

Zeitschrift: Museum Helveticum : schweizerische Zeitschrift für klassische Altertumswissenschaft = Revue suisse pour l'étude de l'antiquité classique = Rivista svizzera di filologia classica

Herausgeber: Schweizerische Vereinigung für Altertumswissenschaft

Band: 62 (2005)

Heft: 2

Artikel: The date of Corbulo's campaigns in lower Germany

Autor: Malloch, S.J.V.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-47935>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 18.02.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

The Date of Corbulo's Campaigns in lower Germany

By S. J. V. Malloch, Cambridge

In his narrative year of AD 47¹ Tacitus records that Gannascus, a former Roman auxiliary, was leading the Chauci on raids into lower Germany and, especially, on the coastline of the Gauls (*Ann.* 11.18.1). Cn. Domitius Corbulo, now legate of lower Germany since the death of Q. Sanquinius Maximus, entered lower Germany (*provinciam ingressus*) and routed Gannascus (*luntribusque hostium depressis et exturbato Gannasco*), a campaign which gave him his first taste of the *gloria* that would so characterise his later career (11.18.2). When the situation was sufficiently settled, Corbulo turned his attention to the discipline of his troops (11.18.2–3, cf. 19.1), and events pick up again at 11.19.1 with his resettlement of the Frisii.

Most scholars have accepted Tacitus' date of 47 for Corbulo's arrival in lower Germany and victory over Gannascus². In his article on Corbulo in *RE*, Stein too accepted the date, but remarked that Corbulo's campaigns might have started in 46 if one took as evidence coinage that contained the legend *de Germanis* and was dated to 46³. He then referred the reader to Groag's article on Claudius in *RE*. Under the year 46 in his chronological breakdown of Claudius' reign, Groag noted that coinage bearing the reverse legends *de Britann(is)* and *de Germanis* indicates that there were battles in Britain and on the Rhine in that year, and he suggested that Corbulo perhaps commenced his campaigns in Ger-

- 1 Tacitus opens *Ann.* 11.18.1 with the stock temporal formula *per idem tempus*, which "implies an indeterminate chronological relationship with what precedes" and is used to situate events in the narrative year in question, in this case in 47 (A. J. Woodman/R. H. Martin, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 3* [Cambridge 1996] 262 [on 3.29.1]). Tacitus commences his account of *res Germaniae* at 11.16.1 with a more explicit reference to the narrative year, *eodem anno*.
- 2 E. Ritterling, *Fasti des römischen Deutschland unter dem Prinzipat* (Vienna 1932) 48, cf. 49; V. M. Scramuzza, *The Emperor Claudius* (Cambridge 1940) 197; G. Walser, *Rom, das Reich und die fremden Völker* (Baden-Baden 1951) 42; W. Eck, *Die Statthalter der germanischen Provinzen vom 1.–3. Jahrhundert* (Köln/Bonn 1985) 117–118, cf. 116; R. Syme, "Curtailed tenures of consular legates", *ZPE* 59 (1985) 265 = *Roman Papers*, ed. A. A. Birley, Vol. 5 (Oxford 1988) 500; A. King, *Roman Gaul and Germany* (London 1990) 164; B. Levick, *Claudius* (New Haven/London 1990) 153; *CAH*² 10.236 (Th. Wiedemann). The exact date of Q. Sanquinius Maximus' death is unknown: see *PIR*¹ S 136; *RE* s.v. Sanquinius 4; Ritterling 48; Eck 116. Dio's account, in epitome for this period, offers no independent evidence: for Corbulo in lower Germany, see 60.30.4–6 (Xiph.).
- 3 *RE* s.v. Corbulo 50 (Suppl. 3, col. 395): "doch könnte sein Feldzug in Germanien schon 46 begonnen haben, wenn man die aus diesem Jahre datierten Münzen mit der Legende *de Germanis* ... darauf beziehen will ..."; followed by M. Hammond, "Corbulo and Nero's eastern policy", *HSCPh* 45 (1934) 87, 103 n. 4.

many in that year⁴. Nonetheless he placed the account of Gannascus' raids and Corbulo's victory in his account of the year 47, adding only at the end that the events perhaps took place in 46⁵.

