Boudica's Speeches in Tacitus and Dio

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# BOUDICA'S SPEECHES IN TACITUS AND DIO[1]

ABSTRACT: *Some recent scholarship has argued that ancient Roman historians inevitably cast foreigners as inferior and thereby justified Roman imperialism and colonialism. This paper questions this position's validity through an examination of the Boudica orations in Tacitus (*Ann. *14.35.1–2) and Cassius Dio (62.3–6). It argues that both authors present complex portrayals of Boudica and seem at least partially capable of valorizing her complaints against Roman misrule.*

Much recent scholarship on the topic of Roman imperialism has presented a definitive break with views prevalent in the early- to mid-twentieth century. Whereas previously many historians favored positions that highlight the "defensive" character of Roman expansionism,[2] contemporary opinions are often distinctly critical of this outlook.[3] Some of this recent work appears influenced by the spirit, if not the specifics, of postcolonial theory.[4] Yet, even before this new theoretical approach had an impact on the classics, numerous

[1] I would like to thank *CW*'s editor Matthew S. Santirocco and the anonymous referees of *CW* for their valuable criticisms and suggestions, which aided the completion of this paper in its present form. I would also like to thank Mary T. Boatwright, who offered many helpful comments on an earlier draft. All translations are my own. Any errors of fact or judgment are my own.

[2] See, for example, T. Mommsen, *The History of Rome*, vol. 4, tr. W. P. Dixon (New York 1894); T. Frank, "The Import of the Fetial Institution," *CP* 7 (1912) 335–42; M. Holleaux, *Rome, la Grèce et les monarchies hellénistique au IIIe siècle avant J.-C. (273–205)* (Paris 1921); T. Frank, *Roman Imperialism* (New York 1929); E. Badian, *Roman Imperialism in the Late Republic* (Ithaca 1968); R. M. Errington, *The Dawn of Empire: Rome's Rise to World Power* (Ithaca 1972) esp. 3–5. For modern surveys of scholarly approaches to Roman imperialism, see E. Frézouls, "Sur l'historiographie de l'impérialisme romain," *Ktema* 8 (1983) 141–62.

[3] E.g., M. Millett, "Romanization: Historical Issues and Archaeological Interpretation," in T. Blage and M. Millett, eds., *The Early Roman Empire in the West* (Oxford 1990) 35–37; R. Hingley, "Attitudes to Roman Imperialism," in E. Scott, ed., *Theoretical Roman Archaeology: First Conference Proceedings* (Aldershot 1993) 23–27; W. S. Hanson, "Forces of Change and Methods of Control," in D. J. Mattingly, ed., *Dialogues in Roman Imperialism: Power, Discourse, and Discrepant Experience in the Roman Empire* (Portsmouth, R.I., 1997) 67, which labels views on the topic that highlight the "defensive" nature of Roman imperialism "apologist approaches"; D. J. Mattingly, "Introduction: Dialogues of Power and Experience in the Roman Empire," in Mattingly (above) 7–24; J. Webster, "A Negotiated Syncretism: Readings on the Development of Romano-Celtic Religion," in Mattingly (above) 169; G. Fincham, "Writing Colonial Conflict, Acknowledging Colonial Weakness," in G. Davies, A. Gardner, and K. Lockyear, eds., *TRAC 2000: Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference* (Oxford 2001) 25–34.

[4] E.g., P. Freeman, "'Romanization'—'Imperialism': What Are We Talking About?" in K. Meadows, C. Lemke, and J. Heron, eds., *TRAC 96: Proceedings of the Sixth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference* (Oxford 1997) 8–14; C. R. Whittaker, "Imperialism and Culture: The Roman Initiative," in Mattingly (above, n.3); Fincham (above, n.3). For some perceptive comments on the often broad and unspecific influence of postcolonial theory on classicists, see P. Vasunia, "Hellenism and Empire: Reading Edward Said," *Parallax* 9.4 (2003) 88. For a general discussion of postcolonial theory in the context of Roman imperialism, see J. Webster, "Roman Imperialism and the 'Post Imperial Age,'" in J. Webster and N. Cooper, eds., *Roman Imperialism: Post-Colonial Perspectives* (Leicester 1996).



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scholarly books and articles on Roman imperialism focused on the ways in which the drive to conquer territories and subject natives to Roman rule was an integral part of Roman elite culture.[5]

Undoubtedly related to critical appraisals of modern European and American imperialism, such views have also influenced scholarly assessments of ancient Roman historians. Much as Edward Said argued that Orientalists offered demeaning portraits of Easterners in order to justify their exploitation and domination at the hands of the West,[6] a number of contemporary scholars of Roman history have detected a penchant on the part of ancient historians to characterize non-Romans in a derogatory fashion. Some recent discussion has centered on the notion that ancient authors consciously or unconsciously cast non-Romans as inferior and thereby present intellectual justifications for Roman imperialism.[7] In short, such scholarship has focused on the ways in which Roman historians' discussions of barbarians serve to apologize for Roman expansionism.

Take, for example, Steven Rutledge's article "Tacitus in Tartan: Textual Colonization and Expansionist Discourse in the *Agricola*," which appeared in the journal *Helios*.[8] In this piece, Rutledge focuses on the oration of a Celtic enemy of Rome, the Caledonian leader Calgacus (*Agr.* 30–32). According to Rutledge, Tacitus' *Agricola*

> turns the alien and distant land of Roman Britain into a Roman space, with a Roman identity, whose people share and embrace Roman values and ideology with varying results, and the ultimate aim of Tacitus' text is to perpetuate the further expansion and spread of the *Romanitas* Agricola imposes on Britain. . . . [T]he text in short acts as an abettor in the colonial process.[9]

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[5] E.g., W. V. Harris, "On War and Greed in the Second Century B.C.," *AHR* 76 (1971) 1371–85; P. A. Brunt, "Laus Imperii," in P. D. A. Garnsey and C. R. Whittaker, eds., *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge 1978) 159–91; ); K. Hopkins, *Conquerors and Slaves* (Cambridge 1978); W. V. Harris, *War and Imperialism in Republican Rome: 327–70 B.C.* (Oxford 1979); J. A. North, "The Development of Roman Imperialism," *JRS* 71 (1981) 1–9; P. Jal, "L'impérialisme romain: Observations sur les témoignages littéraires latins de la fin de la République romaine," *Ktema* 7 (1982) 143–50.

[6] E. W. Said, *Orientalism* (1978; repr. New York 2003) passim. For Said's discussion of Orientalism as it pertains to the ancient world, see 21, 56–57.

[7] E.g., J. Webster, "The Just War: Graeco-Roman Texts as Colonial Discourse," in S. Cottam, D. Dungworth, S. Scott, and J. Taylor, eds., *TRAC 94: Proceedings of the Fourth Annual Theoretical Roman Archaeology Conference* (Oxford 1994) 1–10; R. Alston, "Conquest by Text: Juvenal and Plutarch on Egypt," in Webster and Cooper (above, n.4) 99–109; J. Webster, "Ethnographic Barbarity: Colonial Discourse and 'Celtic Warrior Societies,'" in Webster and Cooper (above, n.4) esp. 116–19; S. H. Rutledge, "Tacitus in Tartan: Textual Colonization and Expansionist Discourse in the *Agricola*," *Helios* 27 (2000) 75–95; C. Clarke, "An Island Nation: Re-reading Tacitus' *Agricola*," *JRS* 91 (2001) 94–112.

[8] Rutledge (above, n.7).

[9] Rutledge (above, n.7) 75.

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It is this kind of exegesis of ancient literary texts that this paper aims to test. This essay examines the Boudica[10] orations found in the works of Tacitus and Cassius Dio, in order to discern whether a reading of these speeches focusing on the dehumanizing rhetoric of an imperial power and in agreement with dominant views of Roman expansionism catches the nuances that Tacitus and Dio offer in these creations. Since the Boudica orations touch upon the subject of Roman imperialism and are put in the mouth of a foreigner, they can allow us to gauge the degrees to which Tacitus and Dio seem capable of offering critical assessments of Roman expansionism. This paper attempts to determine, that is to say, how much resistance can be built into the imperial project—how critical of Rome's empire both Tacitus and Dio prove to be.

## I.

First, let us examine the requisite historical background for the respective orations. In either A.D. 60 or 61, Boudica, the widow of Prasutagus, the recently deceased client-king of the Celtic Iceni tribe, led an unsuccessful revolt against Rome.[11] We possess only three narratives of this rebellion, two by the same author.[12] Tacitus presents

[10] For the rationale behind this spelling of the name (and not Boudicca or Boadicea), see K. Jackson, "Queen Boudicca?" *Britannia* 10 (1979) 55.

