CIRCUMNAVIGATING TACITUS' *AGRICOLA*: *MISE EN ABYME* AND THE MUTINY OF THE USIPI

by

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(Under the Direction of Erika T. Hermanowicz)

ABSTRACT

This study examines the bizarre account of the mutiny of the Usipi in Tacitus' *Agricola*. It argues that this centrally placed, ostensible digression actually functions as a *mise en abyme* for the work. Just as the *Agricola* presents its readers with a complex series of generic and thematic elements, so too does the mutiny narrative contain all of these features and reflect them in a single episode: historiography and the commemoration of great deeds, anti-Domitianic rhetoric and the central theme of liberty versus servitude, ethnography and foreign interactions, and circumnavigation as a symbol for the conquest of Britain. Moreover, by taking these elements to various extremes, the mutiny of the Usipi exhibits the tendency of the *mise en abyme* to distort the work that it reflects.

INDEX WORDS: Tacitus, Agricola, Mutiny, Usipi, Mise en abyme, Agr. 28, Domitian, Roman Britain, Circumnavigation, Periplous

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DEDICATION

hic interim liber I dedicate to my grandparents, whose endless support and limitless affection is hardly repaid by this *professio pietatis*.

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This two-year *beatissimi saeculi ortus* at the University of Georgia, coming not long after a very dark period in my life, owes so much to countless individuals who have helped me along the way.

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provided much insight into issues I would have otherwise overlooked. He was also meticulous in catching more rudimentary errors that (and I am slightly embarrassed to say this) I should have spotted on my own. I would also like to thank William Turpin at Swarthmore, as well as Chris Kraus, Emily Greenwood, and Egbert Bakker at Yale, who were willing to dedicate at least some of their time to discussing and giving feedback on elements of this study. Lastly, several key issues in this thesis were brought to light at a February Classics Colloquium in my own department here at the University of Georgia and at the 107th Annual Meeting of CAMWS, so I would like to acknowledge the audience members for their insights, and also thank Nick Rynearson for organizing and inviting me to present at the former of these two events.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Midway through the *Agricola*, after detailing the successful military campaigns of the work's namesake and just prior to the climactic battle of Mons Graupius, Tacitus breaks from his main narrative in order to recount the remarkable adventure of the Usipi. In this episode, the historian describes how a cohort of Germanic Roman auxiliaries revolts, commandeers three Liburnian ships, and accidentally circumnavigates Britain. Even more striking is how the strange misadventure plays out. With only one captain remaining after the uprising, a series of raids on and skirmishes with coastal Britons ensues. The destitute cohort resorts to cannibalism, and the tiny contingent which makes it back to the Rhineland is taken hostage by other Germans and sold into slavery. At last, a select few find their way back to Roman territory and become the living proof of their exploits.

The mutiny of the Usipi is without a doubt an extraordinary moment in Tacitus' *Agricola*. Upon first glance the episode seems noteworthy for several reasons. For one, it appears to abruptly usurp Tacitus' account of his father-in-law's campaigns. Given the preceding descriptions of the war preparations by the Romans and the Britons, its placement just prior to the battle of Mons Graupius creates a clear break in the main narrative.[1] Likewise, Tacitus makes no effort to hide his interest in the event he is

[1] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) rightly note that Tacitus follows the historiographical tradition in deliberately pausing before the battle of Mons Graupius: "Tacitus follows the practice of Sallust and Livy in marking off and introducing major sections of his work by digressions," p. 245.

narrating. He concludes his first sentence by declaring that the cohort "dared a great and memorable deed" (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, *Agr*. 28.1). Throughout the episode he draws attention to the exceptional nature of the events using similar expressions, suggesting that the Usipi would become "as wonder in everyday gossip" (*vulgato rumore ut miraculum*, 28.1) and declaring that they eventually became "the proof of so great an incident" (*indicium tanti casus*, 28.3). Yet above all else it is the subject matter that catches the reader's attention: sedition, suspicion, slaughter, piracy, cannibalism, and reenslavement guarantee that almost nothing ordinary transpires in this second narrative. In sharp contrast to Tacitus' focus on Agricola and the British mainland, the mutiny of the Usipi transports the reader to the barely mentioned British backwaters wherein a series of astonishing events takes place.

Attempts to explain the mutiny narrative have most often focused on the accidental circumnavigation of Britain by the Usipi and its relation to the deliberate circumnavigation ordered by Agricola (10.4 and 38.3).[2] More recently, scholars have found other *Agricola*-defining elements at work in the passage, including ethnographic material, geographic content, and various rhetorical topoi.[3] Yet several aspects of the episode remain unexplored. The commemoration theme, which plays a central role in defining the *Agricola*, lies at the heart of the mutiny narrative.[4] Likewise, efforts to

[2] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 245; Martin (1981), p. 43; Clarke (2001), p. 110; Ash (2010), pp. 276-78.

[3] For discussion of the ethnographic elements, see Clarke (2001), pp. 109-10 and Ash (2010), esp. pp. 281-87, 290-93. For the geographic theme and how the Usipi help to define Britain's remote and insular status, see Clarke (2001), pp. 109-12. For the rhetorical role of the Usipi, see Clarke (2001), pp. 109-12 and Ash (2010), pp. 278, 281, 290-93.

[4] Those who view the *Agricola* as at least partly serving an encomiastic purpose are Syme (1958), p. 121; Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 11-12; Dorey (1969), p. 1; Martin (1981), p. 39; Mellor (1993), pp. 10-11; Braund (1996), pp. 151-76; Ash (2006), p. 20; and Harrison (2007), pp. 311-12, to name only a few. Whitmarsh (2006), examining the work in this context, illustrates the numerous ambiguities and complexities of this supposed biography. Clarke (2001), albeit very briefly, touches upon the encomiastic theme in the mutiny episode, pp. 109-10.

situate the passage in a work that spans many genres would benefit greatly from a broader analysis, one that underscores its multi-generic and multi-thematic nature.[5] For the question of how best to classify the *Agricola* remains a perennial problem for its readers, and the mutiny of the Usipi offers a surprising solution.

The mutiny of the Usipi does far more than simply delay the campaign narrative with an exciting chronicle.[6] It plays a central role in unifying the loosely connected elements found throughout the *Agricola*.[7] Tacitus, using the mutiny story as his starting point, shapes the passage in such a way that it offers a new representation of the work as a whole. The "mutiny" plays out on the numerous literary layers and folds of the *Agricola*. On the most basic level, Tacitus tells the story of a rebellion. In addition, through his central placement of the episode – a kind of mutinous structure – Tacitus

[5] The generic classification of the *Agricola* remains a perennial problem. Marincola (1999) calls it "one of the most problematic works in Roman literature," p. 318. The work certainly professes to be an encomium of Tacitus' father-in-law (*Agr*. 3.3). Yet it begins with a preface that is steeped in the Roman historiographical tradition (1-3) and then goes on to include a geography and ethnography of Britain (10-12), a summary Roman history of the island predating Agricola's tenure as governor (13-17), an annalistic account of Agricola's governorship (18-29), and a detailed description of the events at Mons Graupius including pre-battle speeches (30-34) and the battle narrative proper (35-38). As a result of these various attributes, scholars have offered numerous interpretations of the *Agricola*'s overall purpose and classification. While the complete list is far too long to present here, it is worth noting that a number view the biographical element as only one of many, equally prominent generic elements: Syme (1958), pp. 121-25; Martin (1981), pp. 39-40; Marincola (1999), pp. 318-20; Ash (2006), pp. 20-23; Whitmarsh (2006), pp. 305-10, esp. 307-10; and Sailor (2008), p. 103.

[6] That is, it is not just a digression. Such a notion has been taken up in recent years by scholars of ancient historiography, beginning with the work of Wiedemann (1993) on Sallust. Other recent examples include Morello (2002) on Livy's "Alexander Digression" (Livy 9.17-19), Munson (2001) on the relationship between Herodotus' ethnographies and his political *logoi*, Pothou (2009) on the digressions in Thucydides, as well as Woodman (1998), pp. 86-103, and Luce (1991) on Tacitus' digression about writing *Annals* (*Ann*. 3.65). Yet much of this scholarship focuses on what I would term the "self-declared digression," in which the author indicates that he is changing narrative gears. The mutiny of the Usipi is of a different nature since it does not feature any authorial statements. It is for this reason that Ash (2010) argues against using the term digression to classify the mutiny narrative, p. 275-78. For an extremely useful, well categorized bibliography of the scholarship on digressions, see Pothou (2009), pp. 159-73.

[7] Here I follow the recent trend of examining the relationship between particular Tacitean episodes and significantly larger narratives, notably Ash (2007), Haynes (2010), and Ash (2010). For a similar methodology vis-à-vis Sallustian episodes, see Wiedemann (1993).

creates a significant break in the *Agricola*'s main narrative.[8] One even finds an insubordination of diction in Tacitus' use of overdetermined text: a number of loaded words are found throughout the episode, and, although used with less common meanings in the passage itself, also carry significant connotations given their usage elsewhere.[9] Such unexpected language, structure, and syntax further highlight the relationship between the themes and genres at work in the mutiny narrative and those found throughout the *Agricola*. In essence, they work together to create a synecdoche-styled microcosm in which the mutiny of the Usipi serves as an *Agricola* in miniature.

Given these characteristics, it makes sense to analyze the mutiny of the Usipi using the theory of *mise en abyme*. The following broad definition should make clear the reason for its usefulness with respect to the mutiny of the Usipi: "a 'mise en abyme' is any aspect enclosed within a work that shows a similarity with the work that contains it."[10] Yet there are several more specific characteristics that the *mise en abyme* usually

[8] Positioned just prior to the climactic battle of Mons Graupius, the escapade appears at a central point in the work. Cf. Ogilvie and Richmond 1967, p. 245; Martin 1981, p. 43; Soverini 2004, pp. 224-25; and Ash 2010, p. 278. In essence, it provides an additional means of reconsidering what constitutes "Agricola" at a pivotal point in the narrative. Given its structural impact on the narrative, the episode offers the possibility of reading the *Agricola* as a ring composition around it.

[9] Following definitions given by Riffaterre (1983), pp. 39, 43-44. Useful too in this regard is the Bakhtinian notion of the dialogic, especially given the subversive nature of Tacitus' mutiny narrative and its ability to reveal otherwise hidden information. Kristeva (1980) gives several useful definitions. In summarizing Bahktin's notion of intertextuality, she writes, "What allows a dynamic dimension to structuralism is his conception of the 'literary word' as an *intersection of textual surfaces* rather than a *point* (a fixed meaning), as a dialogue among several writings: that of the writer, the addressee (or the character), and the contemporary or earlier cultural context," pp. 65. She then states, "The word's status is thus defined *horizontally* (the word in the text belongs to both writing subject and addressee) as well as *vertically* (the word in the text is oriented toward an anterior or synchronic literary corpus)…Hence horizontal axis (subject-addressee) and vertical axis (text-context) coincide, bringing to light an important fact: each word (text) is an intersection of word (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read…any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of *intertextuality* replaces that of intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least *double*," p. 66.

[10] Dällenbach (1989), p. 8, building on the initial definition given by Gide and cited by Dällenbach, p. 7. This definition is also cited by Ron (1987), p. 421. Another useful definition of the *mise en abyme* is given by Ricardou (1973), who, quoting Hugo, writes, "C'est une double action qui traverse le drame et qui le reflète en petit…L'idée bifurquée, l'idée se faisant echo à elle-même, un drame moindre copiant et coudoyant le drame principal, l'action traînant sa lune, une action plus petite que sa pareille," p. 49. In terms of classical scholarship, the theory of *mise en abyme* seems only to have found explicit usage by

exhibits, all of which can be seen in *Agricola* 28: that it somehow reflects the totality of the work in which it is found, often set textual signs;[11] that it is isolatable from the rest of the text, that is, set on a different narratological plane;[12] that, even though it is found at a lower diegetic level and has the quality of a synecdoche,[13] it nevertheless usurps the place of the primary narrative;[14] that it has an anachronical distribution, whether retrospective, prospective, or retroprospective;[15] and lastly, that it will either "*contest* or *reveal* the proper function functioning of a particular narrative,"[16] often with subversive force.[17]

In his account of the mutiny of the Usipi, Tacitus makes use of all these qualities of the *mise en abyme*. Throughout the passage, he employs the themes of history making, commemoration, and transmission of great deeds from the edge of the empire that are central to the *Agricola*. He frequently employs words with strong historiographical

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Martin (2000) and Fowler (2000). The concept is mentioned in several other essays in the volume edited by Sharrock and Morales in which these two articles appear, including that of Morales (2000). In terms of historiography, little has been done, although Dällenbach is at least cited by Pothou (2009) in his bibliography, p. 159 (see note 6 above), and Kraus (1994) does make use of the term in a piece that has methodological relevance for this study, p. 268.

[11] Ron (1982), pp. 422-25.

[12] Ron (1982), pp. 427-29. Bal (1978) notes that the *mise en abyme* should "form an isolatable whole, constituting an interruption, or, at least, a temporary change in the narrative," p. 124. Ron (1982) also indicates, "In *mise en abyme*, the reflecting part must be located at the same or at a lower diegetic level than the whole it reflects," p. 429. It is significant in this regard that the mutiny of the Usipi is a plot-based excursus which cuts the main narrative in half.

[13] Ron (1982): "It is a *small part* carrying 'as much' significance as the whole that contains it. Not *any* intratextual analogy will qualify. *Mise en abyme* is not only an iconic relation, it must also be a *synecdoche*," p. 430.

[14] Ron (1982) writes that "the *mise en abyme* consists of heightening the significance of something at a lower level," p. 430.

[15] Ron (1982), p. 432 and Dällenbach (1989), pp. 60-71. Additional work on the prospective *mise en abyme* has been done by Jefferson (1983).

[16] Ron (1982), p. 434.

[17] Ron (1982): "In more general terms, *mise en abyme* ironically subverts the representational intent of the narrative text, disrupting where the text aspires to integration, integrating where the text is deliberately fragmentary," p. 434. Dällenbach (1989) makes a number of useful points with respect to this throughout his work. The subversive nature of *mise en abyme* has even been noted in classical texts. In describing Nestor's account of his raid in *Iliad* 11, Martin (2000) writes, "The same happens, to some extent, with the second phenomenon involved here: the *mise en abyme*, a text-within-text that functions as a microcosm or mirror of the text itself. I propose that Nestor's narrative in Book 11 is precisely such a mirror, but that it is a distorting device. As the *mise en abyme* in modern fiction has been found to suggest other possibilities for the narrative…so Nestor's autobiography works to heighten our sense of difference within the poem's world. It draws our attention because it is so different in texture and style from what precedes," p. 63.

connotations, and he repeatedly uses this commemorative diction in wholly unexpected contexts. By coupling such language with phrases similar to those used elsewhere to describe Agricola, Tacitus creates a means of comparison between the Usipi and the work's protagonist, and transforms the mutiny narrative into a precursor to Agricola's exploits and to the *Agricola* itself. At the same time, by creating this parallel between Roman proconsul and German rebels, Tacitus draws further attention to the problems of the historiographical process and its limits in the age of Domitian.

Along these same lines, Tacitus features in the mutiny narrative important rhetorical themes found elsewhere in the *Agricola*. These include reflections on the troubled Domitianic principate and its failures, the key notion of achieving great deeds under bad emperors, as well as the central themes of freedom versus enslavement and the tyranny of Roman conquest.[18]

Just as ethnography is a central feature of the monograph, so too does it play an important role in the episode. Not only does Tacitus' language in *Agricola* 28 look back to his description of Britain (*Agr*. 10-12), but other ethnographic details show up as well. A series of interactions between different peoples occurs throughout the episode with differing results, including Usipi versus Romans, Usipi versus coastal Britons, and Usipi versus larger German nations. Questions of savagery and its limits are evoked when Tacitus describes the cannibalism of the Usipi.[19] Furthermore, key ethnographic words in the episode such as *miraculum* suggest a strong, almost Herodotean link between ethnography and the wider genre of historiography.

[18] For an excellent overview of the role of anti-Domitianic rhetoric and the notion of "good men under bad emperors," see Martin (1981), pp. 46-48.
[19] Cf. Clarke (2001), p. 110 and Ash (2010), pp. 284-87.

Finally, the theme of circumnavigation in the mutiny plays an essential part in the *mise en abyme*, given its semiotic role in representing the conquest of Britain. The idea that Agricola learned about Britain's status as an island from the cohort's accidental *periplous* – as strongly asserted by Cassius Dio (Cass. Dio 66.20) – creates an even deeper connection between the protagonist and the Usipi.[20] The recognition of this claim in the *Agricola*, while carefully hidden, places the mutiny narrative at the heart of Tacitus' literary endeavor.

[20] The idea that Dio's brief accounts of Agricola are based on Tacitus' biography is straightaway noted by Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 1. Yet they also think that Dio may have had other sources for the mutiny narrative, and that this accounts for the differences between the two versions, p. 321.

CHAPTER 2

CONSCRIPTA ET IN BRITANNIAM TRANSMISSA: HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE MUTINY

Historiography lies at the heart of Tacitus' narrative about the mutiny of the Usipi. It is through this generic structure that the author most visibly mirrors the central purpose of his work – the celebration of Agricola's life and accomplishments, most notably his conquest of Britain – in the remarkable exploits of a seemingly random Germanic cohort. Through several key phrases at the narrative level, Tacitus draws attention to the mutineers' great deeds and the dissemination of their story, and essentially creates a "miniature Agricola." Moreover, through the repetition of historiographical language, some of which plays a crucial role at other points in the work, he creates a mise en abyme at the metanarrative level. This, in turn, offers an additional vantage point from which to reflect upon the exemplary achievements of his father-in-law.

In many ways the story does this by functioning as a negative mirror. The extreme actions of the Usipi along the coast of Britain, a pivotal component of their own glory and renown, serve as blurry or opaque reflections of Agricola's exploits on the island. That is, even though both Agricola and the Usipi exhibit many of the same virtues and exemplary characteristics, and likewise achieve similar historiographical results in their oddly comparable "conquests of Britain," the foreign Usipi do so in a way that Agricola, as a Roman proconsular governor and Tacitus' archetypal protagonist, cannot. As such,

they serve as delimiting agents of the *Agricola*'s historiographical process, and, separated from the main plot, carry out this function as doubles on a distinct narratological plane.

From the very outset Tacitus draws attention to the historiographical elements at work in the mutiny narrative. A glance at the entire chapter makes this quite clear.

> *Eadem aestate* cohors Usiporum per Germanias **conscripta** et in Britanniam **transmissa** *magnum ac* ***memorabile facinus*** *ausa est*. occiso centurione ac militibus, qui ad **tradendam** disciplinam inmixti manipulis **exemplum** et rectores habebantur, tres liburnicas adactis per vim gubernatoribus ascendere; et uno remigante, suspectis duobus eoque interfectis, *nondum* ***vulgato rumore*** *ut miraculum praevehebantur*. mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum **exissent**,[21] cum plerisque Britannorum sua defensantium proelio congressi ac saepe victores, aliquando pulsi, eo ad extremum inopiae venere, ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur. atque ita circumvecti Britanniam, amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus, pro praedonibus habiti, primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt. ac fuere quos per commercia venumdatos et in nostram usque ripam mutatione ementium adductos ***indicium*** *tanti casus* ***inlustravit***.[22]
>
> *In that same summer* a cohort of Usipi – after being enlisted from among the German territories and dispatched into Britain – *dared a great and memorable deed*. After the slaying of a centurion and soldiers, who as a model for imparting discipline were mixed in with the cohorts and were attached as controllers, they forcefully reduced the helmsmen into submission and commandeered three Liburnian ships. With only one kept on as a rower, since two had been suspected and therefore killed, *they were passing by not yet as a wonder in everyday gossip*. In due time, when they disembarked to seize water and supplies, they contended with a great many of the Britons who sought to protect their possessions; often victorious, at other times beaten back, they at last came to such extreme

[21] This and all remaining *Agricola* passages are taken from the OCT edited by Winterbottom and Ogilvie (1975). The Furneaux OCT (1958) here reads *mox ad aquam atque utilia raptum ubi adpulissent*. For a detailed analysis of this line's textual criticism and the reasoning behind this emendation, see Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 247-48. More recently the issue has been discussed by Heubner (1984), p. 85 and Soverini (2004), pp. 227-28. It is worth noting that both verbs have the meaning of bringing ships to shore (*OLD exeo* 1c and *OLD appello* 2, 3, 4b) *and* of literary creation (*OLD exeo* 5b, 11 and *OLD appello* 6). The verb *appello* "To turn (one's mind to something)" (*OLD* 6) frequently refers to writing: Terence begins the prologue of the *Andria* by stating why he "first turned his mind to writing" (*poeta quom primum animum ad scribendum appulit*; *An*. 1); similarly, in Cicero's *De Oratore*, Catulus likens Antonius' turning of his mind to the criticism of philosophy to a pilot cautiously steering his ship near an outcropping (*timide tamquam ad aliquem libidinis scopulum sic tuam mentem ad philosophiam appulisti*; *De or*. 2.154). Nevertheless, *exeo* has a wide range of literary, historical, and rhetorical meanings, and also fits the historiographical context of the passage. Either way the problems with the MS tradition for this line are numerous and complex. I merely wish to point out the thematic possibilities offered by the earlier variant in Furneaux.

[22] Words with connotations of historiography and writing are given in bold in the Latin only; historically themed phrases are given in italics in both the Latin and the subsequent English translation.

> destitution that they devoured first their weakest men, and soon after those chosen by lot. And thus having circumnavigated Britain, after their ships had been lost through not knowing how to command them, and having been held as pirates, they were captured, first by the Suebi and soon after by the Frisii. But there were those – sold into slavery through commercial transactions and brought even so far as our shore through the exchange of buying – *whom proof of so great an incident made famous*.[23]
> (*Agr*. 28)

Tacitus begins the passage with a significant temporal phrase, *eadem aestate* ("in that same summer," 28.1).[24] In so doing, he places the passage firmly in the annals of Agricola's campaign season. This positioning echoes his use of similar expressions to begin chapters in the surrounding narrative.[25] Most notable is the marking of Agricola's arrival in Britain with the words *medio iam aestate* ("now in the middle of summer," 18.1). Tacitus' use of an almost identical phrase at *Agricola* 28 would appear to connect the entrances into British territory of the Usipi and Agricola. In addition, the annalistic background to the phrase gives a strong historiographical purpose to the mutiny.[26] Finally, it is significant that in his later works Tacitus uses the same phrase (*eadem aestate*) to mark off episodic digressions – often about slave revolts and similar insurrections – from the surrounding text. In the *Annals*, for example, Tacitus begins his description of the slave uprising near Brundisium with the exact same phrase (*Ann*. 4.27.1). Likewise, he uses the phrase *eodem anno* to begin his narrative about the false Agrippa Postumus (*Ann*. 2.39.1), as well as various sections on Tacfarinas' war in Africa

[23] All translations are my own.
[24] Not, as Ash (2010) calls it, "a loose chronological marker," p. 275. At first glance, one could follow Ash in saying that "it seems to sit rather precariously anchored," p. 275. However, a careful examination of Tacitus' use of similar temporal phrases elsewhere in the *Agricola*, the *Histories*, and the *Annals* shows a clear digressive purpose.
[25] Such as *primo statim anno* (*Agr*. 20), *sequens hiems* (21.1), *tertius expeditionum annus* (22.1), *quarta aestas* (23.1), *quinto expeditionum anno* (24.1), *ceterum aestate* (25.1), and *initio aestatis* (29.1).
[26] The combined use of an annalistic temporal word and the demonstrative *idem* has already seen extensive use by Livy. Books 1-10 of *Ab urbe condita* feature the phrase *eodem anno* 52 times, often more than once in the same chapter. Levene (2010) discusses at length how this phrase and similar expressions, including *eadem aestate*, are used in Livy's third decade to show simultaneity and link different narratives into his overarching annalistic framework, pp. 45-52.

(*Ann*. 2.52.1 and 4.20.1).[27] Tacitus' first two words in *Agricola* 28 play a threefold role: they link the mutiny narrative with Agricola's campaigns,[28] they mark the passage with a digressive lexical tag, and they give the episode a strong annalistic thrust.

In the participial "conscription" of the Usipi and dispatch into British territory that follows, Tacitus uses language with strong historiographical connotations. He writes of the Usipi cohort, *per Germanias conscripta et in Britanniam transmissa* ("after being enlisted from among the German territories and dispatched into Britain," *Agr*. 28.1). Even if Tacitus often uses *conscripta* to denote military enlistment,[29] the reader cannot help but recognize the inherent notion of writing in the word.[30] For example, in describing Gnaeus Piso's suicide preparations in the *Annals*, Tacitus writes, *pauca conscribit obsignatque et liberto tradit* ("he wrote down a few things, affixed a seal, and handed it off to his freedman," *Ann*. 3.15.3).[31] Likewise, *transmissa*, while not denoting historiographical action in this passage, has strong connotations of bequeathing to posterity and to one's

[27] Tacitus uses other significant temporal phrases to embark on comparable digressions in the *Histories* and the *Annals*: *sub idem tempus* for the appearance of the false Nero (*Hist*. 2.8.1) and the gladiatorial dispute in Pompeii (*Ann*. 14.17.1), *non ultra paucos dies* for the appearance of the imposter Geta (*Hist*. 2.72.1), *nec multo post* for the rebellion of the Clitae in Cilicia (*Ann*. 12.55.1), and *per idem tempus* for the gladiatorial dispute and unrelated shipwreck of 64 CE (*Ann*. 15.46.1). For the digressive usage of *eodem anno* in Livy, we need only look at the phrase just prior to his recounting of Marcus Caedicius' prophecy of the Gallic invasion, which leads into his long excursus on the Gauls and their expansion into the Italian Peninsula (Liv. 5.32.6-35.3).

[28] For this reason, the contestation by Ash (2010) of the use of the term "digression" to describe the episode makes perfect sense, pp. 275-76. But given the use of the phrase for other digressive narratives, I do not entirely agree.

[29] *Lexicon Taciteum*, vol. 1, p. 208. I exclude from my tally the many uses of the phrase *patres conscripti* by Tacitus.

[30] *OLD conscribo* 2, 3, 4, and 4c. Sailor (2008) notes connotations of mediation in *conscribere* ("write up"), as opposed to the unmediated "handing down" of *tradere*, p. 54. For Sailor, there is a great deal of significance in Tacitus's usage of *tradere*, as if suggesting that the difference between his version of events and reality is made to be nonexistent, p. 54.

[31] All passages of Tacitus' *Annals* and *Histories* come from the Heubner Teubners (1978). Given the pairing in this sentence of *conscribo* with *trado*, the context of handing down the memory of oneself to posterity is implicit.

successors.[32] The position of the phrase – third in the sentence – is striking, for it suggests that Tacitus is engaging in syntactical word play to emphasize his role in the historiographical process.

