

HIST 4033 The Roman Empire
Paper 1 / 1600 -1800 Words
Due September 18 by 5pm

Historians of the ancient world considered themselves to be literary artists as well as narrators of facts, and would freely adapt and rework earlier works if it suited their purposes. This includes rewriting famous speeches. However, it is rare that we have both the original and adaptation for comparison to see how an ancient historian worked. One case where we do is the speech the Emperor Claudius delivered to the senate advocating for Roman citizens of Gaul to be admitted to the senate in 48. Most of the original speech of Claudius survives on a bronze tablet which was found near Lyon, France (below). The historian Tacitus included a version in his account of the reign of Claudius (*Annals* 11.24, pg. 207-208 in your translation - read 11.23 as well for the background).

For this paper, you will compare the two speeches, and analyze how Tacitus has adapted Claudius's original. Some issues you should consider as you build your argument:

- What arguments of Claudius does Tacitus keep in his version? Does he put them in the same position in the speech? How does Tacitus change the emphasis?
- What arguments does Tacitus use that are missing from Claudius's speech?
- Does Tacitus use the same examples as Claudius? If he uses different examples, how do they change the emphasis or focus of the speech?
- Is the larger thrust of the speeches the same, or has Tacitus shifted the emphasis? If he has, how is his version different?

Based on these points, explain how Tacitus has adapted Claudius's speech. Does he maintain the basic outline and ideas of the original, or does he have different aims? What does this show about how ancient historians work? Which version of the speech do you find more effective, and why?

Do not be judgmental about Tacitus's adaptation, and remember, ancient historians have different standards than modern historians. You are to limit your analysis to the speeches of Claudius and Tacitus alone – do not look at modern scholarship or other sources. I want to read what you have to say, not what someone else has to say. Looking at outside sources will result in an automatic F on the assignment.

Use direct quotes sparingly and when they will specifically illustrate the point you are trying to make. Try to avoid excessive summary. Whenever you quote or paraphrase, be sure to cite the ancient author. Cite the text by the sentence numbers, either in the sentence or parenthetically; e.g. "As Claudius says at 12..." or "as explained by Tacitus (24.2)" - make sure to distinguish between Claudius and Tacitus's version of Claudius. Use Times New Roman or a similar serif font, double-spaced, with 1" margins all around. Don't forget to put a page number at the bottom of each page. Papers are due on September 18 by 5pm. Send your paper as a .doc, .docx, .pdf, or .rtf attachment to cmuntz@uark.edu. Late papers will not be accepted except in cases of documented emergencies.

The Lyon Speech of Claudius

(A line or two is missing from the top of the tablet)

1. I should say at the outset that I reject the first thought that will, I am sure, be the very first thing to stand in my way: namely that you will recoil from my suggestion as though I were introducing some revolutionary innovation. Think, instead, of how many changes have taken place over the years in this state and how many forms and constitutions our state has had, from the time of its very foundation.

2. At one time this city was held by kings, though they did not pass it along to successors from their own families. People from other families came to the throne and even some foreigners. Numa, for example, succeeded Romulus, and was a Sabine; that made him a neighbor, certainly, but at the time he was also a foreigner. Another example is Tarquinius Priscus, who succeeded Ancus Marcius: because of his impure blood—his father was the Corinthian Demaratus and his mother was from Tarquinii, to Tarquinius Priscus supposedly had a Greek father and an Etruscan mother. And though well-born she was very poor, which is why she was forced to marry such a husband—Tarquinius was kept from positions of honor in his own land and thus emigrated to Rome, where he became king.¹

3. Between Tarquinius and either his son or his grandson (for our authorities disagree on this point) there came Servius Tullius. And according to the Roman sources Servius Tullius had as a mother a prisoner of war, Ocresia; according to the Etruscans he had been the faithful companion of Caelius Vivenna² and took part in his adventures, and later, when he was driven out by a change of fortune, he left Etruria with all the surviving troops of Caelius and seized the Caelian hill,³ which thus takes its name from his leader Caelius, and after changing his name (for his Etruscan name was Mastarna) he was given the name I have already mentioned, and became king, to the very great advantage of the state. Then, after the behavior of Tarquinius Superbus came to be hated by our city—and not only his behavior but that of his sons—the people obviously became tired of monarchy, and the administration of state was transferred to the consuls, who were annual magistrates.⁴

4. Why need I mention the dictatorship—more powerful even than the consulship—which was what our ancestors came up with when wars were particularly hard or there was serious civil disturbance? Or why need I mention the the creation of tribunes of the plebs, to provide assistance for the plebs? Why mention transfer of *imperium* from consuls to the decemviri, and at the end of the reign of the decemviri the return of *imperium* back to the consuls? Why mention the distribution of the consular power to multiple recipients, called tribunes of the soldiers with

¹ Numa, Ancus Marcius, and Tarquinius Priscus were the second, fourth, and fifth kings of Rome.