Stein and Groag gave only the briefest of mentions to the numismatic evidence they cite for a date of 46. The coinage in question⁶ features Claudius on the obverse, with the legend 'TI. CLAUD. CAESAR. AUG. P. M. TR. P. VI. IMP. XI'. 'TR. P. VI. IMP. XI' places the issue firmly in 46, Claudius' sixth year of tribunician power and the year which saw him become 'IMP. XII'⁷. On the reverse is featured a "triumphal arch, surmounted by an equestrian statue, l[eft], between two trophies; the rider holds spear in l[eft] hand and extends r[ight] in act of address"⁸; 'DE GERMANIS' is written on the architrave.⁹ The imagery of the reverse is similar to that of the issue of 46 for the conquest of Britain¹⁰, but the style more closely evokes the issue of 41 for P. Gabinius Secundus' victory against the Chauci¹¹, which recovered for Rome the last remaining standard lost with Varus in AD 9. These associations with other victory issues suggest that the *de Germanis* issue of 46 seeks also to exploit a military success: that success was Corbulo's routing of Gannascus.

- 4 *RE* s.v. Claudius 256, col. 2800: "Münzen aus diesem Jahr mit den Reverslegenden *de Britann(is)* und *de Germanis* ... sprechen dafür, dass in Britannien und am Rheine gekämpft wurde; wahrscheinlich setzte Plautius seine Unternehmungen fort und hatte Domitius Corbulo die seinigien begonnen (s. zum J. 47)."
- 5 *RE* s.v. Claudius 256, col. 2804: "Doch gelang es dem neuen Statthalter von Germania inferior, Cn. Domitius Corbulo, mit der Rheinflotte die feindlichen Fahrzeuge zu vernichten (vielleicht schon im J. 46, s. d.)." Similarly, his biography of Corbulo at *PIR*² D 142: "Legatus Aug. pro pr. exercitus Germanici inferioris a. 47 ... fortasse iam a. 46 ..."
- 6 *BMC* Claudius 36 = *RIC*² Claudius 35. H.-M. von Kaenel describes it as a "neuzeitliche Fälschung" (*Münzprägung und Münzbildnis des Claudius* [Berlin 1986] 12 n. on Münztyp 27). Cf. T. Fischer, "Bemerkungen zur spätclaudischen Münzprägung", *SchwNR* 46 (1967) 35 n. 9, who records that R. A. G. Carson considers the coin to be authentic. Accordingly, it appears in *RIC*². I take the coin to be genuine, but understand that if it is proved to be a modern forgery any argument which employs it as evidence cannot be sustained.
- 7 *CIL* XIV.85 = *ILS* 207 = *Docs* 312 b. *CIL* XIV.85 also records Claudius as "TRIB. POTEST. VI" and "COS. DESIGN. IIII", designate, that is, for 47.
- 8 *BMC* Claudius 36, which has the same description as *BMC* Claudius 29.
- 9 *BMC* Claudius 36 and von Kaenel ([n. 6] 12 n. on Münztyp 27) record that "DE GERMANI" is written on the architrave; *RIC*² Claudius 35 n. reports that "the final and rather flattened S is in fact visible".
- 10 Hence the description of the reverse of *BMC* Claudius 36 is that of the reverse of the *de Britann(is)* issue, *BMC* Claudius 29. See above n. 8.
- 11 *BMC* Claudius 2 = *RIC*² Claudius 4 (cf. 3) = von Kaenel (n. 6) p. 50, Münztyp 5; cf. Dio 60.8.7; Suet. *Claud.* 24. The description of the reverse of *BMC* Claudius 2 reads "Triumphal arch surmounted by an equestrian statue l[eft], between two trophies; the rider holds sword(?) in l[eft] hand. DE GERMANIS on architrave". But the coins featured at von Kaenel (n. 6) Münztyp 5 nos 73–80 (plate 2) appear to depict the rider with the top of the right arm raised as in an act of address; and no. 77 perhaps depicts a spear, not a sword.