> 1) The time of the event by way of annalistic marker (*eadem aestate*)
> 2) The subjects of the event and their origins (*cohors Usiporum per Germanias*)
> 3) The "conscription" and "transfer" into Britain, using words with strong literary connotations (*conscripta et in Britanniam transmissa*)
> 4) The mention of its historical significance (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*)[33]

What is essentially suggested by this phraseology is that the Usipi are linked to their ensuing notoriety in the *Agricola* as a direct result of Tacitus' "writing" them "too" (*conscripta et*) into the British narrative.

At the end of the first sentence, Tacitus confirms that historiography and commemoration will play a central role in the mutiny of the Usipi. He states that the cohort of Usipi "dared a great and memorable deed" (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, *Agr*. 28.1). The significance of this phrase cannot be overlooked.[34] For it is most often Agricola himself who accomplishes great and memorable deeds as Governor of Britain.

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[32] *OLD transmitto* 9. Tacitus uses it at *Annals* 4.41.2 to describe Sejanus' failed plan to ensure that the title of emperor will be handed down to him. In this instance the verb takes the meaning of *trado* (*OLD* 6), "to hand over (persons, tasks, responsibilities, etc.) to another's charge," which in the *Agricola* frequently refers to the governorship of Britain. For more on the overall role of this language, see note 75 below.

[33] While some might object to my postponed positioning of *conscripta* in this arrangement, I believe it is significant that Tacitus positions these loaded "writing" participles between mention of the Usipi and their achievements.

[34] Nor its ambiguity, given the positive and negative meanings of *facinus*. I translate *facinus* here with its primary meaning of "deed, act, event" (*OLD* 1). I do not deny that in this instance it has the connotation of "crime, misdeed" (*OLD* 2), as Tacitus is wont to use it, with a notable example being the murder of Postumus Agrippa at *Annals* 1.6.1 (*primum facinus novi principatus*). Ash (2010) rightly notes the "moral pendulum" of *facinus*, pp. 280-81. I find a particularly telling instance early in the *Annals*, when Tacitus recounts the ridicule of the soldiers guarding Augustus' corpse. Tacitus describes those doing the ridiculing as men who could remember a time "when the dictator Caesar's slaying seemed to some to be the worst crime and to others to be the most beautiful deed" (*cum occisus dictator Caesar aliis pessimum, aliis pulcherrimum facinus videretur*, *Ann*. 1.8.6).

The phrase itself demonstrates a significant degree of intertextuality, which furthers its role in defining the theme of commemoration at work in the episode.[35] The closest parallel is a phrase in Terence's *Heautontimorumenos*, in which Syrus tells Clitipho, "Alas, there can be neither a great nor memorable deed without danger" (*heus, / non fit sine periclo facinus magnum nec memorabile*, *Haut*. 313-14).[36] Using a line from comedy that describes the risk of hiding one's mistress at dad's house is certainly peculiar, but it is not without purpose.[37] In describing a wholly unprecedented episode in the language of a stock scene, Tacitus may be foreshadowing the story's eventual fame given its almost ludicrous plot (*vulgato rumore ut miraculum*, *Agr*. 28.1). Tacitus also highlights the indisputable fact that the mutiny of the Usipi was fraught with risk (i.e. *non fit sine periclo*, *Haut*. 314). A third rationale for the allusion may be found in the subsequent lines of the comedy. When the slave Syrus is slow to respond to a question regarding his plans, Clitipho accuses him of digressing, and Clinia tells him to get to the

[35] For an excellent overview on intertextuality in Tacitus and a means of assessing claims thereof, see Woodman (2009), pp. 1-14. Also useful, given the literary nature of Tacitus' references concerning the Usipi, is Woodman (1998), who discusses "substantive imitation," an allusion that "results from a similarity of context," pp. 234-35. I would expand this to say that seemingly random instances of intertextuality in Tacitus often add additional context through which the reader can find a wider range of meaning. Woodman later writes, "In the meantime we should be prepared to acknowledge that Tacitus' extensive imitative practices are an intrinsic feature of his historical writing and denote a literariness which raises fundamental questions about the nature of the history he writes," p. 236. O'Gorman (2009) is also extremely helpful in showing how intertextuality bridges preexisting chronologies and challenges them, such that historical events lose their terminally unique status and become visibly repeatable, pp. 236-42.

[36] The usage of *facinus* in this non-pejorative context gives additional weight to its semi-positive use by Tacitus in the mutiny narrative, as argued for by Ash (2010), p. 281.

[37] One often finds parallels for Tacitean phrases in the works of Plautus and Terence. For example, Heubner (1984) cites Plaut. *Pseud*. 542 and Ter. *Eun*. 959 as parallels for the phrase *facinus ausa est*, p. 84. Leigh (2004) suggests a deeper connection between comedy and history: "True, there are many instances where a point of intersection between the events portrayed on the comic stage and those excavated from other ancient sources for the period may suggest a form of topicality. Yet such intersections are only the starting point for the investigation of various discursive categories," p. 22. Even though Leigh is referring to overlap of texts from the same period, his point about topicality holds true for Tacitus: at the very least Tacitus has a topos in mind. For a closer connection between comedy and the beginnings of Latin historiography, see Wiseman (1994), esp. pp. 1-22 and Wiseman (1998).

point (318-19). Thus, by alluding to this work, Tacitus provides yet another means of reflecting on the digressive aspect of the mutiny narrative.[38]

The phrase also features a number of parallels in historiography and historiographical poetry.[39] Similar phrases appear in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*. The first occurs when the historian is describing why the Catilinarian conspiracy deserves treatment. He writes, *nam id facinus in primis ego memorabile existumo sceleris atque periculi novitate* ("For I judge this deed to be especially memorable for the novelty of the crime and its danger," *Cat*. 4.4). For both Sallust and Tacitus, a *memorabile facinus* is clearly a motive for writing a historiographical account.[40] By a Sallustian standard, then, the Usipi have earned a place in Tacitus' monograph, especially if one takes *periculi* (4.4)

[38] Syrus' slave status adds an additional topical overlap, given that the Usipi were a band of foreign conscripts having been granted about as much authority as that of a slave body. As Leigh (2004) makes clear, there was a general concern among Romans about the arming of slaves that reached a high point around the time that New Comedy was being performed. He writes, "The arming of slaves is a matter of recurrent concern in Roman politics…It might therefore be asked whether the comic slave decked out in a full array of military metaphors does not have that power to provoke laughter which only truly anxious audiences enjoy. For this anxiety was all too fresh for the Roman audience of Plautus and it is indicative of quite how desperate a situation Rome reached at the worst of the Second Punic War that she was driven to enrol slaves into the legions and to promise them their freedom as a reward for service," p. 26.

[39] Although this thesis will not examine many instances of intertextuality and topoi from Greek literature, it should be noted that the mutiny of the Usipi appears to draw heavily on Herodotean notions of historiography. In addition to the outright bizarre (a type of *miraculum*) often serving as *thoma*/*thauma* in Herodotus, Tacitus' phrase *magnum ac memorabile facinus*, especially when committed by a seemingly insignificant band of German conscripts, fits well into the rubric for historical investigation established in Herodotus' preface: μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἕλλησι, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροισι ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλεᾶ γένηται ("so that great deeds and wonders, some shown by the Greeks others by the barbarians, do not lack fame," Hdt. Praef.); τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε, τὰ δὲ ἐπ᾽ ἐμεῦ ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. τὴν ἀνθρωπηίην ὦν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τὠυτῷ μένουσαν ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως ("For those [cities] that were once great, many of these have become small, while those that were great in my time, were previously small. Knowing therefore that human prosperity never remains in the same place, I will make equal mention of both," Hdt. 1.5.4).

[40] It would be interesting to note whether *facinus* prompts historiography on a wider scale. For in the *Agricola*, the single usage of the word (*Agr*. 28.1) results in a short, self-contained historiographical narrative. On the other hand, in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* the 25 usages of the word appear to be a driving leitmotif around which the entire narrative revolves. I would even suggest that Tacitus' description of the very first event in Tiberius' reign (*primum facinus novi principatus*, *Ann*. 1.6.1) results in a six book account of the subsequent events in his life.

as referring to the "risk" taken by Catiline rather than just the "danger" he presented to the Rome.[41]

In many ways, the character of Catiline and his conspiracy offer a range of models for Tacitus' Usipi. Most obvious is the fact that he is the leader of a seditious movement, one whose previous attempt (so Sallust claims) came close to being the undoing of Rome.[42] From such a usage we might see in Tacitus' Usipi the lurking threat of a revolutionary slave body to the Roman Empire. Moreover, Sallust also presents Catiline as partaking in a form of ritual cannibalism, when he presents the rumor that Catiline and his coconspirators drank human blood (22.1-2), which Catiline imagines to be a sort of hazing via *facinus* (*quo inter se fidi magis forent alius alii tanti facinoris conscii*, 22.2).[43]

Yet in the same narrative, we see Catiline stating to his coconspirators that their bold actions reflect a virtuous *facinus*.

> Sed quia multis et *magnis* tempestatibus vos cognovi fortis fidosque mihi, eo animus ***ausus est*** **maxumum atque pulcherrumum *facinus* incipere**, **simul quia vobis eadem quae mihi bona malaque esse intellexi**

[41] Ramsey (2007) notes that *facinus* is "usually pejorative" in Sallust, although here it can be translated in the "archaic neutral sense of simply a 'deed,' 'event'," p. 67. Such a reading might allow us to see some positive connotation not only in Sallust's use of *periculum*, but also in Tacitus' usage of *facinus* at *Agr*. 28.1. I would argue that Sallust's deployment of *facinus* displays a wide range of connotations, not only in the contrast between the positive and negative usages, but also specifically within the negative spectrum of meanings. Of the 25 times the word appears in the *Bellum Catilinae*, it is used 3 times with highly positive connotations (*Cat*. 2.9, 7.6, 53.2), once with a highly ironic positive meaning (20.3), once with mixed or neutral sense (4.4), 17 times with a negative, moral-criminal meaning (11.4, 13.4, 14.1, 14.2, 16.1, 19.5, 23.1, 25.1, 28.3, 32.2, 37.5, 48.2, 49.4, 51.6, 51.15, 51.23, 52.36), once with a negative, strictly moral connotation (15.3), once with a negative moral-religious meaning (22.2), and once with a highly rhetorical sense of extreme *nefas* (18.8). Nevertheless, having noted these differences, it should be emphasized that all instances of the word by Sallust carry rhetorical force (for example, Sallust repeatedly uses phrases combining *flagitium* with *facinus*), and most if not all of the negative usages carry an implied sense of *nefas*.

[42] *quod ni Catilina maturasset pro curia signum sociis dare, eo die post conditam urbem Romam pessumum facinus patratum foret* ("Which if Catiline had not hastened to give the signal to his allies before the senate house, on that day the worst crime since the founding of the city of Rome would have been accomplished," 18.8).

[43] I am grateful to Mike Zimm for reminding me of this passage in Sallust.

> But since I have known you to be brave and faithful to me in many great times, therefore my mind has dared to begin the greatest and most beautiful deed, likewise because I have come to know that good things and bad things are one and the same for you just as they are for me.
> (20.3)

The parallel with Tacitus' *Agricola* is striking, not merely on a verbal level but also on a contextual one. Indeed, Catiline explicitly states that in both his mind and the minds of his coconspirators, good and evil are indistinguishable (*vobis eadem quae mihi bona malaque esse*). By giving this as a reason (*simul quia…intellexi*) for daring the greatest *facinus* ever (*ausus est maxumum atque pulcherrumum facinus incipere*), Catiline emphasizes the moral duality of his plan, a duality which is evident in the mutiny of the Usipi. In this way, *mala facta* are a prerequisite for imagined optimistic outcomes. More positive still, Sallust presents Catiline fighting bravely and effectively in the front ranks of his soldiers in what one might call his *aristeia* (60.3-4, 61.1, 61.4). In this sense, he displays the *facinus* of former Roman times, as described earlier in the narrative (7.6), and ends his life in the process.

Remarkable too is a potential parallel in Velleius Paterculus, who prefaces Asinius Pollio's refusal to follow Octavian to Actium by stating, *Non praetereatur Asinii Pollionis factum et dictum memorabile* ("The memorable act and speech of Asinius Pollio should not be passed over," Vell. Pat. 2.86.3). This phrase merits attention as an instance of one historian remarking upon the words and deeds of another historian, who has told Octavian that his refusal to run a risk at Actium will allow him, as the one writing about the civil wars, to be a prize for the victor afterwards (*itaque discrimini vestro me subtraham et ero praeda victoris*, 2.68.3).[44] Like Velleius' Pollio, Tacitus has waited for

[44] This forms a striking contrast with Horace's attitude in his first Epode, where the poet tells Octavian that he would follow him not just to Actium but to the ends of the earth if required (*Epod*. 1.11-14), a risk that

a secure period of time – following the death of Domitian – to compose his work. The significant difference in risk-taking between the historians and the Usipi should be noted.

Chapters 1-3: Tacitus on his approach to writing about the deeds of great men (no longer risky)
| Chapters: 4-17: Agricola before his governorship (risk as a soldier, otherwise not risky)
| | Chapters: 18-27: Agricola's campaigns and governorship (significant risks)
| | | Chapter 28: The mutiny of the Usipi (extreme risks)
| | Chapters 29-38: Mons Graupius and late governorship (significant risks)
| Chapters 39-43: Agricola's return to Rome (less risk taken, implied risk from Domitian)
Chapters 44-46: Tacitus' elegy to Agricola (no longer risky)

At the safe end of the spectrum lies Tacitus, who is in many ways comparable to Velleius' Pollio. At the other end lie the Usipi. Agricola falls somewhere in the middle: as a military commander, he takes a number of significant risks, yet he remains cautious in the display of his *imperium* around Domitian.[45] This risk spectrum is reflected in the structure of the *Agricola* and again suggests a ring-composition for the work, whereby the Usipi function as a central element in defining the relationship between the *Agricola*, its author, and its main protagonist.[46]

The Velleius parallel also has relevance given that both episodes revolve around naval situations. Just as Actium was the defining symbol of Octavian's victory and the ushering in of a new era of peace, so too was the circumnavigation of Britain the defining

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will bring at least some reward (1.23-34). It is therefore all the more interesting that Horace, unlike Velleius, describes Pollio's written work as being fraught with risk: *periculosae plenum opus aleae* (*Carm*. 2.1.6). For the idea of ancient historiographical narratives being written by the victors, see Kraus (2005), p. 182.

[45] For more on this idea, see Clarke (2001), pp. 110-12.

[46] The idea of a general ring structure for the *Agricola*, with the British narrative "flanked on either side by Roman matters," is laid out by Whitmarsh (2006), pp. 305-6. Birley (2009) writes, "Because it was in Britain that Agricola displayed his virtues, almost half the work is devoted to the governorship (18-38), divided into two halves by a dramatic digression, the mutiny of the Usipi (28)," p. 50. Douglas (2007) lists additional criteria for recognizing a ring composition, including the need for a reversal of the original sequence of events following a discernable midpoint: "The longer ring forms tend to embellish the mid-turn with an elaborate commentary. A well-marked turning point is a sign of a well-designed ring composition…sometimes it takes the form of a minor ring," p. 34; see also pp. 31-42. With the mutiny of the Usipi serving as this midpoint, the *Agricola* fits a number of Douglas's criteria. For a strong argument in favor of ring composition in Tacitus, see Woodman (1998), pp. 229-30 and Woodman (1972), 152-155. Cairns (1979) gives an excellent bibliography on ring composition in general, p. 194. In addition, he offers an excellent analysis of earlier instances of ring composition in Homer and Theocritus and their impact on Tibullus' poetic structures, pp. 192-213.

emblem of Agricola's conquests.[47] Several other episodes suggest that Tacitus was aware of its maritime associations. Lucan uses a similar expression in the speech of Vulteius, the leader of the Opitergians, to his desperate troops facing death aboard their ship: *nescio quod nostris magnum et memorabile fatis / exemplum, Fortuna paras* ("I do not know what great and memorable example, Fortune, you are preparing as our fate," Luc. 4.496-97).[48] The Opitergians commit mass suicide following Vulteius' exhortation, and obtain posthumous fame for their remarkable *exempla* (4.570-81). The Usipi follow a similar trajectory. Like the Opitergians, they are a non-Roman contingent; their nautical mishaps lead to them to an extreme plight that requires desperate measures; and the manner in which they face these challenges results in widespread fame.[49]

The Opitergian *exemplum* in Lucan also features a strong paradoxographical element, hinting at the literary creation of a spectacle in the mutiny of the Usipi.[50] The Roman imperial interest in *naumachia*, which seems to have culminated in a Flavian obsession with these maritime spectacles,[51] can certainly be seen in the bizarre actions of the Usipi, whose ability to garner fame at Rome would have been limited to the arena. It has been suggested that in the Opitergian narrative Lucan deliberately evokes the

[47] That the Usipi commandeered *liburnicas* (*Agr*. 28.1) might evoke the famed warships led by Agrippa at Actium in Horace's first Epode, given that the poet stresses the danger of the enterprise (*Epod*. 1.1-4).
[48] Vulteius' apostrophe to Fortuna suggests an additional parallel to the phrase *magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est* (*Agr*. 28.1). For Lucan begins this entire Illyrian narrative (Luc. 4.402-581) with the preface, *non eadem belli totum fortuna per orbem / constitit, in partes aliquid sed Caesaris ausa est* ("The same fortune did not exist throughout every region of the war, but dared something else against the parties of Caesar," 4.402-3).
[49] At the very least it brings them significant notoriety. Either way, the brave exploits of both groups left a lasting impression and these were noted by the authors, in much the same way as Catiline's noble actions during his final stand are recorded by Sallust. What is more, the Opitergians are not the only ones in a difficult situation. This narrative section also recounts how Caesar's legate, Gaius Antonius, and his men are trapped on an island, are practically starving to death, and are forced to eat grasses (Luc. 4.408-14). Not only does the general situation reflect the one faced by the Usipi (*eo ad extremum inopiae venere*, *Agr*. 28.2), but so too does the landscape on which it unfolds (*quos alit Hadriaco tellus circumflua ponto, / clauditur extrema residens Antonius ora*, Luc. 4.407-8) and the language used to describe it (*circumflua*, *extrema*; cf. *Agr*. 10.3, 30.3).
[50] For the amphitheatrical quality of the Vulteius episode, see Leigh (1997), pp. 259-64.
[51] Coleman (1993) describes at length the naumachia of Titus in 80 CE, pp. 60-74.

naumachia, and creates a metatextual spectacle, in which both the reader and the absent Caesar invoked by Vulteius are made into an amphitheatrical audience and are invited to visualize the events depicted.[52] With this intertext in mind, the wondrous events experienced by the Usipi might suggest a similar viewing by readers of the *Agricola*. Indeed, not only is the episode filled with morbidly spectacular entertainment, but it is also filled with expressions suggesting perception.[53]

Even Tacitus, in a later work, uses a similar phrase to describe Otho's men, when they rejoice in having fixed the heads of Galba, Vinius, and Piso on poles as though it were "a beautiful and memorable deed" (*pulchrum et memorabile facinus*, *Hist*. 1.44.2). It is significant that the focus of this chapter of the *Histories* is Otho, who is said to have felt the greatest pleasure at seeing Piso's decapitated head (*Nullam caedem Otho maiore laetitia excepisse, nullum caput tam insatiabilibus oculis perlustrasse dicitur*, *Hist*. 1.44.1). The morbid visual spectation is once again present in the parallel. But even more noteworthy is the fact that the sole appearance of Otho in the *Agricola* is a description of how his fleet, the *classis Othoniana*, was responsible for the death of Agricola's mother (*Agr* 7.1), which in turn led Agricola to join the Flavian cause (7.2-3). It is worth noting that the plundering operations of the Othonian fleet (*licenter vaga…hostiliter populatur*, 7.1) bear some resemblance to those of the Usipi, although the Usipi conduct raids not because of greed but solely in order to survive.[54]

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[52] Leigh (1997), pp. 259-61.

[53] Phrases such as *suspectis duobus eoque interfectis* (*Agr.* 28.1), *pro praedonibus habiti* (28.3), and *indicium tanti casus inlustravit* (28.3) all describe varying degrees of visual interpretation.

[54] Ash (2010), p. 284. The greed of emperors, especially Domitian, becomes an important theme in the *Agricola*. For an excellent description of how the actions of the Usipi highlight the cruel barbarism of Domitian, see Ash (2010), pp. 290-93. Note too how Tacitus mirrors the unrestrained plundering of the Othonian fleet (*licenter vaga…hostiliter populatur*, *Agr*. 7.1) in the licentious power play of the young Domitian (*iuvene admodum Domitiano et ex paterna fortuna tantum licentiam usurpante*, 7.2) and in the

Remembering great and memorable deeds serves as the ostensible reason Tacitus gives for writing the *Agricola*. At the start of the Agricola, we see the historian as one who recounts for later generations the deeds and habits of famous men (*Clarorum virorum facta moresque posteris tradere*, 1.1). There is a particular emphasis on greatness: the failings of the present age require that accomplishments of such men have the essence of a great and noble virtue (*quotiens magna aliqua ac nobilis virtus*, 1.1).[55] Early in Tacitus' monograph, Agricola repeatedly demonstrates this quality: in his youthful studies at Massilia,[56] in his early military training under Suetonius Paulinus,[57] in his second army apprenticeship under Petilius Cerialis,[58] and as governor of Gallia Aquitania.[59] Most of all, Agricola distinguishes himself as governor of Britain and commander of her armies.[60] Such that, by the end of the work, Agricola's greatness is undeniable: *bonum virum facile crederes, magnum libenter* ("you would easily believe him to be a good man, gladly a great one," 44.2).

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insubordination of the commander of the Twentieth Legion that Agricola is sent to replace (*ubi decessor seditiose agere narrabatur*, 7.3).

[55] The same sentence goes on to describe how the faults of the present age – ignorance of what is right and envy – "belong to small and great states alike" (*parvis magnisque civitatibus commune*, 1.1). For a Herodotean parallel, see note 39 above.

[56] "Certainly his aspiring and elevated temperament was seeking the excellence and splendor of great and lofty glory more vehemently than cautiously" (*scilicet sublime et erectum ingenium pulchritudinem ac speciem magnae excelsaeque gloriae vehementius quam caute adpetebat*, 4.3).

[57] "And a desire for military glory entered his mind, unwelcome during times when there is an unfavorable view towards eminent men and no less danger from great fame than from infamy" (*intravitque animum militaris gloriae cupido, ingrata temporibus quibus sinistra erga eminentes interpretatio nec minus periculum ex magna fama quam ex mala*, 5.3).

[58] "His merits had room for exempla" (*habuerunt virtutes spatium exemplorum*, 8.2); "Nor did Agricola ever revel in the fame from his exploits…thus, from his excellence in obeying, from his modesty in speaking out, he was beyond the reach of envy though not beyond the reach of glory" (*nec Agricola umquam in suam famam gestis exultavit…ita virtute in obsequendo, verecundia in praedicando extra invidiam nec extra gloriam erat*, 8.3).

[59] "It would be an insult to his distinguished qualities to refer to integrity and moderation in so great a man. Not even fame, which often even good men indulge in, did he seek by putting his virtue on display or through artifice" (*integritatem atque abstinentiam in tanto viro referre iniuria virtutum fuerit. ne famam quidem, cui saepe etiam boni indulgent, ostentanda virtute aut per artem quaesivit*, 9.4).

[60] A noteworthy example occurs following the conquest of Mona (18.5-6).

While the actions of the Usipi mark them out for greatness, it is also quite clear that these actions are the exact opposite of what would be permissible for Romans, and especially for Agricola. Murder of Roman soldiers, escape from slavery, piracy, and cannibalism are in many ways the epitome of non-Roman behavior.[61] To be sure, the actions of the Usipi are not without cause nor wholly indiscriminate,[62] as has already been seen to some degree with regards to their plundering operations. But there is still something outrageous about the memorable deeds of the Usipi. How then do we reconcile this with their being given a central place in the *Agricola*?

By keeping in mind that Tacitus separates the Usipi from Agricola by way of a second narrative, and by thinking of this account as a *mise en abyme*, an exact parallel becomes unnecessary. In fact, it is the jarring differences that offer us an additional outline (or perhaps a shadow) through which we can further discern the limits to the "Agricola" endeavor.[63] After all, Tacitus has taken great pains to show that the accomplishment of great deeds in the Domitianic era is extremely problematic. Not only is there a limit on how much glory great men such as Agricola can attain, but there has also been a patent falsification of the triumph by the emperor, under whose power the

[61] It therefore comes as little surprise that Woodman (1998), describing Tacitus' portrayal of the mutinies of 14 CE in *Annals* 1.16-51, refers to the Germanic legions' massacre of one another as "perhaps the lowest and most solemn point in the whole of Tacitus' long narrative of the mutinies in Pannonia and Germany," p. 218. I owe this point to Erika Hermanowicz, and I am grateful for her many suggestions on how to address this inconsistency.

[62] Ash (2010) takes this idea much further, pp. 281-88. She notes that a laudable motive for the mutiny of the Usipi could be implied given that they were conscripted, pp. 281-82. She goes on to note their restraint and the self-imposed limit to their transgressing when forced to commit cannibalism in order to survive, pp. 284-85. While it is true that Tacitus does not describe a maddened feeding frenzy, it would be a mistake to say that any sort of cannibalism could be considered virtuous by a Roman reader. Subsequently, in citing the contrast with Germanicus' soldiers who get swept to Britain and recount fantastic stories of the mythic creatures they beheld (*Ann*. 2.23-24), Ash notes that "those Usipi who live to tell their tale retain dignity by showing relative restraint in narrating their experiences," p. 286. Given her observation, it is worth pointing out that Tacitus frequently characterizes Agricola as a man of restraint (note esp. *Agr*. 8.3, 9.4, 19.6, and 40.3-4). That being said, we have to keep in mind that Tacitus does not specify how the Usipi were recognized or questioned. After all, it is just as possible that the Usipi showed no restraint under the torture they likely endured after their recognition. Tacitus simply does not say.

[63] For this aspect of the *mise en abyme*, see Martin (2000), p. 63 and Ron (1982), p. 434.

senatorial class has been reduced to servitude.[64] Under such conditions, the actions of the Usipi – outlandish and overturning the normal Roman order of things – become a much-needed reminder of the Domitianic historiographical process, where a random Germanic slave body can gain fame comparable to a great Roman general such as Agricola.

Regardless of the inversion, the Usipi still accomplish a highly memorable feat. Thus, they too become part of the literary commemoration that is a central facet of Tacitus' works.[65] Its role in the *Agricola* goes without saying.[66] Early in the work Tacitus states, "But in former times, as there was an inclination and a more open path to the achievement of memorable actions…" (*sed apud priores ut agere digna memoratu pronum magisque in aperto erat*, *Agr*. 1.2). Thus, it is still no small feat for the Usipi, in the present day and age, to do something worth being remembered.[67] They have earned

[64] While Tacitus does not explicitly say in the *Agricola* whether the reverse is true, that is, whether slaves rose to higher stations, he does depict in the *Annals* a number of freedmen controlling the principates of Claudius and, to a lesser degree, Nero, and has a number of them playing an important role in prosecuting Roman senators and having them put to death. For a detailed discussion of the Domitianic inversion and Tacitus' *Agricola* as a literary corrective, see Sailor (2004) and Sailor (2008), pp. 51-118.

