heirs of Tiberius, are mentioned together at the beginning of the *Annals*. Tacitus reports that Augustus placed Germanicus, Augustus' step-grandson (and great-nephew) and Tiberius' nephew, at the head of eight legions on the Rhine and ordered Tiberius to adopt him, although Tiberius already had a son, Drusus, of a similar age (*Ann.* 1.3.5). The two young men continued to be friendly rivals until Germanicus' death and Tiberius takes pains to ensure that no more power or position is given to one over the other. However, of the two, Germanicus enjoyed the more important military command granted to him by Augustus and greater popular favor (*mirus apud populum favor*, 1.7.6–7; 1.33.2). Germanicus was viewed by the people as an alternative to Tiberius and as someone who might bring back the republic (*Ann.* 1.33). Germanicus was the only one with enough legions to make Tiberius uncomfortable, the only other member of the imperial family who had both a

⁸ Borzsák 1969; Charlesworth 1934: 610; Syme 1958: 254. Michel (1966: 125) says: "chez lui, Germanicus apparaît comme le modèle idéal du général romain."

⁹ Koestermann 1963: 39; Bird 1973; Syme 1958: 254, 418.

¹⁰ Shotter 1968. Ross (1973) notes that Tacitus is not as complimentary towards Germanicus as are Suetonius (*Calig.* 3) and Josephus (*AJ* 18.207 ff.). Rutland (1987) also concludes that Germanicus is either naïve or dangerous.

¹¹ Goodyear (1972: 239–241) finds that Tacitus' portrayal of Germanicus is ambivalent, but thinks that Germanicus is depicted as "undignified and inept at the climax of the German mutiny." Pelling (1993) also finds Tacitus to be ambiguous about Germanicus' heroism.

¹² *Ann.* 11.18–20; 13.8–9, 41; 14.24; 15.1–25.

claim to the throne and popular support to gain it. Tiberius, indeed, when he took over following the death of Augustus, feared Germanicus and his legions (*Ann.* 1.7.6–7). But in spite of this, Germanicus was retained in his position of command, and Tiberius asked a renewal of proconsular powers for Germanicus at the time Drusus became consul elect at Rome (*Ann.* 1.14.3–4). So before the mutinies begin, both Drusus and Germanicus are on a somewhat equal footing within the imperial household, although Tacitus pays more attention to Germanicus in his preface.

Mutiny in Pannonia (Ann. 1.16–30)

The two mutinies, in Pannonia and in Germany, which are described one after the other in the first book of the *Annals*, are presented as parallel accounts and when compared they provide interesting insight into Tacitus' portrayal of Drusus and Germanicus under pressure. Ross (1973: 211–212), however, is mistaken when he says about the two that "exactly the same causes are seen behind the revolt in Germany" as in Pannonia. The two cases are parallel, yet they are remarkably different.

The mutiny in Pannonia (*Ann.* 1.16–30) begins when the troops become restless upon the death of Augustus. Tacitus says that the reasons for this are not new: the desire of the troops for anarchy and the hope of reward from rebellion (*ex civili bello spem praemiorum*, 1.16.1). Three legions under the command of Junius Blaesus become unruly when he suspends normal duty for the period of mourning for Augustus. The soldiers are eager for luxury and leisure (*luxum et otium cupere*, 1.16.2), spurn discipline and work (*disciplinam et laborem aspernari*, 1.16.2), and take the opportunity of the death of the emperor to agitate for change. One of the soldiers, Percennius, arouses the rest and incites them to demand pay of one denarius a day, sixteen years service with no recall after, and a gratuity upon discharge (*Ann.* 1.16.3–1.17). Percennius' speech to the soldiers is vividly reported and his recital of grievances appears designed to arouse sympathy from the reader.¹³ He points out that the army is a harsh and unrewarding profession (*Ann.* 1.17.4), and his remarks are confirmed later by the events of the German campaign. Tacitus emphasises both the soldiers' grievances and the disorder of the legions through his inclusion of the substantial list of complaints.¹⁴

When matters become progressively worse, the commander, Blaesus, approaches the soldiers who are busy heaping up earth and offers his own life in order to quell the disturbance:

¹³ Syme 1958: 375. Auerbach (1953: 36–37) feels that Tacitus does not understand the soldiers' demands and dismisses them with his disapproving remarks about the causes (*Ann.* 1.16.1). Auerbach (1953: 39–40) finds Percennius' speech to be "purely aesthetic" and not necessarily truthful, just as Vibulenus' (*Ann.* 1.22–23) is not.

¹⁴ Despite Tacitus' disapproving remarks about the true causes for restlessness, the grievances appear to be factual based on the hardships the soldiers undergo throughout the *Annals*.

properantibus Blaesus advenit, increpabatque ac retinebat singulos, clamitans: "mea potius caede imbuite manus. levioere flagitio legatum interficietis, quam ab imperatore desciscitis. aut incolumis fidem legionum retinebo, aut iugulatus paenitentiam adcelerabo." (Ann. 1.18.3)

But there is no response from the troops to this noble gesture. Blaesus next makes a "tactful appeal" (*multa dicendi arte*, 1.19.2) to the troops, urging them to avoid violent undisciplined measures (*cur contra morem obsequii, contra fas disciplinae vim meditentur?*, 1.19.3) and suggesting that the soldiers name deputies to send to Rome. The men request Blaesus' son and the granting of this concession temporarily settles the troops (Ann. 1.19.4–5). This indicates that Tacitus' remarks about desire for anarchy motivating the troops are not entirely true: the relaxation of discipline and such desires may have been a reason for the start of the rebellion, but the soldiers are amenable to reason at this point and appear willing to respond to negotiation.

Ross (1973: 212) considers Blaesus' actions, especially the offer to end his own life, to be successful:

... it matters not that some concessions have been made, that Blaesus' own son is to serve the troops by carrying out their demands as a legate to Rome, that only *modicum otium* has been restored.

Why does this not matter? Blaesus has quickly capitulated to the demands of his mutinous men, a serious sign of weakness, to judge from Tacitus' disapproval of the soldiers' anarchy, yet he has restored only a small bit of order. McCulloch (1984: 45) even considers that Blaesus is ultimately responsible for causing the mutiny in the first place because of his leniency in relaxing discipline at the death of Augustus. But Ross (1973: 215) considers Blaesus' actions to contrast with those of Germanicus later,¹⁵ and Shotter (1968: 198) views them as:

a logically considered step which was designed to appeal to both logic and emotion. By making his own life of less value than the well-being and loyalty of his men, Blaesus was showing them the care to which they might respond. . . . We see here very clearly the difference between the seasoned professional and the youthful amateur, for by contrast, Germanicus' action is seen for what it really was—the impulsive and desperate act of bravado.

Is this actually true? When Blaesus offers his own life, the troops are busy with a scheme to merge three legions into one and are too distracted to pay much attention to him (Ann. 1.18.6–7). For Blaesus to offer his own life as his very first action to try to establish order may very well be described as an "impulsive and desperate act of bravado," particularly since Tacitus tells us that there is absolutely no response to this gesture. It is the stubbornness of Blaesus, along with concessions to the troops, which finally prevails after a certain amount of time (*pervicacia victi*, 1.19.2). Blaesus should rather be praised for his later, rational offer to the soldiers. But after the delegation to the senate is granted, Tacitus

¹⁵ McCulloch (1984: 45) agrees: "Blaesus is on the whole a commendable figure."

says that the soldiers are now "haughty" because they have gained through protest that which they were unable to achieve *per modestiam* (*Ann.* 1.19.5). When the revolt breaks out again, Blaesus orders a few looters thrown into prison "in order to frighten the others" (*ad terrorem ceterorum*, 1.21.1). This incites the troops all the more and new leaders arise. Vibulenus, indeed, clearly takes advantage of the general disorder to agitate with false accusations merely for the sake of creating more turmoil (*Ann.* 1.22–23). So we see that the delayed attempts to restore order combined with the immediate concessions do matter: the soldiers have learned how effective violence and mutiny can be. The soldiers are not far from killing Blaesus himself: *haud multum ab exitio legati aberant* (*Ann.* 1.23.3).

The situation is so grave that Tiberius sends out his son, Drusus Caesar, the powerful L. Aelius Sejanus, who is an advisor to Drusus and in charge of discipline for the army (*rector iuvenis et ceteris periculorum praemiorumque ostentator*, 1.24.2),¹⁶ staff, and two battalions of the Guard in order to settle the emergency (*Ann.* 1.24.1–2). Drusus reads a letter from Tiberius saying that Drusus can grant some concessions and the rest must be referred to the senate (*Ann.* 1.25.2). But because Drusus insists that he can do little without consulting Tiberius, the soldiers become angry, believing that they are being blocked. They shout abuse at Drusus, asking why he has come if he can do nothing better than refer matters to his father:

cur venisset, neque augendis militum stipendiis, neque adlevandis laboribus, denique nulla bene faciendi licentia? at hercule verbera et necem cunctis permitti. Tiberium olim nomine Augusti desideria legionum frustrari solitum: easdem artes Drusum rettulisse. numquamne ad se nisi filios familiarum venturos? (*Ann.* 1.26.2)

The soldiers protest that although the emperor has no power over rewards, no one cares about punishments (*an praemia sub dominis, poenas sine arbitro esse?*, 1.26.3).¹⁷ The situation grows worse, but an eclipse of the moon frightens the ignorant soldiers (*rationis ignarus*, 1.28.1) because they view it as a bad omen (*Ann.* 1.28.1–2). Tacitus reports that Drusus takes this opportunity to play on the soldiers' misgivings and that he sends officers around to work on the morale of the men. These officers point out to the troops that the two leaders of their rebellion are in no position to grant concessions or pay the troops and that they are not able to overthrow the imperial family and to seize power:

quo usque filium imperatoris obsidebimus? quis certaminum finis? Percennione et Vibuleno sacramentum dicturi sumus? Percennius et Vibulenus stipendia militibus, agros emeritis largientur? denique pro Neronibus et Drusis imperium populi Romani capessent? (*Ann.* 1.28.4)

Through such persuasive arguments and by playing upon the soldiers' fears of the eclipse Drusus manages to turn a chance affair of nature to his advantage.