[11] Tac. *Ann.* 14.29.1 sets the revolt in A.D. 61. J. Asbach (*Analecta historica et epigraphica latina* [Ph.D. diss., Bonn University, 1878] 8–16) first argued that Tacitus was mistaken and that the rebellion actually broke out in A.D. 60. The basis for this contention is essentially twofold: first, the outbreak and the quelling of the revolt took too long to have occurred during one year alone; second, the logistics of the appointments of various Roman statesmen related to this rebellion favor A.D. 60 over 61. Numerous scholars have agreed and/or added rationales for this argument: e.g., R. Syme, *Tacitus*, 2 vols. (Oxford 1958) 391; G. B. Townend, "Some Rhetorical Battle-Pictures in Dio," *Hermes* 92 (1964) 467; R. M. Ogilvie and I. Richmond, eds., *Cornelii Taciti de vita Agricolae* (Oxford 1967) 192; D. R. Dudley, *The World of Tacitus* (London 1968) 43; A. R. Birley, "Petillius Cerialis and the Conquest of Brigantia," *Britannia* 4 (1973) 181 n.16; D. P. Orsi, "Sulla rivolta di Boudicca," *AFLB* 16 (1973) 531; K. R. Bradley, *Suetonius'* Life of Nero*: An Historical Commentary* (Brussels 1978) 236; R. Martin, *Tacitus* (Berkeley 1981) 173; S. Frere, *Britannia: A History of Roman Britain*, 3rd ed. (London 1987) 57; P. R. Sealey, *The Boudican Revolt against Rome* (Princes Risborough 1997) 12. Others conclude that 61 is the correct date: e.g., P. Fabia, *Les sources de Tacite dans les* Histoires *et les* Annales (Paris 1893) 337; R. G. Collingwood and J. N. L. Meyers, *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* (Oxford 1936) 99; R. Syme and R. G. Collingwood, "The Northern Frontier from Tiberius to Nero," *CAH* (1934) 802; G. H. Macurdy, *Vassal-Queens and Some Contemporary Women in the Roman Empire* (Baltimore 1937) 103; C. E. Stevens, "The Will of Q. Veranius," *CR* 1 (1951) 4; H. Königer, *Gestalt und Welt der Frau bei Tacitus* (Ph.D. diss., Nürnberg University, 1966) 61; J. D. Harrington, *Cassius Dio: A Reexamination* (Ph.D. diss., University of Kentucky, 1970) 135; D. Braund, *Ruling Roman Britain: Kings, Queens, Governors, and Emperors from Julius Caesar to Agricola* (London 1996) 133; P. Laederich, *Les limites de l'empire: Les stratégies de l'impérialisme romaine dans l'oeuvre de Tacite* (Paris 2001) 308.

[12] Suetonius briefly mentions the revolt in *Nero* 39; as this notice is bereft of detail and not placed in chronological context, it is of essentially no use to our examination.

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an extremely terse account of the revolt in *Agricola* 14.3–16.2, and a longer, yet still concise, version in *Annales* 14.29–39. Cassius Dio provides a discussion of the revolt in 62.1–2,[13] which has come down to us from antiquity only in the form of Xiphilinus' epitome of Dio's history.[14] Unfortunately, Tacitus and Dio do not agree on major details pertaining to the revolt, which renders our understanding of it shaky.[15] Tacitus and Dio stress different causes for the rebellion, but concur on some specifics. According to the former, Prasutagus left his two daughters and the emperor Nero as heirs to his inheritance, presumably as a way to protect his descendants.[16] The results of this action, Tacitus tells us in the *Annales*, were precisely the opposite: upon Prasutagus' death, Roman centurions pillaged his realm; slaves laid waste to his household; his widow Boudica was whipped; and his daughters were raped. In addition to the maltreatment of Prasutagus' family, Tacitus informs us that the *praecipui* ("chief men") among the Iceni had their ancestral estates confiscated.[17] As a result of these actions, Tacitus informs us, Boudica led a revolt against the Romans.[18]

Tacitus does not claim that the seizing of the king's and nobles' property was technically illegal. There is a reason for this: agreements between the government of Rome and client-kings only pertained to the ruler himself; once he died, all previous arrangements were null and void.[19] Still, Tacitus' discussion of events appears aimed at elic-

[13] The book numbers of Dio in this paper are those of Boissevain, who reformulated the numbering of Leunclavius, a sixteenth-century editor. See U. P. Boissevain, H. Smilda, and W. Nawijn, eds., *Cassii Dionis Cocceiani historiarum romanarum quae supersunt*, vol. 2 (Berlin 1895–1931) xxi–xxvii; A. Gowing, "Cassius Dio on the Reign of Nero," *ANRW* 2.34.3 (1997) 2558–59.

[14] For information on Xiphilinus, see Boissevain (above, n.13) vol. 2, i–xvii; F. Millar, *A Study of Cassius Dio* (Oxford 1964) 2; P. A. Brunt, "On Historical Fragments and Epitomes," *CQ* (1980) 488–94; J. Edmondson, *Dio: The Julio-Claudians: Selections from Books 58–63 of the* Roman History *of Cassius Dio* (London 1992) 29; Gowing (above, n.13) 2561–63. Some scholars have blamed Xiphilinus for the supposedly poor quality of Dio's account of the Boudica revolt: e.g., C. M. Bulst, "The Revolt of Queen Boudicca in A.D. 60," *Historia* 10 (1961) 508; Orsi (above, n.11) 531, who guesses that this is the case; Gowing (above, n.13) 2563.

[15] For example, Tacitus (*Ann.* 14.32.2–3, 14.33) informs us that the rebellious Britons sacked three cities (Camulodunum, London, Verulamium), Dio one fewer (62.1.1). Regarding this discrepancy, Suet. *Ner.* 39, Eutr. 7.14, and Oros. 7.7 all agree with Dio. Yet Tacitus provides more detail than Dio, who does not name the cities that were sacked. For a fuller discussion of the discrepancies in Tacitus' and Dio's accounts, see E. Adler, *The "Enemy" Speaks: Oratory and Criticism of Empire in Roman Historiography* (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 2005) 166–83.

[16] Tac. *Ann.* 14.31.1.

[17] Tac. *Ann.* 14.31.1.

[18] Ogilvie and Richmond (above, n.11) 198 posit that the following tribes were involved in the uprising: the Iceni, Trinovantes, Coritani, Cornovii, Durotriges, Brigantes, and, probably, the Catuvellanni. Laederich (above, n.11) 310 believes a smaller number of tribes were involved: the Iceni, Trinovantes, Catuvellanni, and Coritani.

[19] See D. Braund, "Royal Wills and Rome," *PBSR* 51 (1983) esp. 43–44. Braund correctly concludes that Tacitus does not blame Rome for the confiscation of the

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iting sympathy for the Iceni, and, more specifically, for Prasutagus' family.

According to Dio, the reasons for the rebellion were threefold: the procurator Decianus Catus' confiscation of money that the emperor Claudius previously bestowed on prominent Britons; Seneca the Younger's recalling of forty million sesterces he loaned to the islanders; and the entreaties of Boudica herself, which Dio considers the fundamental cause of the revolt.[20] In both Tacitus' and Dio's narratives of the rebellion, Boudica offers a rousing oration to her troops (Tac. *Ann.* 14.35; Dio Cass. 62.3–6); both historians, moreover, present a speech by Suetonius Paulinus, the Roman governor of Britain, to his own troops. Although Tacitus and Dio offer these orations at different junctures in their narratives,[21] and though Dio grants Paulinus three shorter speeches (62.9–11) instead of one long harangue, it is clear that both historians present the reader with counterpoised speeches of generals before a major conflict—a common element of ancient historiography.[22] As noted above, these orations offer us the opportunity to assess the degrees to which both Tacitus and Dio appear capable of presenting negative appraisals of Roman imperialism.

In order to believe that this can be gleaned from these speeches, however, we must first conclude that the orations are neither *ipsissima verba* renditions of Boudica's words nor accurate reflections of sentiments she actually expressed. Naturally, one cannot infer anything about Tacitus' and Cassius Dio's discussion of Roman foreign policy in these orations if they are essentially the product of the speaker, not their respective authors.

Although the historicity of speeches in Graeco-Roman historiography has been the subject of much scholarly disagreement, there is little reason to conclude that Tacitus and Dio put forth an accurate account of an historical Boudican oration.[23] First, as Theodore

king's property; rather, he seems irked by the manner in which it was accomplished. S. Dyson ("Native Revolt Patterns in the Roman Empire," *ANRW* 2.3 [1975] 167–68) sees the Roman treatment of the Iceni as typical of abuses in "early stages of Romanization."

[20] Dio Cass. 62.2.1–2.

[21] Whereas Tacitus presents Boudica's and Paulinus' orations before the final confrontation between the Romans and the Britons, Dio offers Boudica's at the start of the Britons' rebellion.

[22] For a discussion of the nature of such speeches, see T. C. Burgess, "Epideictic Literature," *University of Chicago Studies in Classical Philology* 3 (1902) 209–14; M. H. Hansen, "The Battle Exhortation in Ancient Historiography: Fact or Fiction?" *Historia* 42 (1993) 161–80.