[65] Remembering through writing (and its centrality to the historian's task) is emphasized not only at the start of the Agricola, but also in a number of other passages in which Tacitus expresses authorial purpose, namely *Ann*. 1.1, 3.65, 4.32-35, 13.20, and *Hist*. 1.1-3.

[66] Sailor (2004) notes in the *Agricola* the importance of both textual and non-textual memory in transmitting the past, p. 140. For a discussion of *memoria* and its use in commemorating the virtues of Agricola's family, see Harrison (2007), pp. 315-16; for its use as "literary commemoration through biography," p. 316; for another view of its important role in the *Agricola*, see Haynes (2006), pp. 151-54.

[67] Sailor (2004) constructs an excellent chart in order to differentiate how Tacitus characterizes Roman historiography in prior times (*antiquitus*) versus in the present day and age (*nostris temporibus*), p. 144. Some qualities of historiography in the present age which he lists are (1) "transmission conditional on exceptional event (*quotiens magna aliqua ac nobilis virtus vicit ac supergressa est vitium* 1.1)," (2) "implication that it is difficult," (3) "autobiography seen as arrogant or suspect," and (4) "implication that virtues [are] most difficult to come by…and times are hostile to virtues (*tam saeva et infesta virtutibus tempora* 1.4)." The mutiny of the Usipi demonstrates all four of these characteristics: (1) the actions of the Usipi are certainly qualified by Tacitus as being exceptional (*magnum ac memorabile facinus…ut miraculum…indicium tanti casus*); (2) the process by which the Usipi attain fame is longwinded and arduous, and includes a detailed mutiny, skirmishes with Britons for supplies, starvation and cannibalism, circumnavigation of the island, capture by Germanic tribes, and being sold into slavery; (3) the Usipi themselves become the "living" *indicium* of their feats and thus avoid the tarnish of written autobiography; and (4) the Usipi, perhaps more than any other contingent in the *Agricola*, demonstrate just how easy virtue is able to be subsumed by *saevitia* with a hint of virtue. For an emphasis on their virtue in tough times, see Ash (2010), pp. 284-87.

their place in Tacitus' writing because, like his protagonist, their actions are great and memorable.[68]

In the subsequent narrative, Tacitus uses a number of words with strong historiographical connotations.[69] The most noticeable by far is *trado*. In the mutiny narrative *(ad tradendam disciplinam*, 28.1), the verb has the meaning "to impart, pass on" qualities or attributes.[70] Yet Tacitus most frequently uses the verb with temporal force to mean "to hand down, pass down, relate" information, especially historical information.[71] In this latter sense, *trado* appears in the very first and very last phrase of the *Agricola*.[72] Tacitus begins the work, *Clarorum virorum facta moresque posteris tradere* ("To hand down to later generations the deeds and habits of illustrious men," 1.1).[73] Furthermore, his biography ends with an even more expansive use of this verb: *Agricola posteritati*

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[68] Clarke (2001) highlights Calgacus' use of the actions of the Usipi as exhortatory *exempla* in his speech (*Agr*. 32.3), p. 110. She also links their fame to the overall theme of commemoration in the *Agricola*, noting that the Usipi are allowed to obtain unlimited renown whereas Agricola must be moderate in his seeking of it. She writes of the Usipi, "Their murder of the Roman soldiers might have been a dreadful crime, but it won them fame, or at least notoriety ('magnum ac memorabile facinus', 28)," p. 110.

[69] The word *exemplum* certainly has historiographical force. While referring specifically to the presence of the Roman soldiers in the cohort as a "warning" or "deterrent" (*OLD* 3), the word calls to mind its repeated use by other Latin prose writers to mean "a typical example" or "instance" (*OLD* 2, 6, 8, and 9). The ideas of history (events as *exempla*), biography (the individual as *exemplum*; *OLD* 1 and 1b), and writing (models of imitation) are all contained in this word. For more on *exemplum* and its rhetorical connotations in the *Agricola*, see Chapter 3 of this thesis.

[70] *OLD trado* 2c.

[71] *OLD* 10; cf. Liv. 22.31.8, 42.11.1, and Tac. *Ann*. 13.20. Similarly, Tacitus frequently uses it with the meaning "to hand down, bequeath" (*OLD* 4); cf. Sall. *Hist*. 1.55.25, Hor. *Sat*. 1.4.117, and Tac. *Ann*. 4.34. In all of his works, Tacitus uses *trado* two thirds of the time with its historiographical meaning (*Lexicon Taciteum*, vol. 2, pp. 1657-60). For *trado* as a Roman historical word, see also O'Gorman (2009), p. 241.

[72] This certainly provides additional evidence for reading the *Agricola* as a ring composition around the mutiny of the Usipi. Sailor (2008) sees a relation between a number of uses of *trado* in the *Agricola*, especially its uses at the beginning and end of the work (*Agr*. 1.1 and 46.4; he also cites *Agr*. 10.1 and 13.2), although he does not discuss its usage at *Agr*. 28.1. His contention is that Tacitus and Agricola together succeed in surpassing Julius Caesar's accomplishments in Britain, in that Tacitus, by virtue of Agricola's exploits, has bequeathed these deeds to subsequent generations of readers and has thus secured their place in history, p. 84. For the relationship between *trado* in the first and last sentences, see also Martin (1981), p. 49.

[73] Tacitus makes a similar declaration at the beginning of the *Annals*: *inde consilium mihi pauca de Augusto et extrema tradere…* ("Therefore it is my plan to relate a few things about Augustus and his final affairs…" *Ann*. 1.1.3). Again, at *Agr*. 10.1 (*rerum fide tradentur*) and 13.2 (*potest videri ostendisse posteris, non tradisse*), he uses *trado* with the same meaning.

narratus et traditus superstes erit ("Agricola will survive, having been recounted and handed down to posterity," 46.4).[74] Thus, while *trado* is not used in this precise manner at *Agricola 28*, the reader will no doubt be reminded of its primary historiographical meaning.[75]

The second phrase of historical import appears midway through the story of the mutiny. Tacitus writes, *nondum vulgato rumore ut miraculum praevehebantur* ("they were passing by not yet as a wonder in everyday gossip," 28.1). First, the use of *nondum* indicates that the Usipi will gain fame for their actions, even if it has not yet been obtained. Second, the use of the expression *vulgato rumore* guarantees that the story of the mutiny came to be widely known and celebrated (*ut miraculum*) by the time Tacitus

[74] One could argue that the verb *trado* in both of these instances has the additional temporal meaning of "to bequeath" (*OLD* 4). Harrison (2007) sees *narratus* and *traditus* as marking Agricola's literary apotheosis from man into book, pp. 318-19.

[75] In the *Agricola*, the verb *trado* is also used to signify "handing over" the governorship of Britain to another's charge (*OLD* 6). Tacitus uses it to describe the gubernatorial succession of the province prior to Agricola: *Petronius Turpilianus…Trebellio Maximo provinciam tradidit* ("Petronius Turpilianus handed the province over to Trebellius Maximus," *Agr*. 16.3). More significant is Tacitus' statement upon Agricola's successful completion of his tenure: *tradiderat interim Agricola successori suo provinciam quietam tutamque* ("In the meantime Agricola had handed over to his successor the province, subdued and secure," 40.3). Unlike all the governors of Britain before him, Agricola has succeeded in handing down the post without any unresolved problems (*quietam tutamque*). Cf. Rutledge (2000), pp. 92-93. Tacitus uses the verb *trado* just before this with similar connotations: *credidere plerique libertum ex secretioribus ministeriis missum ad Agricolam codicillos, quibus ei Syria dabatur, tulisse, cum eo praecepto ut, si in Britannia foret, traderentur* ("Many believe that a freedman from among the more secret of imperial servants was dispatched bearing imperial orders to Agricola, in which Syria was given to him, with instruction that, if he was in Britain, these were to be handed over," (*Agr*. 40.2). Agricola's encounter with Domitian's freedman follows his departure from the province, rendering the orders obsolete: he knows that his leadership has been successful. In contrast, Domitian symbolically fails in his "handing over," be it in redundant orders to be "conveyed" to Agricola, or in the discipline his soldiers fail to "impart" upon the Usipi. For an earlier view of *trado*'s didactic sense, see Varro *Ling*. 6.61. With respect to the primary meanings of the word in the *Agricola* and the impact of their earlier appearances on its usage in the mutiny narrative, Riffaterre (1983) is particularly useful: "To conclude, in all texts belonging to this category, accumulation filters through the semantic features of its words, thereby overdetermining the occurrence of the most widely represented seme and canceling out the semes that appear less frequently. The components of the accumulation become synonyms of one another irrespective of their original meaning in ordinary language," p. 39. For this specific phenomenon in Tacitus, Woodman (1998) notes, "The verbal repetitions seem almost to serve as cross-references to the earlier passage, as if to underline the relationship between them," p. 220. See also note 9 above.

was writing the *Agricola*.[76] For *vulgato* has at its root a number of meanings denoting fame,[77] and *rumore* adds additional strength to the idea of dissemination.[78]

Furthermore, via the expression *ut miraculum*, Tacitus ties the widespread fame of the Usipi to Agricola's similar role as a household name in Rome.

> Quidquid ex Agricola amavimus, quidquid **mirati sumus**, manet mansurumque est in animis hominum in aeternitate temporum, fama rerum
>
> Whatever we loved about Agricola, whatever we wondered at, it remains and will continue to remain in the minds of men, in the eternity of the ages, by the fame of things.
> (46.4)

The word *miraculum* denotes the exceptional nature of the mutiny,[79] that which demands recognition, thus earning it the privilege of being widely acclaimed (*vulgato rumore*).[80] Likewise, what will be forever remembered about Agricola is whatever those who knew him, especially Tacitus, thought most exceptional (*quidquid mirati sumus*, 46.4). Even so,

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[76] The same phrase is used to describe Sejanus' hatred of rumors given his attempts to keep a low profile (*vulgi rumorem…deprecatur*, *Ann*. 4.41.1).

[77] On a basic level, *vulgatus* means "well-known, celebrated; common knowledge" (*OLD* 2). But the verb that contains it has an even wider range of usages: "to make available to the mass of the population" (*OLD vulgo* 1), "to make widely known, spread a report of, make public, broadcast" (*OLD* 3) and "to spread the news and story (that)" (*OLD* 3b) both with the sense of oral transmission, and "to publish (a literary work)" (*OLD* 3c).

[78] The word *rumor* can refer to "common talk, rumour, gossip (as a vehicle of information or comment)" (*OLD* 2), to "a piece of gossip, a rumour, unconfirmed report" (*OLD* 2b) as well as to "a report or rumour of some particular occurrence" (*OLD* 3), all of which have relevance to this central phrase. The phrase *vulgato rumore* also has a telling parallel in Tacitus' *Histories*. It appears during the intensification of the Batavian Revolt, several lines after Civilis declares open war: *volgato rumore a Sarmatis Dacisque Moesica ac Pannonica hiberna circumsederi; paria de Britannia fingebantur* ("with the widespread rumor that the Moesian and Pannonian winter camps were being blockaded by the Sarmatians and the Dacians; equivalent things were being fashioned about Britain," *Hist*. 4.54.1). Its usage here is striking for two reasons. First, it is accompanied by the verb *fingo*, which has a literary sense (*OLD* 6). Second, Tacitus separates Britain from other regions when it comes to the rumors evoked of a province, and perhaps has in mind the role *rumor* once had in ensuring the widespread fame of the Usipi and their voyage around the island.

[79] Cf. Clarke (2001), p. 111.

[80] I here take *miraculum* as the Latin equivalent of *thoma/thauma*. Munson (2001) discusses the importance of "wonder" (*thoma*) in Herodotus: its role as part of "the celebratory function of the text," as "a fact that wants to be narrated," and most importantly, in connecting ethnography with history, p. 19. Munson writes, "Since *thoma* words advertise onetime occurrences, lasting individual achievements, geographical features, and cultural artifacts, an exploration of their meaning will throw further light on the ability of metanarrative to bridge the distinction between ethnography and history," p. 19. For a full treatment of *thoma* by Munson, see pp. 232-65. See also note 39 above.

the word *miraculum* as it appears in the mutiny narrative also carries with it connotations of paradoxography.[81] In this sense, an additional difference between the Usipi and Agricola should be noted: whereas admiration for Agricola's conquest had nothing to do with foreign and bizarre, it can be certain that the Usipi's fame had much to do with the spectacular strangeness of their misadventure.

Tacitus ends the mutiny narrative on a strong historiographical note, just as he began it. He summarizes the mutiny and its consequences in four words: *indicium tanti casus inlustravit* ("whom proof of so great an incident made famous," 28.3). Just as the outcome – starvation, cannibalism, defeat, and enslavement – is in no way positive for the Usipi, so too can this phrase be translated "[for whom] the proof of so great a downfall made evident."[82] But, as is often the case, Tacitus leaves both possibilities open to his reader. Expressions with mixed connotations such as *magnum ac memorabile facinus* and *ut miraculum* have already been used to describe the mutiny and the resulting events. Moreover, Tacitus has just emphasized the extraordinary process by which the information traveled so as to become known to the Romans.[83] So the historical

[81] Woodman (1998) refers to "*miracula*, τὰ θαυμαστά" as "the marvels of paradoxography proper," p. 187. Leigh (1997) sees a fairly explicit connection between *mirari* and *spectare*, p. 236, and their connection to the amphitheater, p. 242. He states that "the amphitheatre is the home of the θαῦμα in imperial Rome, and any scene of the *Pharsalia* containing both thaumastics and gladiators or *naumachiae* has to denote the amphitheatre," p. 242.

[82] Just as the phrase *magnum ac memorabile facinus* can also be translated as "a great and memorable crime."

[83] Tacitus' emphasis on the commercial transactions by which those few surviving Usipi came back to Roman territory in order to tell their tale (*ac fuere quos per commercia venumdatos et in nostram usque ripam mutatione ementium adductos*, *Agr*. 28.3) suggests another thematic marking in the mutiny narrative. Sailor (2004) discusses the relationship between commerce/remuneration/financial transaction and history in the *Agricola*, p. 145. He argues that Tacitus uses an economic metaphor "to deny an economic character to historiographical production in the past" and to show a shift in the present day to a historiographical market characterized by lack of "history's raw materials (*digna memoratu*)," a drop in the value of *virtutes*, and a shift to *gratia* and *ambitu*. The Usipi fit into the present system described by Sailor as their achievement of notoriety is wholly dependent upon a corrupt commercial market. Furthermore, in his analysis of the preface to the *Agricola*, Sailor writes that "speech, in contrast to memory, is imagined through an *economic* metaphor (*commercio*)," p. 152. The Usipi fit this definition, since it must have been

"evidence" (*indicium*) is both proof of a "misfortune" or "disaster,"[84] as the specifics of the outcome indicate, and confirmation of a "fortuitous occurrence."[85] Moreover, the Usipi themselves are the confirmation of this remarkable incident: not only have they made history, but they have also served as the living proof of its authenticity.[86]

through speech and oral narration that their story became known and widespread at Rome (*vulgato rumore*).

[84] *OLD casus* 5.

[85] *OLD* 3d.

[86] Sailor (2004) sees in the *Agricola* the notion that the present generation does not produce historical texts, but rather serves as the material for the production of these texts, p. 152. For additional discussion, see note 67 above.

CHAPTER 3

EXEMPLUM ET RECTORES HABEBANTUR: RHETORIC AND THE MUTINY

Just as the Mutiny of the Usipi encourages additional questions about the role of historiography in Tacitus' *Agricola*, so too does it highlight a number of rhetorical topoi found throughout the work. At the most basic level, the Usipi emphasize the motif of Roman imperial expansion and its impact on subject peoples. While one would not expect such a theme to be problematic in Roman literature (which almost always portrays the subjugation of foreign peoples in a positive light), the *Agricola* makes it so. From Tacitus' comment that Agricola had used Roman refinements to mask the slavery of the subjugated British peoples,[87] to his now famous declaration by Calgacus that under the false name of empire the Romans lay waste to a country and call it peace,[88] the *Agricola* problematizes the rhetoric of empire.

The mutiny narrative adds an additional problematic layer given the attention it draws to the feats of the Usipi. They are a group of Roman conscripts, and by any normal standard belong as subjects of the imperial military apparatus. Yet they achieve a name for themselves by escaping their enslavement in the waters around Britain and by making Agricola aware of Britain's island status through their own circumnavigation of the

[87] *idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, cum pars servitutis esset* ("And it was called civilized culture by the conquered, even though it was part of their enslavement," *Agr*. 21.2).
[88] *auferre trucidare rapere falsis nominibus imperium atque ubi solitudinem faciunt pacem appellant* ("Robbing, slaughtering and plundering under false names they call empire, and where they make a wasteland, they call it peace," 30.5).

island.[89] Their fame quickly finds its way back to the primary narrative, wherein Calgacus uses their exploits as a key *exemplum* in his own anti-imperial rhetoric (*Agr*. 32.3). Furthermore, throughout the entire narrative their implicit association with Germany, the province where they were conscripted, evokes the anti-Domitianic rhetoric found elsewhere in Tacitus' first work. Thus, in trying to understand these seemingly contradictory topoi which are at once present in the passage, it makes sense to continue using the framework of the *mise en abyme*. For it is through the seemingly problematic association of these motifs that we can find new ways of understanding the complexity with which Tacitus viewed his father-in-law's exploits, the state of the empire in which they took place, and the multitude of challenges they presented.

Before exploring the multifarious rhetoric of the *Agricola* and its echoes in the mutiny of the Usipi, it is well worth reconsidering the passage as a whole.

> Eadem aestate cohors Usiporum **per Germanias conscripta** et in Britanniam transmissa magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est. occiso centurione ac militibus, qui ad tradendam disciplinam **inmixti manipulis exemplum et rectores habebantur**, **tres liburnicas adactis per vim gubernatoribus ascendere**; et uno remigante, suspectis duobus eoque interfectis, nondum vulgato rumore ut miraculum praevehebantur. mox ubi aquam atque utensilia **raptum** exissent, cum plerisque Britannorum sua defensantium proelio congressi ac saepe **victores**, aliquando pulsi, eo ad extremum **inopiae** venere, ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur. atque ita circumvecti Britanniam, **amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus**, **pro praedonibus habiti**, primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt. ac fuere quos **per commercia venumdatos** et in nostram usque ripam mutatione **ementium** adductos **indicium** tanti casus inlustravit.[90] (28)

[89] So Dio explicitly tells us (Cass. Dio 66.20.1-2). For my argument that Dio is reading in Tacitus a suggestion that the Usipi were directly responsible for Agricola's similar exploit, see Chapter 5 of this thesis.

[90] Words and phrases with rhetorical force are given in bold and will be discussed in this chapter.

A quick look back at the previous citation of the passage,[91] coupled with the above reexamination, will make abundantly clear its generic richness.[92] This metatextual layering is in no way a static structure. As demonstrated in the previous section on historiography, there exists in *Agricola* 28 a series of vibrant textual interactions, not only between the mutiny narrative and the *Agricola* proper, but also between the mutiny narrative and other literary works. Therefore, any examination of broad themes such as rhetoric and ethnography must account for the fact that these are not isolated, but are in fact closely connected with historiography.[93] Furthermore, given the dynamic and multifaceted nature of the *Agricola*, it would be a mistake not to look at these elements from the framework of a single *mise en abyme*. However, in order to clarify as much as possible the explicative process, they will be treated in separate sections for the remainder of this thesis with references to other chapters wherever necessary.

In recounting the mutiny of the Usipi, Tacitus puts rhetoric – both the specific rhetoric of oratory and the general rhetorical themes found in the *Agricola* – at the center of his narrative.[94] After positioning the mutiny proper in an ablative absolute phrase (*occiso centurione ac militibus*, 28.1),[95] he straightway hints at the rhetorical with the phrase *inmixti manipulis exemplum et rectores habebantur* ("[who were] mixed in with the cohorts as a model and were attached as controllers" 28.1). Tacitus dedicates an entire

[91] See the introduction to Chapter 2 of this thesis.
[92] For an even fuller sense of the generic multiplicity at work in the episode, see also the beginning of Chapters 4, which highlights the ethnographic genre as it appears in the passage as a whole.
[93] For a quick overview on rhetoric in Roman historiography, especially *inventio* and *memoria*, see Laird (2009). The seminal study on the topic is Woodman (1988). Similarly, for the close ties between ethnography and historiography, see Dench (2007). Dench notes that "when ancient historians engage in traditions of delineating the lands and customs of 'other peoples', they are drawn into rhetoric and practices that came to be regarded in antiquity as quintessentially historical," p. 493. The interaction of these two genres and the role of ethnography in the mutiny narrative are discussed in Chapter 4 of this thesis.
[94] Mellor (1993) calls the *Agricola* a "highly rhetorical biography," p. 13.
[95] For the ablative absolute as a pivotal phrase in Roman historiography, see Kraus (2010), p. 403.

phrase to underscoring the failure of the centurion and Roman soldiers to maintain their disciplinary *exemplum* over the Usipi. Alone, this might be unremarkable. However, since Tacitus has taken pains to stress that the Usipi were conscripted in Germany (*per Germanias conscripta*, 28.1), the burden of the military failure falls on the only Roman in the *Agricola* associated with this province – Domitian.[96]

Immediately following the Mons Graupius narrative (29-38), Tacitus decries Domitian's triumphs as a sham.[97]

> Hunc rerum cursum, quamquam nulla verborum iactantia epistulis Agricolae auctum, ut erat Domitiano moris, fronte laetus, pectore anxius excepit. inerat conscientia derisui fuisse nuper falsum **e Germania** triumphum, **emptis per commercia** quorum habitus et crines in captivorum speciem formarentur: at nunc veram **magnamque victoriam** tot milibus hostium caesis **ingenti fama celebrari**.
>
> Domitian received this account of events, although it was increased with no boasting of words in the letters of Agricola, as was his custom: happy in countenance, anxious at heart. It was in his awareness that he was being ridiculed in that his recent triumph out of Germany had been false, with men having been bought through commercial transactions whose dress and hair were shaped into the appearance of captives; but that now a true and great victory, with so many thousands of the enemy having been slain, would be celebrated with immense fame.
> (39.1)

In recounting the Domitianic failure, Tacitus uses a language that echoes the mutiny of the Usipi. The phrase *e Germania* reflects the earlier usage of *per Germanias* (28.1),

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[96] Ash (2010) comes to a similar conclusion: "More productive perhaps is to view the episode more broadly as one component of Tacitus' pervasive strategic assault on the martial achievements and legacy of Domitian," p. 290. Clarke (2001) also notes, "The importance of Germany for our understanding of the *Agricola* is a recurrent theme…Domitian's own expedition was incomplete (*Ag*. 39)," p. 109.

[97] See also Ash (2010), pp. 290-91. A worthwhile comparison would be with the triumph of Germanicus in 17 CE, whom Tacitus, as per his usual custom, describes as having been celebrated even though the war in Germany was still unfinished (*decernitur Germanico triumphus manente bello*, *Ann*. 1.55.1). But at least Germanicus' triumph is not said to be false. In fact, Tacitus later describes his triumphal procession which included spoils, captives, and imagery from the campaigns including their geographical locations (*vecta spolia, captivi, simulacra montium fluminum proeliorum*, *Ann*. 2.41.2). Domitian gets no such allowances. We do know from Strabo that Germanicus' triumph included the displaying of important captives, such as Thusnelda, her young son Thumelicus, and her brother Segimuntus (7.1.4). For more on the subject, see Beard (2007), pp. 107-11. For other "fake triumphs" and their link to the mimetic process of triumphal representation, see pp. 185-86.

while the expression *emptis per commercia* closely parallels *per commercia venumdatos…ementium* (28.3).[98] Even the words *magnamque victoriam* and the phrase *ingenti fama celebrari* call to mind the Usipian notions of daring a great and memorable deed (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, 28.1), achieving a number of victories against the Britons (*saepe victores*, 28.2), and obtaining immense fame (*indicium tanti casus inlustravit*, 28.3).

Through the framework of the *mise en abyme*, we can see the Usipi as a double for Agricola in this anti-Domitianic *exemplum*. Like Agricola, their achievements form a strong contrast with the fabricated triumph of the emperor.[99] Moreover, their reversal extends well into their re-enslavement, as is indicated by their ensuing notoriety.[100] This

[98] Ash (2010) offers an extremely insightful comparison between the two phrases and how they link both passages as a whole: "Is it just a coincidence that *per commercia*, used first of the Usipi (*per commercia venumdatos*, *Agr*. 28.3), recurs again in Domitian's sham triumph in reference to slaves *emptis per commercia* (*Agr*. 39.2)? This is not to imply that the enslaved Usipi are the same men who feature in Domitian's display, but rather to suggest that Tacitus establishes a conceptual link between two episodes, which together cast Domitian in a dim light. Domitian may claim the conquest of Germany, but here we see the Usipi (part of the fruits of that supposed victory and duly enlisted in the Roman army) ably demonstrating a lively sense of their own independence and refusing to cooperate with their conquerors," p. 291.

[99] Tacitus later states, *tot exercitus in Moesia Daciaque et Germania et Pannonia temeritate aut per ignavium ducum amissi* ("so many armies were lost in Moesia and Dacia and Germany and Pannonia because of the cowardice or through the ignorance of their commanders," *Agr*. 41.2). The historical basis for this assertion is questionable with respect to Germany and Domitian. As Wells (1992) notes, Domitian was a successful general who was revered by his soldiers, pp. 166-67. He writes of Domitian's conquest along the Rhine, "His first campaign was in Germany, where he led a successful campaign against the Chatti beyond the middle Rhine (83), broke their power, and took permanent possession of the Taunus region. Suetonius stigmatizes the campaign as 'quite unjustified by military necessity' (*Domitian* 6), but it gave the Romans a stronger frontier in the middle Rhine region, and after the suppression of Saturninus' revolt it proved possible to reorganize the frontier and permanently reduce the garrison," p. 167. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) cite Frontinus (*Strat*. 2.11.7, 2.3.23) and evidence from archaeological excavations in order to suggest exaggeration on the part of Tacitus, pp. 284-85. Jones (1992) concurs and discusses the historical record at greater length, pp. 126-31. Dorey even goes so far as to say that Domitian's military achievements far surpassed those of Agricola (1960), p. 67. Regardless, Tacitus' anti-Domitianic sentiment remains dominant and its point could not be clearer.

[100] The enslavement of captives was by no means an exceptional event on its own. As Bradley (1994) notes, "The legal rules on *postliminium* show in fact that it was common for all peoples to convert captives into slaves, the assumption being that slavery was universal, or near-universal, in the ancient world," pp. 23-24. Citing Justinian's *Digest*, he also notes the ancient worldview that slavery originated in warfare, pp. 25-26, and later notes that the conversion of slaves into captives had probably begun during Rome's earliest wars in Italy, pp. 32-33. In the case of a triumph, Beard (2007) reminds us that most captives were sold as slaves

forms a contrast with Domitian's captives, whose infamy results from the recognition of their speciousness. On a metatextual level, then, the Usipi serve as a rhetorical mirror that further highlights the differences between the military achievements of Agricola and Domitian.