In the most recent work on the *Statthalter* of upper and lower Germany, Werner Eck dates Corbulo's legateship and campaign against Gannascus to 47, and he is sceptical of the credibility of the *de Germanis* issue of 46 as evidence¹². Eck claims that since there is coinage extant, datable to between 41 and 45, which depicts Claudius' father, the elder Drusus, and contains similar reverse types to the *de Germanis* issue of 46¹³, that fact renders the *de Germanis* issue of 46 inconclusive as evidence for Stein's suggestion that the campaigns, and thus Corbulo's tenure as legate, commenced in 46¹⁴. Eck's argument does not convince. The *de Germanis* issue of 46 does not depict the elder Drusus on the obverse and cannot be taken as part of the series dated to between 41 and 45. Although several of the reverse types of the elder Drusus issues bear a resemblance to the reverse type of the *de Germanis* issue of 46, this may have been a deliberate attempt visually to associate Claudius' success with his father's¹⁵; beyond that, the two sets of issues served different purposes. As with the earlier *de Germanis* issue of 41 and the contemporary *de Britannis* issue of 46, the *de Germanis* issue of 46 depicts Claudius and was intended to celebrate a victory in Germany that was to be directly identified with the emperor, having been achieved under his auspices. The elder Drusus issues, on the other hand, exploited Drusus' German victories of 12–9 BC¹⁶ as a part of Claudius' early propaganda programme to appropriate the military glory of his family in the absence of his own self-won military distinction. The elder Drusus was an important part of this programme, and Claudius used him not only in numismatic propaganda¹⁷ but in statue groups as well, at least one of which portrayed the elder Drusus as a triumphant general and emphasised his blood-link to Germanicus – and thus to Claudius¹⁸. After Claudius' conquest of Britain in 43, a

12 Eck (n. 2) 117–118, cf. 116; cf. Ritterling (n. 2) 48–49, who dates Corbulo's tenure to 47 and remarks: "Tacitus' kurzer Bericht faßt Corbulos Erfolge gegen Chauken und Friesen unter dem J. 47 zusammen: aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach aber ist der Beginn seines Kommandos am Niederrhein schon etwas früher, spätestens in das J. 46, anzusetzen."

13 The elder Drusus issues cited by Eck ([n. 2] 118 n. 10) are *BMC* Claudius 95–108 (cf. *RIC*² Claudius 69–74; von Kaenel [n. 6] pp. 57–63, Münztyp 12–14). Only the reverse types of *BMC* Claudius 99–103 closely resemble that of *BMC* Claudius 36.

14 Eck (n. 2) 118: "Nach Stein könnten Münzen aus dem J. 46 mit der Legende *de Germanis* möglicherweise mit seinem Feldzug zusammenhängen. Da jedoch auf anderen Münzen für den Vater des Claudius, Nero Claudius Drusus, die allgemein in die Jahre 41–45 datiert werden und dem Typus vom J. 46 sehr ähneln, ebenfalls an Erfolge über die Germanen erinnert wird, muß dies nicht beweiskräftig sein."

15 Cf. *BMC* Intr. clii; C. B. Rose, *Dynastic Commemoration and Imperial Portraiture in the Julio-Claudian Period* (Cambridge 1997) 39.

16 *BMC* Intr. clv.

17 Aside from the coins discussed here, cf. *BMC* Claudius 157–165, 208–212, 241 (cf. *RIC*² Claudius 93, 109). See Rose (n. 15) 39.

18 Drusus is portrayed as a triumphant general in a fragmentary relief from Ravenna: see Rose (n. 15) 40, 100–102, with plates 98–104; in general, 39–40, 42.

major success to rival that of his father, the elder Drusus became less important to the emperor as a military figure, and faded from view¹⁹.