[23] Numerous scholars have doubted that Tacitus' orations are heavily based on actually delivered orations: e.g., Fabia (above, n.11) 266–67; K. Eisenhardt, *Über die Reden in den* Historien *und* Annalen *des Tacitus* (Ludwigshafen am Rein 1911) 11–31; E. Courbaud, *Les procédés d'art de Tacite dans les* Histoires (Paris 1918) 110; R. Ullman, *La technique des discours dans Salluste, Tite Live et Tacite: La matière et la composition* (Oslo 1927) 197–99; Macurdy (above, n.11) 107; Syme (above, n.11)

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Burgess noted, pre-battle harangues are the most likely category of orations to be invented by ancient historians.[24] Such speeches contain certain stock elements and themes in common, which suggests that dramatic and rhetorical considerations weighed heavily on their inclusion. Mogens Hansen, furthermore, has justly questioned the historicity of such speeches on the basis of logistics: without amplification systems, generals may not have been able to address all of their troops in one gathering.[25] As H. Taine realized, the audiences for such speeches were entirely unrealistically portrayed in ancient historiography: one seldom learns of noises from the crowd, applause, jeers, and other forms of response.[26] In addition, Boudica would not have addressed her troops in either Latin or Greek; as a result, it is highly unlikely that Tacitus and Dio acquired adequate information on her speeches' contents. Finally, Tacitus and Dio offer such disparate versions of Boudica's harangue that it seems far-fetched to believe that either historian intended to present an accurate account of an actual speech.

Still, it would be foolhardy to assume that the sentiments in these compositions necessarily reflect their authors' opinions on the topic of Roman imperialism. Since juxtaposed speeches played an important part in Graeco-Roman historiography, one may reasonably infer that matters of tradition loomed large in their inclusion. This may be particularly the case regarding Dio's speech, since his devotion to the literary strictures of the Second Sophistic led him to punctuate his orations with stylistic imitations of Attic writers, particularly Thucydides.[27] In addition, such speeches serve as a break from the

317; N. P. Miller, "Style and Content in Tacitus," in T. A. Dorey, ed., *Tacitus* (London 1969) 110; Harrington (above, n.11) 25; J. N. Adams, "The Vocabulary of the Speeches in Tacitus' Historical Works," *BICS* 20 (1973) 124–28; A. V. van Stekelenburg, "Lucan and Cassius Dio as Heirs to Livy: The Speech of Julius Caesar at Placentia," *AC* 19 (1976) 44–45; Martin (above, n.11) 175, 230–33; R. Mellor, *Tacitus* (Berkeley 1993) 115; Gowing (above, n.13) 2581. The same is true regarding Dio's speeches: e.g., P. Meyer, *De Maecenatis oratione a Dione ficta* (Ph.D. diss., University of Berlin, 1891) 2; Macurdy (above, n.11) 107; Townend (above, n.11) 468 n.2; A. R. Burn, "Tacitus on Britain," in Dorey (above) 46; J. Overbeck, "Tacitus and Dio on Boudicca's Rebellion," *AJP* 90 (1969) 137; van Stekelenburg (above); Martin (above, n.11) 175; G. W. Bowersock, "Cassius Dio and Herodian," in P. E. Easterling and B. M. W. Knox, eds., *The Cambridge Ancient History of Classical Literature*, vol. 1 (1985) 712; A. Gowing, *The Triumviral Narratives of Appian and Cassius Dio* (Ann Arbor 1992) 227–28, 244.

[24] Burgess (above, n.22) 209–14. See also J. Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge 1997) 17: "Certain types of incidents common in war, such as the capture of a city, or the speech of a commander before battle, were particularly subject to imitation [in Graeco-Roman historiography]"; Eisenhardt (above, n.23) 17–18; E. Keitel, "Homeric Antecedents to the *Cohortatio* in the Ancient Historians," *CW* 80 (1987) 153–72.

[25] Hansen (above, n.22). See, however, W. K. Pritchett, *Ancient Greek Battle Speeches and a Palfrey* (Amsterdam 2002) 52–65, which disagrees with Hansen's position.

[26] H. Taine, *Essai sur Tite Live* (Paris 1874) 291–92.

[27] Dio's stylistic debt to Thucydides was noted by Photius (*Bibl.* 71). For modern assessments of this topic, see principally E. Litsch, *De Cassio Dione imitatore Thucy-*

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main narrative in which they are found, and also add an element of dramatic tension. Even so, it will be argued that the speeches allow one to conclude that Tacitus and Dio were capable of presenting ambivalent discussions of Roman imperialism and of portraying a barbarian rebel in a semi-sympathetic light.

II.

First, to Tacitus. Before we discuss the specifics of Tacitus' Boudica oratation, it will prove useful to provide the text of it in full, with an accompanying translation:

> Boudicca curru filias prae se vehens, ut quamque nationem accesserat, solitum quidem Britannis feminarum ductu bellare testabatur, sed tunc non ut tantis maioribus ortam regnum et opes, verum ut unam e vulgo libertatem amissam, confectum verberibus corpus, contrectatam filiarum pudicitiam ulcisci. Eo provectas Romanorum cupidines, ut non corpora, ne senectam quidem aut virginitatem impollutam relinquant. Adesse tamen deos iustae vindictae; cecidisse legionem, quae proelium ausa sit; ceteros castris occultari aut fugam circumspicere. Ne strepitum quidem et clamorem tot milium, nedum impetus et manus perlaturos. Si copias armatorum, si causas belli secum expenderent, vincendum illa acie vel cadendum esse. Id mulieri destinatum: viverent viri et servirent.
>
> (*Ann.* 14.35.1–2)[28]

> Boudica, riding in a chariot with her daughters before her, as she approached each tribe, was saying that it was customary for the Britons to wage war under the leadership of women; but then, she said, she was not

*didis* (Ph.D. diss., University of Freiburg, 1893) and E. Kyhnitzsch, *De contionibus, quas Cassius Dio historiae suae intexuit, cum Thucydideis comparatis* (Ph.D. diss., University of Leipzig, 1894). Numerous other scholars mention Dio's indebtedness to Thucydides: e.g., N. P. Vlachos, "Demosthenes and Dio Cassius (D.C. 38, 36–46)," *CR* 19 (1905) 102; J. N. H. Jahn, *A Critical Study of the Sources of the History of the Emperor Nero* (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1920) 33; E. Gabba, "Sulla *Storia Romana* di Cassio Dione," *RSI* 67 (1955) 304; F. Millar, "Some Speeches in Cassius Dio," *MH* 18 (1961) 11; Millar (above, n.14) 42, 177; Harrington (above, n.11) 126–27; A. Piatowski, "L'Influence de l'historiographie tragicque sur la narration de Dion Cassius," in *Actes de la XIIe conférence internationale d'études classique 'eirene'* (Amsterdam 1975) 263; W. Ameling, "Cassius Dio und Bithynien," *EA* 4 (1984) 130–31; G. J. D. Aalders, "Cassius Dio and the Greek World," *Mnemosyne* 39 (1986) 293; J. W. Rich, "Dio on Augustus," in A. Cameron, ed., *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History* (Chapel Hill 1989) 88; Edmondson (above, n.14) 39–40; M. Hose, *Erneuerung der Vergangenheit: Die Historiker im Imperium romanum von Florus bis Cassius Dio* (Stuttgart 1994) 367–69; M.-L. Freyburger-Galland, *Aspects du vocabulaire politique et institutionnel de Dion Cassius* (Paris 1997) 18–19. Dio claims that he read Greek authors to improve his style (55.12.5).

[28] The text of the *Annales* used for this paper is that of K. Wellesley, ed., *Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt* vol. 1.2 (Leipzig 1986).

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> avenging her kingdom and her power as a woman born from noble ancestors, but rather her lost freedom, her body worn out by whips, and the defiled chastity of her daughters as one of the people. The rapaciousness of the Romans had advanced so far, she said, that they do not even leave bodies, old age, or maidenhood unsoiled. Nevertheless, the gods of just revenge are present: a legion that dared battle has fallen; others hid in the camp or searched intently for an escape. She said that the Romans would not even be able to endure the din and clamor of so many thousands, much less their fury and violence: if they considered the abundance of troops and the motives of the war, they would know that their battle line must either conquer or fall. That was the resolve of a woman: the men might live and be slaves.

The speech, which is in *oratio obliqua*, commences with Boudica on a chariot with her daughters in front of her assembled troops. She first argues that it is customary for the Britons to fight under female commanders (14.35.1). There already is reason to doubt the historicity of the oration: the Britons would be well aware of what was customary for their people, and thus the sentiment seems to be aimed at Tacitus' readership, not an imagined audience of Britons.[29] The remark, furthermore, makes little sense in light of a comment that Tacitus has Calgacus offer in the *Agricola* (31.4). Calgacus, in order to stir up his troops, refers to the prior fortunes of the Britons under an unnamed female commander (clearly either Boudica or Cartimandua);[30] we Britons, he claims, even fared well against the Romans when led by a woman. If females customarily led Britons into war, as Boudica maintains, Calgacus would not realistically offer such a comment. It is likely that Tacitus began his Boudica oration in this manner in order to highlight both Boudica's gender and the foreignness of the Britons, who would—unlike the Romans—engage in battle under female leadership.[31]

The start of Boudica's oration offers sentiments similar to those found in Calgacus' harangue. Both focus on the gender of the Britons' commanders. Calgacus' speech also mentions the Romans' sexual defilement of Celtic women,[32] just as Tacitus discussed the rape of Boudica's daughters in the lead-up to the Boudica oration (14.31.3)

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[29] See Miller (above, n.23) 110.

[30] On Cartimandua, client queen of the Brigantes, see Tac. *Ann.* 12.36; *Hist.* 3.45.