	Agricola (*Agr*. 18-38)	Usipi (*Agr*. 28)	Domitian (*Agr*. 39)
Setting:	Britain	British waters/German coast	Germany
Legacy:	Military conquest/ Subjugation	Symbolic conquest/ Escape and re-enslavement	False conquest/ False enslavement
Symbol:	Circumnavigation/ No triumph	Circumnavigation/Triumph in being paraded	Fabricated triumph
Captives:	No captives	Serve as captives	Replica captives used

Rather than serving as the symbol of a failed *princeps*, the Usipi, through the commercial process of their re-enslavement (*emptis per commercia*), come to emblematize the exact opposite. As both the successful cohort and the slave body marched on display (who, in an additional reversal, become proof of their own victory), they obtain the triumph that Agricola is denied while simultaneously undermining Domitian's mock-triumph.[101] In a bizarre, carnivalesque way, they even fulfill the *Agricola*-defining notion "that even under bad emperors there can be great men" (*posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros esse*, 42.4).[102]

The conflict between proper and improper *exempla* – and the role of the Usipi therein – plays an important role in the *Agricola*.[103] Even the notion of good men under

for profit, especially if the campaign were far from Rome, and only a few were brought back for the procession, pp. 118-19.

[101] It should nevertheless be noted that the "captives on parade" could steal the show, whether through suicide in order to escape the humiliation (e.g. Cleopatra), or given their name or stature, as Beard (2007) discusses at length, pp. 107-42, esp. 133-39.

[102] Here Dench (2005) is quite useful: "The *Agricola*, then, powerfully exploits a sense of outsider and insider as relative categories, placed on a sliding scale rather than as mutually exclusive, polarized entities," p. 85.

[103] This theme finds precedent in a number of Tacitus' antecedents, especially Cicero and Sallust. For Cicero, we need only look at *Verrines* 2.209-213, in which the orator uses the word *exemplum* 13 times in

bad emperors (42.4), plays into this motif, albeit it in a twisted manner. It is therefore not the least bit surprising that in the *Agricola*, the word *exemplum* appears four times outside of the mutiny narrative. The word first appears in Tacitus' summary of Agricola's service under Petilius Cerialis, when he declares that under the leadership of the latter Agricola's virtues had a space for setting precedents (*habuerunt virtutes spatium exemplorum*, 8.2). Its first mention by Tacitus highlights its positive denotation, and the link to Britain is implicit.[104] We might here see the *exemplum* that belonged to a previous generation of Romans, which Britain as a semi-detached space has preserved.[105]

The role of the island as an exemplary landscape is seen again when Agricola's first act upon arriving there as governor is the conquest of the Ordovici and the invasion and capture of Mona (18). However, in this case the *exemplum* lies open to several possibilities. The recently victorious Ordovici wish to demonstrate the impact of their revolt and test Agricola's mettle (*probare exemplum ac recentis legati animum opperiri*,

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an attempt to show Verres' flawed models of provincial governance and to contrast those models with their proper counterparts. Seeing the *Verrines* as a model for Tacitean exemplarity finds additional support in the fact that Verres is consistently linked with terrible governance of Sicily, Rome's first imperial possession and "the ornament of empire" (*Prima omnium, id quod ornamentum imperii est, provincia est appellata*, *Verr*. 2.2.2), and is repeatedly called out for his association with pirates. For Sallust, see Chapter 2 of this thesis, in whose writing we see that the *exemplum* also maintains a persistent link to historiography. Kraus (2005) notes, "Throughout extant Roman historiography, the *exemplum* is deployed as a means of understanding, negotiating, and representing past and present alike. As part of the ancient tradition of rhetorical persuasion, *exempla* are embedded in a system designed to argue both sides of a given question; so any exemplary story or figure can be itself the grounds of contested interpretation, while conflicting *exempla* can offer means of contesting paradigms…Already in our earliest Latin historical narratives, the exemplary figure is at once an individual and a type; as history concentrates its (and our) gaze on a series of exemplary figures, we are encouraged to see them both as unique, historically determined individuals and as imitable, repeatable, paradigms," pp. 186-87. For the purely didactic role of *exempla* and a clear separation between the positive and negative, Valerius Maximus is a useful source, especially given that Agricola appears to embody all that is best in his ethical guide. On the other hand, the *exempla* to avoid, all found in Val. Max. 9, include deeds by Catiline, Hannibal, and numerous other individuals, both Roman and foreign, and ought to be considered vis-à-vis the Usipi and Domitian. For a useful overview of Valerius Maximus, see Skidmore (1996).

[104] Given the sentence which immediately precedes: *brevi deinde Britannia consularem Petilium Cerialem accepit* ("Shortly thereafter Britain received Petilius Cerialis as consul," *Agr*. 8.2).

[105] For the semi-detached nature of Britain, see Clarke (2001), pp. 98-104. For Agricola's use of that space in a manner that is not open to him elsewhere in the empire, see Sailor (2008), pp. 78-80.

18.2). As such, it is an action requiring a corrective on the part of Agricola, who immediately proves their *exemplum* wrong, completely annihilates the tribe, and follows up late in the campaign season with the daring invasion of Mona. The downfall of Mona, in turn, has a lasting impact on Agricola's own exemplary status, launching his reputation for greatness and foreshadowing his conquest of the Britain.

Following the mutiny of the Usipi, the *exemplum* takes on additional dimensions. First, it appears as topos during the speeches preceding the Battle of Mons Graupius, in which the Usipi actually become the positive model in Calgacus' exhortation.[106] Herein they function as a key precedent in Calgacus' call to arms, appearing at the end of his declamation against Roman servitude.[107]

> in ipsa hostium acie inveniemus nostras manus: adgnoscent Britanni suam causam, recordabuntur Galli priorem libertatem, tam deserent illos ceteri Germani quam nuper Usipi reliquerunt.
>
> In this very battle line of the enemy we will come upon our own cohorts: the Britons will recognize their cause, the Gauls will recall their former freedom, and the other Germans will desert those men the Usipi recently abandoned. (32.3)

Among the subjugated Britons, Gauls and Germans, the Usipi stand out as the sole group that sought freedom from their Roman imposed servitude.[108] They have become the rhetorical model for Calgacus by revolting against what they see as the negative

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[106] Ash (2010), p. 278 and Clarke (2001), p. 110.

[107] On Calgacus' all too Roman rhetoric, Mellor (1993) notes, "It is a proper Roman declamation, and Tacitus projects Roman rhetoric into the mouth of a remote barbarian tribal leader and thereby elevates him into an opponent worthy of Agricola. The speech echoes the familiar accusations of Rome's greed, cruelty, and love of power which Sallust also recorded, and goes on to the most famous denunciation of Roman imperialism," p. 12. Martin (1981) too remarks, "Much of what Calgacus says comes straight from the language of Roman declamations. But the speech seems to have a bite that goes beyond the purely conventional," p. 44. Cf. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 253-54. For more on the foreign group misinterpreting key *exempla* and losing militarily, see Chaplin (2000), who cites numerous instances in Livy, pp. 73-82.

[108] It should also be noted that earlier in the *Agricola*, in the indirect discourse preceding Boudicca's revolt, the Britons use the Germans as *exempla* for throwing off the Roman yoke (*sic Germanias excussisse iugum: et flumine, non Oceano defendi*, *Agr*. 15.3).

precedent set by the Romans who conscripted them.[109] Thus, for Calgacus the Usipi have found room to set their own *exempla* in Britain, against the constraints of both the Domitianic regime on the continent and the governorship of Agricola on the British mainland.[110]

Calgacus is of course mistaken in thinking that the paradigm set by the Usipi applies to his men, and Agricola proves him wrong both in battle and in his counter-speech. For it is here that Agricola invalidates Calgacus' oratory, declaring, "If new peoples and an unfamiliar battle array had stood firm, I would be urging you with the examples of other armies," (*Si novae gentes atque ignota acies constitisset, aliorum exercituum exemplis vos hortarer*, 34.1). Agricola stresses to his men that the present situation at Mons Graupius requires nothing more than the military model they have come to expect during their service in Britain. Therefore, Calgacus' attempt to use the

[109] It is striking that the word *exemplum* in the *Agricola* always has some relation to power structures, often with respect to subversion thereof and mutiny: vis-à-vis Agricola under Cerialis, following the model set by the military commander (8); in the revolt of the Ordovici (18); in the attempted and failed disciplining of the Usipi (28); in Agricola's counter-speech to the commander of the rebellious Britons (34); and in the killing of the provincial governor Civica for his supposed revolutionary actions in Asia, in light of which Agricola proves his subservience to the emperor by refusing the proconsulship there (42).

[110] Clarke (2001) makes a valuable inference regarding the Usipi and Calgacus on the one hand, and Agricola and Calgacus on the other: "Britain, by its very remoteness, could be identified as a place of invigoration, where people such as the Usipi are able to perform in a spectacular and memorable way, and where Calgacus fulfils some of the qualities which Agricola himself might have accomplished, had he not been a general under Domitianic Rome," p. 112. Nevertheless, as Jonathan Master has pointed out to me, Tacitus elsewhere indicates that the provinces benefit from the stability of imperial rule. For example, regarding the creation of the principate by Octavian, Tacitus writes, "Nor were the provinces, which were continually shaken by force, by corruption, and finally by bribery, disapproving of that state of things, with the rule of the senate and people having been held suspect on account of the contests for power and the greed of the magistrates, and with the avail to the laws having been made useless (*neque provinciae illum rerum statum abnuebant, suspecto senatus populique imperio ob certamina potentium et avaritiam magistratuum, invalido legum auxilio, quae vi ambitu, postremo pecunia turbabantur*, *Ann*. 1.2.2). Likewise, in Cerialis' speech at Trier, Tacitus presents the idea that the benefits from good emperors extend far out into the provinces, while the harms of bad emperors have only local impact (*et laudatorum principum usus ex aequo quamvis procul agentibus: saevi proximis ingruunt*, *Hist*. 4.74.2). That being said, it would seem that Domitian's detrimental impact extends far beyond Rome in the *Agricola* (cf. *Agr*. 39-41), and so we might also see the Usipi reflecting a negative result of Domitian's involvement in the provinces.

Usipi as his model fails when Agricola's soldiers fight in their customary manner, and demonstrates his misreading of the Germanic cohort's narrative.[111]

When the word *exemplum* shows up for the last time in the *Agricola*, it has taken on a range of meanings, including the positive models set by Agricola, the mixed paradigms of the Usipi, and the failed ideals of the Britons. It is Domitian who embodies all the worst imperial archetypes, a fact which is embodied in the word's final usage.[112]

> Aderat iam annus, quo proconsulatum Africae et Asiae sortiretur, et occiso Civica nuper nec Agricolae consilium deerat nec Domitiano **exemplum**.
>
> Now the year was at hand in which the proconsulships of Africa and Asia were to be drawn, and after the recent killing of Civica neither was counsel lacking for Agricola nor a precedent for Domitian.
> (42)

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[111] For example, Calgacus seems completely unaware of a number of details: that the Usipi revolted against men who were not under the command of Agricola; that the Usipi were often successful in their skirmishes with the Britons (which in turn does not bode well for Calgacus, a British chieftain); that the cohort was eventually reduced to utter desperation, starvation, and cannibalism; and that this same group was eventually caught and re-enslaved. Roller (2004) makes a useful point about multiple readings and misreadings of *exempla*: "[The] production of exemplary discourse is beset at every turn by instabilities, contradictions, and contestation. An action may be evaluated positively in one ethical category, but negatively in another; or perhaps different aspects of an action carry divergent value. How are these conflicting judgments to be reconciled or weighed? An object that some viewers interpret as monumental, hence part of exemplary discourse, can be rejected by other viewers, who contend that its appearance is deceptive and it has no monumental quality at all – or there may be disputes about precisely what, or whom, a certain monument commemorates," p. 7. Dench (2005) is more interested in the moral issue, but sees the link between the proper servitude imposed by the Romans on their conquered subjects and the improper "enslavement" under Domitian: "The doomed figure of Calgacus the Caledonian, outspoken critic of Roman domination and morality, is a nostalgic if not ultimately viable alternative to Agricola's partial implication in the enslavement that is Roman imperial rule and the enslavement that is Domitian's reign," p. 85.

[112] As opposed to *exempla* best suited to an emperor. Seneca's advice to Nero is useful both in emphasizing that there is a clear idea of imperial exemplarity and in illustrating what constitutes it. The word appears six times in his *De Clementia*. Commenting on its first usage in which the gods are given as paradigm (*quoniam deorum feci mentionem, optime hoc exemplum principi constituam ad quod formetur*, *Clem*. 1.7.1), Braund (2009) writes that "the idea of exemplarity is central to the *De Clementia*, as we see from the introduction of the idea in the opening image of the mirror," p. 238. Seneca also mentions as *exempla* Augustus (*admonere te exemplo domestico volo*, 1.9.1), the excesses of previous emperors (*non priorum principum exemplis corruptum quantum sibi in cives suos liceat experiendo temptare*, 1.11.2), Tarius' condemnation of his son and Augustus' actions in light of this (*Hoc ipso exemplo dabo, quem compares bono patri, bonum principem*, 1.15.3), lesser forms of authority (*In magna imperia ex minoribus petamus exemplum*, 1.16.2), and clemency in the face of personal injury (*difficilius est enim moderari ubi dolori debetur ultio quam ubi exemplo*, 1.20.1). The last of these is particularly noteworthy given the supposedly vengeful actions of Domitian.

The *exemplum* of Civica applies to both Domitian and Agricola: while the negative precedent set by Domitian was open to repetition, it was one that was well understood by the former governor of Britain (*nec Agricolae consilium deerat*). For Agricola, then, being a good man under a terrible emperor and fulfilling this broader Tacitean *exemplum* means understanding the constraints that are imposed and finding where one's *exempla* have room to serve a positive purpose.[113] In this regard, the Usipi serve as a different kind of paradigm. Like Agricola, they find a space for countering the Domitianic model of oppression. But unlike the protagonist, they have the freedom to enter unchartered waters, and, as a slave body, to follow and establish a wide range of positive and negative *exempla* without needing to face the constraints of the Roman exemplary tradition.[114]

Tacitus completes the phrase describing the military regimen imposed upon the Usipi with the words *et rectores habebantur*, and in so doing raises additional questions about Roman imperial rule.[115] While the expression most likely refers to the posting of the soldiers as military overseers, it can also be understood to mean, "They were regarded as masters," with connotations of tyrannical rule.[116] Forms of *rector*, *rex*, and *rego* appear

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[113] It is again worth noting the role Britain plays in fulfilling this purpose: *habuerunt virtutes spatium exemplorum* (*Agr*. 8.2). For more on Britain's role as a space free from the constraints of empire, see Clarke (2001), pp. 106-9.

[114] Clarke (2001): "Fame and commemoration motivate the writing of the *Agricola*…although Agricola himself is forced to be moderate in the seeking of his renown. In this respect the Usipi, in a perverse way, are allowed to succeed where Agricola fails," p. 110. The reservations of Ash (2010) to the points raised by Clarke are worth noting, p. 291. Of course, an additional constraint facing Agricola is the lack of continuity between past and present under Domitian. As Roller (2009) stresses, "Underlying this 'exemplary' view of the past is the assumption that the past occupies a space of experience continuous with or homologous to the present, and therefore lies open to immediate apprehension by present actors," p. 215. For the problem with exemplarity under Domitian, including Tacitus' emphasis on the obstacles to achieving great deeds in the present as opposed to in the past, see Sailor (2004) and Sailor (2008), pp. 51-118.

[115] Useful starting points in the text for this theme include the preface (for problems between the emperor and his Roman subjects) and *Agr*. 21 (for the deceitful process of Roman "enslavement").

[116] *OLD rector* 3 and 4. I strongly disagree with the *OLD* classification of the word's usage here to mean "guide" (*OLD* 5). First, there is little reason to see why a centurion and soldiers would serve as guides for a naval enterprise. This would be the job of the helmsmen. Second, since the aimless sailing (*praevehebantur*) follows the loss of two *gubernatores*, it seems likely that this was their job. Finally, given that later in the mutiny narrative the gerund *regendi* refers to ship oversight, *rectores* here almost certainly

a number of times in the *Agricola*.[117] What is striking about the usage of these words during the early British narrative is the ambiguity over whether they should be read as having positive or negative connotations. As in the mutiny of the Usipi, where the word *rectores* has a strong negative sense but the later use of *regendi* does not, the ambiguity over what constitutes appropriate "rule" persists throughout the *Agricola*.

By noting that the helmsmen of the three Liburnian ships were overthrown by force (*adactis per vim gubernatoribus*), Tacitus not only evokes the rhetoric of Roman rule, but also describes the mutiny in language that calls to mind themes from the upcoming battle of Mons Graupius. In terms of general motifs, one idea insinuated by Tacitus is the overthrow of the Domitianic ship of state.[118] Given that the ship metaphor features prominently in oratorical treatises of Cicero,[119] and given that other words with

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denotes ranking military officers (*OLD* 4c). For the use of this word with such a meaning in similar phraseology, cf. Man. 5.637; for its naval implications vis-à-vis Dionysius of Syracuse's fleet command, cf. Val. Max. 6.9.ext.6.

[117] The word *rector* appears once again during the Battle at Mons Graupius. Tacitus writes of the British failure during the fight, "And often stray chariots – the horses being terrified without their controllers, as dread had borne each of them – ran into those men who were lying crosswise and in the way of their path" (*ac saepe vagi currus exterriti sine rectoribus equi, ut quemque formido tulerat, transversos aut obvios incursabant*, *Agr*. 36.3). Like the aimless Liburnian ships (*praevehebantur*) after they were commandeered by the Usipi, the stray (*vagi*) chariots and their unintended collisions, due to the removal of *rectores*, reflects a chaotic *libertas* that ultimately results in the defeat of the revolting tribes. Likewise, the noun *rex* and the corresponding adjective *regius* appear a number of times in the pre-Agricola British narrative and are used exclusively to denote non-Roman rulers. As part of his ethnography of the island, Tacitus states that the Britons at once obeyed kings but are now driven by princes into factions (*olim regibus parebant, nunc per principes factionibus et studiis trahuntur*, 12.1). For a line that describes the British peoples, the line sounds eerily reminiscent of Roman history. It was the Romans who once obeyed kings (*olim regibus parebant*) and were only recently thrown into civil war by the four emperors (*nunc per principes factionibus et studiis trahuntur*). Tacitus goes on to say that kings became captives during the invasions of the island by Claudius and Vespasian (13.3), after which time client kingship became established in the province (14.1). The word *rex* appears once more during the discourse of the British peoples leading up to Boudicca's revolt (15.2), in which she is characterized using the adjective *regius* (16.1).

[118] Although one would expect to find parallels in the Horatian corpus, especially in *Epodes* 10 and *Odes* 1.14, there is little evidence of intertextuality.

[119] Notable instances include Cic. *De or*. 1.8, 1.38, 1.46, 1.174, 1.214, *Sest*. 46, *Inv*. *rhet*. 2.146, *Ad Brut*. 1.14.2, *Rep*. 1.2, 2.51, and *Rab*. *Post*. 26. That Tacitus had in mind the *De oratore* when he wrote parts of the *Agricola* has been suggested by Martin (1981), who writes of the *consolatio* at the end of the work, "In keeping with the tone of the section the language becomes more elevated and the style, with its repetitions and balanced clauses, more Ciceronian, even to the extent of incorporating reminiscences of Cicero's

strong rhetorical connotations feature prominently in the mutiny of the Usipi,[120] the link to rhetoric is all the more likely.

We can also find in the writings of Tacitus' contemporaries allegory for the ship of state topos, wherein the rule of the Roman *princeps* during a particularly turbulent political period is symbolized by trouble at sea. Suetonius uses this metaphor in his description of the remarkable events after Actium, which shares a number of themes with the mutiny of the Usipi and other similar episodes.[121]

> nec multo post navali proelio apud Actium vicit in serum dimicatione protracta, ut in nave victor pernoctaverit. ab Actio cum Samum in hiberna se recepisset, **turbatus nuntiis de seditione praemia et missionem poscentium**, quos ex omni numero confecta victoria Brundisium praemiserat, repetit<a It>alia tempestate in traiectu bis conflictatus, primo inter promunturia Peloponensi atque Aetoliae, rursus circa montes Ceraunios **utrubique parte liburnicarum demersa**, simul eius, in qua vehebatur, fusis armamentis et **gubernaculo diffracto**; nec amplius quam septem et viginti dies, donec †ad desideria militum ordinarentur, Brundisii commoratus, **Asiae Syriaeque circuitu Aegyptum petit** obsessaque Alexandrea, quo Antonius cum Cleopatra confugerat, brevi potitus est. et Antonium quidem seras condiciones pacis temptantem ad mortem adegit viditque mortuum. Cleopatrae, **quam servatam triumpho magno opere cupiebat**, etiam psyllos admovit, qui venenum ac virus exugerent, quod perisse morsu aspidis putabatur.
>
> Not much afterwards he won a victory by means of naval battle near Actium, with the engagement having been protracted into the late hours, such that the victor passed the night on his ship. When he took himself from Actium to Samos in order to pass the winter, he was roused by dispatches about a mutiny of men demanding rewards and discharge, men whom he had sent ahead to Brundisium from every cohort after victory had been achieved. And with Italy having been sought once more, he was severely shaken by a storm twice during the crossing, the first time between the promontories of the Peloponnese and Aetolia, and again around the Ceraunian Mountains where a number of the Liburnian ships were sunk, at the same as which the tackle of his own ship on which he was being carried was scattered and the rudder was broken. Having delayed at Brundisium for no more than twenty seven days until the desires of the soldiers were carefully attended to, he sought Egypt by the circuit of Asia and Syria, and after besieging

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consolatory remarks on the death of L. Licinius Crassus at the beginning of *De oratore* III," p. 48. Birley (2009) sees a textual echo of the *Orator* in the first few sentences of the *Agricola*, p. 47.

[120] Such as *OLD exemplum* 2, 5, 6, and 7; *OLD inopia* 6; and *OLD indicium* 1 and 2.

[121] Another episode that has much in common with both this passage and *Agricola* 28 is the description of the voyage of Germanicus' soldiers who accidentally end up in Britain because of a storm and end up recounting the wonders of their journey once they make it back to the Rhineland (Tac. *Ann*. 2.23-24).

> Alexandria, to where Antony had fled with Cleopatra, he soon took possession of it. And to be sure he drove Antony, who sued for late terms of peace, to death, and beheld his corpse. To Cleopatra, whom through toil was desiring to be enslaved for a great triumph, he even conducted *psylloi*, in order to suck out the venom and poison which was thought to have destroyed her via the bite of an asp. (*Aug*. 17.2-4)

Suetonius could easily have passed over most of this account and focused on the siege of Alexandria and the death of Antony and Cleopatra. He certainly emphasizes the theme of Cleopatra's refusal to be paraded in servitude (*quam seruatam triumpho magno opere cupiebat*), which might make us think of the similar yet different outcome for the Usipi, whose fame comes from the proof of their physical display (*Agr*. 28.3).[122] But in the end, he chooses instead to focus on the remarkable events surrounding Octavian's detour to Italy. Like the mutiny of the Usipi, the wondrous nature of the episode provides a key reason for its presence in the narrative. Rumor of a mutiny provides the reason for Octavian's excursion (*turbatus nuntiis de seditione praemia et missionem poscentium*, *Aug*. 17.3), suggesting that the workings of the state are not entirely stable. A storm twice interrupts the journey, which in terms of the ship of state topos builds on an established literary precedent.[123] In addition, the Liburnian vessels from Actium and their destruction play a central part (*utrubique parte liburnicarum demersa*, 17.3) by adding a specific political event to the allegory, and the destruction of the rudder on Octavian's ship (*gubernaculo diffracto*, 17.3) adds to the general topos.[124]

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[122] For the most famous interpretation of these events and a likely source of inspiration for Suetonius, see Hor. *Carm*. 1.37.

[123] Examples might include Hor. *Epod*. 1.10 and *Carm*. 1.14, although there has been some dispute over whether the ship in 1.14 represents the ship of state. The original arguments in favor of such a reading are those of Fraenkel (1957), pp. 154-58 and Commager (1962), pp. 163-69, the latter of whom cites Quintilian (8.6.44) for what prompts such a reading and Suetonius (the above passage) for the referenced political event. For the dispute, see Mendell (1938) and Anderson (1966), and for a new interpretation see Knorr (2006).

[124] We might see a similar problem in the loss of the helmsmen after the mutiny of the Usipi (*adactis per vim gubernatoribus*, *Agr*. 28.1). Furthermore, the seeking of Egypt by circuit (*Asiae Syriaeque circuitu*

Vis-à-vis Mons Graupius, the expression *adactis per vim gubernatoribus* looks ahead to the idea of overthrowing Roman rule featured in the *declamatio* of Calgacus. The word *gubernator*, although referring more often than not to a ship's "helmsman,"[125] also figuratively means "one who controls" or governs.[126] In addition, this figurative meaning usually refers to the individual in charge of the Roman state,[127] for whom *Agricola* serves as steward in Britain. Calgacus makes this clear as he concludes his speech with the deictic cry, *hic dux, hic exercitus* ("Here is the leader, here is his army," *Agr*. 33.4). Furthermore, the stress Calgacus places on the Roman navy's role in the subjugation of the known world provides an additional link between the phrase *adactis per vim gubernatoribus* and Calgacus' anti-imperialist rhetoric.

> nam et universi coistis et servitutis expertes, et nullae ultra terrae ac ne mare quidem securum inminente nobis classe Romana.
>
> Now you are both all united together and experienced in servitude, and no further lands nor even the sea is a refuge for us from the threatening Roman fleet. (30.1)

Unlike Calgacus, however, the Usipi succeed in casting off the Roman yoke. Additionally, they prove his assertion to be incorrect in that the sea around Britain becomes their refuge. It is only when they begin to take on the Roman stereotype emphasized by Calgacus – *raptores orbis* ("plunderers of the earth," 30.4) – and land their commandeered ships to raid for supplies (*mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum exissent*, 28.2) that they become weakened.

Aegyptum petit, *Aug*. 17.3) might be read as topically analogous to the circumnavigation of Britain by the Usipi on their return to Germany (*Agr*. 28.3).

[125] *OLD* 1.

[126] *OLD 1b.*

[127] See Cic. *Rab*. *Post*. 26 and *Rep*. 2.51 for this specific usage of the word.