¹⁶ Miller 1959: *ad loc.*

¹⁷ Tiberius says that he will refer reforms, not punishments, to the senate (see Miller 1959: *ad* 1.25.3).

When it is pointed out to them that collective action brings slow rewards but individual goodwill can be rewarded immediately (*Ann.* 1.28.5), the soldiers begin to distrust each other (*commotis per haec mentibus et inter se suspectis*, 1.28.6). The superstitious soldiers with their unbalanced minds (*perculsae semel mentes*, 1.28.2) repent and become obedient.

Drusus, who is not a practiced orator but who speaks with natural dignity (*rudis dicendi, nobilitate ingenua*, 1.29.1), calls an assembly of his soldiers and rebukes them. He then offers to write to Tiberius and this settles the soldiers. But Drusus consults with his officers about further action. There is a division of opinion between waiting for a response from Rome and cutting down the leaders of the rebellion immediately (*certatum inde sententiis*, 1.29.3). Drusus, who had a "naturally severe disposition" (*promptum ad asperiora ingenium Druso erat*, 1.29.4), decides to have the two leaders of the mutiny, Percennius and Vibulenus, killed. The officers now punish the contrite legions. There is a general, unorganized slaughter: some of the chief leaders of the rebellion are killed when they are wandering about outside the camp; others are handed over by their fellow soldiers (*Ann.* 1.29–30). A pouring rain contributes to the misery of the soldiers and since the mutiny has been concluded, Drusus departs without waiting to hear from Rome.

It is worth wondering whether Drusus could have succeeded, or succeeded so well, if the eclipse had not occurred. Ross (1973: 213) thinks so. He finds Drusus' actions shrewd and his execution of only the two ringleaders (*Ann.* 1.29.4) an act of restraint. The other killing, performed by the soldiers themselves (*Ann.* 1.30), does not appear to have been ordered by Drusus.¹⁸ But perhaps Blaesus would have acted better, based on Tacitus' presentation of events and his disparagement of disorder in general, if he had not delayed in taking any action until the soldiers were uncontrollable. According to this view, Blaesus should have either promptly supported the demands, if they were justified (as they appear to be), or punished the two leaders right away. During one of the uprisings in Germany the *castrorum praefectus*, Manius Ennius, kills two soldiers who instigate an uprising and stops any further mutiny by ordering the soldiers to fall into line (*Ann.* 1.38). A prompt (although not necessarily violent) response might have been effective. Or perhaps Drusus should have acted more forcefully immediately upon arrival, instead of equivocating about having to ask Tiberius about the soldiers' demands and further inflaming them. Tiberius, after all, had given Drusus "no certain orders," expecting him to act as the situation required (*nullis satis certis mandatis, ex re consulturum*, 1.24.1). The affair in Pannonia is consistently characterized by the Roman generals doing too little too late¹⁹ and then too much, unnecessarily. The widespread killing, which caused confusion to arise again among the legions

¹⁸ Since only Drusus as general in charge had the authority to kill without trial, this action also calls into question Drusus' control of his men.

¹⁹ Kajanto (1970: 706–707, 712) says that Tacitus emphasizes the importance of discipline and does not support the rebels.

after they had calmed down, was not necessary and possibly unwise, since the example of Blaesus' attempt to "terrify" the soldiers by punishing a few had already demonstrated that such punishments could backfire. What is more, in view of Tacitus' dislike of disorder in general, a deliberate creation of more turmoil is not an ideal action.

Mutiny in Germany (Ann. 1.31–49)

A second mutiny, in Germany, where Germanicus was in charge of eight legions on the Rhine, is also described in Book 1 (*Ann.* 1.31–49) and this directly follows the account of the Pannonian mutiny. Tacitus asserts that the concomitant outbreak in Germany among the legions of Lower Germany happened for the same reasons as the Pannonian revolt:

isdem ferme diebus isdem causis Germanicae legiones turbatae, quanto plures, tanto violentius et magna spe fore, ut Germanicus Caesar imperium alterius pati nequiret daretque se legionibus vi sua cuncta tracturis. (*Ann.* 1.31.1–2)

These legions "lost their minds" (*in rabiem prolapsus*, 1.31.3) like those in Pannonia, presumably because of the same desire for anarchy and financial gain. But there is an additional political element to this uprising: these soldiers also hope that their general Germanicus might become the next leader of Rome. Ross (1973: 211), however, considers the causes of both revolts to be the same, and that *ex civili bello spem praemiorum* (*Ann.* 1.16.1) is paraphrased by *et magna spe fore, ut Germanicus Caesar*. Yet, this is not really the case. Even if the grievances are the same (pay, years of service, and ill-treatment), the motives are not. The armies in Pannonia, although the term *ex civili bello* is used of them, never contemplate actual civil war (i.e., moving in armed uprising against the emperor himself at Rome), and Tacitus never mentions any political motives other than in this one phrase. Blaesus, indeed, contrasts his men with those who were victors in the civil war (*si tamen tenderent in pace temptare, quae ne civilium quidem bellorum victores expostulaverint*, 1.19.3). It is probable that *ex civili bello spem praemiorum* (*Ann.* 1.16.1) refers to the hope of personal reward from their own local rebellion. The soldiers certainly have no powerful leader who could take charge and lead them on to Rome. The officers Drusus sends to mollify his troops point out to them that the two leaders of their rebellion are in no position to grant concessions, pay the troops, or seize power (*Ann.* 1.28.4). The German armies, on the other hand, have Germanicus, who was the only person in the Roman Empire with the family background, the power, and the popularity to oppose Tiberius.²⁰ *magna spe fore, ut Germanicus Caesar imperium alterius pati nequiret daretque se legionibus vi sua cuncta tracturis* (*Ann.* 1.31.1–2) is a very important additional reason for rebellion.²¹ The success of the German revolt would have placed Germanicus in control of the empire and the German armies in a very privileged position.

²⁰ Martin 1981: 107.

²¹ So Goodyear 1972: *ad* 1.31.1.

This, indeed, is feared by Tiberius; he later thinks that there is something behind Agrippina's attentions to the army (*non enim simplices eas curas*, 1.69.3) and he deprives Germanicus of a final victory in Germany because of jealousy (*Ann.* 2.26.4–5).

Tacitus relates that the leaders of the Pannonian mutiny were few, but that the army of Lower Germany was influenced by a large number of recruits from the urban mob conscripted from Rome in A.D. 9.²² These work on the other soldiers, agitating them to demand higher pay, discharges for veterans, and relief from the cruelty of the centurions:

igitur audito fine Augusti vernacula multitudo, nuper acto in urbe dilectu, lasciviae sueta, laborum intolerans, implere ceterorum rudes animos: venisse tempus quo veterani maturam missionem, iuvenes largiora stipendia, cuncti modum miseriarum exposcerent saevitiamque centurionum ulciscerentur. non unus haec, ut Pannonicas inter legiones Percennius, nec apud trepidas militum aures, alios validiores exercitus respicientium, sed multa seditionis ora vocesque: sua in manu sitam rem Romanam, suis victoriis augeri rem publicam, in suum cognomentum adscisci imperatores.

(*Ann.* 1.31.4–5)

According to Tacitus, the two mutinies were different precisely because of this large group of recruits.²³ These former members of the urban mob helped to foster the belief among the legions that the fate of Rome rested in their hands (*Ann.* 1.31.5). The German armies' identification of themselves with the name Germanicus indicates to what degree they considered his interests, and those of all emperors who bore the name, to be their own (*Ann.* 1.31.5). In addition, Tacitus explicitly contrasts the leadership of the German revolt with that of the earlier Pannonian revolt; here there are not just one or two leaders but many, and the larger number of leaders of the German mutiny helps to solidify the rebellion and makes it more difficult to check (*Ann.* 1.31, 32).

After describing the beginning of the revolt, Tacitus digresses to comment on the hatred that Livia and Tiberius bore towards Germanicus and the goodwill that the people extended to the son of Nero Drusus (*Ann.* 1.33.2). The goodwill is based upon the popular belief that Nero Drusus would have restored the republic if he had obtained power and that his son Germanicus might be able to do so. The passage once more emphasizes the exalted image of Germanicus in the eyes of the Roman people, now explained as resulting from the reputation of Germanicus' father and because Germanicus is perceived as being different from Tiberius.²⁴ Even though Tacitus asserts that Germanicus exerted himself on behalf of Tiberius, the more so as he became closer to power (*Ann.* 1.34.1), such an action is an indication of Germanicus' desire to serve his country honorably. This desire, even if it involves aid for Tiberius, would not necessarily hurt Germanicus'

²² Dio Cass. 57.5.4; 56.23.2–3.

²³ Also Dio Cass. 57.5.4.

²⁴ See *Ann.* 1.7. Germanicus was also popular at court because of his wife and wife's family (*Ann.* 2.43.5–6).

popularity with the people, and to do otherwise would be treasonous as well as dangerous.²⁵ The insertion of this passage here suggests, although it is not explicitly stated, that at least some of this regard of the people for Germanicus is also present among his troops. The unified and violent legions are only willing to respond to Germanicus,²⁶ and after the mutiny, Germanicus' legions remain fiercely loyal to him throughout his German campaign (*Ann.* 1.71.2–3; 2.12).