[31] Ogilvie and Richmond (above, n.11) 198 inform us that Tacitus' notion that the Celts did not discern between the sexes of their rulers is "exaggerated."

[32] . . . *coniuges sororesque etiam si hostilem libidinem effugerunt, nomine amicorum atque hospitum polluuntur* ("even if our wives and sisters have escaped the lust of the enemy, they are defiled by so-called friends and guests," *Agr.* 31.1). The text of the *Agricola* is that of M. Winterbottom and R. M. Ogilvie, eds., *Cornelii Taciti opera minora* (Oxford 1975).

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and in the oration itself (14.35.1). In both cases, Tacitus appears interested in concentrating on the oppression of the Britons through the metaphor of sexual misconduct.

Tacitus' Boudica turns to her next argument. She does not, she claims, act in the capacity of a ruler, but of a woman of her people, since her freedom has been lost, her body whipped, and her daughters ravaged (14.35.1). The speech continues to discuss Roman imperial injustices through the lens of gender, restating the charges of abuse and rape Tacitus presented in the narrative of the rebellion itself. In addition to focusing on the gender of the speaker, the remark also allows Boudica to downplay her noble stature, and potentially makes her argument more compelling to readers. Boudica does not act like a haughty, foreign queen, but like an outraged woman. This highlights something noticed by other scholars examining this oration: Tacitus in some ways turns Boudica into a wronged Roman matron.[33] He does not, that is to say, always transform Boudica into the "Other"; rather, he views her in part as a slightly idealized Roman woman.

Boudica's focus on the sexual maltreatment of her daughters offers another potential link between foreign and Roman women. Elsewhere in the Roman historiographical tradition, rape looms large as an event that validates an uprising. Famously, Sex. Tarquinius' rape of Lucretia hastens the demise of the kingship, serving as the catalyst for the anti-monarchical rebellion led by Brutus and Collatinus.[34] To be sure, the parallel is not perfect—Boudica is not personally the victim of sexual misconduct, and she certainly does not respond in the same fashion as that attributed to Lucretia. Still, it is interesting to note that this historical connection serves both to "Romanize" Boudica and to present a justification for the rebellion somewhat akin to Rome's expulsion of a "foreign" monarchy.

Boudica then turns to a complaint regarding Roman misrule in Britain. The Romans' avarice has become so all-encompassing, she claims, that their very bodies are not free from it (14.35.1). By means of such a comment, Boudica fashions her familial maltreatment at the hands of the Romans into a more general argument concerning the provincial misconduct of an imperial power. The sentiment is somewhat reminiscent of Sallust's powerful line in the *Epistula Mithridatis* (*Hist.* 4.69M):

> Namque Romanis cum nationibus populis regibus cunctis una et ea vetus causa bellandi est: cupido profunda imperi et divitiarum (*EM* 5).[35]

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[33] E.g., D. Schürenberg, *Stellung und Bedeutung der Frau in der Geschichtsschreibung des Tacitus* (Ph.D. diss., University of Marburg, 1975) 77; J. Crawford, "Cartimandua, Boudicca, and Rebellion: British Queens and Roman Colonial Views," in T. L. Hunt and M. R. Lessard, eds., *Women and the Colonial Gaze* (New York 2002) 26–27.

[34] On the rape of Lucretia, see Livy 1.57.6–59; Dion. Hal. 4.64.4–67.4; Val. Max. 6.1.1.

[35] The text of the *EM* used here is that of A. Kurfess, ed., *C. Sallusti Crispi Catilina, Iugurtha, fragmenta ampliora* (Leipzig 1976).

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> For the Romans there is a single age-old cause for instigating war on all nations, peoples, and kings: a deep-seated lust for empire and riches.

In both cases, greed—not concern for the justice of Roman actions—is presented as the motivating force behind Roman expansionism, and this avarice potentially has lascivious overtones (*cupido profunda*, "a deep-seated lust"). Tacitus allows Boudica to expand what was originally fashioned as a personal grievance (i.e., the maltreatment of Boudica and her daughters) into a general argument concerning provincial misrule. It is a damning indictment—one that undercuts Roman claims to be acting in self-defense.

Boudica also refers to the earlier success of the revolt, claiming that the gods were just in granting revenge against the Romans. One of their legions (that of Petilius Cerialis) has perished, she says, and the remaining Romans were hiding in their camp or searching for an escape (14.35.2). In offering this sentiment, Boudica shifts her focus to Roman military weakness and pusillanimity. Tacitus has now distanced Boudica from her previous role as a Roman matron; unlike the legendary Lucretia, Boudica, having suffered a wrong, exhorts her troops to continue with their uprising, which she characterizes as just (*iusta vindicta*). To be sure, it is possible that this criticism of supposed Roman cowardice is not the kind of sentiment that would elicit much sympathy in the hearts of many Romans. After all, later events demonstrate that Boudica's remarks are untrue: the Romans ultimately defeat the rebellion. Such an argument, however, could serve to highlight the tragic character of Boudica; even in the face of superior Roman military might, the Britons' leader rallies her army with optimistic assessments of their foe.

In presenting this point, Tacitus' Boudica refers to the customs associated with the Britons' military endeavors. *Ne strepitum quidem et clamorem tot milium . . . perlaturos* ("They [the Romans] would not even be able to endure the din and clamor of so many thousands"), Tacitus reports her as saying, offering an explicit mention of the Britons' war cry—the typical cacophonous fanfare that barbarians bring into battle (14.35.2). In this instance, Tacitus demonstrates that he has not fully "Romanized" Boudica: he has not merely reinvented her as a wronged Roman matron, but has cast her as part Roman, part Briton.[36] His is a complex portrayal of an enemy of Rome, which neither entirely relies on an ahistorically Roman Boudica nor an "Otherized" barbarian.

This complexity of presentation can also be gleaned in Boudica's peroration. The view she has presented, she says, is that of a woman, though men might live on as slaves (14.35.2).[37] In concluding in this

[36] *Pace* Crawford (above, n.33) 26–27.

[37] For more discussion of this finale, see E. Kostermann, *Cornelius Tacitus:* Annalen, vol. 4 (Heidelberg 1968) 95. Boudica's peroration seems to express a sentiment similar to that of Boiocalus, the German leader who denounces Rome in the *Ann.*:

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manner, Tacitus appears to show little regard for verisimilitude: if females were in fact regular leaders of Celtic military expeditions, as Boudica claimed at the start of her oration (14.35.1), it is improbable that she would offer a peroration that highlights the peculiarity of her role as a woman leading the rebellion. Yet Boudica's final remark allows Tacitus to return to the subject of the speaker's gender—the subject with which the oration commenced. And Tacitus has clearly offered this sentiment as mellifluously as possible: *viverent viri et servirent* ("the men might live and be slaves"). This conclusion also appears to offer a strikingly downcast view of the final battle on the part of the Iceni; it is as if Boudica knows that she and her people are doomed to failure, and thus must elect death.

All in all, Tacitus' Boudica oration is a complex, compact excoriation of Roman imperialism. Notably, Tacitus refers to the gender of the speaker on more than one occasion and has Boudica offer a largely anecdotal response to Roman misrule. Although this may be the case because this is the way Tacitus envisioned a woman arguing, it is also possible that Tacitus has Boudica speak in this fashion in order to avoid the repetition of another Calgacus-like oration. By the time Tacitus wrote the *Annales*, oratorical complaints against Roman expansionism were already fairly common occurrences in his work. In the *Agricola*, Tacitus has unnamed Britons discuss their grievances against Rome (15), and has Calgacus offer a strong indictment of Roman misrule in Britain (30–32); in the *Historiae*, the Batavian prince Civilis delivers two addresses against Roman misrule (4.14, 17). Tacitus may have preferred his Boudica to personalize the oration as a means of presenting a similar argument—one against Roman misconduct in the provinces—in a novel form. Variety, that is to say, might be key to Tacitus' presentation of the Boudica speech.

As noted above, however, one can still detect links between Tacitus' Boudica oration and other Tacitean speeches that criticize Roman rule. Roman sexual misconduct, for instance, is also mentioned in the Tacitean orations of Calgacus and Civilis (*Hist.* 4.14).[38] Most significantly, Tacitus neither demonizes Boudica nor presents a simplistic characterization of her. His Boudica is a hybrid—part maltreated Roman matron, part determined Celtic leader.

Even those elements of the speech that cast Boudica as a barbarian connect with themes Tacitus elsewhere casts as quintessentially Roman. The oration's appeal to the cardinal import of *libertas* ("freedom")[39]

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*deesse nobis terra *in qua vivamus*: in qua moriamur, non potest* ("we may lack a place to live, but not a place to die," 13.56.1); I accept Wellesley's (above, n.28) reading for these lines, but, for variants, see his *appendix critica*, 151.

[38] Yet in the Civilis oration, in contrast to Tacitus' Boudica speech, Tacitus makes it clear (4.14) that Civilis used the Romans' debauchery as a pretext: he planned a revolt anyway. Tacitus never claims this in regard to the Boudica oration.

[39] . . . *verum ut unam e vulgo libertatem amissam, confectum verberibus corpus, contrectatam filiarum pudicitiam ulcisci* (". . . but rather, as one of the people, she avenged her lost freedom, her body worn out by whips, and the defiled chastity of her daughters," 14.35.1).