Later in the mutiny narrative, following the circumnavigation of Britain, the phrase *amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus* ("after their ships had been lost through not knowing how to command them," 28.3) once again suggests a failure "to rule." In the context of the episode's plot, the ablative absolute explains how the Usipi came to arrive back in the Rhineland, which played a crucial role in their story's dissemination and their own subsequent fame. But it also develops the metaphor of the "failed ship of state" which surfaced earlier in the narrative. The verb *rego* evokes a number of non-nautical associations, the most notable being "to control (peoples, states. etc.), exercise dominion over, govern."[128] This is not surprising given its iconic usage in Anchises' advice to Aeneas about the Romans' "manifest destiny": *tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento* ("You, Roman, remember to rule the nations with full authority," Verg. *Aen*. 6.851). As noted earlier, the word *rego* and its cognates appear numerous times in the *Agricola*, a number of which refer to the idea of *imperium* exercised by Roman provincial magistrates and client kings. In this context, then, the association between the phrase *per inscitiam regendi* and the condition of the Roman Empire becomes hard to ignore.

By taking a topos that is normally used to describe the Roman political apparatus and employing it in a narrative that describes the feats of a rebellious cohort of Germanic conscripts, Tacitus further complicates the rhetoric of empire seen throughout the *Agricola*. It is one thing to pronounce the failings of the principate at Rome (*Agr*. 1-3, 40-43), to exaggerate the failure of the imperial armies in the provinces (39, 41), and to put anti-Roman rhetoric into the mouth of the foreign general prior to a climactic battle (30-

[128] *OLD* 10.

32).[129] Yet it is another thing entirely to transfer a Roman theme onto mutinous foreigners who are of slave status. But this cannot come as a complete surprise, given that Tacitus has already accorded them a significant historiographical presence in his work. Therefore, in challenging the divisions between the Roman conqueror and the foreign captive, he represents a breakdown that we might expect to take place along the far reaches of the empire. The Usipi have, quite literally, commandeered the Roman fleet.

The impact can be seen on both the thematic and the narratological levels. In terms of rhetorical motif, the topical confusion and its transfer to Germanic conscripts calls into question the condition of Roman *imperium* at a time when the state, according to Tacitus, is in grave turmoil, and the only corrective appears to be the author's father-in-law.[130] More interesting still is the location of this exchange with respect to the primary sequence of events. At *Agricola* 27, Tacitus indicates that the Britons are preparing to revolt, and in so doing indicates that Agricola's authority is about to be contested. Likewise, in the narrative that follows and as early as *Agricola* 29, Tacitus presents an extended account of the insurrection and Agricola's successful suppression of it.[131] Yet upon finishing the account of the Usipi and hearing about the emerging British rebellion, the reader cannot be certain that Agricola will be victorious.[132] What is more, the appropriation of the Usipi as a key *exemplum* in the speech of Calgacus suggests that

[129] In the case of Calgacus' speech Tacitus is building on a historiographical tradition that finds a clear precedent in Caesar, Sallust and Livy, in which the enemy denounces Roman imperialism and its consequences prior to battle. For an example, see Hannibal's speech prior to the Battle of Ticinus (21.43-44). Furneaux (1922) also sees a parallel in Sallust, near the end of Catiline's final speech to his army (*Cat*. 58.14), p. 121, which is also noted by Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p 254. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) see shared elements with the speeches of Critognatus (Caes. *B Gall*. 7.77), Micipsa (Sall. *Iug*. 10), Adherbal (14), and Civilis (Tac. *Hist*. 4.32), p. 253. Cf. note 108 and following above.
[130] The idea of Agricola/*Agricola* as a corrective is that of Sailor (2004) and Sailor (2008), pp. 51-118.
[131] For an extended discussion of these two surrounding chapters and their relationship to the mutiny of the Usipi, see Chapter 6 of this thesis. It is also worth noting that several chapters earlier, Tacitus showed the pivotal role of the Roman fleet in Agricola's campaigns (*Agr*. 25.1-2). For more on this see Chapter 6.
[132] At the very least, he or she will not know the manner in which Agricola will achieve this victory (for Agricola nearly achieves it at *Agr*. 26).

the cohort has served as a source of inspiration for the British revolt. In terms of narratology, then, the application of the failed ship of state motif to the Germanic cohort creates an additional layer of suspense as the reader enters upon the climactic battle at Mons Graupius, and it will not be resolved until Agricola's own fleet circumnavigates the island.

In the subsequent phrase, the last before the capture of the Usipi by the other German tribes, Tacitus describes the cohort as "having been held as pirates" (*pro praedonibus habiti*, 28.3).[133] In so doing he conjures up the rhetorical topos of piracy, which, like the conflict between proper and improper *exemplum*, has a prominent role in Cicero's *Verrines*.[134] The oratorical connection Cicero establishes between piracy and the abuse of *imperium* by a Roman provincial governor is key. The word *praedo* shows up 51 times in these orations.[135] One description in the *Verrines* is particularly relevant, given both the repeated uses of the word *praedo* and the participation of the Usipi in the slave trade that immediately follows the expression *pro praedonibus habiti* (28.3).

> Navem imperare ex foedere debuisti; remisisti in triennium; militem nullum umquam poposcisti per tot annos. Fecisti item ut **praedones** solent…Phaselis illa, quam cepit P. Servilius, non fuerat urbs antea Cilicum atque **praedonum**…Sed

[133] I take *habeo* here as denoting both the act of perception (*OLD* 24 with *pro praedonibus*) and possession (*OLD* 1).

[134] By the time Tacitus wrote the *Agricola*, the use of piracy as a topos in Roman oratory was well established. Nor was it the *Verrines* alone that were responsible for this link. As is mentioned at the outset of Petronius' *Satyricon*, pirates became a common trope of *suasoriae* and *controversiae* in rhetorical education (Petron. 1.3). For example, a number of Seneca the Elder's *Controversiae* feature capture by pirates as a key rhetorical element (*Controv*. 1.6, 1.7, and 7.1). In an oral version of the previous chapter, which I delivered at a University of Georgia classics colloquium, Keith Dix also noted this connection.

[135] This does not include the many uses of other synonymous words such as *pirata* and *archipirata*. Cicero most frequently uses *praedo* as a rhetorical term of reproach for Gaius Verres' seemingly barbaric and unrestrained actions as governor of Sicily, which he makes all the more effective by using it elsewhere to refer to the actual pirates whom Cicero accuses Verres of associating with. For example, he refers to Verres as *praedonum praedo ipse* ("the pirate of pirates himself," *Verr*. 2.1.154) and to his ship as *navis illa praedonis istius* ("that ship of this pirate," 2.1.46). Yet he also takes pains to show Verres' piratical associations: this includes his preference to make profit from his dealings with pirates while treating his own Sicilian citizens like slaves (2.1.9), his allowing of pirates to lodge in his own house (2.1.12), and even his association with the *archipirata* (2.5.64).

> quod erat eius modi loco atque ita proiecta in altum ut et exeuntes e Cilicia **praedones** saepe ad eam necessario devenirent, et, cum se ex hisce locis reciperent, eodem deferrentur, adsciverunt sibi illud oppidum **piratae** primo **commercio**, deinde etiam societate…Verum haec civitas isti **praedoni** ac **piratae** Siciliensi Phaselis fuit[136]
>
> From the agreement you should have requisitioned a ship; you remitted it for three years; you demanded not a single soldier for so many years. You acted in a manner that pirates are accustomed to act…that Phaselis, which Publius Servilius captured, was not previously a town of Cilicians and pirates…But because it was in a place of such a sort and thus projected onto a height such that even the pirates departing from Cilicia often came to that place by necessity, and, when they withdrew from these places, they were carried back from the same place, the pirates attached that town to themselves first through commerce, then even through partnership…But this state was the Phaselis of that Sicilian plunderer and pirate!
> (*Verr*. 2.4.21-23)

The Usipi themselves are mistaken for pirates by the German tribes they encounter upon their return to the Rhineland. In a way this is not altogether unexpected given their extended nautical adventure which included a series of coastal raids. In addition, like the events which take place in the rhetorical town of Phaselis, the piracy of the Usipi results in their reentrance into the commercial trade system.[137]

In the final sentence of the mutiny narrative, Tacitus stresses the fact that the enslavement of the Usipi was a requirement for their story's widespread fame.

> ac fuere quos **per commercia venumdatos** et in nostram usque ripam mutatione **ementium** adductos indicium tanti casus inlustravit.

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[136] All Latin text of Cicero's *Verrines* comes from the Peterson OCT (1978).

[137] In a way, it is ironic that the Usipi are mistaken for pirates upon their return to Germany, the one province associated with Domitian. For at the end of the *Agricola*, Tacitus recounts how fortunate his father-in-law was to have died prior to the darkest days of the emperor's reign of terror, all the while describing horrific and bloody scenes of chaos and murder watched over closely by the emperor (*Agr*. 45). In terms of topical precedent, Cicero's account of Gavius, the Roman citizen whom Verres is accused of Crucifying (*Verr*. 2.5.158-70), sees much in common Tacitus' account of the atrocities in Domitianic Rome. What is more, the story is hinted at immediately following Cicero's description of Phaselis (2.4.24), and the story itself includes the hypothetical *exemplum* that had Verres been captured by barbarians, he too would have wanted the rights afforded to a Roman citizen. Verres' crucifixion of Gavius, then, has far exceeded anything piratical or barbaric. It is pure *nefas*, and Tacitus' portrayal of Domitian seems molded on this idea. For a striking parallel, cf. *Agr*. 2 and *Verr*. 2.5.170. For the idea that Domitian has transgressed far beyond the cannibalism of the Usipi, see Ash (2010), pp. 292-93.

> But there were those – sold into slavery through commercial transactions and brought even so far as our shore through the exchange of buying – whom proof of so great an incident made famous.
> (*Agr*. 28.3)

As is made abundantly clear in Calgacus' declamation (30-32) and elsewhere in the *Agricola*, the theme of slavery plays a profound role in Tacitus' monograph. The theme is not limited to situations arising from Roman conquest of foreign peoples. Long before recounting Agricola's conquest of Britain, Tacitus describes in brutal terms the metaphorical Roman servitude under the principate of Domitian.

> et sicut vetus aetas vidit quid ultimum in **libertate** esset, ita nos quid in **servitute**, adempto per inquisitiones etiam loquendi audiendique **commercio**.
>
> And just as the bygone age saw what was the height of freedom, thus we saw the height of servitude, after even the exchange of speaking and hearing had been removed through inquisitions.
> (2.3)

That part of the Domitianic servitude consisted of a removal of "even the exchange of speaking and hearing" finds a strong parallel in the final moments of *Agricola* 28: there is absolutely no mention of the Usipi recounting their story to whomever it was that purchased them. In essence, Tacitus leads his reader to believe that the physical bodies of the enslaved Usipi served as proof of their great deeds, an idea with implicit risk (*periculum*), given Rome's slave-based society and history of slave revolts.[138]

[138] I owe this idea to Naomi Norman, who offered a number of useful points along these same lines following the oral version of the previous chapter delivered at the University of Georgia. Bradley (2010) states in the simplest of terms, "Rome was a genuine slave society," p. 625. Even so, the nuances of the Roman slave system were complex, and Bradley gives an excellent overview. For a more detailed analysis of the complexities of Roman slavery in the Roman literary tradition, see Fitzgerald (2000). Similarly, Bradley (1994) gives a more elaborate social history of the practice, in which the complexities are again noted: "The Roman slavery system cannot be understood, therefore, without at once acknowledging its enormous diversity and variability, and any attempt to define its general features must constantly allow for the unanticipated and the exceptional," p. 4.

Here again we see how the Usipi afford Tacitus an opening into problematic rhetorical parallels. The Usipi, as slaves, are not supposed to rebel. The Roman senatorial class is not supposed to be "enslaved" by the emperor. Yet in the *Agricola*, it is the conscripted Usipi who achieve lasting fame for their actions, which includes a victory over Domitian's legions. They become the foreign equivalent of the Roman martyrs whose actions Tacitus must both praise and disavow in order to distinguish them from his paradigmatic father-in-law.[139] Even so, the Usipi are not Romans, and their actions in many ways exemplify the chaos that the Domitianic principate has unleashed on the Roman Empire. It is a bad day for slave-laden Rome when conscripted recruits successfully revolt, kill numerous Roman soldiers, and gain lasting fame. The *Agricola* makes possible both interpretations. On the one hand, the Usipi are able to illustrate the problems of empire and be a symptom of its troubles, killing, pirating, cannibalizing, serving as the enemy's *exemplum*, and gaining notoriety. On the other hand, they can triumph over Domitian, whose actions are made out to be far worse by Tacitus, in a way that Agricola cannot, and as such become martyr figures, gain lasting fame, and provide the semiotic key for Agricola's own emblematic circumnavigation of Britain.

As part of the parallel enabled by the *mise en abyme*, Tacitus' portrayal of Agricola as repeatedly choosing silence over narration might be seen in tandem with the physical proof provided by the bodies of the Usipi. One remarkable instance of the governor's silence speaking volumes comes at the end of his first season of campaigns, following his successful conquest of Mona.

> ne laureatis quidem gesta prosecutus est, sed ipsa dissimulatione famae famam auxit, aestimantibus quanta futuri spe tam magna tacuisset.

[139] Sailor (2008), pp. 113-16.

> He did not even follow up these exploits with laurel-wreathed dispatches, but with the very dissimulation of fame he increased his fame, with men estimating how much was his hope for the future when he had been silent about such great things. (18.6)

Indeed, Tacitus seems to suggest that Agricola's mere silent presence conveys a message to those observing him. In the Battle of Mons Graupius, he is described as being physically "present everywhere" (*frequens ubique*, 37.4). Upon his journey home, Agricola's encounter with Domitian's freedman was rumored to be one without a word exchanged but with an implicit understanding between both parties (40.2). Finally, when Agricola returns to Rome, he deliberately chooses to enter the city at night in order to avoid crowds, and upon reaching the palace is briefly embraced without a word being spoken (*nullo sermone*, 40.3). Indeed, Tacitus never mentions that his father-in-law recounted his accomplishments to him. Only once does he disclose that Agricola repeatedly told him how easy it would have been to conquer Ireland (24.3).[140]

That the enslavement of the Usipi was a requirement for their eventual notoriety follows a well-established pattern in the *Agricola*. Like Agricola, the Usipi achieved their exploits while Domitian was emperor.[141] Moreover, the reentrance of the Usipi into the slave trade occurred upon their return to Germany, the province of Domitian's conquest. This idea finds its logical conclusion in that the servitude at Rome as well as the resulting censorship and book burning were necessary requirements for the composition of the *Agricola* as it came to be published. Without these events, the anti-Domitianic rhetoric would have no place in the work. There would be no need for the elaborate introduction (1-3) and the work would lose its resulting ring-compositional structure. Most of all,

[140] Martin (1981), p. 45.
[141] At least according to Tacitus, who places the mutiny in 83 BCE. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) note that Cassius Dio places the same events in 79 BCE, when Titus would have still been emperor, p. 321.

Agricola's exploits – characterized repeatedly for both their unparalleled *moderatio* and their remarkable greatness in the face of the Domitianic threat – would lose all significance,[142] and the extreme actions of the Usipi would have nothing to reflect, exaggerate, and distort.

[142] The *moderatio* of Agricola has been well noted. Mellor (1993) writes, "But the central theme that lies at the heart of Tacitus's political philosophy: that 'even under bad emperors men can be great'. Tyranny even brought an opportunity to exhibit new virtues, since *moderatio* was not mere passive acceptance but a laudable action," p. 13. For Tacitus' mention of Agricola's moderation, see note 59 above.

CHAPTER 4

COHORS USIPORUM PER GERMANIAS: ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE MUTINY

Ethnography too plays a noticeable role in the mutiny of the Usipi.[143] This is to be expected, given the central role of foreign conquest in the *Agricola*.[144] That Agricola's Historiographical exploits have a strong ethnographic element is made even more apparent, given that the *res gestae* of the protagonist take place along the farthest reaches of the empire, against a multitude of newly encountered peoples.[145] In many ways Tacitus' earlier ethnography of Britain (*Agr*. 10-12), while having the characteristics of a digression, is a literary requirement: it creates a map on which to situate the nature and location of Agricola's achievements.

In the mutiny narrative, Tacitus creates an ethnographic element that reflects Agricola's accomplishments vis-à-vis Britain and her peoples, while simultaneously taking on extreme attributes. When viewed in terms of the ethnographic genre, the Usipi continue to exhibit the mixed mirroring which they have shown in both a historiographical and rhetorical framework. In this context, the Usipi inhabit and help to

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[143] See Thomas (1982) for a discussion of Tacitus' skill as an ethnographer, his careful consideration of the ethical connotations of the genre, and his drawing of the tradition from the poets Horace, Virgil, and Lucan, pp. 126-30.

[144] Feldherr (2009) writes, "Any large-scale history of the Romans is inevitably a history of conquest…The importance of military victory as an affirmation of political and moral well-being gives a special importance to the portrayal of non-Romans in Roman historiography," p. 301.

[145] As noted by Dench (2007) and numerous others, the genre boundaries between historiography and ethnography are extremely blurry. As Sailor (2008) demonstrates, this is even more apparent in the Agricola: "As in the course of Roman history generals began to celebrate triumphs for ever more distant conquests, the ceremony relied more and more on good faith: increasingly, what the *triumphator* presented for inspection in his procession was tokens of what he had seen and done. In this sense, he was not just a general, but a geographer too, as well as an ethnographer and a historian, presenting the results of a conquest that was also an act of investigation and recording," p. 93. For the broader cultural role of the ethnography, see Dench (2005), pp. 41-46.

define the liminal spaces of Tacitus' British narrative: they bridge the gaps between Agricola and the people he conquers. They are at once the soldierly body that conducts campaigns against the inhabitants of Britain, and the ultimate form of cannibalistic other that exceeds anything Agricola witnesses during his own campaigns. Likewise, they are both the victorious tribe that overthrows the Roman naval element and then goes on to symbolically conquer the British island, as well as the captured enemy that finds its way back to the Rhine for display.

It is worth reexamining the passage in question in order to see the wide range of ethnographic markers that Tacitus lays out.

> Eadem aestate **cohors Usiporum per Germanias conscripta et in Britanniam transmissa** magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est. occiso **centurione** ac **militibus**, qui ad tradendam disciplinam **inmixti** manipulis exemplum et rectores habebantur, **tres liburnicas adactis** per vim gubernatoribus ascendere; et uno remigante, suspectis duobus eoque interfectis, nondum vulgato rumore ut **miraculum** praevehebantur. **mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum exissent, cum plerisque Britannorum sua defensantium proelio congressi** ac saepe victores, aliquando pulsi, eo ad **extremum** inopiae venere, **ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur**. atque ita circumvecti Britanniam, amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus, **pro praedonibus habiti, primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt**. ac fuere quos per commercia **venumdatos** et **in nostram usque ripam** mutatione ementium **adductos** indicium tanti casus inlustravit.[146]
> (28)

Straightway Tacitus presents the reader with a range of ethnographic words as he introduces the acting unit: *cohors Usiporum per Germanias conscripta et in Britanniam transmissa* ("a cohort of Usipi, enlisted from among the German regions and dispatched into Britain," 28.1).[147] Not only does Tacitus describe the group as non-Roman (*cohors*

[146] Words and phrases with ethnographic connotations are given in bold.
[147] For the Germanic background of the Usipi, see Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 245 and Heubner (1984), p. 83.

Usiporum),[148] but also instigates both a foreign vs. Roman (*per Germanias conscripta*) and a foreign vs. foreign (*in Britanniam transmissa*) set of interactions. Each of these in turn develops into an ethnographic encounter and conflict: the story begins with the Usipi facing off with their Roman officers, continues with their battles against various British peoples, and ends with their capture by other, more powerful German tribes.[149] Like Agricola, whose actions are largely defined by and dependent upon foreign encounters, and like his biography, which defines itself by the conquest of an extremely foreign space, the Usipi gain fame through their contact with foreign peoples.

The voyage of the Usipi and their many ethnic encounters follow a pattern that Tacitus lays out in his geography and ethnography of Britain.

> Britannia, insularum quas Romana notitia complectitur maxima, spatio ac caelo in orientem Germaniae, in occidentem Hispaniae obtenditur, Gallis in meridiem etiam inspicitur; septentrionalia eius, nullis contra terris, vasto atque aperto mari pulsantur.
>
> Britain, the greatest of the islands to be encompassed in the Roman knowledge, stretches out with respect to its land and sky against Germany to the East, against Spain to the West, and is even looked at by the Gauls to the South; its northern regions, since no lands lie facing, are beaten by a vast and open sea.
> (10.2)

[148] As opposed to Cassius Dio, who makes no mention of the foreign element, referring to them simply as "some soldiers who had rebelled" (στρατιῶται γάρ τινες στασιάσαντες, Cass. Dio 66.20.1). For a detailed comparison, see Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 321-22.

[149] The weakness of the Usipi relative to the Suebi and Frisii can be deduced from the *Germania*. In it the Usipi are mentioned only for their location along the Rhine (*Germ*. 32.1). By contrast, numerous chapters are dedicated to describing the many tribes that make up the Suebic nation (38-46.1), and the Frisii are organized into two groups based on their relative might (34.1). Also worth noting is Caesar's account of the expulsion of the Usipi from their lands by the Suebi, which forced them to the Rhineland (*In eadem causa fuerunt Usipetes et Tencteri, quos supra diximus, qui compluris annos Sueborum vim sustinuerunt, ad extremum tamen agris expulsi et multis locis Germaniae triennium vagati ad Rhenum pervenerunt*, *B Gall*. 4.4.1-2). The similarities between this description in Caesar and *Agricola* 28 are striking, in particular the desperation forcing a last resort action (*ad extremum…agris expulsi*) and the subsequent extended wandering of the tribe (*et multis locis Germaniae triennium vagati*).

Britain is entirely defined by its closest neighbors – Germany, Spain, and Gaul – as well as its northern lands which are exposed to a vast and open sea.[150] The closest thing Britain has to self-definition is its open ocean (*aperto mari*) to the North.[151] This, in turn, makes possible the taming of the island via the sea which beats it (*pulsantur*), an idea which Tacitus emphasizes by using language that evokes assailing with siege engines.[152] Furthermore, Tacitus' use of an ablative of specification (*spatio ac caelo*) ensures that Britain's total inhabitable space is expressed as the sum of foreign elements.[153]

Similarly, the people who dwell in Britain must be described in terms of their resemblance to the Germans, the Spaniards, and the Gauls from the lands opposite the island.

> Ceterum Britanniam qui mortales initio coluerint, indigenae an advecti, ut inter barbaros, parum compertum. habitus corporum varii atque ex eo argumenta. namque rutilae Caledoniam habitantium comae, magni artus Germanicam originem adseverant; Silurum colorati vultus, torti plerumque crines et posita contra Hispania Hiberos veteres traiecisse easque sedes occupasse fidem faciunt; proximi Gallis et similes sunt, seu durante originis vi, seu procurrentibus in diversa terris positio caeli corporibus habitum dedit. in universum tamen aestimanti Gallos vicinam insulam occupasse credibile est. eorum sacra deprehendas <ac> superstitionum persuasionem; sermo haud multum diversus, in deposcendis periculis eadem audacia et, ubi advenere, in detrectandis eadem formido, plus tamen ferociae Britanni praeferunt, ut quos nondum longa pax emollierit. nam Gallos quoque in bellis floruisse accepimus; mox segnitia cum otio intravit, amissa virtute pariter ac libertate. quod Britannorum olim victis evenit: ceteri manent quales Galli fuerunt.

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[150] Tacitus' geographic description of the island appears to draw heavily from Caesar, who similarly notes the island's relationship to Gaul, Spain, and Germany (5.13.1-2), as well as the fact that it has no land to the north (5.13.6). However, Tacitus adds the detail about the vast and open sea that strikes Britain's northern shore, while also omitting until later in his narrative Caesar's descriptions of Ireland and Mona. Regardless, the fact that Caesar's accurate geographic statement (*Insula natura triquetra*, 5.13.1) finds no mention in Tacitus' account is worth noting. For a detailed account of the manner in which Tacitus sets himself apart from Caesar in his geography and ethnography, and of his own ethnographic project in general, see Sailor (2008), pp. 81-89.

[151] Clarke (2001) continually stresses the importance of Britain's location in the Outer Ocean in defining its insularity, pp. 98-100, 106.

[152] *OLD pulso* 6. Romm (1992) cites several instances, such as Albinovanus Pedo and Strabo 7.2.1, where the North Sea is described as an enemy force that is either attacking or being attacked, p. 144.

[153] In Caesar, *spatium* is used only for spatial measurement, while *caelum* does not occur.

> As for those mortals who first inhabited Britain, indigenous or having arrived, as it is among barbarians, little is known. The physical characteristics of their bodies are varied and the proofs are as follows. For instance, the red hair and the great limbs of those inhabiting Scotland confirms a Germanic origin. The colored complexions of the Siluri, their mostly curly hair, and the fact that Spain is positioned opposite lend credence to the notion that Iberian peoples of long ago crossed over and occupied these dwelling places. Those nearest to the Gauls are also similar to them, either because of the lasting power of origin, or because, for lands projecting opposite each other, the position of the sky has given the deportment to their bodies. In general, however, it is convincing for one surmising that the Gauls had occupied a nearby island. You could ascertain their sacred rites and the belief of their superstitions. Their speech is not much different. In challenging dangers there is the same boldness and, when these arrive, the same dread in fleeing. Nonetheless the Britons exhibit more fierceness, being men whom a long peace has not yet softened. For we have learned that the Gauls once flourished in wars; soon afterwards inactivity came over them with leisure, with their virtue having been dismissed in equal proportion to their freedom. Such a thing has befallen those Britons previously conquered: the rest remain just as the Gauls once were.
> (11.1-4)

Tacitus straightway declares the impossibility of determining the precise origin of the Britons.[154] In so doing, he builds upon the historiographical style of Thucydides, who at the outset of Book 6 is unable to say for sure whence came the first Sicilians (ὧν ἐγὼ οὔτε γένος ἔχω εἰπεῖν οὔτε ὁπόθεν ἐσῆλθον ἢ ὅποι ἀπεχώρησαν, Thuc. 6.2.1).[155] With respect to the Britons' physical appearance, Tacitus stresses how varied it is (*habitus corporum varii*), albeit within the range of characteristics displayed by peoples in the regions opposite Britain. The red hair and large limbs of the Caledonians

[154] This stands in marked contrast with Caesar, who writes, "The interior part of Britain is inhabited by those whom, born on the island, themselves say that it is put forth by memory, the maritime part by those who crossed over from Belgium for the sake of booty and declaring war" (*Britanniae pars interior ab eis incolitur quos natos in insula ipsi memoria proditum dicunt, maritima pars ab eis qui praedae ac belli inferendi causa ex Belgio transierant*, *B Gall*. 5.12.1-2).