At the beginning of the revolt Caecina, the general of the Lower Army, does not attempt to suppress the uprising because of failure of nerve: Tacitus says he did not "stand in their way" (*nec legatus obviam ibat: quippe plurimum vecordia constantiam exemerat*, 1.32.1).²⁷ When the troops attack the centurions (*Ann.* 1.32) and the revolt progresses, Germanicus hastens to the camp and meets with an assemblage of his troops. Unlike Blaesus, Germanicus first speaks to his men, ordering them to assemble according to their companies and bring forth their standards (*Ann.* 1.34.3) and then attempting to employ rational argument. However, his attempts at persuading them to cease their mutiny are unsuccessful, and his men respond by reciting their grievances in detail. They then offer Germanicus supreme power: *si vellet imperium, promptos ostentavere* (*Ann.* 1.35.3–4). In response, Germanicus flamboyantly draws his sword and offers to kill himself, and his words are similar to those of Blaesus: *at ille moriturum potius quam fidem exueret clamitans* (*Ann.* 1.35.4). Although some soldiers are unimpressed—one offers Germanicus his own sword—others are shocked by this act and restrain Germanicus, who then departs in the momentary interlude. Much has been made of Germanicus' gesture. Shotter calls it "an impulsive and desperate act"; Williams says that it is "hysterical"; Goodyear calls it an "ill-considered charade"; McCulloch scorns Germanicus' "bluff"; and Ross, although he finds a deliberate parallel between this action and Blaesus' earlier offer, says that it is "theatrical in the extreme" and that it only serves to make Germanicus look "ludicrous."²⁸ Is this necessarily so? It does not come close to Otho's tears on his banquet couch (*Hist.* 1.82.1) or to the episode in which Valens, disguised as a slave, hides from his troops (*Hist.* 2.29.1). It should also be viewed in contrast with Caecina's earlier failure (*Ann.* 1.32.67); this perspective suggests some courage on Germanicus' part. Germanicus first attempted to persuade. His gesture of suicide was offered in response only to the offer of empire, not merely to the disorder and turmoil of the soldiers. As

²⁵ But compare McCulloch (1984: 68), who feels that Tacitus reveals inconsistencies between Germanicus' actions and his reputation: Germanicus is a foil to Tiberius, but "is in his own way as deceptive and manipulative as his uncle/adoptive father."

²⁶ M' Ennius tells his soldiers that their rebellion is against Germanicus, not himself, and this seems to calm them (*Ann.* 1.38.2).

²⁷ Miller (1959: *ad* 1.32) says that Caecina's behavior is contrasted by implication with that of Blaesus. Goodyear (1972: *ad* 1.32.1) says that Caecina was in a worse position than Drusus because the German mutiny was more violent.

²⁸ Shotter 1968; Goodyear 1972: *ad* 1.35.4; Williams 1989: 144; Ross 1973: 215. McCulloch (1984: 89) says: "Germanicus resorts to the lowest sort of self-aggrandizement." Rutland (1987: 155) says that the gesture is "absurdly sentimental."

such, it can be considered an emphatic statement of *fides* to the emperor. What is more, Germanicus' gesture does have some effect on the actual mutiny since he did manage to make the soldiers ashamed and to calm them long enough for him to slip away:

saevum id malique moris etiam furentibus visum, ac spatium fuit, quo Caesar ab amicis in tabernaculum raperetur. (*Ann.* 1.35.5)

It is an effective action because at least part of the soldiers, even in their demented frame of mind (*furentibus*), hope that Germanicus will be their leader in Rome. They do not want him dead, they want him alive and leading a civil war—without him there is no one else²⁹—and Germanicus' assumption of authority, although it is not their main motivation, is the surest way to gain their demands. The gesture of suicide, which Antonius also successfully offers to mutinous troops in Tacitus' *Histories* (*Hist.* 3.10.4) and which Caecina similarly performs when he successfully uses his body to block the camp gate after his soldiers panic in Germany (*Ann.* 1.65), is neither a strange action for a Roman general nor is it without result.³⁰ It also perhaps illustrates the confidence which Germanicus has in his own popularity and his awareness of his image in the eyes of his troops.³¹ The death of Blaesus would have hurt the soldiers' chances of obtaining concessions, but the death of Germanicus would have ruined both concessions and dreams of Germanicus as emperor entirely. To say that Germanicus appeared "a figure of almost comic failure"³² is too extreme.

Germanicus gains some time to consider the situation and meets with his advisors in order to consult about what action to undertake in response. They settle upon three options: attacking the rebels with *auxilia* and *socii*, granting the demands, or severely punishing the men (*Ann.* 1.36). It is decided by all (*volutatis inter se rationibus placitum*, 1.36.3) to have a letter written in the name of the emperor that offers discharge to twenty-year veterans, says that sixteen-year veterans are released from duty, and asserts that legacies should be doubly paid (*Ann.* 1.36.3). Although Germanicus has been ridiculed for these actions,³³ the "forged" letter has the desired effect on the troops and the concessions are granted. Germanicus thus is able to restore order and to induce some legions of the Upper Army to take the oath of allegiance (*Ann.* 1.37.3). Germanicus has been criticized for granting concessions which were larger than those of

²⁹ Josephus says in a different context that Germanicus' soldiers considered it an honor to die so that he might be emperor (*AJ* 18.207 ff.).

³⁰ Compare also the incident in the *Historia Augusta* where the emperor Avidius Cassius confronts his troops dressed only in a loin cloth, to their great shock (*SHA Av. Cass.* 4.7).

³¹ Germanicus later uses his own funds and personal kindness to intensify the legions' fighting spirit and loyalty to himself (*Ann.* 1.71.2–3).

³² Ross 1973: 215. The account of Germanicus' threatened suicide is also found in Dio 57.5.2–3.

³³ Dio (57.5.3) also mentions Germanicus' letter. Goodyear (1972: *ad* 1.36.3) says that the "incompetence" of the letter lowers one's opinion of Germanicus.

Drusus.³⁴ Tacitus himself comments that the money paid was “stolen” from the treasury (*turpi agmine, cum fisci de imperatore rapti*, 1.37.2), but his disapproval rests more heavily on the soldiers than on Germanicus. Under the circumstances, Germanicus was obliged to make some attempt to help the soldiers in order to quell the rebellion and still keep their favor and he needed to act quickly because of the threat of enemy attack (*Ann.* 1.36.1–2). Drusus only consulted with his advisors about possible punishments or other actions after the mutiny had ended. Thus Drusus faced a great upheaval; he was only saved by a stroke of luck from nature. Germanicus cannot count on another eclipse to occur, this time for his own benefit. Payment to the legions was the surest way to settle the mutiny and at the same time increase Germanicus’ popularity with them. Germanicus, indeed, after the mutiny is ended and while on the German campaign, pays his soldiers from his own pocket in order to ensure their loyalty (*Ann.* 1.71.2–3).

The rebellion breaks out again. When envoys from the senate arrive, the soldiers begin to worry that the concessions will be revoked. They drag Germanicus out of bed, carry off one standard, and attack a senatorial delegate who must take refuge at an altar of the eagle and standards (*Ann.* 1.39.1–5). But calm is restored after Germanicus sternly addresses his men, blaming the gods, not the soldiers, for the disorder (*fatalem increpans rabiem, neque militum, sed deum ira resurgere*, 1.39.6). He explains the reason for the arrival of the envoys (*Ann.* 1.39.6) and the men are cowed (*attonitaque . . . contione*, 1.39.6). In the manner of Julius Caesar who calmed his men with a single word, Germanicus is able to restrain the troops through his speech.³⁵ Germanicus, in fact, mentions Caesar and that incident (*Ann.* 1.42.3) when he later makes a tearful, and rather lengthy, appeal to his men as he prepares to send away his wife and young son (*Ann.* 1.41–44). It is, of course, an attempt to equate himself with Julius Caesar, but Germanicus had already demonstrated in the previous scene that the parallel had some validity. Furthermore, his tears may be excused since they are on behalf of his family, not himself. Tacitus reports that Germanicus was criticized at the time for not seeking help from the obedient Upper Army and for still keeping his family among the troops, where they might be in danger (*Ann.* 1.40). Modern scholars such as Ross (1973: 216–217) blame him for this, but these actions may not be as foolish as they seem. The possibility of using one part of his troops against the other had already been considered and rejected (*Ann.* 1.36.2): it came too close to the “civil war” Tacitus later despises (*Ann.* 1.48–49). Nor can Germanicus be accused of a lack of familial concern. He did take thought for his family, but his wife Agrippina, the daughter of a great general, refused to leave (*Ann.* 1.40.3).³⁶ And if Germanicus was relying on his popularity as a member of the imperial family and the son of a

³⁴ Ross 1973: 216; McCulloch (1984: 192–193) says that “Germanicus’ *largitio* is desperate.”

³⁵ Here again, Germanicus differs from the panic-stricken, weeping Otho (*Hist.* 1.82.1) and the cowardly Valens (*Hist.* 2.29.1).

³⁶ According to Dio (57.5.6–7), Agrippina and Gaius were actually seized by the soldiers, but were later released. Tacitus appears to play down the threat to Germanicus’ family. However, he does credit

Republican, he perhaps intended to keep his family as a last resort, a last weapon to calm the soldiers. His tearful speech to his troops when Agrippina and Gaius finally do prepare to leave camp has more effect than any other of his actions (*Ann.* 1.41, 44),³⁷ and if the retention of his family was a deliberate gesture, then Germanicus must be regarded as a very clever and calculating man.³⁸ In addition, Baxter (1972: 251–252) has pointed out Virgilian echoes in Germanicus' speech which associate him with Aeneas and the rebellious troops with *furor* and madness (*furētibz*, 1.42.1). If this is the case, then Tacitus portrays Germanicus as being capable and in control—a rational hero who opposes madness and disorder.³⁹ When Germanicus reminds his men of his attempted suicide and declares that he should have gone ahead (*Ann.* 1.43.1), his remark appears to affect the soldiers as much as the actual action did previously, and this is another indication of the gesture's appropriateness. Germanicus successfully concludes both mutiny and speech by urging his soldiers to demonstrate that they are sorry (*Ann.* 1.43.4). The soldiers are ashamed and prepare to punish the rebel leaders themselves, bringing each to a hasty trial and then executing them (*Ann.* 1.44.2–3). Germanicus does not interfere, neither giving the order nor taking the blame:

nec Caesar arcebat, quando nullo ipsius iussu penes eosdem saevitia facti et invidia erat.