The significance of the *de Germanis* issue of 46 is secure: what, then, of Tacitus' placement of Corbulo's victory under 47? Tacitus can and does distort the chronology of *res externae*; at times he admits it²⁰, especially if he thinks that he has good reason for distortion, but there are instances where he does not. Here is one. At *Ann.* 11.8.1, under the narrative year of 47²¹, Tacitus reports that Claudius restored Mithridates to Armenia. The statement is there as an introductory marker to note the item of Roman interest in the following three chapters of Parthian affairs: Mithridates' return is actually narrated later, at 11.9.1–2. Dio, in contrast, locates the restoration in his narrative year of 41 (60.8.1). Internal evidence in Tacitus militates against his later date. Firstly, at 11.9.4, Seleucia on the Tigris surrendered to the new Parthian king, Vardanes I, *septimo post defectionem anno*. Tacitus narrates the start of the rebellion in 36 (*Ann.* 6.42.1–4)²², which on his scheme means that it ended in 42, a date very close to that attested by the numismatic record (late 41)²³ and by Dio (41)²⁴. After the capitulation of Seleucia Vardanes is reported to have visited the

19 Levick (n. 2) 45, with examples. The elder Drusus issues are dated mainly to between 41 and 45: *BMC Claudius* 95–108, 157–165, 208–212; *BMC Claudius* 241 is dated to “c. 46(?)”; *BMC Claudius* 208 is dated at *RIC*² *Claudius* 109 to “c. AD50(?)–4”. Cf. also *ILS* 212 = *Docs* 369 (AD 47): Claudius boasts of his conquest of Britain (l. 39–41), and later mentions the elder Drusus *Germaniam subigens* (2.36–37).

20 *Ann.* 6.38.1 (see also below, n. 24), 12.40.5 (quoted below, n. 29), 13.9.3.

21 Tacitus opens 11.8.1 with *sub idem tempus*, which is similar in function to *per idem tempus*: see above n. 1.

22 See K. Nipperdey/G. Andresen, *P. Cornelius Tacitus, ii. Ab Excussu Divi Augusti XI–XVI* (Berlin 1908) on 11.9.4, followed by Furneaux and Koestermann. Cf. N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (Chicago 1938) 164, who gives a start date of 35; A. D. H. Bivar in: E. Yarshater (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran. Volume 3 (1) The Seleucid, Parthian and Sasanian Periods* (Cambridge 1983) 71, 72: “A. D. 35–36”. There is no numismatic evidence to help clarify this problem. See also below, n. 24.

23 Seleucia on the Tigris was minting Vardanes' issues in October 41, which indicates that the revolt had finished by that time at the latest. See D. Sellwood, *An Introduction to the Coinage of Parthia* (London 1980) type 64.1 (p. 208).

24 Tacitus can be reconciled with the numismatic evidence and Dio by assuming that he either misdated the start of the revolt or moved it from its correct location in 35 (which would see the revolt end in 41) to the narrative year of 36. The latter is a possibility. Under 35 he gives an account of the installation of Tiridates (*Ann.* 6.32.3–37.4). The narrative picks up again under 36 with one of Tiridates' first acts, his receiving the submission of certain Parthian cities, Seleucia included (6.41.2–43.1). Since haste was to his advantage (cf. 6.43.1) Tiridates may have traveled to these cities immediately on his installation in 35, and thus the start of the revolt of Seleucia dated from that year. Tacitus may have chosen Tiridates' installation as an easy, though artificial, place to divide the material and so deferred notice of the revolt to his narrative year of 36 because that and other events leading to Artabanus II's regaining the throne (6.44.5) formed a narrative unity. Already in his eastern account Tacitus has admitted to combining the events of two summers (34–35: 6.38.1, referring to 6.31–37; cf. R. H. Martin, *Tacitus Annals V & VI* [Warminster 2001] 167); he may have silently combined the events of 35–36 in his account at 6.41.2–44.5.