[155] While there are numerous differences between the Athenian campaign in Sicily and Agricola's campaign in Britain (most notably the outcome), a number of broad parallels call for a more rigorous comparison. Both feature the conquest of large islands preceded by ethnographies in order to stress the novelty and scale of their respective expeditions. Both feature naval episodes which contain the defining characteristics of their respective works: the mutiny of the Usipi (*Agr*. 28) and the conquest of Mona (18) vs. the final Athenian defeat in the Syracusan Great Harbor (Thuc. 7.70-72). Indeed, Wiedemann (1993) sees in Thucydides' Sicilian preface a model for the digressions found in Sallust's *Bellum Iugurthinum*, pp. 48-49. Furthermore, Egbert Bakker has suggested to me that in Thucydides we can see *mise en abyme* operating in the reactions to the Syracusan naval harbor battle by the Athenians watching from the shore.

demonstrates a Germanic origin. Colored complexions and curly hair shows Iberian influence. Even those closest to the Gauls, either because of shared ancestry or simply due to geographic proximity, share their characteristics.[156] Furthermore, the Gauls and the Britons have similar languages, share religious rites and superstitions, and display a similar pattern of softening due to idleness, Roman conquest, and the introduction of luxury.[157] Given that the conquest of Britain by Agricola is the central feature of the work, the inclusion of a geography and ethnography makes perfect sense given the historiographical precedents.[158] Even so, Tacitus' focus on the island's ethnic multiplicity suggests a more definite purpose to the multicultural excursions of the Usipi.

The initial conflict between the Usipi and the Romans appears straightforward, yet it subtly introduces the anti-Domitianic rhetoric through its ethnographic contrasts. By means of several key words, Tacitus indicates that the Usipi have been enlisted by the Romans. Words such as *centurione*, *rectores*, *liburnicas*, and *gubernatoribus* (*Agr*. 28.2) indicate a Roman presence, while phrases such as *conscripta et in Britanniam transmissa*

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[156] Geographic proximity and ethnographic relationship are frequently linked in this section of the *Agricola* (cf. *Agr*. 10.2, 11.2), which is not at all the case in Caesar, who only notes that the customs of the Britons differ little from those of the Gauls (*neque multum a Gallica differunt consuetudine*, *B Gall*. 5.14.1).

[157] For the role of luxury in enslaving the Britons, see *Agr*. 21. The idea of softening comes from Redfield (1985), who carefully delineates between what he calls hard cultures and soft cultures in Herodotus: "Soft peoples are characterized by luxury, the division of labor, and complexity of *nomoi*, especially in the sphere of religion; hard peoples are simple, harsh, and fierce. Among soft peoples market-exchange proliferates; hard peoples rely on gift and theft, the heroic modes of exchange. Soft peoples centralize resources through taxation, build monuments, are literate and organized; their politics tend toward tyranny. Hard peoples have relatively weak political organizations and tend toward anarchy. Soft peoples tend to acculturate their dead, hard peoples to naturalize them; among hard peoples women are treated as an abundant natural resource, more or less freely available, whereas among soft peoples women tend to become a commodity, disposed of by sale, through prostitution, or otherwise. Hard cultures fall short of civility; they are unwelcoming and difficult to visit. Soft cultures are confusing and seductive, difficult to leave once visited," pp. 109-10. Redfield goes on to discuss how hard peoples can become soft, citing as his chief example the Persian encounters with Media and Lydia, and its eventual adoption of their customs, p. 111.

[158] For examples, see Hdt. 1.93-94 (Lydians after Cyrus' conquest), 1.193-200 (Babylonians after Cyrus' conquest), 1.215-16 (Massagetae after Cyrus' invasion and defeat), 2.77-92 (Egyptians prior to Cambyses' invasion), 4.16-82 (Scythia prior to Darius' invasion), Thuc. 6.1-5 (Sicily prior to the Athenian expedition), Caesar *B Gall*. 1.1 (Gaul), 4.1-4 (Germany prior to Caesar's operations there) 5.12-14 (Britain prior to Caesar's second expedition), Sall. *Iug*. 17-19 (North Africa), and Livy 5.33-35.3 (Gallic ethnography and Etruscan geography prior to the sack of Rome). Cf. Feldherr (2009), p. 301.

(28.1) imply the entrance of the Usipi into the theater of operations in which Agricola is carrying out his campaigns.[159] In many ways, the mutiny proper shows that the Usipi have successfully left the Domitianic sphere of authority and have entered into a British territory which has yet to be defined as Roman, given that Agricola's victory at Mons Graupius and his fleet's successful circumnavigation of the island have still not taken place. Just as Agricola's second military campaign under the leadership of Cerialis in Britain gave his virtues a physical space for *exempla*,[160] so too do the seas around Britain create a physical space conducive to the *exempla* of the Usipi.[161] Even so, the success of the Usipi against a Roman military group and the positive spin given to their mutiny is problematic, even when viewed in the context of Domitian.[162] It is therefore necessary to view Britain as a place where both the Usipi and Agricola can escape and accomplish great and memorable deeds: Agricola can escape Domitian and conquer new peoples on the British mainland, while the Usipi can escape all forms of Roman domination in the waters surrounding the island.

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[159] Clarke (2001) sees a parallel between the Usipi and Agricola's troops since both groups cross over into British territory, p. 109.

[160] "Shortly thereafter Britain received Petilius Cerialis, a man of consular rank. [Agricola's] virtues had a space for *exempla*" (*brevi deinde Britannia consularem Petilium Cerialem accepit. habuerunt virtutes spatium exemplorum*, *Agr*. 8.2). While *spatium* can refer to a temporal space (*OLD* 4, 8, 9, and 10), and its use here certainly suggests such connotations, its primary denotation in this passage is spatial. Moreover, Tacitus' repeated usage of the word soon after in his geography of Britain (*Agr*. 10) refers exclusively to physical space (*OLD spatium* 7).

[161] Clarke (2001) finds Britain to be a suitable place for Agricola's *res gestae* largely due to the island's insularity being still in question, pp. 106-7. However, while she finds important links between the Usipi and Agricola, she nevertheless views their behavior as "antithetical…to the civilizing force of Agricola," p. 110. She writes, "But the Usipi had found in Britain an invigoration of their 'edge of the earth' existence. Their behaviour is the least civilized to find a place in the work," p. 110.

[162] This is especially true given their subsequent failure to materialize from Calgacus' rhetoric into a victory for the Britons, although the latter can be explained by several differences. For one, the adventure of the Usipi takes place at sea in an undefined, liminal space. In addition, Calgacus' parallel between his men and the Usipi is not altogether appropriate, given that the Usipi engage in skirmishes with British tribes and are frequently successful in doing so (*saepe victores*, *Agr*. 28.2; cf. note 111 above). In this respect, the Usipi are more like Agricola himself.

Once the Roman element has been removed, the ethnographic theme becomes far more prominent in the mutiny narrative. Tacitus highlights this with the word *miraculum*, which almost always has connotations of ethnographic wonder.[163] It appears regularly in Pliny's *Natural History* and at least once in Pomponius Mela's *De Chorographia*, both written in the century prior to the *Agricola*.[164] By using a word with such connotations, Tacitus emphasizes that the actions of the Usipi will come to be viewed as exceptional, non-Roman, and even downright bizarre. Furthermore, the fact that the word appears only this one time in the *Agricola* shows the Usipi creating an ethnographic paradigm that goes above and beyond anything seen on the British mainland.

Two naval episodes from Tacitus' later works shed additional light on the use of *miraculum* in the mutiny of the Usipi. The first occurs late in the *Histories*, when Civilis stages a naval display to intimidate the Roman convoys. During this event, the Roman military commander Cerialis, who is watching the display unfold, is roused to action by its commotion (*Cerialis miraculo magis quam metu derexit classem numero imparem, usu remigum, gubernatorum arte, navium magnitudine potiorem*, *Hist*. 5.23.2). As in the mutiny of the Usipi, the actions of a Batavian mutineer and his strange little ships inspire

[163] All of the following meanings are used in ethnographic contexts: "an amazing object or sight, a marvel" (*OLD* 1), "the seven wonders of the ancient world" (*OLD* 1b), "an amazing event, act, or circumstance" (*OLD* 2), "the fact of constituting a marvel" (*OLD* 3), and "wonder, amazement" (*OLD* 4). For the importance of its Greek equivalent *thoma* in Herodotus, see Hartog (1988), pp. 230-37 and Munson (2001), pp. 232-65. For further discussion, see notes 39, 80, and 81 above.

[164] Mela uses *miraculum* to refer to the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus as one of the Seven Wonders of the World (*unum de miraculis septem*, 1.85). Moreover, he does so using historiographical terminology: the Mausoleum is referred to as an *opus*, a *monimentum*, and the reason why Halicarnassus should be remembered (*cur memoranda sit*, Mela 1.85). Pliny the Elder refers to the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus in similar terms (*opus id ut esset inter septem miracula, hi maxime fecere artifices*, *HN* 36.30). In Pliny, the word has a variety of ethnographic usages, showcasing its exploratory sense. It can refer to man-made items such as sculpture (34.38), to which category the mausoleum at Halicarnassus belongs. But it can also refer to natural wonders, such as deer (8.114), worms in India (9.46), and plant life (22.62). During conversation about *mise en abyme*, the generic richness of Tacitus' *Agricola*, and the key role of ethnography in this mix, Emily Greenwood noted Pliny the Elder's similar fondness for generic exploration and experimentation. That Pliny's *Natural History* was consulted by Tacitus as source material for the *Germania* is not disputed.

wonder from a Roman audience.[165] The second use of *miraculum* by Tacitus occurs in the *Annals*, during the episode in which a storm sends Germanicus' men to Britain.[166]

> ut quis ex longinquo revenerat, **miracula narrabant**: vim turbinum et inauditas volucres, **monstra maris**, ambiguas hominum et beluarum formas, visa sive ex metu credita.
>
> Each time anyone had returned from far off, they were telling of wonders, the force of the winds and unheard of flying creatures, monsters of the sea, the mixed forms of men and beasts, having been seen or believed out of fear.
> (*Ann*. 2.24.4)

Like Civilis display, the events surrounding Germanicus' soldiers are specifically naval in nature, resulting in part because they were sailing near the mouth of the Rhine, in part because of chance.[167] The maritime nature of the *miracula* finds its confirmation in the stories of "sea monsters" by the men who return: it is clear that the men did not venture inland.[168]

The appearance of the word *miraculum* in the mutiny of the Usipi after the Roman soldiery is overthrown foreshadows a new series of ethnographic encounters: between the

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[165] The language also echoes that of *Agricola* 28: *Liburnicis* (*Hist*. 5.23.1) for *liburnicas* (*Agr*. 28.1), *miraculo* (*Hist*. 5.23.2) for *miraculum* (*Agr*. 28.1), *remigum* (*Hist*. 5.23.2) for *remigante* (*Agr*. 28.1), *gubernatorum* (*Hist*. 5.23.2) for *gubernatoribus* (28.1), and *ausus* (*Hist*. 5.23.3) for *ausa* (*Agr*. 28.1). However, several differences should be noted. Even though both the Usipi and Civilis have openly revolted, the naval escapades of the Usipi constitute a series of genuine actions, whereas those of Civilis consist of naval theatrics (*navalem aciem ostentandi*, *Hist*. 5.23.1). Furthermore, the Usipi commit a true act of daring (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, *Agr*. 28.1), while Civilis dares no further engagement (*Civilis nihil ultra ausus*, *Hist*. 5.23.3). Given the preceding discussion, it is worth mentioning that Heubner (1982) notes several parallels between this episode and the works of Pomponius Mela and Pliny the Elder, pp. 171-74.

[166] Both Clarke (2001), pp. 108, 111 and Ash (2010), pp. 286-87 have compared the mutiny of the Usipi with this episode. Clarke (2001) likewise sees a parallel between these two usages of *miraculum*, p. 111.

[167] This creates an excellent thematic connection between the Usipi in the *Agricola* and the Opitergians in Lucan (see Chapter 2 of this thesis), Germanicus' men are in many ways the objects of *Fortuna*. That being said, chance is never explicitly mentioned in the mutiny of the Usipi. For more on the contrast between the Usipi and the soldiers of Germanicus, see Ash (2010), p. 286.

[168] One can see an additional focus on the nautical element in a fragment by Albinovanus Pedo, who served as a commander under Germanicus during these campaigns (cf. Tac. *Ann*. 1.60). While it appears to recount the same event, Goodyear (1981) goes out of his way to refute the connection, pp. 243-45. However, other commentators, such as Furneaux (1896), p. 314; Koestermann (1963), p. 294; and Hollis (2007), p. 375 see no reason to do so. Courtney (1993) is even more explicit: "This describes the disaster of the expedition of Germanicus in AD 16 down the Ems into the North Sea, described by Tac. *Ann*. 2. 23-4," p. 316. For additional readings of the Pedo fragment, see Romm (1992), pp. 144-45; Courtney (1993), pp. 315-19; and Hollis (2007), pp. 372-81.

Usipi and various non-united British peoples (*plerisque Britannorum*, *Agr*. 28.2). While these confrontations may at first seem unremarkable, their significance – both as a crucial plot element in driving the Usipi to commit cannibalism and as a reflection of a key theme in Agricola's campaigns – cannot be emphasized enough. Given the centrality of the conquest of Britain to the *Agricola*, any reference to similar actions by the Usipi deserves careful consideration.

Tacitus mentions encounters with new British peoples by Agricola or his men four times in the work.[169] The first of these defines Agricola's bold third season of campaigns: *Tertius expeditionum annus novas gentes aperuit, vastatis usque ad Taum (aestuario nomen est) nationibus* ("The third year of campaigns revealed new races, with nations having been laid to waste as far as the Taus (the name comes from an estuary)," 22.1). Tacitus goes on to state that Agricola's attacks were so terrifying that the enemy did not dare to attack even though Agricola and his men were beset by heavy storms.[170] To be sure, such boldness should again remind us of the Usipi, their own excessive audacity, and the theme of daring that permeates the *Agricola*.

The second instance occurs two chapters later, when Tacitus describes Agricola's similar encounters leading to additional conquest: *Quinto expeditionum anno nave prima transgressus ignotas ad id tempus gentes crebris simul ac prosperis proeliis domuit* ("In the fifth year of the expeditions, having crossed on the first ship, he conquered peoples unknown up to that time through equally frequent and successful battles," 24.1). When it comes to their skirmishes with the Britons we see the Usipi as being both similar to and

[169] Clarke (2001) cites most of these and notes the important role they play in Britain's loss of insularity as the result of Agricola's conquest of the island, pp. 100-101.
[170] "Having been terrified by such dread, the enemy did not dare to challenge our army, even though it was vexed by fierce storms" (*qua formidine territi hostes quamquam conflictatum saevis tempestatibus exercitum lacessere non ausi*, *Agr*. 22.1). The play on *saevus*, given the ethnographic content of this chapter, is worth noting.

different from Agricola. On the one hand, we see that they are frequently successful in battle (*ac saepe victores*, 28.2). On the other hand, we see an action that in many ways resembles piracy: the Usipi were conducting raids solely for the purpose of obtaining supplies and were not aiming at conquest (*mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum exissent*, 28.2).[171] In this respect, the Usipi once again demonstrate liminal actions that are both the essence of valorous Roman conquest and the paradigm of non-Roman lawlessness.

The third and fourth references to new peoples occur immediately before and after the battle of Mons Graupius. The one is noteworthy given its placement at the very beginning of Agricola's reply to Calgacus' harangue. Agricola begins, "If new peoples and an unfamiliar battle array had stood firm, I would be urging you with the examples of other armies" (*Si novae gentes atque ignota acies constitisset, aliorum exercituum exemplis vos hortarer*, 34.1). In reminding his soldiers that the Britons against whom they will be fighting are essentially the same *novae gentes* that they have already encountered throughout their campaigns, Agricola signals that their repeated experience against "new peoples" will play to their advantage.[172] In terms of the metanarrative, Tacitus is simultaneously reminding the reader of the ethnographic scope of his work. His initial digression on Britain and how its people are defined by its closest neighbors (10-12), Agricola's successful campaigns against "new races" (22), and even the *exemplum* of the Usipian cohort and its similar encounters with the Britons have together defined the

[171] Perhaps leading to their mistaken identity (*pro praedonibus habiti*, 28.3).
[172] Of course, this sentiment is not expressed in the Usipi narrative, and is of little avail to them as they encounter additional Britons and become reduced to extreme poverty. In this sense, we might see the Usipi as being given no rhetorical ability by Tacitus, and thus being denied any such potential for using such repetition to their advantage. Then again, the Usipi have no military commander such as Agricola to lead them; quite the opposite, in fact (*amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus*, 28.3).

narrative as one of British exploration.[173] Thus, by stressing through Agricola's words that Calgacus' contingent was, but is no longer, a novel entity, Tacitus assures his reader that the symbolic conquest of Britain is nearly complete.[174]

The final mention of new peoples comes during the pivotal circumnavigation of Britain by Agricola's men, highlighting the close ties between the victory over these groups, the conquest of Britain, and the earlier actions of the Usipi.

> ibi acceptis obsidibus, **praefecto classis circumvehi Britanniam praecepit**. datae ad id vires, et praecesserat terror. ipse peditem atque equites lento itinere, quo **novarum gentium animi** ipsa transitus mora terrerentur, in hibernis locavit. et simul **classis** secunda tempestate ac fama Trucculensem portum tenuit, **unde proximo Britanniae latere praelecto omnis redierat**.
>
> Then, with hostages having been received, he ordered the prefect of the fleet to circumnavigate Britain. The majority of the navy was given for this task, and terror had preceded it. He himself placed the infantry and cavalry in the winter quarters by means of a slow march, so that thereby the minds of the new peoples would be terrified from the very lateness of their passage. Meanwhile the fleet with favorable weather and fame held the port of Trucculensis, from which it had returned in full after having sailed along the adjacent shore of Britain. (38.3-4)

Tacitus concludes the British portion of the *Agricola* (18-38) with a firm statement regarding his father-in-law's final exploits. In so doing, he reminds the reader of his earlier declaration to write about Britain and its peoples, and it is now exceedingly clear that he has on numerous occasions done precisely that.

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[173] It ought to be mentioned that Tacitus, in his ethnography of the Britons, describes their military characteristics and tendencies (12.1-2), and thereby links ethnography to conquest.

[174] Feldherr (2009) makes an extremely useful point in this regard: "The 'otherness' of the Britons, in which Calgacus rejoices – their sense of a possible alternative reading of history – is erased by the Roman's reminder that this is an enemy that his troops know from experience. His army's own actions have revealed the pedestrian truth about British servility, and that knowledge should inspire conquest – as he puts it, 'Britain has been discovered and conquered' ('inventa Britannia et subacta,' 33.3). Tacitus' Agricola re-writes the Britons not as feisty and terrifying woad-daubed monsters, but – moving from the world of mere legend and rumor ('fama ac rumore') to that of historiographic truth – as merely the defeated victims Rome's record of conquest has made them. That Agricola wins the battle, and that Tacitus records that victory, together help to establish the Roman's version as the truth about Romans and non-Romans," p. 306.

> **Britanniae situm populosque** multis scriptoribus memoratos non in comparationem curae ingeniive referam, **sed quia tum primum perdomita est**.
>
> I will mention the site and peoples of Britain, remembered by many writers, not with a view to comparison of study or literary talent, but because it was thoroughly conquered then for the first time.
> (10.1)

In this regard, Tacitus makes clear that there is an inherent connection between ethnography and conquest.[175] It is not just the site of Britain that was completely conquered by Agricola, but its peoples as well (*Britanniae situm populosque*).[176] By the end of chapter 38, Tacitus guarantees the completion of this task in his description of the terror in the minds of the new peoples that precedes the arrival of Agricola's navy (*et praecesserat terror… quo novarum gentium animi ipsa transitus mora terrerentur*, 38.3). Through his description of Agricola's complete warring down of previously unknown races, Tacitus makes a strong claim for the *Agricola* in the genres of Roman ethnography and historiography.[177] Similarly, in describing the circumnavigation of the island by Agricola's entire fleet (*praefecto classis circumvehi Britanniam praecepit…unde proximo Britanniae latere praelecto omnis redierat*, 38.3-4), Tacitus creates a unique emblem for this accomplishment, and conclusively links it to the similar feat by the Usipi (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, 28.3).

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[175] Cf. Sailor (2008), p. 82.
[176] As noted before, this differs from the Usipi (*saepe victores, aliquando pulsi*, *Agr*. 28.2).
[177] Sailor (2008) is especially helpful for seeing the manner in which the ethnography of Britain and the preceding description of Tacitus' marriage with Agricola's daughter unify the actions of writer and protagonist: "With *Ag*. 9 draws to a close the narrative of Agricola's career before the governorship of Britain; with *Ag*. 10 begins the ethnography of the island, which itself initiates the build-up to the narrative of the governorship. At the margin between these sections Tacitus enters the story, as the betrothed, then husband, of Agricola's daughter…It is only fitting that we learn of this first binding link between Agricola and his son-and-law here because, as we shall see, an important subtext of the ethnographical and historical digressions is the collaboration of the men in conquering Britain and writing the *Agricola*…In juxtaposing the reports of this marriage and of the appointment to Britain, Tacitus hints at another point of contact: subjugating Britain, making it into a province, is the shared task of father-in-law and son-in-law," p. 81.

In terms of narrative sequence, the cumulative British encounters of the Usipi serve as an important requirement for the cannibalism topos that emerges thereafter. The progression of the middle sentence of the mutiny narrative (28.2) makes this abundantly clear.

1) The Usipi disembark to conduct raids for supplies (*mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum exissent*).
2) They encounter Britons who fight to defend those materials (*cum plerisque Britannorum sua defensantium proelio congressi*).
3) Although they are often victorious, their losses add up over time (*ac saepe victores, aliquando pulsi*).
4) This eventually leads to their extreme destitution (*eo ad extremum inopiae venere*).
5) Which in turn forces them to commit cannibalism in order to survive (*ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur*).

There is a clear progression of cause and effect. Without the skirmishes against the coastal Britons and their cumulative effect on failure of the Usipi to obtain supplies, the story of the mutiny would lack this notable element in its repertoire of wonders.

The emergence of the barbaric trope of cannibalism is an unmistakable ethnographic element, one that not only realigns the Usipi with non-Romans in the *Agricola*, but also situates them at a point far-removed from other foreign elements in the work.[178] Tacitus details the progression of the Usipi toward this behavior: *eo ad extremum inopiae venere, ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur* ("they at last came to such extreme poverty that they devoured first their weakest men, and soon after those chosen by lot," 28.2).

[178] Cf. Clarke (2001), who notes that the barbarism of the Usipi is so extreme that it exceeds what would be expected even in the Northwest of the Roman world, p. 110.

The use of the phrase *ad extremum* calls to mind the Greco-Roman notion that those races "living at the world's end" were the least civilized of peoples.[179] It also ties into Tacitus's limited use of the word *extremus* elsewhere. Prior to the mutiny of the Usipi, Tacitus uses it solely in his geography of Britain.[180] Later it appears only in the speeches preceding the battle of Mons Graupius, once when Calgacus emphasizes the geographic extent of Rome's conquest (*nos terrarum ac libertatis extremos recessus ipse ac sinus famae in hunc diem defendit*, 30.3), and again when Agricola stresses the extreme fear felt by the Britons (*novissimae res et extremo metu torpor defixere aciem in his vestigiis*, 34.3). Also worth noting is Tacitus' use of the verb *vescerentur*, which here denotes cannibalism and thus barbarism.[181] It would appear that the voyage of the Usipi along the edges of the known world brings out their most primitive tendencies.[182] Likewise, it would be difficult to argue against the notion that the Usipi narrative is made wondrous in no small part because of these ethnographical elements.[183]

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[179] *OLD extremus* 1c. Rutledge (2000) cites numerous descriptions in the *Agricola* of Britain's location at the edge of the world, p. 77. Cf. Clarke (2001), who views this liminal position as being under threat in the text, pp. 98-99. Clarke writes, "It was standard practice in geographical and ethnographical works to portray peoples on the edge of the earth as pirates and brigands," p. 104. Clarke goes on to note the emergence of the "white man gone native" trope among the Romans as a result of their extended presence in this liminal location, p. 104.

[180] First, in describing how the island is shaped like a wedge with respect to its northernmost shore (*sed transgressis inmensum et enorme spatium procurrentium extremo iam litore terrarum velut in cuneum tenuatur*, *Agr*. 10.3); next, in explaining the weather patterns in this far away region (*nox clara et extrema Britanniae parte brevis*, 12.3); and last, in relating how these flat fringes of the world cast little shadow onto the sky (*scilicet extrema et plana terrarum humili umbra non erigunt tenebras*, 12.4).

[181] *OLD vescor* 2; cf. Cic. *Fin*. 2.92, Sall. *Iug*. 89.7, Verg. *Aen*. 3.622, Liv. 23.5.12, Ov. *Met*. 15.467, Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.160, and *Tusc*. 1.69. Clarke (2001) cites Strabo (4.5.4) who remarks that Ireland is situated outside the intended limits of the Roman Empire due to cannibalism and incest, p. 102. Strabo writes that he has "nothing to say for sure" (οὐδεν ἔχομεν λέγειν σαφές) about Ireland, except that they are "more savage than the Britons" (ἀγριώτεροι τῶν Βρεττανῶν) as a result of their cannibalism and excessive diet (ἀνθρωποφάγοι τε ὄντες καὶ πολυφάγοι).

[182] Cf. Clarke (2001), p. 110. If one follows the suggestions made by Romm (1992) – who posits that the North Sea was viewed as an untamable natural boundary, pp. 148-49 and that Tacitus describes its waters as a wholly alien realm (*Germ*. 2.1), pp. 141-42 – it is possible to see this as the antithesis of Agricola: Agricola conquers the wild North, whereas the Usipi end up embodying it. The *mise en abyme* has come full circle.

[183] Cf. Munson (2001), p. 19.

Nevertheless, Tacitus complicates his narrative by endowing the Usipian cannibalism with unexpected attributes.[184] He does not explicitly portray the Usipi as committing cannibalism as the result of their ethnicity. Grammatically, this can be seen in the fact that the cannibalism itself is situated in a result clause (*ut infirmissimos suorum, mox sorte ductos vescerentur*, 28.2) due to extreme starvation (*eo ad extremum inopiae venere*, 28.2). It would appear that Tacitus is complicating the moral terms with which we are meant to view the Usipi, even as they approach the epitome of otherness.

Even so, cannibalism is not something one expects to see committed by Romans. Thus, while one could argue that the Usipi are engaging in non-gratuitous cannibalism, the mere fact that there is any cannibalism makes it gratuitous to any Roman reader. For example, when Lucan recounts how Romans under the command of Gaius Antonius who are stranded on an island eat grasses in order to survive (Luc. 4.408-14), it is a far cry from the cannibalism committed by the Usipi.[185] Cannibalism, then, marks the ultimate difference between the Usipi and Agricola. While Agricola has thoroughly Romanized a number of Britons (*Agr*. 21), the Usipi have become the antithesis of civilized Romans. In this sense, it is essential to see them operating through the framework of the *mise en abyme*. Since they exist in a secondary narrative that is distinct from the main plot, they are able to reflect exemplary characteristics of the work's protagonist, while simultaneously displaying attributes that are wholly impossible for him to embody.[186]

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[184] Ash (2010) goes so far as to say that the manner in which the cannibalism is undertaken shows remarkable ingenuity, pp. 284-85.
[185] For more on this episode, see Chapter 2 of this thesis.
[186] Ron (1987) is useful here: "In conclusion, *mise en abyme* derives its special interest from the contestation of the hierarchies and ground rules which organize the 'normal' (or classic or readable) narrative text. But by virtue of this contestation, it implies that entire system of rules and hierarchies. When a new representational or narrative mode appears which seeks to undo that 'normal' system, the recognition of *mise en abyme* in it revives that old system precisely because of its dialectical relation to this special figure," p. 435. For foreigners as typical doubles in *mises en abyme*, see Dällenbach (1989), pp. 52-53.