(*Ann.* 1.44.3)

He leaves matters up to the soldiers (*Ann.* 1.44.2–3). Ross (1973: 217) calls this "avoid(ing) all responsibility." But Germanicus is very conscious of his image and by this action that is really non-action he is able to have the ring-leaders punished without incurring any resentment. He achieves what he desires by getting the soldiers to discipline themselves voluntarily and he keeps his hands clean. This episode also illustrates Germanicus' mild character: Tacitus later mentions and demonstrates his kindness (*et erat, ut rettuli, clementior*, 2.57.2) and his unwillingness to punish enemies when he recounts how Germanicus rescued his enemy Piso (*Ann.* 2.55).

Germanicus' kindness might, in the view of a Roman, be interpreted as a sign of weakness of character. However, Germanicus makes other changes which increase both discipline and loyalty: he revises the list of centurions, keeping only those whom the soldiers commend (*Ann.* 1.44.5),⁴⁰ and he sends troops to two legions sixty miles away, resolving to make war on them if they do not recognize his authority (*Ann.* 1.45). In this way Germanicus bends to the will of his troops,

Agrippina with ending the mutiny, presumably because she remained in camp until she was used as a basis for appeal (*Ann.* 1.69.4–5).

³⁷ Hurley 1989: 319

³⁸ Goodyear (1972: *ad* 1.41.1) and Koestermann (1963: *ad* 1.41.3) note that Agrippina makes too much noise in leaving and seems to intend to attract the attention of the soldiers.

³⁹ That is, if one accepts Auerbach's assertion (1953: 39–40) that speeches in Tacitus are rhetorical and adapted to fit the author's interests and point of view. Cf. Martin 1969: 130–131.

⁴⁰ Rutland (1987: 156–158) deplores this action, saying it "may well highlight a nature dangerously inclined to shirk responsibility."

while at the same time he exerts his power against those who are still hostile. Nevertheless, after Tiberius plans to visit him, Germanicus orders Caecina to gather some trusted men from among the two still hostile legions, and they kill the unsuspecting leaders of the revolt in their tents—a massacre like a civil war (*cadere, caedis*, 1.48.3; *cladem*, 1.49.3; *civilium armorum facies*, 1.49.1). Tacitus reports that after this Germanicus weeps (*Ann.* 1.49.2).⁴¹ Did Germanicus issue his brutal order because he was attempting to avoid the emperor's criticism for leniency? Tiberius certainly was not completely happy about Germanicus' success in ending the mutiny (*Ann.* 1.52). Or is it an attempt to place himself on an equal footing with Drusus who also executed the leaders of his revolt? In each case, the rebels suffer.

It was clearly Tacitus' intention to consider and compare the two mutinies in Pannonia and Germany. The two rebellions occurred simultaneously; and although one is reported after the other, the accounts of both are placed so closely together in the text that comparison is unavoidable. Tacitus hints that the reader should compare the two when he states that Tiberius received reports about both at the same time and deliberated about which legions he should visit (*Ann.* 1.46–47). Tiberius, afraid of alienating one group of troops even more by visiting the other first, decided to meet only with his two sons. Tacitus, likewise, since he orders his text chronologically, appears to suggest that primacy should not be given to one account or the other simply because of the order of presentation or the disparate length of the descriptions of the two incidents.

There are some important similarities and differences between the narrative organization and events of the two mutinies. In both episodes the author emphasizes disorder, rebellion, and violence and contrasts this with discipline, rational effort, and calmness. Words such as *rabies*, *furor*, and *ratio* are frequent in both accounts and are considered to be the motivating forces of the respective sides.⁴² Tacitus writes from a traditional and Stoic perspective and he clearly favors rationality and order in spite of his sympathetic inclusion of the grievances of the soldiers. Stylistically, a balance is created between the two mutinies by numerous parallel incidents such as: offers of suicide by generals, sending delegations to Rome, meetings between officers, punishments of a few men, and the soldiers' final disciplining of themselves. Tacitus, with his terse style, might have abbreviated his account by omitting some episodes or actions without necessarily falsifying the information presented. That he did not do so suggests that he desired this parallelism. Likewise, the two vivid speeches by the two leading rebels, Percennius and Vibulenus, in the account of the Pannonian mutiny

⁴¹ Baxter (1972: 251–252) also notes Virgilian parallels between the slaying of the rebels and *Aeneid* 9 and 12. This gives a heroic touch to Germanicus' unfortunate actions.

⁴² The Pannonian soldiers are described as *eo furoris venere* (*Ann.* 1.31.2) and *diversis animorum motibus* (1.25.2). Cf. *ut sunt mobiles ad superstitionem percussae semel mentes* (1.28.2); *commotis per haec mentibus*, 1.28.6. Drusus seeks to turn the soldiers in *sapientiam* (1.28.3). The soldiers in Germany are *lymphati* (*Ann.* 1.32.1), *vecordes* (*Ann.* 1.39.1), *furantes* (*Ann.* 1.40.2), and *furentibus* (*Ann.* 1.42.1).

and, in contrast with them, the two addresses of Germanicus to his troops (*Ann.* 1.39.5–6; 1.42–43) form a symmetry. Drusus' remarks to his soldiers in Pannonia and the grievances of the Roman soldiers in Germany form another symmetrical pattern since all are reported in *oratio obliqua*. However, despite this creation of patterns of similarity between the two rebellions and the fair presentation of both the generals' and the soldiers' views, there are some important differences in the accounts of the two mutinies. Tacitus' Stoic outlook helps to interpret the actions of the generals in each case.

Pannonian revolt	German revolt
1. disorder of soldiers	1. disorder of soldiers
2. commanders uncertain	2. rational response of Germanicus
3. suicide offer of Blaesus	3. soldiers offer empire
4. rational speech of Blaesus	4. suicide offer of Germanicus
5. soldiers respond temporarily	5. soldiers respond temporarily
6. soldiers disorderly	6. Germanicus meets with advisors
7. Drusus reads letter	7. Germanicus disregards Rome
8. Drusus defers to Rome	8. Germanicus writes letter
9. soldiers angry	9. soldiers respond to reason
10. eclipse	10. soldiers worry/disorder
11. speech of Drusus/writes letter	11. rational speech of Germanicus
12. soldiers respond	12. soldiers respond
13. Drusus meets with advisors	13. soldiers respond to Agrippina
14. Drusus punishes soldiers	14. soldiers punish themselves
15. soldiers punish themselves	15. Germanicus enacts reforms
16. general massacre	16. some ringleaders killed
17. Drusus disregards Rome	17. general massacre

Both mutinies are characterized by disorder; however, in both the soldiers usually respond, at least momentarily, to some rational offer, either of a delegation to Rome, or of actual concessions, or of an appeal to their patriotism. The behavior of the soldiers is somewhat similar throughout—alternation between panic and temporary calm. Likewise, the two sons of Tiberius do not act in widely different ways, since their potential responses are somewhat limited (promises, concessions, punishments). Both generals must punish some men, but both attempt to rely more on persuasion. Both are ultimately successful in restoring order. Even if Germanicus is criticized because the soldiers “held” his family (*Ann.* 1.41–43),⁴³ Drusus may also be considered to have been held prisoner. Tacitus allows the officers to use the word “besieged” of him (*filium imperatoris obsidebimus*, 1.28.4).⁴⁴

⁴³The difference between Germanicus and Drusus in terms of military campaigns and maturity is made quite clear later, after Germanicus' successes in Germany (*Ann.* 2.42–43).

⁴⁴Hurley 1989: 319. Cf. *velit in urbe victa facies* (*Ann.* 1.41.1).

On the other hand, there are some important contrasts between the two generals.⁴⁵ Drusus is more dutiful towards Rome; Germanicus, although loyal, appears more concerned with keeping his soldiers' goodwill. Both are uncertain what to do when confronted by mutiny and try several options; however, Drusus is more hesitant at first, while Germanicus is decisive. Drusus at first relies upon Tiberius' letter (*Ann.* 1.25.2) and later writes to Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.29.1); Germanicus writes a letter purporting to be from Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.36.3). Both Drusus and Germanicus consult with advisors, but those of Germanicus are not named. Drusus, however, is accompanied by the very powerful figure of Sejanus and a number of other staff who may be in charge of final decisions (*rector iuveni et ceteris periculorum praemiorumque ostentator*, 1.24.2). But are these differences significant? Germanicus is similarly assisted by his formidable wife, Agrippina, who is said by Tacitus to have suppressed a mutiny that the emperor's signature had failed to check (*Ann.* 1.69.5) and who may very well have been Sejanus' equal. Perhaps the most important difference is found in the character of the two generals: Drusus is "no orator" (*Ann.* 1.29.1), and Germanicus is noted for lengthy speeches (*Ann.* 1.39, 40–43); Drusus is quick to be harsh (*promptum ad asperiora ingenium Druso erat*, 1.29.4), and Germanicus noted for his mildness (*Ann.* 1.33.2; also 2.55.3–5, 2.57.2–4, 2.72.2). Yet it is difficult to interpret these remarks as favoring one over the other: the general Corbulo, described by Tacitus later in only the most favorable terms, is both remarkable for his eloquence (*Ann.* 13.8) and his harshness (*Ann.* 11.18). It is safe to say that although Ross (1973: 215–216) attacks Germanicus for acting disgracefully and contrasts him with Drusus, and Shotter (1968: 199) says that Tacitus shows how ineffective Germanicus is, Germanicus' options and decisions are hardly different from those of Blaesus and Drusus; they are just more extreme: more concessions, more sympathy, and more violent punishments, as befits a more volatile and dangerous situation.