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relates to Tacitus' discussion of the kinds of criticisms Thrasea Paetus and the senatorial Stoic resistance offered about the government of the Roman Empire.[40] Much like Thrasea, Boudica couches her appeal in the language of freedom versus slavery. At the very least, this suggests that Boudica's cause piqued Tacitus' interest. Overall, given the intricacy of the oration, conclusions about its supposed anti-Briton, colonialist tenor seem unfounded.

## III.

Having discussed Tacitus' Boudica speech, we may now move on to Dio's version. This account of the oration is more verbose; it demonstrates none of the concision detectable in the Tacitean version. Overall, modern scholars have been less likely to view this speech—or almost any other penned by Dio—as concerned with much more than ostentatious displays of philosophical musings and oratorical commonplaces.[41] For this reason, it seems, Dio's orations directly pertaining to Roman behavior in the provinces have not merited much attention. Rather, the great weight of scholarship on Dio's speeches pertains to the orations of Agrippa (52.2–13) and Maecenas (52.14–40), which discuss the best way to rule an empire.[42] In reality, Dio's Boudica speech, though a pell-mell creation, presents some powerful indictments of Roman rule more specific than the generalities that Tacitus' Boudica musters. The text of the oration with accompanying translation should make its garrulousness clear:

> (3.1) "πέπεισθε μὲν τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῖς ὅσον ἐλευθερία τῆς δουλείας διαφέρει, ὥστ' εἰ καὶ πρότερόν τις ὑμῶν ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ κρείττονος ἀπειρίας ἐπαγωγοῖς ἐπαγγέλμασι τῶν Ῥωμαίων ἠπάτητο, ἀλλὰ νῦν γε ἑκατέρου πεπειραμένοι μεμαθήκατε μὲν ὅσον ἡμαρτήκατε δεσποτείαν ἐπισπαστὸν πρὸ τῆς πατρίου διαίτης προτιμήσαντες, ἐγνώκατε δὲ ὅσῳ καὶ πενία ἀδέσποτος πλούτου δουλεύοντος προφέρει.

[40] See *Ann.* 16.35. One can witness Tacitus' use of such language elsewhere: e.g., in Percennius' stirring of a revolt among the Pannonian legions (*Ann.* 1.17); in Calgacus' oration (*Agr.* 31.1–2); in Civilis' speech (*Hist.* 4.17).

[41] E.g., E. Schwartz, "Cassius [Dio Cocceianus]," *RE* 3.2 (1899) 1717–19; Vlachos (above, n.27) 105–6; Millar (above, n.27); Millar (above, n.14) 73–83; van Stekelenburg (above, n.23) 53–54; Gowing (above, n.23) 244–45. See, however, Gabba (above, n.27) 301–8 and A. V. van Stekelenburg, *De Redevoeringen bij Cassius Dio* (Ph.D. diss., University of Leiden, 1971) 38–39 on Caesar's speech regarding the war with Ariovistus (38.36–46), which directly pertains to the topic of Roman imperialism. (On this topic, see below, n.46.)

[42] E.g., Meyer (above, n.23); M. Hammond, "The Significance of the Speech of Maecenas in Dio Cassius, Book LII," *TAPA* 63 (1932) 88–102; Millar (above, n.14) 102–18; J. R. Berrigan, "Dio Cassius' Defense of Democracy," *CB* 44 (1968) 42–45; P. McKechnie, "Cassius Dio's Speech of Agrippa: A Realistic Alternative to Imperial Government?" *G&R* 28 (1981) 150–55; M. Reinhold, "In Praise of Cassius Dio," *AC* 55 (1986) 219–20; Rich (above, n.27) 98–100; A. L. Smyshlyayev, "'The Maecenas Speech' (Dio Cass. LII): The Dating and Political Orientation," *GLP* 13 (1991) 137–55.

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(2) τί μὲν γὰρ οὐ τῶν αἰσχίστων, τί δ' οὐ τῶν ἀλγίστων, ἐξ οὗπερ ἐς τὴν Βρεττανίαν οὗτοι παρέκυψαν, πεπόνθαμεν; οὐ τῶν μὲν πλείστων καὶ μεγίστων κτημάτων ὅλων ἐστερήμεθα, τῶν δὲ λοιπῶν τέλη καταβάλλομεν; (3) οὐ πρὸς τῷ τἆλλα πάντα καὶ νέμειν καὶ γεωργεῖν ἐκείνοις, καὶ τῶν σωμάτων αὐτῶν δασμὸν ἐτήσιον φέρομεν; καὶ πόσῳ κρεῖττον ἦν ἅπαξ τισὶ πεπρᾶσθαι μᾶλλον ἢ μετὰ κενῶν ἐλευθερίας ὀνομάτων κατ' ἔτος λυτροῦσθαι; πόσῳ δὲ ἐσφάχθαι καὶ ἀπολωλέναι μᾶλλον ἢ κεφαλὰς ὑποτελεῖς περιφέρειν; (4) καίτοι τί τοῦτο εἶπον; οὐδὲ γὰρ τὸ τελευτῆσαι παρ' αὐτοῖς ἀζήμιόν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' ἴστε ὅσον καὶ ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν τελοῦμεν· παρὰ μὲν γὰρ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀνθρώποις καὶ τοὺς δουλεύοντάς τισιν ὁ θάνατος ἐλευθεροῖ, Ῥωμαίοις δὲ δὴ μόνοις καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ζῶσι πρὸς τὰ λήμματα. (5) τί δ' ὅτι, κἂν μὴ ἔχῃ τις ἡμῶν ἀργύριον (πῶς γὰρ ἢ πόθεν), ἀποδυόμεθα καὶ σκυλευόμεθα ὥσπερ οἱ φονευόμενοι; τί δ' ἂν προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου μετριάσαιεν, οὕτως ἡμῖν κατὰ τὴν πρώτην εὐθύς, ὅτε πάντες καὶ τὰ θηρία τὰ νεάλωτα θεραπεύουσι, προσενηνεγμένοι;

(4.1) ὑμεῖς δὲ δὴ πάντων τῶν κακῶν τούτων αἴτιοι, ὥς γε τἀληθὲς εἰπεῖν, γεγόναμεν, οἵτινες αὐτοῖς ἐπιβῆναι τὴν ἀρχὴν τῆς νήσου ἐπετρέψαμεν, καὶ οὐ παραχρῆμα αὐτούς, ὥσπερ καὶ τὸν Καίσαρα τὸν Ἰούλιον ἐκεῖνον, ἐξηλάσαμεν· οἵτινες οὐ πόρρωθέν σφισιν, ὥσπερ καὶ τῷ Αὐγούστῳ καὶ τῷ Γαΐῳ τῷ Καλιγόλᾳ, φοβερὸν τὸ καὶ πειρᾶσαι τὸν πλοῦν ἐποιήσαμεν. (2) τοιγαροῦν νῆσον τηλικαύτην, μᾶλλον δὲ ἤπειρον τρόπον τινὰ περίρρυτον νεμόμενοι καὶ ἰδίαν οἰκουμένην ἔχοντες, καὶ τοσοῦτον ὑπὸ τοῦ ὠκεανοῦ ἀφ' ἁπάντων τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρώπων ἀφωρισμένοι ὥστε καὶ γῆν ἄλλην καὶ οὐρανὸν ἄλλον οἰκεῖν πεπιστεῦσθαι, καί τινας αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς σοφωτάτους γε μηδὲ τὸ ὄνομα ἡμῶν ἀκριβῶς πρότερον ἐγνωκέναι, κατεφρονήθημεν καὶ κατεπατήθημεν ὑπ' ἀνθρώπων μηδὲν ἄλλο ἢ πλεονεκτεῖν εἰδότων. (3) ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ μὴ πρότερον, νῦν ἔτι, ὦ πολῖται καὶ φίλοι καὶ συγγενεῖς (πάντας γὰρ ὑμᾶς συγγενεῖς, ἅτε καὶ μιᾶς νήσου οἰκήτορας ὄντας καὶ ἓν ὄνομα κοινὸν κεκλημένους, νομίζω), τὰ προσήκοντα πράξωμεν, ἕως ἔτι τῆς ἐλευθερίας μνημονεύομεν, ἵνα καὶ τὸ πρόσρημα καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῆς τοῖς παισὶ καταλίπωμεν. ἂν γὰρ ἡμεῖς τῆς συντρόφου εὐδαιμονίας παντελῶς ἐκλαθώμεθα, τί ποτε ἐκεῖνοι ποιήσουσιν ἐν δουλείᾳ τραφέντες;

(5.1) λέγω δὲ ταῦτα οὐχ ἵνα μισήσητε τὰ παρόντα (μεμισήκατε γάρ), οὐδ' ἵνα φοβηθῆτε τὰ μέλλοντα (πεφόβησθε γάρ), ἀλλ' ἵνα ἐπαινέσω τε ὑμᾶς ὅτι καὶ καθ' ἑαυτοὺς πάνθ' ὅσα δεῖ προαιρεῖσθε, καὶ χάριν ὑμῖν γνῶ ὅτι καὶ ἐμοὶ καὶ ἑαυτοῖς ἑτοίμως συναίρεσθε. φοβεῖσθε δὲ μηδαμῶς τοὺς Ῥωμαίους· (2) οὔτε γὰρ πλείους ἡμῶν εἰσιν