strongest Parthian provinces and then to have desired to recover Armenia (11.10.1), by which time Mithridates was already on the throne (11.9.1–2). The order of events in Tacitus requires that Mithridates was back in Armenia before or approximately at the same time as the conclusion of the revolt of Seleucia – that is, the restoration must have occurred in the second half of 41²⁵. Secondly, Tacitus tells how C. Vibius Marsus, legate of Syria, by threatening war prevented Vardanes from attempting to retake Armenia (11.10.1). The dates of Marsus' legateship further clarify the chronology. Coinage indicates that P. Petronius was still the legate in 41/2²⁶, and Josephus confirms that he lasted approximately one year into Claudius' reign (*AJ* 19.316). In 42 at the latest he was recalled and replaced by Marsus (*AJ* 19.316), who was himself recalled on the death in 44 of Herod Agrippa (*AJ* 20.1). Marsus' legateship must have terminated in either late 44 or early 45²⁷, which makes the term of his office 42–44/5. This complements the evidence provided by the revolt of Seleucia: Marsus was fresh in his post as legate in the period after the conclusion of the revolt and when Vardanes desired to regain Armenia; but he would not have been in office to warn off the Parthian king had these events actually occurred in 47. The numismatic record and the evidence of Tacitus and Dio suggest a date for the restoration of Mithridates much earlier than that provided by Tacitus' location of the episode in his narrative year of 47. Tacitus' technique at 11.8–10 is to narrate events that cover more than one year, without any hint to the reader that he is doing so; the events recorded at the end of 11.10 are shown by the numismatic evidence to belong to c. 47, in line with the narrative year²⁸. During this period events in Armenia and Parthia were often interrelated, and narrative clarity demanded a degree of fusion and chronological dislocation within the accounts

25 41 is the date accepted by moderns: D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor to the End of the Third Century after Christ* (Princeton 1950) 2. 1409–1410, with earlier bibliography; M.-L. Chaumont, "L'Arménie entre Rome et l'Iran", *ANRW* 2.9.1 (1976) 92; D. Braud, *Rome and the Friendly King. The Character of the Client Kingship* (London 1984) 170.

26 *RPC* nos 4276–4277; E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175BC–AD135)*, rev. edn. ed. G. Vermes and F. Millar (Edinburgh 1973) 1. 263.

27 Schürer (n. 26) 1. 263–264. Coins belonging to Marsus' successor, C. Cassius Longinus, are extant, dated to 45/6 (J. Eckhel, *Doctrina Numorum Veterum* [Vienna 1792–1798] part 1, vol. 3, p. 280, no. 11; T. E. Mionnet, *Description de Médailles Antiques Grecques et Romaines* [Paris 1806–1837] vol. 5, p. 167, no. 174; not in *RPC*) and to 47/8 (Eckhel, *ibid.*; Mionnet no. 176; *RPC* nos 4278–4280). Schürer ([n. 26] 264) remarks that only the issue of 47/8 is above suspicion.

28 By the end of 11.10 Vardanes was dead, and Gotarzes II and Meherdates contended for the throne until Gotarzes was successful. His *saevitia* and *luxus* led to a secret embassy to Rome requesting that Meherdates be installed (11.10.4). Tacitus' date of 47 is close to that provided by the numismatic record: Gotarzes was minting "named" issues in 45/6 and 46/7 in response to Meherdates' rivalry to the throne: see Sellwood (n. 23) p. 213, type 66 (pp. 218–219); cf. R. H. McDowell, *Coins from Seleucia on the Tigris* (Ann Arbor, 1935) no. 90 (pp. 72–73), p. 227, who, using a different chronology, dates Gotarzes' issues to 46/7 and 47/8. Tacitus defers full treatment of Meherdates' challenge until the narrative year of 49 (12.10.1ff.).

of *res externae*²⁹ and sensitivity to the surrounding narratives of *res internae*. There was little point in narrating Mithridates' restoration in 41, only to recall it when it became relevant to later events in Parthia. Moreover, Tacitus' account of the turbulent and dramatic politics at Rome in 41 would not have brooked interruption by notice of such an event, whereas the narrative location of 11.8–10, in addition to adhering eventually to the chronology of the events, further provided Tacitus with the opportunity to give early notice of the rivalry between Britannicus and the young Nero, L. Domitius Ahenobarbus, whilst the reader's attention was focused on the sibling conflict of the Parthian monarchs Vardanes and Gotarzes³⁰.