Tacitus' Stoic outlook and the comparison of the order of events in each situation suggest that judgement of the relative merits of the actions of the two generals should be based on their rationality, effectiveness, ability to retain control, and timing. From this perspective, Tacitus might find fault with a number of the actions by officers in Pannonia. For example, Blaesus' offer of suicide was ineffectual and appears to be ill-timed since it came not at a moment of climactic confrontation (as is usual for such actions) but when the soldiers were not paying attention and it produced no response. Likewise, the first speech of Drusus was neither forceful nor conciliatory enough and had no effect. What is more, the generals in Pannonia are frequently uncertain about what response they should make, and their delay in responding contributes to confusion among the soldiers. Drusus does not consult with his staff until after the mutiny has ended—a deplorable indication of lack of planning. Drusus' officers encourage

⁴⁵ So Furneaux 1896: 219, n. 2.

the soldiers to be suspicious of each other (*Ann.* 1.28.5–6), which is not good policy and is damaging to morale and to military effectiveness. Drusus makes no reforms, neither changing the centurions nor altering other areas in order to improve performance; and his departure from camp without waiting for the reply from the senate demonstrates that he had no interest in the soldiers' legitimate grievances. When Drusus permits extreme punishment to be carried out in a haphazard manner after the mutiny is concluded, this only serves to create more disorder and misery. This killing is unnecessary and excessive since the Pannonian mutiny has already been suppressed. One cannot help but wonder why Drusus allowed so many of his own men, whom he would eventually need in the field, to be sacrificed needlessly in this manner. Although his aim was to frighten the men in order to dissuade them from further agitation, Drusus had already executed the two ringleaders and he had the example before him of Blaesus, whose punishment of several soldiers had only led to more uproar (*Ann.* 1.21). Perhaps Sejanus played a role in all this and inhibited Drusus,⁴⁶ who was inordinately fond of bloodshed (*sanguine nimis gaudens*, 1.76.3), from more extreme action earlier in the mutiny.

On the other hand, based on the same criteria, Germanicus is presented in a slightly better light than Drusus. In the German mutiny, Germanicus is more calm and capable, always using reason or a well-thought-out response to settle his soldiers. Germanicus takes more decisive actions, such as quickly confronting the mutinous men and immediately meeting with his advisors. Tacitus emphasizes that Germanicus differs from Drusus in consulting with his officers earlier about possible actions; Drusus only consults after the eclipse and the mutiny have ended and only punishment remains (*Ann.* 1.29.3–4). Germanicus also moves rapidly with his offer of concessions and enacts some important reforms. Germanicus faced greater difficulties. He was confronted with the threat of enemy attack and had to deal with more than the two ringleaders who faced Drusus. These problems made Germanicus' situation the more difficult to resolve,⁴⁷ and so he may be considered to have displayed greater capabilities in achieving success. Thus in the areas of decisiveness, timing, rational planning, and effectiveness at restoring order without destroying goodwill or morale Germanicus surpasses Drusus. When Germanicus allows his soldiers to punish themselves, his action differs from the punishments in Pannonia. Since the punishment is characterized by rudimentary trials conducted on the spot by the soldiers, it more organized and does not contribute to more panic (which is important from a Stoic perspective). However, the soldiers delight in the slaughter (*gaudebat caedibus miles*, 1.44.3) and Germanicus does display some weakness in permitting it. What is more, the last incident, when Germanicus orders the general massacre among the only two

⁴⁶ Sejanus was, after all, the nephew of Blaesus.

⁴⁷ Tacitus emphasizes this contrast between the mutinies. Dio (57.5.1) mentions only the death of Augustus as the cause for the revolt in Pannonia. He also does not include the two rebel leaders and speaks only of the mutiny of the soldiers as a whole (Kajanto 1970: 706–707).

still hostile legions, is questionable and troubling. Although this action might be excused as last-minute discipline, motivated by fear of Tiberius and postponed until absolutely necessary, Tacitus' grim summary of the massacre indicates his disapproval (*Ann.* 1.49).

The fact that Germanicus does not take advantage of the German rebellion to advance himself suggests that the wishes of the Roman populace might have been different from Germanicus' ambitions. At the time of the mutiny Germanicus is quite willing to ignore an opportunity to overthrow Tiberius and possibly to restore the republic. Although Germanicus takes upon himself the authority of the senate and emperor without the power to do so, he keeps his oath of allegiance to Tiberius. At the same time, Germanicus' preoccupation with his popularity among the troops, which is evidenced by his sympathy for the rebels and reluctance to punish them, and his willingness to make use of his popularity on occasion for his own advantage suggest that he might have threatened Tiberius in the future if the chance arose. Augustus had contented himself with tribunician authority, only gradually gathering power, and had been careful to conciliate the army by gratuities (*Ann.* 1.2). According to Tacitus, Augustus had found it necessary to use violence in a few situations so that there might be general order (*pauca admodum vi tractata quo ceteris quies esset*, 1.9.5). Augustus' critics asserted that because of his lust for power, he used filial duty and the critical position of the state as a cloak for his own ambitions, merely affecting a leaning to the Pompeian side (*Ann.* 1.10). In this context, Germanicus' republican reputation, his filial fidelity, his refusal of supreme command, his generosity to his soldiers, and his punishment of "a few" so that the rest might fall into line take on an Augustan tinge and contribute another possible motive to Germanicus' actions. The German revolt might have been Germanicus' "practice run" for a later imperial coup. Tiberius certainly recognizes this since he later becomes nervous at Agrippina's attentions to the army (*non enim simplicis eas curas, nec adversus externos [studia] militum quaeri*, 1.69.3-4). When Tiberius later learns of Germanicus' military successes, he seeks pretexts to get rid of Germanicus (*Ann.* 2.42.1), not only because of jealousy (*Ann.* 2.26.5), but because he fears Germanicus' popularity with the army (*Ann.* 1.69.3-4); and he deprives Germanicus of final victory in Germany because of jealousy (*Ann.* 2.26.4). Thus, of the two generals, Germanicus ends up at the conclusion of the German mutiny as the more powerful, the more successful, the more popular with his men, and ultimately, the greater threat to Tiberius.

AMMIANUS MARCELLINUS (*RES GESTAE* 20.4.9-20.5.7; 24.3.1-8)

Two remarkably similar rebellions are described in the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus as occurring in A.D. 360 and 363, some three hundred years after those recorded by Tacitus. The Caesar Julian is confronted in Gaul by mutinous legions who insist on remaining in their native land with Julian as their leader and who ultimately create him Augustus in order to achieve this. Later, Julian

defuses grumbling among his troops in Assyria, which has the potential for mutiny. As in Tacitus' *Annals*, these two situations provide character sketches of the general Julian: his motives, behavior with his men, and his reactions to crisis. Ammianus appears to have created specific parallels between the narrative organization and the details of the events recorded by Tacitus and his own two more terse recollections. The first mutiny of Julian's troops in Gaul may be compared to the revolt of Germanicus' legions in Germany, while the dissent in Assyria has similarities primarily to the Pannonian revolt.

Ammianus was a highly learned and allusive author. Elements of many other historians and poets, both Roman and Greek, are found scattered through his history. The influence of Tacitus in particular upon his writings has long been recognized, and the existence of some similarities between the only two mutinies found in the *Annals* and the single pair that are mentioned in the *Res Gestae* should not be surprising.⁴⁸ This does not mean that Ammianus distorted all of his information for a literary/dramatic effect. However, Ammianus may have permitted himself considerable license, especially in regard to the details of the second mutiny. Ammianus, who was present on Julian's Persian campaign, appears to have made use of very little other written contemporary information about the campaign.⁴⁹ The whole Persian expedition happened so far from the eyes of Rome that the facts would not have been readily available or confirmable. Therefore, there was room for Ammianus to develop his version of one minor incident so that it incorporated the literary style of Tacitus and contained references to him. Also, in the case of the *adlocutiones*, both in Assyria (Amm. Marc. 24.3.5) and elsewhere, it was accepted historical practice to put words into the mouth of a general which may never have been actually spoken.⁵⁰ So the second mutiny may particularly be considered to have been modeled upon both of the revolts in the *Annals*.

The situation for the first mutiny is quite different. It is not just Ammianus who reports how Julian came to be emperor; several other historians also describe the same situation,⁵¹ a momentous event in an extraordinary century. Even Julian himself felt the need to provide his own version. Bowersock (1978: 49) points out that although Ammianus was not actually on the scene in Gaul, he had access to first-hand information as did many others. Yet, even if the general story and motivations would have been known to many and Ammianus was compelled to include some of the main points found in the account of Julian himself and others, Ammianus still appears to have excelled in his literary adaptation of those facts and in his creation of the scene. The Tacitean allusions do exist, frequently in

⁴⁸ Blockley (1973) gives other scholarship on the subject. However, this does not pertain to the mutinies.

⁴⁹ See Matthews 1989: 161-175.

⁵⁰ See Blockley 1973: 73.

⁵¹ Libanius (*Orat.* 12.59, 13.33, 18.97); Julian (*Letter to the Athenians* 283-284C); Zosimus (3.9.1-2); Eunapius (*VS* 7.3.8).

connection with incidents not reported in other sources, and they contribute to the color and excitement of the passage.

Similarities between the styles of Tacitus and Ammianus have been discussed by Auerbach (1953: 52–53, 57–60), who compares the Pannonian mutiny with Ammianus' account of a riot in Rome.⁵² In the course of this discussion Auerbach (1953: 53) also finds some similarities between Tacitus' account of the Pannonian mutiny and Ammianus' report of that in Gaul. Auerbach (1953: 52) comments in another connection that Ammianus is less inclined "to concern himself with objective problems and to give a thorough analysis of the causes" than Tacitus. Tacitus acknowledges that the soldiers in Pannonia possess a rational set of demands to which the commanders and authorities must respond and about which they negotiate. He also depicts the soldiers as humans "with a definite sense of honor." Auerbach (1953: 52–53) finds, however, that Ammianus depicts no human or rational relationship between the rebels and the authorities, he makes no attempt to present the lives of ordinary people as either interesting or human, and he never lets the populace talk. These differences between Tacitus and Ammianus are important and must be kept in mind when comparing the accounts of mutiny in the two authors.