² A famous Etruscan adventurer. The Etruscans were the dominant people in central and northern Italy before the rise of Rome.

³ One of the seven hills of Rome.

⁴ Servius Tullius was the sixth king of Rome, and was murdered by Tarquinius Superbus, the seventh king and son or grandson of Tarquinius Priscus.

consular power, who were first six and then eight in number?⁵ Why should I mention the fact that offices that were once patrician ones were shared eventually with the plebeians, religious ones as well as military?⁶

5. If I were to tell of the wars, which our ancestors started with and which have continued down to the present day, I fear that I would appear too boastful, and look as though I wanted to boast about my glory in extending the empire beyond the Ocean.⁷ But let me instead return to my original point. Citizenship can ...

[some text is lost here]

6. Certainly it was a new thing when my great-uncle Augustus and my uncle Tiberius decided to admit into this Senate house the flower of the *coloniae* and the cities from all over the empire—all of them good and wealthy men of course.⁸ But, you may say, is not an Italian senator more useful than a provincial one? When I start explaining this aspect of my censorship I will reveal what I think about that.⁹ But certainly I think that provincials should not be rejected, as long as they will be a credit to the Senate.

7. Behold that most glorious and flourishing colony of Vienne: how long has it provided senators for this chamber?¹⁰ From Vienne comes an ornament of the equestrian order¹¹ with few equals, Lucius Vestinus, whom I esteem greatly and retain even now in my service. May his children, I beseech you, enjoy priesthoods of the first rank, and after that, in the years to come, may they proceed to further honors. (I will not utter the dire name of that brigand—I detest him, that monster of the wrestling-ring—or the fact that he acquired the consulship for his family before his colony had ever obtained the solid benefit of the Roman citizenship.¹² And I could say the same thing about his brother, who suffered a pathetic and fate, and was thus no use to you as a senator.)

⁵ These are the various magistrates of the Roman Republic. Dictators were appointed for six months on an emergency basis. The decemviri were elected in the mid-fifth century to codify Rome's laws. *Imperium* refers to the legal power to raise and command armies. Tribunes of the soldiers replaced consuls for several decades, apparently in response to increased military demands, and are different from the tribunes of the plebs, who were civic officials with veto power.

⁶ Traditionally, early Rome was beset with a power struggle between the patricians, the families descended from the original senators, and the plebeians, who encompassed the remainder of the populace. This conflict of orders was resolved by the late 3rd century BCE through a series of power-sharing agreements.

⁷ A reference to Claudius's conquest of southern Britain.

⁸ *Coloniae*, or colonies, were foundations made up of Roman veterans which were spread throughout Italy, and eventually into the provinces.

⁹ As censor, Claudius had in mind to reform the senate.

¹⁰ A Latin colony in southern France that received full Roman citizenship under either Caligula or Claudius.

¹¹ The rank below senator.

¹² Claudius is referring to Valerius Asiaticus, who had been part of the plot to kill Caligula and who led a dissolute lifestyle. He was also from Vienne, and apparently became consul in 35 before full citizenship had been extended to the colony.

8. It is time now, Tiberius Caesar Germanicus,¹³ to reveal to the senators where your speech is headed; for you have already come to the extreme limits of Gallia Narbonensis.

9. Consider all the distinguished young men I see before me: the fact that they are senators should cause no more regret than that felt by Persicus—a most distinguished man and a friend of mine—when he reads the name Allobrogicus among the images of his ancestors.¹⁴ And if you agree that this is true, what should I not also point out to you that the land beyond Gallia Narbonensis already sends you senators? We do not, after all, regret that we have men in the senate from Lugdunum.¹⁵

10. I was somewhat hesitant, senators, about leaving the boundaries of provinces that were well known to you, but now I must make the case for Gallia Comata¹⁶ with some seriousness. If anyone concentrates on the fact that the Gauls resisted the divine Julius in war for ten years, he should consider that they have also been loyal and trustworthy for a hundred years, and had this loyalty tried to the utmost when we were in danger. They it was who provided my father Drusus with secure internal peace when he was conquering Germany, even though he was summoned to the war while in the middle of a census, which was then a new and strange business for the Gauls. And we know from our own experience how difficult the census can be, even though for us it involves nothing more than the public recording of our resources.

[The surviving text ends here. Presumably the speech continued on a second bronze tablet, but it seems unlikely there was much more - Claudius will have made his direct proposal to allow Gauls with Roman citizenship to become Roman senators]

¹³ Claudius refers to himself by the rest of his name.

¹⁴ Paullus Fabius Persicus had an ancestor called Quintus Fabius Allobrogicus - but this refers not to his ancestry, but rather to the fact that he won a battle over the Allobroges, a Gaulic people.

¹⁵ Claudius, who was born in Lugdunum (modern Lyon), is jokingly referring to himself.

¹⁶ Literally “Long-Haired Gaul” this is general term for the interior of Gaul away from the Mediterranean coast. This was the portion conquered by Julius Caesar in his famous campaigns in the 50s BCE.