Tacitus' willingness to distort chronology combines with the evidence of the *de Germanis* issue of 46 to cast serious doubt on the chronological accuracy of his narrative at 11.18.1. Tacitus chose to record Corbulo's activities as legate under 47 since it was most probably during that year that he undertook to campaign beyond the Rhine and was recalled by Claudius, the climax of 11.18–20 and of his legateship. Corbulo's actions, curtailed as they were, formed a neat whole and demanded not separate instalments spread between narrative years, which would lose coherence and momentum, but a single narrative unit. Tacitus therefore commences his account with the relevant events of 46 and moves silently and without interruption into those of 47: Corbulo's early success against Gannascus and his strict reforms in camp as a 'warm up' for major operations beyond the Rhine, heralded by his resettlement of the Frisii, his approach to the greater Chauci, and his assassination of Gannascus (11.19.1–2). This concentration of material also offered Tacitus the opportunity to spotlight Corbulo, one of his heroes³¹. Throughout his account, Tacitus presents Corbulo favourably, testifies to his energy and ability and discipline, and lays the foundation of his reputation, which looks forward to his eastern command under Nero. Corbulo offered a window into the Republican past of conquest and glory³², a clear contrast to the diplomatic and militarily passive style of the first-century emperors, represented here by Claudius in his dealings with the Cherusci at 11.16–17, in his recall of Corbulo at 11.19.3, and in his awarding *triumphalia ornamenta* to Curtius Rufus for non-military exploits at 11.20.3. Yet conquest in

29 Cf. Tacitus' explanation of chronological distortion at *Ann.* 12.40.5: *haec, quamquam a duobus [Ostorio Didioque] pro praetoribus plures per annos gesta, coniunxi, ne divisa haud perinde ad memoriam sui valerent.*

30 Cf. E. Keitel, *The Structure of Tacitus Annals 11 and 12* (Diss. Chapel Hill 1977) 43; idem, "The role of Parthia and Armenia in Tacitus *Annals* 11 and 12", *AJPh* 99 (1978) 463. It should be added that the rivalry between Britannicus and the young Nero and eventual predominance of the latter is some way off – in *Ann.* 12, in fact, and beyond to *Ann.* 13. It is the vignette at 11.11.2–3 rather than the Parthian material which looks forward to this future discord.

31 R. Syme, *Tacitus* (Oxford 1958) 492.

32 Cf. D. W. T. C. Vessey, "Thoughts on Tacitus' Portrait of Claudius", *AJPh* 92 (1971) 396; and C. B. R. Pelling's analysis of the Tacitean Germanicus: "Tacitus and Germanicus", in: T. J. Luce/A. J. Woodman (edd.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton 1993) 59–85.

Germany would have made Corbulo a *vir insignis*, burdensome to the *princeps* and a threat to peace (11.19.3); here Tacitus again looks forward to Nero's reign and his destruction of Corbulo, and, on a more abstract level, he meditates on the precarious position of *virī insignes* under the principate. Accordingly Claudius recalled Corbulo³³, who by then was making camp in enemy territory across the Rhine (11.20.1). Corbulo's *mot* on this occasion '*beatos quondam duces Romanos*' (11.20.1) testifies to a way of life which he has briefly lived but which, pursued with the independence he has shown, is incompatible with a system where military glory was jealousy guarded by the *princeps*. Reality forces a change of the legate's brief, and military exploits are exchanged for non-military ones: Corbulo has his men construct a *fossa* between the Meuse and the Rhine. Tacitus brings the Corbulo chapters to a close by reporting that Claudius awarded him *triumphalia ornamenta*, although he had denied him war (11.20.2)³⁴.