Auerbach (1953: 56) finds a strong Stoic influence in both Tacitus and Ammianus, but other scholars have noted a certain ambiguity about the extent of Stoic thought in Ammianus' *Res Gestae*.⁵³ Therefore, the Stoic model of Germanicus in Tacitus' *Annals* provides an interesting basis for analysis of the actions of Julian. Julian, as a traditionalist, may be considered to embrace Stoic principles and any departure from those principles will be significant. However, Julian, despite his attempts to follow tradition, does not fare well in the *Res Gestae* if he is interpreted from a traditional and Stoic perspective. The Stoic model of Germanicus when it is applied to the character and actions of Julian in the *Res Gestae* opens up numerous questions about Ammianus' view of Julian. If Ammianus presents Julian in a positive manner, then Ammianus' definition of virtue and excellence is far different from that of his predecessors.

Mutiny in Gaul (Amm. Marc. 20.4.9–20.5.7)

Ammianus describes the revolt in Gaul with a Tacitean terseness and vividness. When Constantius orders Julian's legions to report to the east, the prefect fears mutiny (*motusque militares*, 20.4.9). Julian, deprived of counsellors, calls out his soldiers and orders them to depart for the east. Then a pamphlet of grievances is thrown among them, inciting them further (20.4.10).⁵⁴ Julian gives the soldiers no orders about the route that they should take, and so they decide, after long hesitation (*ambigeretur diutius*), to proceed by way of Paris, where Julian is staying

⁵² This is also noted by Miller (1969: 112) and Blockley (1973: 74–75), who notes the change in moral outlook between Tacitus and Ammianus.

⁵³ E.g., Matthews 1989: 429–431.

⁵⁴ This letter is also mentioned by Julian (*Letter to the Athenians* 283B) and Zosimus (3.9.1).

(20.4.11). There he speaks to his men, praising them, promising rewards, and inviting the officers to dinner (20.4.12–13).⁵⁵ As a result of this the men appear consoled and quiet, but at night they break out into open revolt. They turn to arms, surround the palace, and hail Julian as Augustus (20.4.14).

At dawn Julian addresses his soldiers, refusing the honor. He entreats the legions to do nothing rash and quiets them with mild words (20.4.15). He then promises to grant their demand to stay in their native land and says that he will justify this to the Augustus, who is willing to listen to reason (*capacem rationis*, 20.4.16). When the shouts continue, the Caesar consents to their wish. He is raised on a shield in the manner of a German chieftain and hailed as Augustus (20.4.17).⁵⁶ Ammianus says that Julian, because he perceived that he would be in imminent danger if he continued to resist, accepted the promotion and promised each man five gold *aurei* and a pound of silver (20.4.18).⁵⁷ Julian afterwards withdrew into seclusion (*ad latebras secessisset occultas*, 20.4.20).

But then one of the decurions of the palace hastens to the camp of the Petulantes and Celts, crying out that Julian had been killed (20.4.20). The soldiers become excited by the news, rush about in disorder, and fill the palace; the guards become fearful and flee (20.4.21). The men calm down, but refuse to leave until they see the emperor safe and dressed splendidly in the royal purple (*non antea discesserunt, quam adsciti in consistorium fulgentem eum augusto habitu conspexissent*, 20.4.22). A short time later (20.5.1–5), Julian addresses his troops with a lengthy *adlocutio* in which he declares that he is now Augustus and attempts to appease his men further by asserting, ironically, that no promotions will be granted which are undeserved (20.5.7).

This situation contains many elements that are remarkably similar to those which comprise the mutiny of Germanicus' troops in Germany in Tacitus' *Annals*;⁵⁸ however, the order of events and the response of Julian differ in several respects. Both Germanicus and Julian are the only potential challengers to their emperors, based on their family ties, popularity, commands of legions, and the political desires of their soldiers. Germanicus' legions in Germany and Julian's in Gaul are strongly loyal to their respective Caesars and in each case identify themselves with their general. Both Germanicus and Julian campaign in areas previously pacified by Tiberius and Constantius II, and both become so successful in their military campaigns that their respective emperors become jealous and seek ways of removing the generals from their armies (*Ann.* 2.26.4–5; *Amm. Marc.* 20.4.1–2).⁵⁹ The soldiers in each situation, although their grievances differ, feel

⁵⁵ The dinner is mentioned by Zosimus (3.9.1), and is possibly derived from Eunapius (Bowersock 1978: 50), but is not mentioned by Julian in his *Letter to the Athenians*. It is interesting that Ammianus (14.6) singles out dinner parties in Rome as an example of the city's licentiousness.

⁵⁶ Zosimus (3.9.2) also reports the shield.

⁵⁷ Libanius says that Julian gave no donatives (*Orat.* 18.100).

⁵⁸ Noted by Szidat (1977: *ad* 20.4.1) without elaboration.

⁵⁹ Germanicus' successes come after the mutiny, Julian's before.

that they have genuine cause for complaint and look to their generals for help against Rome or Milan. In each situation the soldiers' discontent is provoked and encouraged by agitators who are not identified. Both Germanicus and Julian are concerned about their soldiers' welfare: Germanicus grants their demands and Julian, before the mutiny, insists that his men should suffer no inconvenience (*illi nullas paterentur molestias*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.4). Julian also finds his men's complaints reasonable (*rationabiles querelas*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.11).⁶⁰ Germanicus and Julian impress their men by personal kindness (*Ann.* 1.71.2–3; Amm. Marc. 20.20.4.12) and both encourage their soldiers' loyalty to the emperor. Both Germanicus and Julian worry about the close proximity of the barbarian tribes (*Ann.* 1.36.2; Amm. Marc. 20.4.6). Both decide to grant their soldiers' demands after they are offered the position of emperor (*Ann.* 1.36; Amm. Marc. 20.4.16). And in both cases mutiny arises after a relaxation of discipline: in Germany because of the death of Augustus, in Gaul because Julian neglects to tell his troops in which direction to march.

There are in addition some verbal similarities between the two passages. These are found in contexts that also are parallel, although the words themselves might be expected to be common in such situations. Julian mentions his soldiers' victories and rebukes unseemliness (*aliquid indecorum*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.15). Germanicus reminds his men of their victories under Tiberius (*Ann.* 1.34.4; 1.42.3), wonders where discipline has gone (*ubi veteris disciplinae decus*, *Ann.* 1.35.1), and faults the dishonor they are causing (*quantum dedecoris*, *Ann.* 1.39.6). The soldiers in each case shout terribly (*atrocissimus veteranorum clamor oriebatur*, *Ann.* 1.35.2; *horrendis clamoribus concrepabant*, 20.4.14, *conclamabatur*, 20.4.17).⁶¹ Julian's prefect fears revolt (*motusque militares*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.9); Germanicus' soldiers do rebel (*inplacabilis motus*, *Ann.* 1.32.3; *intumescente motu*, *Ann.* 1.38.2). When the soldiers burst in upon the generals, the palace guards in Gaul are afraid of the soldiers (*metu mortis*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.21) and in Germany Germanicus fears for his life (*intento mortis metu*, *Ann.* 1.39.4).

However, Germanicus responds immediately to the turmoil in Germany by addressing his soldiers. When Julian's troops become rebellious, his first response is to ignore the situation and then to speak to them reasonably and to invite the officers to dinner. When the men realize that they are being ignored, they take up arms and rush to surround the palace, just as Germanicus' troops first besieged Germanicus and then later attacked the consular Munatius Plancus. They also offer to make Julian emperor, just as Germanicus' troops do, and Julian likewise declines. Julian, like Germanicus, agrees to the soldiers' demands without consulting the emperor (Amm. Marc. 20.4.16). Unlike Germanicus, however, Julian does not go away at first and think about the rebellion, consulting with

⁶⁰ Boeft, Hengst, and Teitler (1987: 4.11) do not accept the predicate accusative here, but Julian does sympathize with his soldiers' demands.

⁶¹ Also in Pannonia: *atrox clamor* (*Ann.* 1.25.2).

his advisors (Ammianus [20.4.9] makes it explicitly clear at the start that Julian had no advisors), nor does he mention any possible appeal to Constantius to his soldiers before they revolt openly. Julian, when hailed as Augustus, also does not make the gesture of offering to kill himself as Blaesus and Germanicus did. Instead, he immediately accedes to the demands of his legions, allowing himself to be made Augustus on the spot and offering them money in addition. Concessions and donatives are granted at the very first moment of rebellion. A document also comes into play, but this time it is intended to incite rather than to calm.⁶² And in both situations the soldiers burst in upon the commander's quarters at night, awaken the sleeping general, and demand to see something, either him or the standard.⁶³

Points of Comparison:

	Tacitus	Ammianus
pamphlet incites or letter appeases troops	1.36.3	20.4.10
soldiers offer Caesar the throne	1.35.3–4	20.4.14
refusal or acceptance of Caesar	1.35.4–5	20.4.17
Caesar/Augustus hurried out of sight	1.35.5	20.4.20
concessions/donative granted	1.36	20.4.16–18
rumor/offer of death of general	1.35.4	20.4.20
troops burst into general's household	1.39.3	20.4.21
troops demand to see standard/general	1.39.3–4	20.4.22
<i>adlocutiones</i>	1.39.5–6; 1.42–43	20.5.1–7

Many of these Tacitian reminiscences are not found in the other sources that describe the ascension of Julian: the lack of advisors for the Caesar (Julian [*Letter to the Athenians* 283B–C] says that he consulted with them), the granting of a donative,⁶⁴ the hiding away of the general, Julian's fear for his life, the soldiers' breaking into the palace after Julian was made Augustus,⁶⁵ the words of Julian in his speech to his troops,⁶⁶ and especially, the rumor of Julian's death. These all suggest that Ammianus had the model of Germanicus in mind and possibly adapted his text accordingly.