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*οὔτ' ἀνδρειότεροι. τεκμήριον δὲ ὅτι καὶ κράνεσι καὶ θώραξι καὶ κνημῖσιν ἐσκέπασθε καὶ προσέτι καὶ σταυρώμασι καὶ τείχεσι καὶ τάφροις ἐσκεύασθε πρὸς τὸ μήτι πάσχειν ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς τῶν πολεμίων. τοῦτο γὰρ αἱροῦνται μᾶλλον ὑπὸ τῶν φόβων ἢ τὸ καὶ δρᾶσαί τι προχείρως ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς.* (3) *τοσαύτῃ γὰρ περιουσίᾳ ἀνδρίας χρώμεθα ὥστε καὶ τὰς σκηνὰς ἀσφαλεστέρας τῶν τειχῶν καὶ τὰς ἀσπίδας πολυαρκεστέρας τῆς ἐκείνων πανοπλίας νομίζειν. ἐξ οὗπερ ἡμεῖς μὲν καὶ κρατοῦντες αἱροῦμεν αὐτοὺς καὶ βιασθέντες ἐκφεύγομεν, κἂν ἄρα καὶ ἀναχωρῆσαί ποι προελώμεθα, ἐς τοιαῦτα ἕλη καὶ ὄρη καταδυόμεθα ὥστε μήτε εὑρεθῆναι μήτε ληφθῆναι·* (4) *ἐκεῖνοι δὲ οὔτε διῶξαί τινα ὑπὸ τοῦ βάρους οὔτε φυγεῖν δύνανται, κἂν ἄρα καὶ ἐκδράμωσί ποτε, ἔς τε χωρία ἀποδεδειγμένα καταφεύγουσι, κἀνταῦθα ὥσπερ ἐς γαλεάγρας κατακλείονται.* (5) *ἔν τε οὖν τούτοις παρὰ πολὺ ἡμῶν ἐλαττοῦνται, καὶ ἐν ἐκείνοις, ὅτι οὔτε λιμὸν οὔτε δίψος, οὐ ψῦχος οὐ καῦμα ὑποφέρουσιν ὥσπερ ἡμεῖς, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν καὶ σκιᾶς καὶ σκέπης σίτου τε μεμαγμένου καὶ οἴνου καὶ ἐλαίου δέονται, κἂν ἄρα τι τούτων αὐτοὺς ἐπιλίπῃ διαφθείρονται, ἡμῖν δὲ δὴ πᾶσα μὲν πόα καὶ ῥίζα σῖτός ἐστι, πᾶς δὲ χυμὸς ἔλαιον, πᾶν δὲ ὕδωρ οἶνος, πᾶν δὲ δένδρον οἰκία.* (6) *καὶ μὴν καὶ τὰ χωρία ταῦτα ἡμῖν μὲν συνήθη καὶ σύμμαχα, ἐκείνοις δὲ δὴ καὶ ἄγνωστα καὶ πολέμια· καὶ τοὺς ποταμοὺς ἡμεῖς μὲν γυμνοὶ διανέομεν, ἐκεῖνοι δὲ οὐδὲ πλοίοις ῥᾳδίως περαιοῦνται. ἀλλ' ἴωμεν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἀγαθῇ τύχῃ θαρροῦντες. δείξωμεν αὐτοῖς ὅτι λαγωοὶ καὶ ἀλώπεκες ὄντες κυνῶν καὶ λύκων ἄρχειν ἐπιχειροῦσιν."*

(6.1) *ταῦτα εἰποῦσα λαγὼν μὲν ἐκ τοῦ κόλπου προήκατο μαντείᾳ τινὶ χρωμένη, καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἐν αἰσίῳ σφίσιν ἔδραμε, τό τε πλῆθος πᾶν ἡσθὲν ἀνεβόησε, καὶ ἡ* Βουδουῖκα *τὴν χεῖρα ἐς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀνατείνασα εἶπε* (2) *"χάριν τέ σοι ἔχω, ὦ* Ἀνδράστη, *καὶ προσεπικαλοῦμαί σε γυνὴ γυναῖκα, οὐκ* Αἰγυπτίων *ἀχθοφόρων ἄρχουσα ὡς* Νίτωκρις, *οὐδ'* Ἀσσυρίων *τῶν ἐμπόρων ὡς* Σεμίραμις (*καὶ γὰρ ταῦτ' ἤδη παρὰ τῶν* Ῥωμαίων *μεμαθήκαμεν*), (3) *οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ* Ῥωμαίων *αὐτῶν ὡς πρότερον μὲν* Μεσσαλῖνα *ἔπειτ'* Ἀγριππῖνα *νῦν δὲ καὶ* Νέρων (*ὄνομα μὲν* ⟨*γὰρ*⟩ *ἀνδρὸς ἔχει, ἔργῳ δὲ γυνή ἐστι· σημεῖον δέ, ᾄδει καὶ κιθαρίζει καὶ καλλωπίζεται*), *ἀλλὰ ἀνδρῶν* Βρεττανῶν, *γεωργεῖν μὲν ἢ δημιουργεῖν οὐκ εἰδότων, πολεμεῖν δὲ ἀκριβῶς μεμαθηκότων, καὶ τά τε ἄλλα πάντα κοινὰ καὶ παῖδας καὶ γυναῖκας κοινὰς νομιζόντων, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἐκείνων τὴν αὐτὴν τοῖς ἄρρεσιν ἀρετὴν ἐχουσῶν.* (4) *τοιούτων οὖν ἀνδρῶν καὶ τοιούτων γυναικῶν βασιλεύουσα προσεύχομαί τέ σοι καὶ αἰτῶ νίκην καὶ σωτηρίαν καὶ ἐλευθερίαν κατ' ἀνδρῶν ὑβριστῶν ἀδίκων ἀπλήστων ἀνοσίων, εἴ γε καὶ ἄνδρας χρὴ καλεῖν ἀνθρώπους ὕδατι*

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*θερμῷ λουμένους, ὄψα σκευαστὰ ἐσθίοντας, οἶνον ἄκρατον πίνοντας, μύρῳ ἀλειφομένους, μαλθακῶς κοιμωμένους, μετὰ μειρακίων, καὶ τούτων ἐξώρων, καθεύδοντας, κιθαρωδῷ, καὶ τούτῳ κακῷ, δουλεύοντας.* (5) *μὴ γάρ τοι μήτ' ἐμοῦ μήθ' ὑμῶν ἔτι βασιλεύσειεν ἡ Νερωνὶς ἡ Δομιτία, ἀλλ' ἐκείνη μὲν Ῥωμαίων ᾄδουσα δεσποζέτω (καὶ γὰρ ἄξιοι τοιαύτῃ γυναικὶ δουλεύειν, ἧς τοσοῦτον ἤδη χρόνον ἀνέχονται τυραννούσης), ἡμῶν δὲ σὺ ὦ δέσποινα ἀεὶ μόνη προστατοίης."* (62.3–6)[43]

(3.1) "You have found out how much freedom differs from slavery through real experiences, so that, even if earlier some of you, through ignorance of what was superior, were tricked by the tempting promises of the Romans, you now, having tried both, have learned how great a mistake you made in preferring an imported tyranny to your ancient way of life, and you know how much penury without a master surpasses wealth as a slave. (2) For what of the most shameful, the most distressing sort have we not experienced since these people have taken themselves to Britain? Have we not been robbed entirely of most of our greatest possessions, and do we not pay taxes on the rest? (3) Besides pasturing and farming for them, do we not pay yearly tribute for our own bodies? By how much would it have been better to be sold once and for all, rather than to be held ransom each year with the empty titles of freedom? By how much would it have been better to be slain and die than to endure while subject to a head tax? And yet why did I say this? (4) For, among them not even dying is scot-free, but you know how much we pay even for our dead; with other people, death frees even those who are enslaved, but with the Romans alone the dead live on for gain. (5) And why is it that, even though none of us has money (for how would we get it, and from where?), we are sold and stripped like victims of a homicide? And why should they be moderate in the time to come, when they have treated us in this fashion immediately, and when all men treat even newly caught beasts well?

(4.1) "To speak the truth, we are responsible for all these evils, as some of us entrusted them to set foot on the island to begin with, and did not immediately drive them off, as we did under the famous Julius Caesar; and we did not, as we did with both

[43] The text of Dio used for this paper is that of Boissevain (above, n.13).

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Augustus and Gaius Caligula, make an attempt at a formidable voyage. (2) Thus, though we inhabit so large an island—rather a continent surrounded by water—and though we have our own world and are cut off by the ocean from all other people to such an extent that we have been believed to inhabit another land and sky, and even some of the wisest men have not previously known our name accurately, we have been disdained and trampled on by people who know nothing other than greed. (3) But although we have not done the proper things beforehand, let us, my countrymen and friends and kinsmen (for I consider you kinsmen, since you inhabit one island and are called by a common name), do them now, so that we may leave behind to our children both the name and reality of freedom, while we still remember it. For if we utterly forget our natural state of happiness, what will our children do, nursed in slavery?