Tacitus concludes the mutiny narrative with an additional ethnographic element: the confronting of other, more powerful German tribes by the Usipi. Tacitus' declaration is deceptively simple: *pro praedonibus habiti, primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt* ("having been held as pirates, they were captured, first by the Suebi and soon after by the Frisii," 28.3). In reality it is a bit more convoluted. While in all likelihood the sentence should read in the aforementioned manner, given the parallelism found in the phrase *primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis*, the sentence could also be written as follows: *pro praedonibus habiti primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt* ("having been initially held as pirates by the Suebi, soon after they were captured by the Frisii"). Given the clockwise circumnavigation of Britain by the Usipi, it would make sense for their initial reappearance in Germany to be off the coast of Denmark near the mouth of the Elbe.[187] An additional indication both for the clockwise circumnavigation and the variation in how the sentence can be translated is given by the final progression of the Usipi, beginning of the coast of Suebic lands, proceeding to Frisian territory, and ending up on "our shore" on the Gallic side of the Rhine (*et in nostram usque ripam mutatione ementium adductos*, 28.3).[188] In essence, Tacitus leaves vague the exact location of where

[187] The question of what direction the Usipi took in their circumnavigation of the island has been thoroughly discussed, and the consensus seems to be a clockwise trajectory, beginning on the West coast of Britain. Citing the description of these events by Cassius Dio (66.20), Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) write, "Since they had circumnavigated Britain and arrived on the north coast of Germany, the inference would be that they rounded Cape Wrath and had started on the west coast, as Dio in fact affirms," p. 248. See also p. 322. Martin (1981) agrees with this assessment, p. 43.

[188] Regarding the Suebic land where the Usipi land (at least according to the first, more common reading of the sentence), Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) note, "the Suebi meant here must have dwelt on or close to the coast, presumably east of the Frisii, in Schleswig, where Tacitus locates the Reudigni (*G*. 40, I) or between the Ems and the Elbe, where he puts the Chauci (*G*. 35, I)," p. 249. They later refer to this same landing as "the final shipwreck in Germany or Denmark (*peninsula Suebica*)," p. 322. In terms of the location of the Frisii, they state, "The Frisii occupied the north of Holland from the Old Rhine to the lower Ems," p. 249. Finally, they correctly view *nostram* as "the west or Gallic bank of the Rhine," p. 249. For an excellent map of Tacitus' placement of these tribes, see Rives (1999), following his introduction.

the Usipi made landfall and in so doing stresses the confusion and awe caused by their mysterious reappearance.

That the Usipi are thought to be pirates by those who first see them arriving along the coast of Denmark or Germany shows that a strange ethnographic conversion has occurred during their travels around Britain.[189] The other German tribes do not immediately recognize the Usipi. Whether their identity becomes known after being captured is not mentioned by Tacitus, and it is therefore not worth overanalyzing. It would appear, then, that for a time the Usipi escape their Germanic ethnicity and their wondrous voyage brings about a physical change, although ironically it is probably the result of their near starvation towards the end of their journey. Their re-enslavement by stronger German tribes is therefore not out of the ordinary, regardless of how fitting it is that their return to Germany serves as the catalyst for this process.[190] Tacitus writes that the few who become the living proof of their deeds are first "sold into slavery through commercial transactions and brought even so far as our shore through the exchange of buying" (*per commercia venumdatos et in nostram usque ripam mutatione ementium adductos*, 28.3). A slave trade certainly existed in Germany, especially between the Germans and the Romans.[191] It is therefore quite possible that the Usipi were originally

[189] Clarke (2001): "It was standard practice in geographical and ethnographical works to portray peoples on the edge of the earth as pirates and brigands. Not only those far from the centre of power, but all those characterized by their 'out-of-the-way-ness' (ἐκτοπισμός) are prone to piratical behaviour," p. 104.
[190] For more on the anti-Domitianic rhetoric suggested by these events, see Chapter 3 of this thesis.
[191] Rives (1999) cites this very sentence in the mutiny of the Usipi as support for such a trade: "A few comments of Tacitus suggest that there was a fairly extensive Germanic trade in slaves that ultimately extended into the Roman Empire," p. 218. Thompson (1960), whose claim that the Germans sold most of their slaves to the Romans is cited by Rives, makes a valuable point for the mutiny narrative: "In Caesar's day the Suebi allowed foreign traders to enter their territory so as to sell them the booty which they had taken in war. It is probable that this booty consisted in the main of their prisoners…It appears to follow that a slave trade with the outside world, with Gallic merchants, had developed by the middle of the first century B.C.…Caesar's remark [*B Gall*. 4.2.1], in fact, seems to supply evidence for the export of slaves by the Suebi, but not for their use at home or for their importation into Germany," p. 20. Then, citing Tacitus' sentence in the mutiny of the Usipi, he writes, "Such information as exists about the slave trade inside

taken captive by other Germans before being conscripted by the Romans (*per Germanias conscripta*, 28.1).[192]

Keeping all of this in mind, we can see that the story of the Usipi is rich in ethnographic detail, perhaps even more so than the conquests of Agricola.[193]

- *Agr*. 28.1 – *per Germanias conscripta* (Usipi in Germany versus Romans)
  - *et in Britanniam transmissa* (Usipi leaving Germany with Romans)
  - *occiso centurione ac militibus…inmixti manipulis* (Usipi mixed with Romans)
  - *tres liburnicas…ascendere* (Usipi symbolically nullify the Roman presence)
- *Agr*. 28.2 – *cum plerisque Britannorum…congressi* (Usipi in Britain versus Britons)
  - *eo ad extremum inopiae…vescerentur* (Usipi leaving Britain)
- *Agr*. 28.3 – *pro praedonibus habiti* (Unidentifiable Usipi seen by other Germans)
  - *primum a Suebis, mox a Frisiis intercepti sunt* (Usipi versus other Germans)
  - *per commercia venumdatos* (Usipi with other Germans)
  - *et in nostram usque ripam…adductos* (Usipi with Romans)

From beginning to end, the voyage of the cohort is marked by a complex series of ethnic interactions in a variety of locales. First, they are conscribed by the Romans (and perhaps even by other Germans before that). Next, they contend with those same Romans and escape only to contend with various groups of coastal Britons. Their resulting starvation leads them to a wondrous and precise form of extreme barbarism, before they are mistaken for pirates of unclear ethnic origin. Then, they find themselves contending with other German tribes, until finally facing Romans who reestablish their identity and begin the historiographical record of their many ethnographic encounters.

Germany itself shows the slaves being sold from one people to another until at last they were sold to the Romans on the Rhine," pp. 20-21.

[192] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) make no mention of this, and instead see the Usipi as having been conscripted directly by the Romans, given that Domitian's conquest of this region, p. 245.

[193] Clarke (2001) offers an excellent solution to this difference in noting the true composition of the Roman army in Britain, as noted by Calgacus: "Furthermore, the progress of the text reveals that these 'Romans' are not necessarily Roman at all. The army is made up of Gauls, Germans, and even some Britons. The Romans do not just behave like barbarians; they actually *are* barbarians," p. 104. Clarke goes on to point out Agricola's own Gallic origins, pp. 104 and 106.

CHAPTER 5

ATQUE ITA CIRCUMVECTI BRITANNIAM: CIRCUMNAVIGATION AND THE MUTINY

At the beginning of the third and final sentence of *Agricola* 28, Tacitus states that the mutiny of the Usipi and the subsequent achievements of the cohort culminated in a circumnavigation of Britain (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, *Agr*. 28). This *periplous* looks back to what we already know about the first Roman circumnavigation of Britain that occurred under Agricola (10.4). Yet it also anticipates Agricola's actual orders to do so following the events at Mons Graupius (38.3).[194] As such, the *periplous* demonstrates the pivotal quality of the *mise en abyme*: it looks back to Tacitus' very first digression on Britain's geography (10) and foreshadows his very last description of the island (38).[195]

Furthermore, the circumnavigation serves as a symbol of conquest.[196] In the geography of Britain, Tacitus links the discovery of Britain's island status with its corresponding subjugation by Agricola.[197]

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[194] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 245. Cf. Martin (1981), p. 43; Clarke (2001), p. 110; and Ash (2010), who sees an explicit parallel that prompts readers to reconsider Agricola's achievement, pp. 277-78.

[195] For the pivotal nature of the *mise en abyme*, see Dällenbach (1989), pp. 67-71 and Ron (1987), pp. 431-34. For the proleptic aspect of the *mise en abyme* and its ability to foreshadow in a limited manner, see Jefferson (1983), esp. pp. 197-98, 201-6.

[196] James Anderson first suggested such a possibility to me during our initial discussion of the mutiny narrative. See also Rutledge (2000), p. 79 and Clarke (2001), p. 110.

[197] Clarke (2001): "As Tacitus says, it was at the time of Agricola that Britain was first circumnavigated by the Roman fleet. The paradox is that although this proved that Britain was an island, and therefore remote and theoretically beyond the scope of Rome's imperial aspirations, the act of circumnavigation was a crucial stage in the removal of Britain from the oceanic world beyond the Pillars, and its gradual attachment, both administratively and in the Roman mental map, to the world of the Continent. The circumnavigation led to the embrace (*complectitur*) of Britain by Roman knowledge, but also to a change in its insular status; a geographical realignment, so that it now fell within the compass of the Roman world," p. 101. Cf. Sailor (2008): "The passage divides ethnographies of Britain into two categories, to one of

> Britanniae situm populosque multis scriptoribus memoratos non in comparationem curae ingeniive referam, sed quia **tum primum perdomita est**…hanc oram novissimi maris **tunc primum** Romana classis **circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam adfirmavit**, ac simul **incognitas ad id tempus insulas**, quas Orcadas vocant, **invenit domuitque**.
>
> I will mention the site and peoples of Britain, remembered by many writers, not with a view to comparison of study or literary talent, but because it was thoroughly conquered then for the first time…Then, the Roman fleet, having for the first time circumnavigated this shoreline of the remotest sea, confirmed that Britain is an island, and at the same time came upon islands unknown until now, which they call the Orkneys, and conquered them.
> (10.1-4)

Tacitus links recognition and knowing with power.[198] For Agricola's circumnavigation order, mentioned explicitly at the end of the British narrative (38.4), instills in the coastal Britons a sense of dread, which implies a recognition of its symbolic import.[199] Given the emblematic role of the circumnavigation elsewhere in the *Agricola*, the *periplous* in the mutiny narrative should be read as mirroring and foreshadowing, albeit with some distortion, Agricola's own exemplary conquest of the island.

Although the circumnavigation of Britain serves an emblem for the island's subjugation, the complexity of this symbolism cannot be underscored enough. First, the mutiny narrative's encompassing naval quality connects the episode to other key maritime moments in the *Agricola*: the digression on Britain's geography (10), the conquest of Mona (18), Agricola's crossing the Firth of Clyde (25), the naval campaigns across the Bodotria (25), the circumnavigation after the battle of Mons Graupius (38),

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which belong all previous accounts, and to the other of which we may assign the impending section of *Agricola*. Conquest makes the difference," p. 82. For more on the process of Britain's geographic incorporation into the Roman world, see Clarke (2001), pp. 100-104. Sailor (2008) also provides an illuminating discussion on Tacitus use of the "protreptic" geography and ethnography of Britain to excite the reader about the subsequent conquest narrative, pp. 81-89.

[198] Rutledge (2000), p. 78; Clarke (2001), pp. 95-96, 102; and Sailor (2008), p. 82. Clarke argues that the circumnavigation of Britain is part of this power-knowledge duality; that the understanding of Britain's insular status makes it possible to incorporate it into the Roman world, p. 101. For the relationship between power and knowledge, see Foucault (1980), pp. 68-69.

[199] Similarly, it is in many ways the result of "unknowing" (*inscitiam*) that the Usipi lose their ships and are once again enslaved.

and Agricola's departure from the island (40).[200] The interconnectedness of these chapters provides further evidence for viewing the *Agricola* as a ring composition, given their position linking pivotal points of transition in the narrative structure. Moreover, the link between the mutiny of the Usipi and the British geography is further strengthened by a verbal echo that finds a Virgilian parallel in the story of Daedalus and Icarus, giving additional support to the idea of a Tacitean *mise en abyme*. Finally, a careful examination of the mutiny as presented in Cassius Dio's account offers perhaps the best explanation for why Tacitus gives it such a central role in his monograph.

The first indication that the mutiny of the Usipi plays an emblematic role in the *Agricola* comes, once again, in its very first words. The phrase *eadem aestate* (28.1) echoes the earlier expression *media iam aestate* (18.1), which marks Agricola's naval passage into British waters.[201] There is a further parallel in similar usage of the perfect passive participle. In the mutiny narrative, the participial phrase *in Britanniam transmissa* (28.1) is used to describe the cohort's arrival into the province, just as the participle *transgressus* (18.1) is used to define Agricola's approach. More noticeable, however, is the fact that the earlier phrase *media iam aestate* begins not only the British campaign narrative (18-27) – which the mutiny of the Usipi brings to a close – but also the chapter containing the prophetic conquest of Mona. For it is in this early campaign that Agricola completely subjugates an island in the British territory that had eluded earlier governors,[202] and, as a result, gains a source of lasting fame that both foreshadows his conquest of Britain and follows him as he progresses in this pursuit.[203]

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[200] For more on these connections, see Chapter 6 of this thesis.
[201] For the historiographical import of this phrase, see Chapter 2 of this thesis.
[202] "The island of Mona, from whose capturing Paulinus was recalled by the rebellion of all of Britain, as I have mentioned beforehand, he held it in mind to bring under subjugation" (*Monam insulam, cuius*

The second phrase suggesting a symbolic role played by the Usipi appears at the end of the mutiny proper. In concluding the first sentence, Tacitus writes, "With only one kept on as a rower, since two had been suspected and therefore killed, they were passing by not yet as a wonder in everyday gossip" (*et uno remigante, suspectis duobus eoque interfectis, nondum vulgato rumore ut miraculum praevehebantur*, 28.1). As has already been demonstrated, the larger phrase bears a significant historiographical role in linking the subsequent fame of the Usipi and Agricola.[204] It also has been shown to contain ethnographic implications through its use of the expression *ut miraculum*.[205] It is therefore no surprise that the words *et uno remigante* also play an important part in connecting the mutiny of the Usipi to the larger narrative of the *Agricola*.

The participial phrase *et uno remigante* has long been viewed as problematic by scholars and textual critics. It has been duly noted that *remigante* has been emended more than any other word in the *Agricola*.[206] Yet the word is found in the *Codex Aesinas*, the oldest extant manuscript containing the work.[207] What is more, the mutiny narrative falls

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possessione revocatum Paulinum rebellione totius Britanniae supra memoravi, redigere in potestatem animo intendit, *Agr*. 18.3).

[203] "But by the very act of pretending to be unaware of his fame, he increased his fame, with men surmising that by how much hope there was for the future, to so great a degree had he kept silent" (*sed ipsa dissimulatione famae famam auxit, aestimantibus quanta futuri spe tam magna tacuisset*, 18.6).

[204] See Chapter 2 of this thesis.

[205] See Chapter 4 of this thesis.

[206] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 246 and Baldwin (1970), p. 322. Ogilvie and Richmond note that the emendations fall into three categories. The first group presupposes that the one helmsman stayed at his post, and consists of Bitschofsky's *rem agente*, Wex's *morigerante*, and Doederlein's *regente*. The second category is based on the notion that the helmsman attempted to escape, to which belong Puteolanus' *remigrante*, Peerlkamp's *remeante*, Baehrens's *renatante*, and Currie's *in oram agente*. The third class features the idea of one helmsman refusing duty and casting suspicion on the other two, and includes Walter's *rem pigrante*, Porter's *renuente*, and Lynch's *se negante*. Additional discussion can be found in Heubner (1984), pp. 84-85 and Soverini (2004), who argues extensively in favor of the emendation *et uno rem agente*, pp. 226-27. Ogilvie and Richmond as well as Baldwin rightly point out that none of these emendations is all that convincing.

[207] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) provide an excellent overview on the codex, pp. 84-87. Till (1943) is particularly useful for his photographic reproduction of the *Agricola* and *Germania* sections of the MS (fols. 52-75). See also Niutta (1996) and Mendell (1957), who gives an in-depth description of the MS in its entirety, pp. 258-59. For arguments concerning the manuscript tradition of the *Agricola* in general, see

on one of the original folia written in Carolingian minuscule, believed to be the only direct descendant of the lost Hersfeld archetype.[208] Thus, regardless of how corrupt the text is thought to be, the word ought to be given a more careful consideration in light of this fact.[209] Indeed, *remigante* has been emended primarily because its primary meaning of "rowing" seems awkward in this context. That is, because *remigo* cannot possibly mean "to steer," it must somehow be inferred that one of the helmsman was kept on as a rower in case his direction was needed.[210] That Tacitus leaves it to his reader to make such an inference seems only right, and there is little reason to doubt the word's veracity, especially since it appears earlier in the monograph.[211]

Just as the word *trado* in the mutiny narrative borrows meaning from its initial uses which define the *Agricola*, so too does the word *remigante* act in an overdetermined manner.[212] In his initial digression on Britain and its surroundings, Tacitus mentions in

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Mendell (1935); Mendell (1949); Mendell (1957), pp. 219-92, esp. 257-60, 267-68, 279-85; Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 80-90; Murgia (1977); Schaps (1979); and Murgia and Rodgers (1984).

[208] As opposed to the remaining folia, which were written in a humanistic script during the fifteenth century. This is confirmed by Heubner (1984), who refers to it as "Die Überlieferung im Hersfeldensis," p. 84. Mendell (1957) notes, "The assumption is generally made that one MS of the Minor Works was discovered in Germany and brought to Rome in the middle of the fifteenth century possibly by Enoch of Ascoli, and that from this archetype came all the MSS which we possess today. One exception is made: the eight leaves of the codex *Aesinas* which date from some centuries before 1450 and which contain part of the *Agricola* are held to be an actual part of Enoch's manuscript," pp. 241-42. He later writes, "All that remains today of any early MSS of the Minor Works of Tacitus are eight leaves of the Jesi *Agricola*, in a ninth-century hand, generally ascribed to the district of Fulda…It has been held by most Tacitean scholars that these eight leaves are what is left of the Hersfeld archetype of all our MSS," p. 253. Also Ogilvie and Richmond (1967): "It is thus virtually certain that the *Agricola* section of the Aesinas represents the surviving portion of the Hersfeld MS. brought to Rome by Enoch. The number of leaves (14) agrees with the description of Niccolò and Decembrio and the script points to the vicinity of Fulda," p. 86. For more on the different components of the *Aesinas* MS and how one can distinguish them, see Mendell (1957), pp. 258-59.

[209] For the corruption of the codex, see Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), pp. 86-87.

[210] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 246.

[211] It should be noted that even Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), who offer such an excellent interpretation of the expression, "retain, with misgiving, *E*'s reading *remigante*," p. 246. Baldwin (1970) also sees significance in the verb's appearance elsewhere in the *Agricola*, pp. 322-23. His overall defense of the word's usage is quite convincing, and his subsequent discussion of the potential fate of the helmsman amongst those eaten leading to the final loss of the ships (*amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus*, *Agr*. 28.3) is particularly intriguing.

[212] Riffaterre (1983), pp. 39, 43-44.

quick succession the Roman circumnavigation (*Agr*. 10.4), the Roman discovery and conquest of new islands (10.4), and the condition of the North Sea for sailors (10.5). He describes the slow sea as follows: *sed mare pigrum et grave remigantibus perhibent ne ventis quidem perinde adtolli* ("But men hold that the sea is sluggish and heavy to those rowing and is not, as would be expected, born up even by the winds," (10.5). Thus, immediately following his description of the Roman circumnavigation (the only mention of a *periplous* prior to the mutiny of the Usipi), Tacitus makes use of the verb *remigo* in participial form. The seemingly odd appearance of the word in the mutiny of the Usipi (*et uno remigante*) is not a *hapax legomenon*, and cannot simply be dismissed as a scribal error.[213] What is more, the word is here mentioned as part of a description of the sluggish and slow nature of the North Sea to rowers, which is reflected to a certain degree in the undirected sailing of the Usipi following the murder of the two other helmsmen.

The phrase *et uno remigante* in the mutiny of the Usipi calls into question the ship's trajectory by drawing attention to its problematic oarage. Here, the Tacitean narrative finds a much deeper range of meaning when viewed alongside the exploits of Daedalus and the failed flight of Icarus. In a way the text suggests that there is a geographical limit even to the exploits of the Usipi, which draws further attention to the extreme nature of these deeds. Given the broad thematic parallels and the specific verbal echoes between the Tacitean and Virgilian accounts, it is worth pausing to examine the Daedalian episode vis-à-vis the mutiny of the Usipi and the *Agricola* in detail.

[213] Baldwin (1970) indicates that these two usages of *remigo* constitute the sum of the verb's usage in the Tacitean corpus, pp. 322-23.

Upon Aeneas' arrival in Italy, Virgil presents his readers with an ekphrasis on the doors of the temple to Apollo at Cumae, an episode which can be viewed as a *mise en abyme* in its own right.[214]

> **Daedalus, ut fama est**, **fugiens Minoia regna**
> praepetibus pennis ***ausus*** se credere caelo
> **insuetum per iter gelidas *enavit* ad Arctos**,
> Chalcidicaque levis tandem super astitit arce.
> **redditus his** primum **terris** tibi, Phoebe, **sacravit**
> ***remigium* alarum** posuitque immania templa.
> in foribus letum Androgeo; tum pendere poenas
> Cecropidae iussi (miserum!) **septena quotannis**
> **corpora natorum**; **stat ductis sortibus urna**.
> contra elata **mari** respondet Cnosia tellus:
> hic **crudelis** amor tauri suppostaque furto
> Pasiphae mixtumque genus prolesque biformis
> Minotaurus inest, Veneris **monimenta nefandae**,

[214] Ekphrasis and *mise en abyme* share a remarkable number of characteristics beyond their visual element, and are in many ways interchangeable. The two most notable aspects should be mentioned straightaway. First, ekphrasis, like *mise en abyme*, creates a pause in the primary narrative. Barchiesi (1997) writes, "In ecphrasis the narrative action is frozen," p. 272, and later notes that certain epyllia feature "narratives that could be sidetracked and even engulfed by digressive descriptions," and are "texts in which digression, excursus, and inset ecphrasis notoriously paralyse or thwart the progress of a 'natural' epic narrative," p. 274. Putnam (1998) is even more descriptive: "Ekphrasis, the topos of 'speaking out' in order to describe a person or animal or landscape or, most usually, a work of art, inevitably generates a pause in the narrative when art looks at and continues art, and when the artisan of words, who works on our imaginations by his own verbal constructions, manufactures artifacts within his text for us to see with our mind's eye. As art describes art, we linger, not to escape the story's flow but to deepen our understanding of its meaning, to watch metaphor operating on a grand scale where epic text and one of its greatest synechdoches work as didactic complements to each other," p. ix. For additional explication of the narrative pause inherent in ekphrasis, see Putnam (1998), pp. 2-3, 10, and 208. The second major feature shared by ekphrasis and *mise en abyme* is the complex element of textual self-representation, the synecdoche, which Putnam mentions in the preface given above. Putnam (1998) writes, "It will be my presumption that all of Virgil's notional ekphrases are in consequential ways metaphors for the larger text which they embellish and that, individually and as a group, they have much to teach the reader about the poem as a whole," p. 2. He also highlights the destabilizing and even transgressive nature of intersecting the primary narrative with such a device, a crucial element for viewing Tacitus' mutiny narrative as a *mise en abyme*: "For by its very act of disruption, ekphrasis forces itself on the reader as a generative moment, as two types of narrativity confront each other. For Virgil this instant of intersection, of destabilization and at times transgression, is the overture not for a digression from the heady onslaught of epic narrative but for a meditation on one art as a mirror of another, on Virgil's descriptions of examples of the fine arts as synecdoches for that larger manifestation of artistic accomplishment which is the poem itself," p. 3. Barchiesi (1997) too sees ekphrasis as pushing "literary reflexivity" to its limits, noting that the description of the murals in Juno's temple in *Aeneid* 1 "confront the [Epic] Cycle at an oblique angle," p. 274. He then states, "The images in the temple are thus represented in the narrative, but also framed and miniaturised by the narrative. Their inclusion through ecphrasis invites the reader to consider the relevance of this secondary field of reference to the primary narrative; but the included description is compressed in such a way that a limit is established and a hierarchy of importance is reasserted. This is particularly significant given that epic ecphrases have a potential for becoming 'main stories'," p. 274.

> **hic labor ille domus et inextricabilis error**;
> ***magnum*** reginae sed enim miseratus amorem
> Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resolvit,
> **caeca *regens* filo vestigia**. **tu quoque *magnam***
> **partem opere *in tanto***, sineret dolor, Icare, haberes.
> bis conatus erat ***casus*** effingere in auro,
> bis patriae cecidere manus.
>
> Daedalus – so the story goes – fleeing the Minoan kingdoms, and having dared to entrust himself to the sky with open wings, sailed along the unfamiliar route to the frozen North, and at last lightly stood atop the Cumaean citadel. At first upon his return to the land he consecrated to you, Phoebus, the oarage of his wings and he laid out an immense temple. On its doors the death of Androgeos; following this the Athenians ordered to suffer the punishment (oh wretched thing indeed!) with seven bodies of sons just as old; the urn stands with the lots having been drawn. On the facing side, Cretan soil elevated over the sea responds. Here is depicted the cruel love for the bull and Pasiphaë falsely substituted with a trick and the mixed progeny and the two-form offspring, the Minotaur, the monument of sinful Venus; here lies that labor of the house and its inextricable error. But even Daedalus himself, having pitied the great love of the queen, undid the circuitous trappings of the house, leading a blind path with a thread. You too, Icarus, would have a great role in so great a work (if his grief would have allowed it). Twice had it been tried to fashion your fall in gold, twice did the paternal hands fall short. (*Aen*. 6.14-33)

It is evident that Tacitus, in the mutiny of the Usipi, uses much of the same diction as this ekphrasis narrative. Within the first sentence, Daedalus is not just remarked upon, but renowned (*Daedalus, ut fama est*, 6.14) for his daring (*ausus*, 6.15), just as the Usipi, in the first sentence of the mutiny narrative, are noted for their boldness (*cohors Usiporum…magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, *Agr*. 28.1).[215] Nautical language crops up in both the Daedalian ekphrasis (*enavit*, *Aen*. 6.16) and the mutiny of the Usipi (*navibus*, *Agr*. 28.3).[216]

[215] Excessive daring plays a similar role in Ovid's account of Daedalus and Icarus (*Met*. 8.223-25).
[216] In terms of aquatic parallels, Ovid's version begins by comparing Daedalus' construction of the labyrinth with the Maeander River (*Met*. 8.162-68), before going on to describe how Daedalus and Icarus are trapped on Crete because of the enclosing sea (8.183-86).