Corbulo's achievements and their reward are immediately cheapened by the transfer of narrative focus to Curtius Rufus³⁵, legate of upper Germany, whose non-military mining exploits are recognised by *triumphalia ornamenta* (11.20.3), and to a character sketch of the same legate (11.21.1–3), which reveals Curtius to be the embodiment of a 'principate man', suggestive of what can be expected by and from a senator under the new monarchy. Like Claudius Curtius throws into sharp relief the figure cut by Corbulo in the preceding chapters, and again Corbulo comes out the better man³⁶. The narrative strategies operating within the block of *res Germaniae* at 11.16–20 demanded that chronological fidelity be subordinated to thematic preoccupations. And by concentrating *res Germaniae* in five consecutive chapters Tacitus could also free the re-

33 *igitur* makes Claudius appear to act on criticism of Corbulo at 11.19.3, which was in the minority (*apud quosdam*; cf. *apud plerosque*). Cf. Dio/Xiph. (60.30.4), who states that Claudius recalled Corbulo because he did not want him to become more powerful. Although the idea that Claudius reacted against Corbulo was in the tradition, it is not necessarily true and perhaps his motivation was inferred from the action he took.

34 Cf. Dio/Xiph. (60.30.5): the structure of his account has Corbulo recalled from Germany, give his *mot*, receive *triumphalia ornamenta*, and then turn his attention to his troops and the *fossa*. The impression is that Claudius granted Corbulo *triumphalia ornamenta* on his recall for his earlier military successes. Tacitus places the award after the *fossa*. Yet *triumphalia ornamenta* probably recognised Corbulo's overall military achievement, as the version of Dio/Xiph. makes clear. By placing the notice of the award last in the chapter Tacitus facilitates the transfer of narrative focus to Curtius Rufus and his reward for a non-military feat. See below.

35 Cf. Vessey (n. 32) 396; Keitel (n. 30 *Structure*) 61, who however argues that the juxtaposition of the grant of *triumphalia ornamenta* with the *fossa* cheapens the award. Rather it is the juxtaposition with Curtius which undermines the award. Had Tacitus adopted the same structure as that of Dio the notice of the *fossa* would be more anomalous, the transfer to Curtius more strained, and the effect achieved here lost.

36 Cf. Vessey (n. 32) 396; K. Seif, *Die Claudiusbücher in den Annalen des Tacitus* (Mainz 1973) 88–89.

mainder of *Ann.* 11 for important *res internae* whose drama required a sequence of narrative unbroken by reports of events from abroad.

Corbulo, then, was in lower Germany and had routed Gannascus in 46 at the latest. For this victory Claudius was perhaps saluted 'imperator' by the legions³⁷, and in celebration he minted a *de Germanis* issue. Strengthened by an awareness of Tacitus' capacity for temporal distortion, the numismatic evidence should be accepted as providing a more accurate chronology than Tacitus' narrative at 11.18.1³⁸.

Correspondence:

S. J. V. Malloch
St John's College
St John's Street
GB-Cambridge
CB1 1TP

- 37 Claudius started 46 as "IMP. XI" (*CIL* V.5050 = *ILS* 206 = *Docs* 368; *CIL* V.8003; XI.3791), and by the end of the year was "IMP. XII" (*CIL* X.1558; XIV.85 = *ILS* 207 = *Docs* 312b). Groag ([n. 4] col. 2800) suggested that Claudius received his twelfth salutation for the installation of Cotys as king of the Bosporus in 46 (cf. Dio/Petr. Patr. 60.28.7). It is possible, however, that Claudius received the salutation for Corbulo's success against Gannascus, just as he had received one for P. Gabinius Secundus' victory over the Chauci in 41 (Dio 60.8.7).
- 38 For criticism I should like to thank Professor J. A. Crook, Professor S. P. Oakley, and Professor M. D. Reeve. Professor H. Mattingly kindly gave advice on numismatic issues.