Ammianus says that Julian accepted the position of Augustus because of the threat of danger to himself, but Julian certainly does not appear inclined to protest

⁶² Zosimus (3.9.1) says that there were several pamphlets spread by officers.

⁶³ In Tacitus' *Histories* soldiers also rush to a Palace and burst in, interrupting Otho at a banquet. But he pleads with them and the mutiny settles itself (*Hist.* 1.80–82).

⁶⁴ Not mentioned by Julian and denied by Libanius (*Orat.* 18.100).

⁶⁵ Reported by Libanius (*Orat.* 18.98–99), who, however, says that after the soldiers broke in, Julian was seized, dragged forth to the platform, and then crowned.

⁶⁶ Ammianus says that Julian promised no undeserved promotions; but Libanius (*Orat.* 18.100) says that Julian ordered that those who opposed the coup not be punished.

too much about becoming emperor.⁶⁷ This may be because Julian agreed with the legions' demands. He himself would be severely weakened if he allowed Constantius to take away his forces. Perhaps for this reason he does not make the gesture of suicide. He is afraid that it might succeed in quieting the men. It is interesting that the mere rumor of Julian's death is enough to excite and upset the troops who obviously do not want him dead. What might have happened if Julian had threatened to kill himself? There also is a suggestion that Julian is not behaving in the standard manner for a Roman general or a Caesar. Should he prefer treason to possible danger to himself? This is a significant contrast between Julian and Germanicus, both of whom are popular with their soldiers and are faced with the possibility of seizing power. Julian does not offer suicide, nor does he attempt to calm the legions through words, nor does he risk danger by refusing his troops' wishes, although the men fear his death. Instead, he immediately grants the soldiers demands and then offers to pay them. Julian's longer, formal address to his soldiers is not designed, as Germanicus' was, to encourage the soldiers' loyalty to the emperor. It comes only at the conclusion of the mutiny and serves rather to reassure the legions that it is Julian who is now Augustus. There are also Virgilian echoes, as there were in Germanicus' speech to his soldiers, but here they work to the detriment of Julian, whose withdrawal into hiding (*ad latebras secessisset occultas*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.20) is described in language similar to which Virgil uses of the treacherous Greek soldiers hiding in the Trojan horse (*aut hoc inclusi ligno occultantur Achivi*, Aen. 2.45; *Argolicas foedare latebras*, Aen. 2.55). Germanicus was comparable to Aeneas in controlling the *furor* of his soldiers. The emphasis in Ammianus, however, is not on the *furor* of the legions but on the possibly deceptive control of their actions by Julian.

In Ammianus' account there is the same contrast between *ira* and *ratio* as in Tacitus. Julian rebukes his soldiers' rashness, folly (*temeritas et prolapsio, discordiarum materias*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.15), and anger (*cesset ira*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.16). Germanicus faults the legions' discord (*nil usque turbidum aut discors*, Ann. 1.34.4) and the anger of the gods (*deum ira*, Ann. 1.39.6), and complains of the soldiers' madness (*fatalem increpans rabiem*, Ann. 1.39.6; *in rabiem prolapsus est*, Ann. 1.31.3). In Tacitus' narrative, decisiveness, timing, rationality, and the ability to retain control are the deciding factors in Germanicus' success. However, in Ammianus' account, although Julian never appears to lose either his control of his troops (i.e., so that they no longer respect him), or his own ability to make reasoned and quick decisions, these decisions are either ill-timed or ineffectual, if they are designed to suppress the mutiny. Julian's delay in responding, his hesitation about appealing to Rome, his refusal to confront his soldiers, his lack of deliberation about possible actions, and his quick acceptance of the position

⁶⁷ Matthews (1989: 98–99) says that the situation as a whole, and the dinner party in particular, hints at a conspiracy, and Eunapius mentions plotting (frg. 21.1 = VS 7.3.8). Julian (*Letter to the Athenians* 284C) says that Zeus gave him a sign to assent.

of Augustus are a complete reversal of Germanicus' successful actions. The only *ratio* in this situation is ascribed to the complaints of the soldiers (*rationabiles querelas*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.11) and the clemency of Constantius (*capacem rationis*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.16), while the soldiers' *ambiguum* (a favorite Tacitean term)⁶⁸ is caused by Julian's lack of direction (*ambigeretur diutius*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.11). This suggests that Julian was either completely ignorant about how to command, or that he acted not to suppress, but to encourage the mutiny. Since Julian, unlike Germanicus, was a professional and very experienced soldier who had concluded numerous victories in Gaul, it is unlikely that he did not know what he was doing. But Julian is reported to have carefully considered the situation only before the mutiny took place (*perque varias curas animum versans attente negotium tractare oportere censebat*, Amm. Marc. 20.4.6). The entire mutiny in Gaul appears to have been carefully orchestrated.⁶⁹ And it is significant that the views of the soldiers are only expressed in detail in the contents of the anonymous letter (Amm. Marc. 20.4.10). This incident belongs to the Caesar completely.

Dissent in Assyria (Amm. Marc. 24.3.1–8)

Later, in the course of Julian's campaigns in the East, another conflict arises. Immediately after the dramatically successful siege and capture of the city of Pirisabora in Assyria, three squadrons of Roman cavalry are attacked. One tribune is killed and the panic-stricken forces allow one standard to be carried off (24.3.1). Julian, aroused to great anger (*concitus ira immani*, 24.3.2), hastens to camp and orders two tribunes punished with discharge for failing in their duty to defend the standards and ten of those who fled executed (24.3.2). He then addresses his assembled troops, thanking them for their efforts and promising each man one hundred pieces of silver. But when he perceives that the smallness of the sum has excited a mutinous uproar (*cum eos parvitate promissi percitos tumultuare sensisset*, 24.3.3), he addresses them again. Julian now promises his legions Persian booty if they follow him and act with moderation; he explains to his troops that he has no money of his own with which to pay them and that the imperial treasury is exhausted (24.3.4–6). He also declares that if they do not agree to support him, he will die on his feet (*moriar stando*) or will abdicate (24.3.7). The soldiers are quieted and promise to obey; and they praise his leadership (24.3.8).

This incident, which is not mentioned by Zosimus,⁷⁰ may be compared to both mutinies in Book 1 of the *Annals*, although it is the Pannonian mutiny which it

⁶⁸ *Ann.* 1.16.3; 1.31.3.

⁶⁹ Auerbach (1953: 53) finds that the "scene is highly suspicious; it seems to deal, not with a spontaneous reaction on the part of the soldiers but with a planned mass demonstration in which the instincts of the soldiery are skilfully exploited in a way we know only too well from contemporary history." However, Boeft, Hengst, and Teitler (1987: 4.10) insist that Ammianus places all responsibility on Constantius and makes the events seem to be spontaneous.

⁷⁰ Zosimus (3.19.1–2) says that the Persian raid killed one of three leaders and some men and that the Persians caused the rest to flee and gained one standard. At this, Julian became angry, attacked and routed the Persians, took back the standard, and burned a town. Julian also released the leader

most closely resembles. Here again there are similarities to a Tacitean episode; each previous element is found here, yet the order of events is reversed. In Pannonia disorder breaks out because of desires of the soldiers and their grievances are reported in detail through the speeches of Percennius and Vibulenus. In response, Blaesus offers to kill himself and then says he will send to Rome about the soldiers' demands. Near the end of the mutiny, the legions are told that the leaders of the mutiny have no money to grant concessions to the soldiers. Drusus sends to Rome, deliberates about punishments, and then executes the two leaders of the rebellion. Finally, the troops punish themselves, creating panic and widespread killing. In Ammianus, on the other hand, there is no mutiny at first. Two of the Roman tribunes are punished and ten men are executed by Julian because they are defeated by the enemy. There is no deliberation about this action and the punishment is swiftly carried out. Then Julian grants money to the men, presumably as a donative after their victory at Pirisabora (Amm. Marc. 24.3.3). However, coming when it does, the gift appears to occur for no other reason than because they have been defeated and are presumably demoralized. But when the soldiers grumble at the small size of the amount, Julian, in order to avoid rebellion, offers them booty from elsewhere and excuses himself by saying that neither he nor the treasury has any money to pay the men. Julian concludes his address by declaring that if the men do not support him, he will die on his feet or abdicate. What this means is not clear—possibly that he will allow his troops to kill him if they are displeased. This would be suicide in any case, even if Julian does not mean that he will kill himself. But the declaration, whatever it means, loses some of its impact and excitement by the qualification “or abdicate.” Such an either/or declaration can hardly be expected to rouse vigorously the men who are stuck in the middle of Assyria. Nevertheless, Julian's men continue to follow him, at least for a short time.

Points of Comparison:

Tacitus		Ammianus	
general offers suicide	1.18.3	two soldiers punished	24.3.2
concessions granted	1.19.4–5	ten soldiers executed	24.3.2
no money for soldiers	1.28.4	money granted	24.3.3
Drusus sends to Rome	1.29.1–2	no money for soldiers	24.3.4–6
two soldiers executed	1.29.4	Persian booty	24.3.4
general slaughter	1.30	general offers suicide	24.3.7

When this episode is further compared to the Pannonian mutiny, one notices the odd points of intersection. Both Tacitus' rebel leaders and Ammianus' Julian

of the scouts from his commission and held him and his companions in dishonor for their flight. Zosimus mentions no mutiny or mass execution.

lack money. In both situations two Roman soldiers are punished and others killed because of treachery; however, Drusus waits until the mutiny is ended, while Julian kills before it begins. The rebel leaders in the *Annals* look to Rome for financial gain; Julian tells his men to go to Persia for booty—both sites are far away. And Julian's ambiguous offer to end his life corresponds to a certain extent to Blaesus' (and Germanicus') more emphatic declarations. In neither case are the generals concerned about anything other than the discipline of the soldiers. Both resort to indiscriminate killing at a moment when it is unnecessary. In both situations punishment only serves to create more disorder and uncertainty, and both generals unreasonably sacrifice men whom they will later need in the field. One major difference is that Julian grants money even before there is rebellion, while Drusus grants little or nothing. Another is that Drusus first says that he must consult his father, while Julian emphasizes his lack of family connections (Amm. Marc. 24.4.5). Most importantly, in Assyria it is the general Julian, not his soldiers, who is driven by anger, whereas in Pannonia anger motivates the soldiers' rebellion.