(5.1) "I do not say these things so that you will hate your present circumstances (for you have hated them), nor so that you will fear what is to come (for you have feared it), but so that I may laud you, because you have by yourselves chosen all the necessary steps, and thank you for readily working together with me and each other. Do not at all fear the Romans; (2) for they are neither more numerous than we nor more brave. And the proof is that they are covered with helmets and breastplates and greaves and besides prepared with stockades and walls and trenches so as not to suffer from an attack of the enemy. For they are overpowered by fears, unlike us, who act offhandedly. (3) We truly enjoy such an abundance of bravery that we consider our tents more secure than their walls and our shields far more sufficient than their full suits of armor. As such, overpowering them, we capture them, and overpowered, we flee, and if we decide to withdraw somewhere, we slink away and hide in such marshes and hills that we can't be found or seized; (4) but the Romans, because of their heavy armor, are neither able to chase anyone nor to flee, and if they ever run away, they flee to appointed places, and are enclosed there as if trapped. (5) And in these respects they are by far inferior to us: they can also not endure hunger, thirst, cold, or heat as we can, but requiring shade, shelter, and bread, they need wine and oil, and if any of these things runs dry, they perish; for us, all grasses and roots serve as bread, all liquids serve as

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oil, all water serves as wine, and all trees serve as a house. (6) Verily, these lands are familiar to us and our allies, but are unknown and adverse to them; and we swim the rivers naked, whereas they cannot get to the other side of them easily with boats. But let us go against them trusting in good fortune. Let us show them that they are hares and foxes attempting to rule over dogs and wolves."

(6.1) Having said these things, employing some kind of divination, she let a hare escape from a fold of her dress, and when it ran in an auspicious direction, the whole multitude shouted out with delight, and Boudica, lifting her hand toward the sky, said, (2) "I give thanks to you, Andraste, and I call upon you as a woman to a woman, as one who does not rule over burden-bearing Egyptians as Nitocris, or over the tradesmen Assyrians as Semiramis (for even we have already learned these things from the Romans), (3) or over the Romans themselves, as did Messalina, then Agrippina, and now Nero (for though he has the name of a man, he is in fact a woman, as one can tell from his singing, his lyre playing, and his grooming); rather, I rule over the Britons, who don't know how to farm or practice a trade, but have learned how to be consummate fighters, and consider all things common—including children and wives—and as a result the women have the same valor as men. (4) Ruling over such men and women, then, I both pray to you and ask for victory, safety, and freedom against insolent, unjust, insatiate, and profane men—if, at any rate, one should even call people men who bathe in warm water, eat artificial dainties, imbibe unmixed wine, anoint themselves with myrrh, sleep on soft beds with boys—even ones past their prime—and are slaves to a bad lyre-player. (5) Truly may Ms. Domitia-Nero no longer rule over us, but let that singing girl be lord over the Romans, for surely they are deserving of being slaves to such a woman, since they have already put up with her playing the tyrant for so long; but, mistress [sc. Andraste], may you always be our only leader."

Interestingly, Dio's approach to the character of Boudica is almost entirely different from Tacitus'. Instead of partly presenting her as a wronged Roman matron, Dio stresses Boudica's monstrous, barbarian features. Before the actual speech, in fact, Dio offers a physical portrait of Boudica—a portrait that highlights her almost Amazonian countenance (62.2.2–4). Also, Dio's narrative of the rebellion in the

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lead-up to his version of Boudica's oration appears less sympathetic to the rebels. Unlike Tacitus, who quickly passes over the atrocities the Britons committed against their Roman captives, Dio specifically mentions the most terrible and savage (*δεινότατον καὶ θηριωδέστατον*) action they undertook: they hung up the noblest women naked, cut off their breasts, sewed them to their mouths, and then impaled them on skewers (62.7.2–3). By linking this brutality to sacrifices made in the grove of Andate (apparently the Celtic victory goddess),[44] Dio associates these tortures with the Britons' religion—more specifically, with a female warrior goddess. Accordingly, he keeps the reader's attention on the foreignness of the Britons and the female leadership of the rebellion. Although Xiphilinus, as P. A. Brunt made clear in a useful article on epitomators,[45] was fond of gory details, it is safe to suggest that the framework within which Dio presents his speech of Boudica offers less sympathy for the plight of the Britons than does Tacitus'.

All the same, this does not appear to be true regarding the oration itself. In fact, Dio's Boudica speech proffers a number of specific points that dramatically call into question the blessings of Roman conquest.[46] For instance, Dio's Boudica first remarks that her troops, having suffered the indignities of Roman rule, now understand the difference between freedom (*ἐλευθερία*) and slavery (*δουλεία*); accordingly, she continues, *ἐγνώκατε δὲ ὅσῳ καὶ πενία ἀδέσποτος πλούτου δουλεύοντος προφέρει* ("you know how much penury without a master surpasses wealth as a slave," 62.3.1). Dio thus starts the oration by discussing the Britons' loss of autonomy, rather than focusing on the gender of the speaker.[47]

Throughout much of the speech, Dio casts Boudica and the Britons as what Arthur O. Lovejoy and George Boas termed "hard primitives": "noble savages" unaccustomed to the slothful and effete ways of the civilized.[48] To this end, Dio's Boudica harps on the indignities

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[44] Dio is the only author from antiquity to mention this goddess. He has Boudica refer to *Ἀνδράστη* in 62.6.2; perhaps this is the same figure. For more information on her, see A. Nice, "Superstition and Religion in Tacitus' and Dio's Accounts of the Boudica Revolt," *Pegasus* 36 (1993) 17–18; G. Webster, *Boudica: The British Revolt against Rome A.D. 60* (1978; repr. London 1993) 95.

[45] Brunt (above, n.14) 489–92.

[46] The Boudica oration offers a strikingly different view of Roman imperialism from that presented in Dio's speech of Caesar regarding the war with Ariovistus (38.36–46). As van Stekelenburg (above, n.41) 38–39 recognizes, however, Dio provides hints that the latter oration does not reflect his own opinions on the topic. See Adler (above, n.15) 201–5. One can find, moreover, anti-imperialist sentiments in Dio's speeches. Maecenas' oration, for instance, supposedly a blueprint for Dio's vision of the perfect government, presents the idea that nothing good has happened to Rome since it expanded beyond Italy (52.16.1–2).

[47] Dio perhaps feels free to do this because he dwelled on Boudica's gender at such length in his description of her.

[48] A. O. Lovejoy and G. Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in Antiquity* (1935; repr. Baltimore 1997) 9–11. According to Lovejoy and Boas, "hard primitivism" is an attitude that uncritically lauds the uncivilized as living in austere conditions, and thus unblemished by the decadent trappings of civilization.

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of Roman tax collection in its specificities, conjuring a picture of pre-Roman Britain as a Valhalla free from taxation (62.3.3–5). Dio's Boudica also mixes her economic complaints with a strong moral appeal in order to vilify the Romans. Even though we do not have money, Boudica claims, the Romans strip us of everything; and they will not become more moderate with time, if they have maltreated us so badly from the start (62.3.5).[49]

This does not necessarily imply that Dio has sympathy for Boudica: he may well have gone out of his way merely to depict her as a benighted "hard primitive," and thus entirely unaccustomed to the necessities of "civilized" life. In fact, Dio appears to imagine a fairyland pre-Roman Celtic society without any kind of taxation; it is difficult to determine whether Dio portrays this as a dystopia or utopia. Regardless, Dio ties Boudica's speech to the monetary concerns he himself offered regarding the rebellion: as the matter of loans proved key to Dio's description of the revolt (62.2.1), the matter of taxation proves important to his version of Boudica's oration.

In Dio's version of the speech, Boudica even takes responsibility for the vicissitudes of the Britons' situation. She claims

> To speak the truth, we are responsible for all these evils, as some of us entrusted them to set foot on the island to begin with, and did not immediately drive them off, as we did under the famous Julius Caesar (62.4.1).

Although this sentiment is quixotic (for the Britons could hardly have driven off from the island a determined Roman force), it is ennobling: it allows the reader to conclude that the pitiable subject wants no pity, no special treatment. Taking responsibility, even though erroneously, is laudable—a way of humanizing Boudica. For all of Dio's emphasis on her supposedly Amazonian qualities, his Boudica is not merely a monster, a barbarian.[50]

Boudica's speech continues with this line of reasoning. Though we inhabit a large island and are separated from the rest of mankind to such an extent that many wise men do not know us by name, still, she avers, we have been trampled on by men who only know how to steal from others (62.4.2). Here one can detect a telltale hybrid of denigration and championing of Rome. Boudica's discussion of Britain's geography, naturally, stems from a Graeco-Roman perspective, not a Celtic one. A Celtic leader would be highly unlikely to discuss Britain's distance from the rest of the world; to the Britons, their land would be the center of their activity, and thus not the periphery.[51] Still, Dio's placing of unrealistic geographical statements

[49] Compare Tiberius' funeral oration for Augustus in Dio Cass. (56.35–41), which praises its departed subject for treating provincials well (56.41.4).

[50] *Pace* Braund (above, n.11) 141–43; Crawford (above, n.33) 28.