Points of Ammianus' narrative also strongly recall Tacitus' account of the German mutiny and contrast with it. The punishment of the soldiers who failed to defend their standards uneasily calls to mind an incident from the German mutiny in the *Annals*, when the consular Munatius Plancus is attacked by the troops, is injured and nearly killed, and seeks sanctuary among the eagles and standards where he was protected. Otherwise, says Tacitus, he would have stained an altar with his blood, a rare thing, even among enemies (*rarum etiam inter hostis, legatus populi Romani in castris sanguine suo altaria deum commaculavisset*, Ann. 1.39.4–5). It is Julian, however, who figuratively does stain the eagles and standards with the blood of his men when he randomly executes some of them for failing in their duty and the loss of one standard. In the first case, the many pursue the one to the standards because of their *fatalis rabies* and *ira* (Ann. 1.39.6); in the second instance, one general, driven by anger (*concitus ira immani*, Amm. Marc. 24.3.2), kills many non-mutinous soldiers on account of the loss of a standard in battle. In addition, Germanicus is able to make some of his legions swear an oath of allegiance to Tiberius (*legiones nihil cunctatas sacramento adigit*, Ann. 1.37.3); Julian instead releases his tribunes from their oath (*residuos duos tribunos sacramento solvit*, Amm. Marc. 24.3.2).

The most important difference, however, between Tacitus' two accounts and the actions of Julian is that Julian does not punish any soldiers for their open rebellion in Gaul, yet he reacts extremely viciously to the defeat of a small group of cavalry in a minor skirmish that occurs immediately after a great, hard-fought, and supremely important victory.⁷¹ How shocking it must have been for the soldiers to

⁷¹This punishment comes close to decimation since it involves ten men out of ninety or one hundred. Decimation was quite unusual during the Empire (Watson 1969: 119–120; Tac. *Hist.* 1.31; Suet. *Galba* 12.2). Browning (1976: 201) comments, "The punishment seems to have been

have some of their own number executed by their general for cowardice as his first action after their sack of the city of Pirisabora. There are no rewards, no thanks, no time to rest until after the defeat and the executions (Amm. Marc. 24.3.3; 24.3.8–9). Ammianus emphasizes this by remarking again upon the burning of the city—*incensa denique urbe (ut memoratum est)*, Amm. Marc. 24.3.3—just after mentioning the punishment of the men. Is it any wonder that Julian dies a short time afterwards (Amm. Marc. 25.3.6), possibly by the hand of one of his own men?⁷²

If timing was all important for interpretation of the actions of the generals in Pannonia and Germany, then comparison first between Julian's two responses in Gaul and in Assyria, and then between the Tacitean situations and Julian's actions in Assyria points out interesting questions. Although each individual action which Julian performs in Gaul and in Assyria may be found in Tacitus' accounts, each is performed at an unusual moment. One might even suppose that Julian's actions in Gaul, taken in the order in which they occur, might be applied with more suitable results to the incident in Assyria, while those actions in Assyria, again retained in the same order, might more profitably be applied to the situation in Gaul. A decisive response, a refusal to reward mutinous men, and an offer of suicide might have stopped the revolt in Gaul immediately. On the other hand, a more moderate or hesitant initial action in Assyria, a mild rebuke of the troops, and an address designed to motivate the soldiers might have been more appropriate for the situation in Assyria, where there was no mutiny at first. But if there was a rational motivation behind Julian's hesitation and immediate acceptance of power in Gaul, there appears to be less of one compelling his actions in Assyria. In fact, if the allusions to the Pannonian mutiny found in Ammianus' account of the incident in Assyria suggest anything, it is that Julian's rationality appears to be seriously suffering, especially since he allows anger and indignation (*ad indignationem plenam gravitatis erectus*, Amm. Marc. 24.3.3) to gain the upper hand. In fact, Julian's entire speech to his men in which he qualifies the power of human rationality (*quantum humana ratio patitur*, Amm. Marc. 24.4.6) is an amazing display of inconsistency bordering on insanity.

An overview of the four mutinies, besides pointing out the marvelous ingenuousness and excitability of the Roman soldier, yields interesting conclusions about the various generals. In his description of Julian Ammianus has relied upon what Pauw (1977: 185–186) calls the "indirect method" of character portrayal, in

unusually severe." Julian follows ancient custom (*secutus veteres leges*, 24.3.2) and the custom was old in Tiberius' day (Ann. 3.20.2). However, see Tac. Ann. 3.20.2: after Decius alone continued to fight while his cohort fled, Lucius Apronius, upset by this disgrace (*dedecore*), ordered the rare punishment of decimation (*raro ea tempestate et e veteri memoria facinore decurum quemque ignominiosae cohortis sorte ductos fusti necat*, Ann. 3.21.1). Also Ann. 13.35, where the man who left the standard paid with his life.

⁷² Libanius (Orat. 24.5–7) says that the soldier who inflicted the fatal blow was a Taïene—neither Roman nor Persian.

which comparison, contrast, and innuendo are of special importance. Although the particulars of each of the four mutinies were somewhat different, the possible options open to each of the generals were similar. It is the choice of response and the behavior of each general in relation to the possible choices and possible behaviors in each individual incident which make an over-all comparison of the narratives interesting. All of the generals want to restore order; all appear to take at least some thought for the welfare of their men. However, all find it necessary to exert their authority and all place their own interests above those of their men. In every case *furor* and *ira* are motivating factors, and the generals usually attempt to impose discipline through rational action. Germanicus appears to have acted in a more praiseworthy manner, based on his rationality, than Drusus did. Germanicus is noteworthy for responding decisively at the appropriate time; Blaesus and Drusus are characterized by poor timing, equivocation, and delay in their handling of their mutiny. If Germanicus' ability to respond correctly and at an appropriate time in various situations may be considered to be a model, then Julian falls short in comparison. Julian, although he hesitates initially in Gaul, is remarkably quick to respond to the offer of power and he punishes immediately in Assyria. But it is not Julian's decisiveness that is questionable; rather it is when that decisiveness is applied. Julian is too quick and acts inappropriately. Furthermore, Germanicus is reluctant to yield authority to his soldiers, although he sympathizes with them, and is willing to try many options in order to resolve the mutiny. Julian makes no attempt to appease his men in Gaul and only yields to them in order to increase his own power. Germanicus is willing to enact genuine reforms; Julian, once he has attained power, is concerned more with discipline than morale. Germanicus' punishment of the still hostile portion of his men comes at the conclusion of mutiny, perhaps because of fear of Tiberius. Julian does not punish mutiny; instead he immediately decimates his own cohort because of defeat in battle. It is the timing and appropriateness of action and the concern for the soldiers that distinguishes the two generals and gives preference to Germanicus. What is more, in Assyria, Julian is not merely ineffectual, as Drusus was, but irrational. Therefore, if Germanicus is the basis for evaluation, Julian does not measure up to him. But the most important, as well as the most obvious, contrast between Julian and Germanicus may be found in their attitudes towards power. Germanicus, whatever his heroism or lack of it, and whatever his motives or ambitions, does decline the offer of the rule of Rome; Julian does not.

The Tacitean allusions in Ammianus' *Res Gestae* make all the actions of Julian appear to be not only unheroic but even deplorable and seriously call into question the supposedly positive portrayal of Julian by Ammianus.⁷³ Since they indicate that Julian became progressively less rational as he campaigned towards the East, Ammianus appears to be less than complimentary in portraying Julian. But the allusions and recollections of Germanicus do even more than this. They help to support the suspicion that Julian conspired to incite a revolt and to become

⁷³ As argued, for example, by Thompson (1966: 146).

Augustus. What is more, one wonders if the Tacitean references mentioned in the description of Julian's ascension to the position of Augustus were included solely by Ammianus for dramatic effect and characterization or whether they are instead a product of the learned, literary emperor Julian's reading. This is, of course, a matter of conjecture. But perhaps Julian, if he did plan a conspiracy, turned to Tacitus' account of Germanicus to learn how to cause a mutiny⁷⁴ and then proceeded to create his own by doing everything that Germanicus did *not* do.

All the same, the modern reader, upon reviewing the four mutinies and the actions of the generals during them, may perhaps find nothing to praise in any of the situations. The pattern, already noted, between Germanicus and Augustus may be extended to Julian's behavior when his two mutinies are considered together and, to some extent, even to Drusus' actions in Pannonia. There is a certain similarity throughout all of the situations since the generals and Augustus progress from uncertainty to conciliation, then to gratification, and finally, to brutal punishment. Initial mildness on the part of the generals/Augustus and seeming regard for the soldiers/people create an atmosphere of security before the unexpected violence which is justified by the necessity of retaining order. In every case the calculated deception of the soldiers, the way in which the soldiers' fears are proved to be justified (e.g., Tiberius does revoke Germanicus' concessions much later), the way in which the generals make use of the rebels rather than punishing all of them, and the mass killing, particularly in the case of Julian, should give the twentieth-century reader pause. According to Tacitus, Augustus' admirers said that he only became leader of Rome because there was "no other remedy for discord" (*non aliud discordantis patriae remedium fuisse quam {ut} ab uno regaretur*, *Ann.* 1.9.4-5). The same justification is given by all of the generals as an excuse for their discipline. The attitude of the Caesars and the generals towards the people and the soldiers is the same in every case. Perhaps the most important similarity between Tacitus and Ammianus is that both are adept at portraying the psychology of despotism.

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⁷⁴In which case, Julian would not have considered Germanicus either inept or unsuccessful.

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