[51] For a useful discussion of the ways in which Tacitus' approach to the geography of Britain sheds light on his conception of Roman conquest, see Clarke (above, n.7).

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in the mouth of his Boudica—though demonstrating little regard for verisimilitude—magnifies the theme of Roman greediness by mentioning the distance of Britain from the heart of the Roman Empire. Having pillaged the known world, Dio's Boudica appears to be saying, the Romans now find themselves in far-flung Britain. Yet there may also be a bit of Roman boasting contained in this sentiment: the Romans have conquered a territory so far off that many cannot even name the people who inhabit it.

Boudica also exhorts her fellow Celts not to fear the Romans. The Romans, she claims, require armor, defensive walls, and trenches to protect themselves, whereas the Britons do not. According to her, this demonstrates that the Romans are terrified of them (62.5.2). For the first time in the oration, Dio's Boudica has touched on the topic of Roman cowardice, instead of crafting a moral argument critical of Roman rule in the provinces. Still, the sentiment echoes earlier parts of the oration; as before, Dio focuses on the Britons as "hard primitives": they do not require any of the trappings of civilization to win their wars. Dio's depiction of the Celts seems linked to a vision of pre-Roman Britain as an idyllic golden age, free from the vicissitudes of "civilized" life. All the same, Boudica's boast regarding Celtic military might proves utterly wrongheaded: the Britons were ultimately no match for Suetonius Paulinus' Roman forces.

Perhaps the most striking line of argument Dio's Boudica presents occurs at the end of the speech. After offering a few bookish references to female rulers in other societies, Boudica claims that she does not rule over the Romans, as did Messalina, then Agrippina, and now Nero (62.6.2). Although Nero is in name a man, Boudica argues, his theatrical bent proves that he is actually a woman (62.6.3). Elsewhere in his history, Dio offers numerous comments that suggest a profound antipathy to an emperor taking part in theatrical activities.[52] In fact, throughout his work, Dio appears particularly concerned about the circus, the arena, and the stage; further, his discussions of this topic make it seem as if Dio perceives that an emperor's conduct can be measured by his reaction to the games.[53] Thus Boudica's viewing of Nero through the lens of his stage performances and the concomitant denigration of his masculinity seem to fit Dio's preoccupations.

The commentary Boudica presents also allows Dio to continue with his focus on the Britons as primitives; here he posits that the Britons, before Roman involvement on the island, lived in a communistic society—even a sexually communistic society, à la Aristophanes' *Ecclesiazusae* (62.6.3). Naturally, these details are the invention of

[52] See 74.14.1; 78.13.7; 80.14.3. See also the comments on theatrical activity in the speech of Vindex, which encourages a revolt against Nero (63.22.4–5). For more on this subject, particularly regarding Nero, see C. Edwards, "Beware of Imitations: Theatre and Subversion of Imperial Identity," in J. Elsner and Jamie Masters, eds., *Reflections of Nero: Culture, History, and Representation* (Chapel Hill 1994) 83–97; Gowing (above, n.13) 2569.

[53] See R. F. Newbold, "Cassius Dio and the Games," *AC* 44 (1975) 589–604.

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Dio: the Britons were not proto-communists, and Dio's vision of sexual communism may be a typical way for men to picture female visions of society. Importantly, the argument is damaging not only to Nero himself, but also to Roman society, which would supposedly allow such a weak, "feminine" emperor to rule over it.[54] To this end, Boudica's oration concludes thus:

> Truly may Ms. Domitia-Nero no longer rule over us, but let that singing girl be lord over the Romans, for surely they are deserving of being slaves to such a woman, since they have already put up with her playing the tyrant for so long; but, mistress [sc. Andraste], may you always be our only leader (62.6.5).

The speech certainly demonstrates an intense hatred of Nero, which fits Dio's overall impression of him in his work.[55] This does not disqualify the broader criticism of Roman society offered in this passage, but it does suggest that such criticism was not his only concern. Even so, Dio intertwined his abuse of Nero with explicit condemnation of the Romans: in addition to claiming in the peroration to her speech that the Romans deserve such an effete ruler, Dio's Boudica also criticizes the Roman soldiers whom the Britons face. To this end, she says:

> Ruling over such men and women, then, I both pray to you and ask for victory, safety, and freedom against insolent, unjust, insatiate, and profane men—if, at any rate, one should even call people men who bathe in warm water, eat artificial dainties, imbibe unmixed wine, anoint themselves with myrrh, sleep on soft beds with boys—even ones past their prime—and are slaves to a bad lyre player (62.6.4).

This remark demonstrates an ambiguous stance on the part of Dio regarding the Britons' rebellion that one can detect throughout the oration. The criticism of Roman society both dramatically calls into question the potentially decadent nature of the Roman world, and also casts the Britons as primitive, and, by extension, inferior. Dio has not simply penned a blistering attack on Roman foreign policy; the speech is a hodgepodge of ideas and appears to present an ambiguous take on the Celtic revolt. Still, Dio, like Tacitus, seems capable of valorizing barbarian complaints pertaining to Roman provincial conduct.

## IV.

This leaves us with some general conclusions regarding Tacitus' and Dio's speeches of Boudica. Neither oration, to be sure, presents

[54] *Pace* Jahn (above, n.27) 33, who believes that Boudica's harangue is intended merely to criticize the emperor.

[55] For a discussion of Dio's attitude toward Nero, see Gowing (above, n.13).

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an unambiguous condemnation of Roman imperialism entirely free from the cultural baggage associated with the outlook of the Graeco-Roman elite. To a certain extent, it is unreasonable to assume that Tacitus or Dio—or any other Roman historian—would be capable of offering a portrayal of a Celtic rebellion utterly divorced from a Graeco-Roman perspective on native rebellions. After all, Tacitus and Dio were not Britons; they likely did not possess much first-hand knowledge of the Iceni.[56] All the same, it would be foolish to assert that Tacitus and Dio, on the basis of their respective Boudica speeches, were stalwart anti-imperialists.

Even so, a discussion of these orations based on a perception of the authors as "abettors in the colonial process" (to borrow Rutledge's phrase)[57] will lead to a failure to grasp their nuances and ambiguities. Tacitus' Boudica is neither an unenlightened brute nor a mirror image of a righteous and helpless Roman matron. Rather, Tacitus' characterization offers the reader a more sensitive portrait. It is a picture partly aimed at criticizing Roman imperial misconduct yet also seemingly tied up in highlighting the disenchanting foreignness of the Britons. Although harping on the strangeness of the female leadership of the Britons' revolt, Tacitus also couches his Boudica speech in the language of the senatorial Stoic resistance to the Roman government. This is no dehumanizing portrait from the pen of an unreflective colonizing power.

The same can be said for Dio's Boudica, even though Dio's creation is very different from Tacitus'. His Boudica oration also offers an ambivalent presentation of the rebellion's leader. Though it may strike the modern reader as unfocused and overlong, the speech presents numerous arguments missing from Tacitus' version—arguments that occasionally condemn Roman misrule in strong language. Dio's speech of Boudica is very specific in its look at provincial exploitation—far more specific than Tacitus', which proffers few details save the personal maltreatment of Boudica and her daughters.

Again like Tacitus' version, Dio's Boudica oration seems trapped between a condemnation of Roman society tied to romanticizing a "primitive" Celtic culture and a denigration of non-Romans. Dio also offers distinctly Roman touches to his Amazonian portrait of Boudica. And there is something moral about Dio's Boudica—even if this morality is largely encased in an alien garb. If anything, Dio's exhortation appears less impressive because it seems rambling and undisciplined, not because Dio has no regard for the plight of Boudica.

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[56] Tacitus may have had access to Suetonius Paulinus' memoirs—if they existed—which may have touched upon his career in Britain. See Plin. *Nat.* 5.1.14. On the possibility of this memoir pertaining to Britain, see Fabia (above, n.11) 338–39; Syme (above, n.11) 297, 765. Orsi (above, n.11) 532 thinks that Tacitus may have used them as a source; N. Reed, "The Sources for Tacitus and Dio for the Boudiccan Revolt," *Latomus* 33 (1974) 926–33, believes that both Tacitus' and Dio's accounts of the rebellion are ultimately based on the testimony of Paulinus. Jahn (above, n.27) guesses that Dio's description of Boudica comes from Paulinus' memoirs.

[57] See above, p. 174.

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Under such circumstances, it is far-fetched to conclude that neither Tacitus nor Dio is capable of extending partial sympathy to Boudica and the Britons. Although they both anchor their arguments in the outlook of Graeco-Roman elites, they demonstrate an ability to focus on the problems of Roman expansionism. This calls into question numerous contemporary readings of Roman historians' attitudes toward Roman imperialism, as such exegeses have the tendency to view the matter as too cut-and-dried: the modern scholar attuned to current positions on the topic is likely to underestimate or ignore the self-criticism detectable in ancient historians' works, preferring to portray a self-assured author superciliously condemning all anti-Romanism. Why must these orations be seen as the equivalent of medieval morality plays? Why cannot ancient authors perceive Roman rule to be both a blessing and a curse? It appears as if both Tacitus and Dio, in their respective speeches of Boudica, are asking the latter question.

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