This is made all the more noticeable given that Virgil precedes his ekphrasis with the naval scene of Aeneas initial arrival in Italy (*Aen*. 6.1-8).[217] The representation of oarage by both authors takes on a symbolic role.[218] Virgil describes how Daedalus "consecrated the oarage of his wings" (*sacravit / remigium alarum*, 6.18-19) to Apollo in tandem with the creation of the temple and its doors, in an act which in some ways symbolizes the cost of losing Icarus to the Sun during his voyage.[219] Tacitus, on the other hand, makes the loss of oarage by the Usipi a prerequisite to their later exploits and the subsequent dissemination of their story.[220] Finally, greatness plays a central role in both passages. In the ekphrasis, Virgil presents Pasiphaë as having great love (*magnum reginae…amorem*, 6.28) and more importantly stresses that Icarus, Daedalus' son, was meant to play a role in so great a work (*tu quoque magnam / partem opere in tanto*, 6.30-

[217] In addition, it is worth noting that the scene of hard-working Trojan youths depicts an Italian landscape in much the same way that Tacitus describes the landscape of Northern Britain: "The band of youths shines striving on the Hesperian shore: part seeks the seeds of a flame hidden in the veins of flint, part lays hold of the forests, the thick roof of wild beasts, and points out the rivers that have been come upon" (*iuvenum manus emicat ardens / litus in Hesperium; quaerit pars semina flammae / abstrusa in venis silicis, pars densa ferarum / tecta rapit silvas inventaque flumina monstrat*, *Aen*. 6.5-8).

[218] Putnam (1998) likewise finds significance in Virgil's slippery diction: "He replaces verbal duplicity with verbal contrivance, exchanging the craftsman's double-natured artifact with the poet's ambiguous metaphor, by seeing Daedalus, the human aviator, as swimmer through the heavens. The terrestrial creature, though airborne, is made poetically to deal (like Aeneas for much of the preceding story of his epic) with a watery element, and dedicate on return to earth the oarage of his wings," p. 78. Furthermore, Putnam notes that Virgil's only other usage of the phrase *remigium alarum* occurs upon Mercury's arrival in Carthage (*Aen*. 1.301), p. 224. Interestingly, this occurs after an earlier nautical landing by Aeneas.

[219] This act likewise mirrors Aeneas' recent loss of his father, at whose funeral in Sicily, an event situated near the start of the preceding book, Aeneas made a consecration of his own (5.75-83). The parallel is made even stronger by the prophetic appearance of the snake with seven coils following Aeneas' invocation (*dixerat haec, adytis cum lubricus anguis ab imis / septem ingens gyros, septena volumina traxit*, 5.84-85), in which the sacrifice of the seven Athenian youths who are seven years old becomes an inverted parallel in the ekphrasis (*tum pendere poenas / Cecropidae iussi (miserum!) septena quotannis / corpora natorum*, 6.20-22). Putnam (1998) too finds a parallel in the seven bullocks Aeneas must offer in sacrifice to Apollo and Trivia immediately following the ekphrasis (*Aen*. 6.38), p. 225. Of course, we should also remember Agricola's first words spoken at the battle of Mons Graupius as a corrective for what appeared to be a six-year campaign (*septimus annus est*, *Agr*. 33.2).

[220] Here, the Ovidian text offers a better parallel, specifically stating that Daedalus was "lacking oarage" (*remigioque carens*, *Met*. 8.228).

31), had his father been able to depict his fall (*casus*, 6.32) in the ekphrasis.[221] Likewise, in the mutiny narrative Tacitus describes the "great and memorable deed" (*magnum ac memorabile facinus*, *Agr*. 28.1) of the Usipi, and, like Virgil, ends his account with a statement of how it illustrated so great an outcome (*indicium tanti casus inlustravit*, 28.3).

In terms of themes and subject matter, the Virgilian ekphrasis also offers numerous parallels. Just as Daedalus has fled the Minoan kingdom due to its reigning tyrant (*fugiens Minoia regna*, *Aen*. 6.14), the Usipi have fled the Domitianic continent following their conscription to carry out its labors. Similarly, both Daedalus and the Usipi are unsure of the course of their flight in their own respective northern regions (cf. *insuetum per iter gelidas enavit ad Arctos*, 6.16 with *praevehebantur*, *Agr*. 28.1 and *amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus*, 28.3): in the mythical time of Daedalus, this place is Cumae, a place far removed from Athens or Crete; in the recent Tacitean past, Britain has taken on this isolated status.[222] Both have returns as part of the voyages: Daedalus to Cumae following the death of his son Icarus (*redditus his primum terris*, 6.18), the Usipi to Germany following their cannibalistic plight (*in nostram usque ripam…adductos*, *Agr*. 28.3). In addition, both the temple doors in the *Aeneid* and the mutiny of the Usipi in the *Agricola* feature the interrelated themes of human sacrifice, drawing lots, and cannibalism. Indeed, one could argue that the drawing of lots to decide which Athenian youths will be fed alive to the Minotaur (*stat ductis sortibus urna*, *Aen*. 6.22) – a half-human cannibal of sorts – serves as a mythic parallel to the drawing of lots by the Usipi

[221] Ovid's account of Daedalus ends with an additional, pessimistic outcome: his subsequent murder of the boy whose discoveries rivaled his own became memorialized in the low-flying partridge (*antiquique memor metuit sublimia casus*, *Met*. 8.259).
[222] Cf. Clarke (2001), pp. 100-4 and Sailor (2008), pp. 78-89.

to determine who will be eaten by the others (*mox sorte ductos vescerentur*, *Agr*. 28.2). Lastly, both give up their oarage, although Daedalus consecrates his (*sacravit / remigium alarum*, *Aen*. 6.18-19) whereas the Usipi lose theirs in the aftermath of the mutiny (*et uno remigante, suspectis duobus eoque interfectis*, *Agr*. 28.1 and *amissis per inscitiam regendi navibus*, 28.3).[223]

The influence of the Virgilian episode offers an additional perspective on three larger problems in the *Agricola*: authorship under the tyranny of Domitian, Tacitean complicity during his reign, and correction of such complicity through subsequent written works. For Virgil's temple description offers readers of the Aeneid not just an ekphrasis, but also the story of Daedalus – the secondary, internal author and craftsman of that ekphrasis – and his autobiographical motivations for the piece embedded within the work.[224] Such author-subject and author-autobiography weavings frequently appear in the *Agricola*: the work begins with Tacitus positioning himself in the historiographical and biographical tradition; it goes on to describe its unique role in describing Britain; and it concludes by prophesizing its own success through its linking of subject to book. The Virgilian ekphrasis in particular, as shaped by Daedalus, depicts the darkest aspects of the tyranny of Minos, while simultaneously displaying Daedalus' self-representation: creating a truly awful work (the labyrinth) for the regime and subsequently destroying

[223] Nevertheless, it should be noted that the Ovidian parallel shows Icarus, like the Usipi, losing his oarage primarily as the result of inexperience, not following the one leading him (Daedalus), and excessive boldness (*Met*. 8.223-230).

[224] Putnam (1998) discusses this element of the ekphrasis in great detail. He first writes, "The Daedalus ekphrasis documents the only instance in ancient literature where the artist tells his own tale solipistically in art," p. 5. He declares shortly thereafter, "As two types of narrativity collide, it is the poet, the imaginer of these double visions, who in his role as Daedalus offers us ways to solve the labyrinthine complexities of his own literary accomplishment through depictions of art," p. 10. For more on the autobiographical element, see pp. 13-15, 75-76, 79, 80.

it.[225] In his own preface, Tacitus likewise emphasizes, in the first person, the subservient role played by the senate under Domitian, while being unable to position himself alongside the martyrs as someone wholly independent of the regime. In this way, his work too must serve as a corrective for the loss of senatorial voice, writing, and self-representation which took place under Domitian.[226] In summary, Daedalus' depiction remembers what would have otherwise been forgotten – his complicity and his subsequent claim at rebellion – in the same way that Tacitus' biography preserves and properly restores for future generations a correct reading of his and his father-in-law's actions under and after Domitian.

A further illustration for how a single episode in the *Agricola* plays so key a role in the overall narrative can be seen by reading Virgil's ekphrasis as an incomplete or attempted *mise en abyme* for the *Aeneid*.[227] For the Daedalian scene has as its focus a number of the *Aeneid*'s central themes. Paternal-filial relationships are placed front and center,[228] with the mythical Daedalus and Icarus serving as parallels to Anchises and Aeneas, Aeneas and Iulus, and the entire line of heroes down to Augustus himself. Nor are the father-son relationships presented in unproblematic terms. For the story of Daedalus and the difficulty he faced in depicting the loss of his son (*tu quoque magnam / partem opere in tanto, sineret dolor, Icare, haberes*, *Aen*. 6.30-31) finds a direct parallel in Anchises' painful lament to the young Marcellus, the short-lived heir to Augustus and

[225] Cf. Putnam (1998), p. 80.
[226] Sailor (2008), pp. 52-53, 71-72, 89-118, esp. 103-118.
[227] For the interchangeable qualities of ekphrasis and *mise en abyme*, see note 214 above.
[228] Putnam (1998): "Here also, familial…relationships play vital roles in the deployment of the ekphrasis. As in the case of the Daedalus description, we are dealing with a parent-child bond which, if not a putative part of the artifact, forms a crucial aspect of its reception," p. 7.

the final figure depicted in the line of heroes which has Anchises and Aeneas as its forefathers.[229]

> nec puer Iliaca quisquam de gente Latinos
> in tantum spe tollet avos, nec Romula quondam
> ullo se tantum tellus iactabit alumno…
> heu, miserande puer, si qua fata aspera rumpas,
> tu Marcellus eris.
>
> No one boy from the Trojan race will raise up his Latin forefathers so much in hope, nor will the Romulan earth throw itself forth so much with any descendant…alas, boy destined for pity, if you could somehow break the harsh fates, you would be Marcellus.
> (6.875-77, 882-83)

In fact, one can also see a foreshadowing of Aeneas' prophetic journey to the underworld, which will occupy the remainder of the *Aeneid*'s sixth book, in Daedalus' role as guide to the labyrinth (*Daedalus ipse dolos tecti ambagesque resolvit, / caeca regens filo vestigia*, 6.29-30).[230] Flight and refuge from former kingdoms play a key role in both the Daedalian frieze and the narrative proper, with Aeneas' flight west from Troy and north from Carthage being mirrored in Daedalus' northwest flight from Crete. Even *pietas* and *dolor*, which overshadow the *Aeneid*, find a central place in the ekphrasis.[231]

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[229] Virgil's presentation of Daedalus' and Augustus' loss of a son or adopted son finds yet another parallel in Tacitus' mention of the deaths of Agricola's only sons, first shortly before the birth of his daughter who would become Tacitus' wife (*Agr*. 6.2), and again immediately following the mutiny of the Usipi, which in turn serves as a motivation for Agricola's march on Mons Graupius: "Even in grief was war considered among the remedies" (*et in luctu bellum inter remedia erat*, 29.1). Indeed, his willingness to follow up the loss of a son with grief finds a precedent in the wars in Latium (*Aen*. 7-12), which immediately follow the prophecy of Marcellus' early death (*Aen*. 6.860-86). For the parallel of Marcellus and Icarus, see also Putnam (1998), p. 95.

[230] Putnam (1998): "There is another Daedalian resolution, centering on book 6, that belongs more specifically to Aeneas. The literal labyrinth of Daedalus' manufacture (*hic labor ille domus*) becomes now symbolic, but equally present, in the hero's effortful life as he faces the prospect of descending, alive, into the world of the dead and returning. *Hoc opus, hic labor est* ('this the task, this the effort'), says the Sibyl," pp. 87-88. For additional discussion, see pp. 88-89.

[231] Putnam (1998), pp. 82-96. Even more striking is the potential parallel this establishes with the *Agricola*, a work also notable for its *pietas* when it comes to the relationship between the author and his protagonist (*hic interim liber honori Agricolae soceri mei destinatus, professione pietatis aut lauditus erit aut excusatus*, *Agr*. 3.3; *admiratione te potius et laudibus et, si natura suppeditet, similitudine colamus: is verus honos, ea coniunctissimi cuiusque pietas*, 46.2) and *dolor* (*noster hic dolor, nostrum vulnus, nobis tam longae absentiae condicione ante quadriennium amissus est*, 45.5).

But what is perhaps the most striking feature of the episode is the ritualized human sacrifice that Virgil, through Daedalus, has chosen to depict as the central facet of the visual narrative. Such an image on the front doors of a temple belonging to Apollo – Augustus' patron divinity who, in honor of the victory at Actium, was presented with his own centrally visible temple high on the Palatine hill – is nothing less than a recollection of a darker period in the emperor's life: the civil wars which symbolically set father against son, and upon which the principate was founded.[232] A historicist reading would in all likelihood view the image as a depiction of the human sacrifice by Octavian that supposedly took place at Perusia.[233] In this case, Virgil, through the artist Daedalus, is quietly presenting himself as one privy to and perhaps even complicit in the Augustan regime's darkest affairs. As such, the poet, his internal author, and the many interconnected images featured in their collaborative work serve as a convincing model for Tacitus, Agricola, and their own interrelated deeds.

Following the Usipi's drifting, supply raids, and last ditch cannibalism, Tacitus marks the climax of their endeavor by mentioning their circumnavigation of Britain. Like the mutiny narrative itself, the mention of the circumnavigation in *Agricola* 28 comes as a bit of a surprise. It is an extremely short clause (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, *Agr*. 28.3); it appears late in the story of the mutiny, subsequent to the actual uprising and the

[232] Putnam (1998): "The same holds true for two other ekphrases that, in a more general way, may be partially meant to echo Augustan monumentality. It is, after all, on the doors of a temple to Apollo, dedicated to the god after a difficult period of transition, that Daedalus sculpts salient monuments in his aesthetic life; Augustus, too, makes a parallel offering to his protecting divinity, likewise after a time of challenge. On the doors of the Palatine shrine Augustus ordered to be sculpted two acts of revenge on the god's part, against Niobe for her boastfulness toward Leto and against Brennus for his destructive incursion against the god's sacred precinct at Delphi. For Augustus the theme of Vengeance continues on, reinforcing the propagandistic, in some respects unidimensional, aspects of the Danaid portico," p. 17. For a cautiously pessimistic reading of Virgil's *Aeneid* that nonetheless aims to avoid historicism, see Johnson (1976). For a pessimistic reading of Virgil's *Georgics*, see Thomas (1988), pp. 1, 17-24.

[233] Suet. *Aug*. 15.

numerous events that follow; and it has the force of a result clause without a preceding phrase to make clear why. Yet just as chapter 28 invites the reader to look back at earlier material and to prepare for the remainder of the work, so too does the circumnavigation by the Usipi ask the reader to look back at the earlier mention of the Roman circumnavigation (10.4) and forward to the more detailed account following the battle of Mons Graupius (38.3-4).

Before examining the relationship between the mutiny circumnavigation and the Roman circumnavigation, it is worth examining the *periplous* by the mutineers within the context of mutiny narrative. First, the use of *ita* forces the reader to seek a precedent for the resulting circumnavigation. As it stands, the appearance of this clause at the beginning of a sentence implies that most, if not all of the preceding material in the passage is responsible for this result. The conscription of the Usipi and their voyage to Britain, their mutinous actions, their raids on British lands, and their resulting starvation and cannibalism all lead to their circumnavigation of the island. One can take this even further by considering the three phrases that describe the historical significance of these events. The daring of the great and memorable deed by the Usipi (*magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est*, 28.1) has certainly resulted in a trip around Britain (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, 28.3). Yet the Usipi do not gain their fame from the mutiny alone, as is made clear midway through the story (*nondum vulgato rumore ut miraculum praevehebantur*, 28.1). It is only after their circumnavigation that they are captured (*intercepti sunt*, 28.3), sold into slavery (*quos per commercia venumdatos*, 28.3), brought to Roman territory (*in nostrum ripam…adductos*, 28.3), and given renown for their

actions (*indicium tanti casus inlustravit*, 28.3). In short, their act of circumnavigation results in fame for actions that would have otherwise gone unnoticed.

There can be little doubt that Tacitus intends for his readers to compare the circumnavigation by the Usipi with the circumnavigation by the Romans as ordered by Agricola. As scholars have consistently pointed out, a fair number of differences exist. First, that of the Usipi is unplanned, while the one carried out by the Romans is deliberately ordered by Agricola (*praefecto classis circumvehi Britanniam praecipit*, 38.3).[234] However, this is not apparent while reading the story of the mutiny, as the initial description of the Roman circumnavigation makes no mention of any direct order (10.4) and could be attributed to chance. More significant is the fact that nowhere does Tacitus explicitly say that the circumnavigation by the Usipi was accidental. It must be intentionally inferred by the reader. As a result, Tacitus gives far more agency to the Usipi in their final accomplishment than is seemingly necessary, which in turn leads the reader to speculate further on the relationship between the Usipi and Agricola.

Interestingly, many supposed differences between the Roman and Germanic circumnavigations can also be viewed in terms of their parallelism. For example, one could argue that the Romans fully succeed in their attacks which are a part of their circumnavigation (*invenit domuitque*, 10.4) and thereby instill terror in the Britons (*praecesserat terror*, 38.3), while the same cannot be said of the Usipi, against whom the Britons fight back (*plerisque Britannorum…proelio congressi*, 28.2). Even so, Tacitus explicitly states that the Usipi were "often successful, at other times beaten back" (*saepe victores, aliquando pulsi*, 28.2), implying a greater frequency of success than failure.

[234] Martin (1981), p. 43 and Clarke (2001), p. 110.

The order of events surrounding the circumnavigation by Agricola's fleet can also be seen as a complete reversal of those experienced by the Usipi. After their revolt, the Usipi contend with the Britons to their eventual destitution (*cum plerisque Britannorum…ad extremum inopiae venere*, 28.2), circumnavigate Britain by chance (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, 28.3), and are eventually taken hostage (*intercepti sunt*, 28.3). By contrast, Agricola's soldiers take hostages (*ibi acceptis obsidibus*, 38.3), undertake a planned circumnavigation of Britain (*praefecto classis circumvehi Britanniam praecipit*, 38.3),[235] and thereby instill terror in the Britons they encounter (*praecesserat terror*, 38.3). Yet, one could argue that the two circumnavigations share a remarkably similar itinerary: both feature encounters with Britons and enslavement as central elements in their sequence of events.

Lastly, Tacitus describes the make up of both fleets that circumnavigated Britain in either vague or contradictory terms. In his first mention of Britain's circumnavigation, he defines the fleet as being explicitly Roman (*Romana classis*, 10.4). Yet the mutiny of the Usipi takes the notion of a purely Roman military body and turns it on its head: we read of a conscripted German cohort (*per Germanias conscripta*, 28.1) whose combination with Roman soldiery on Roman naval vessels has lead to an eventual *periplous* of Britain by the non-Roman element.[236] Therefore, by the time we read the more detailed account of the Roman circumnavigation (38.3-4) – having just heard Calgacus speak of Agricola's "non-Roman" army in his rhetorical *exemplum* (32), albeit

[235] For the difference between the planned and unplanned nature of the two circumnavigations, see Martin (1981), p. 43.
[236] Interestingly, only a few words in the mutiny narrative indicate that the Usipi are Roman recruits (*centurione*, *manipulis*, *rectores*, *gubernatoribus*, *Agr*. 28.1) and have boarded ships used by the Roman military (*liburnicas*, 28.1).

a failed one – we are left to wonder whether the fleet which accomplished this under Agricola was an explicitly Roman one.[237]

Above all else, it is Cassius Dio's account of the mutiny that confirms the thematic unity of the three circumnavigation passages in Tacitus' version and provides the best explanation for why Tacitus chose the Usipi for his creation of a centrally placed synecdoche. Again, it is the differences that have been given the most attention.[238] Yet it has also been noted that Cassius Dio must have had access to Tacitus' account.[239] Thus, it

[237] Clarke (2001) also remarks that the Romans in the *Agricola* are not all that Roman; that their army incorporates Gauls, Germans, and Britons; and that they are thus a semi-barbarian entity, p. 104.

[238] Ogilvie and Richmond point out a number of other differences in their appendix on the mutiny: that Cassius Dio makes no mention whatsoever of any foreign tribe in his version of the story, while in Tacitus the Usipi are the central characters; that Dio mentions only ships, while Tacitus specifies three Liburnian vessels; that Dio tells of how the mutineers travelled wherever the waves and wind carried them, while Tacitus makes no mention of any course; that Tacitus describes numerous landings for provisions while Dio speaks of landings at Roman positions on the East coast and ends the story; that Tacitus goes on to describe no landings on the East coast, but instead gives details about the Usipi's resort to cannibalism, their enslavement, and their resulting fame; and that Dio dates the event during the reign of Titus in A.D. 79, while Tacitus places it during the reign of Domitian in A.D. 83, during the penultimate summer of Agricola's campaigns, pp. 321-22. Nevertheless, the differences are not irreconcilable: "The different versions are, in short, different summaries of a single story out of which Dio and Tacitus have each selected what interested them. The facts recounted are not contradictory, but complementary, and both contributions are useful, though Tacitus, as might be expected, is more informative," Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 322.

[239] Mendell (1957) asserts, "It is hard to believe that Cassius Dio (who published shortly after A.D. 200) did not know at least the *Agricola*. In [39.50] and 66.20 he mentions Gnaeus Julius Agricola as having proved Britain to be an island and in the later instance tells the story of the fugitive Usipi. If we make allowance for the method of Tacitus, which leaves his account far from clear, and for the use of a different language by Dio, there can be little doubt that Tacitus was the source for Dio. We know also of no other possible source today. The last part of the section, dealing with Agricola's return and death, confirms the conclusion that Dio drew from Tacitus, and it sounds as though Tacitus had left the impression he desired," p. 226. Indeed, we hear in Dio's statement that earlier writers had invented what they knew about Britain (καὶ πολλοῖς ἐφ᾽ἑκάτερον, εἰδόσι μὲν οὐδεν ἄτε μήτ᾽αὐτόπταις μήτ᾽αὐτηκόοις τῶν ἐπιχωρίων γενομένοις, τεκμαιρομένοις δὲ ὡς ἕκαστοι σχολῆς ἢ καὶ φιλολογίας εἶχον, συγγέγραπται, Cass. Dio 39.50.3) an echo of an authorial statement made by Tacitus in his own geography of Britain (*ita quae priores nondum comperta eloquentia percoluere rerum fide tradentur*, *Agr*. 10.1). Cf. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 304. Further evidence for claiming the *Agricola* as a source for Dio might be found in the Life of the Emperor Tacitus in the *Historia Augusta*, which describes how the emperor (c. 200-276 CE), reigning only half a century after Dio wrote his *Roman History* (275-76 CE versus 207-19 CE), had numerous copies of Cornelius Tacitus' writings distributed to libraries on more than one occasion (*Hist. Aug*. 27.10.3). That is to say, the Flavian author would have been widely known to the later imperial elite, of which Dio was most certainly a member. As Millar (1964) notes, Dio was a Roman statesman from Nicaea who backed Septimius Severus and maintained a written correspondence with the emperor throughout his reign, pp. 17-19. He later obtained quite a number of prominent posts under Severus Alexander, including *legatus Augusti* in Pannonia Superior, a military province with two legions, and a

is particularly noteworthy that Dio directly attributes Agricola's circumnavigation to his knowledge of the mutineers' similar feat.

> κἀν τούτῳ πολέμου αὖθις ἐν τῇ Βρεττανίᾳ γενομένου τά τε τῶν ἐκεῖ πολεμίων **Γναῖος Ἰούλιος Ἀγρικόλας πάντα κατέδραμε**, **καὶ πρῶτός γε Ῥωμαίων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ἔγνω τοῦθ᾽ ὅτι ἡ Βρεττανία περίῤῥυτός ἐστιν**. **στρατιῶται γάρ τινες στασιάσαντες**, καὶ ἑκατοντάρχους χιλίαρχόν τε φονεύσαντες, ἐς πλοῖα κατέφυγον καὶ ἐξαναχθέντες περιέπλευσαν τὰ πρὸς ἑσπέραν αὐτῆς, ὥς που τό τε κῦμα καὶ ὁ ἄνεμος αὐτοὺς ἔφερε, καὶ **ἔλαθον** ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ θάτερα πρὸς τὰ στρατόπεδα τὰ ταύτῃ ὄντα προσσχόντες. **κἀκ τούτου καὶ ἄλλους ὁ Ἀγρικόλας πειράσοντας τὸν περίπλουν πέμψας ἔμαθε καὶ παρ᾽ ἐκείνων ὅτι νῆσός ἐστιν**.[240]
>
> At that time, when war had begun again in Britain, Gnaius Julius Agricola overran everything belonging to the enemy there, and was at least the first Roman that we know of to learn that Britain is surrounded by water. For some soldiers revolted, and after murdering the tribunes and the commander, they retreated into ships and, having put out to sea, they sailed around the west of it, wherever both the waves and the wind were carrying them, and they failed to notice, being on the opposite side, that they landed at camps which were in the same place from which they set out. And from this, to be sure, did Agricola send others to attempt a circumnavigation and learn from them too that it is an island.
> (Cass. Dio 66.20.1-2)

As in Tacitus' account, words of knowing and recognizing play a prominent role in Dio's version of the story.[241] Agricola is the first Roman, as far as was known at the time (ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν), to learn (ἔγνω) that Britain is an island.[242] The mutineers'

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second consulship as *ordonarius* with the emperor, pp. 23-24. The date given above for the composition of Dio's *Roman History* is that of Millar (1964), p. 30.

[240] All passages of Cassius Dio 66 come from Boissevain (1901), while those of Cassius Dio 39 come from Boissevain (1895).

[241] In the first mention of the Roman circumnavigation, Tacitus describes how the Romans under Agricola's governorship not only discovered that Britain is an island (*tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam adfirmavit*, *Agr*. 10.4), but also came upon nearby islands up to that time unknown and as a result of discovering them were able to conquer them (*ac simul incognitas ad id tempus insulas, quas Orcadas vocant, invenit domuitque*, 10.4). Tacitus clearly links recognition and knowing with power. For the reader eventually learns of Agricola's circumnavigation order which instilled in the coastal Britons a sense of dread, and therefore an implicit recognition of its power (38.3). Similarly, it is the "unknowing" (*per inscitiam regendi*, 28.3) of the Usipi that leads to their defeat, their enslavement, and the resulting Roman knowledge of their fall (*indicium tanti casus inlustravit*, 28.3).

[242] Dio first mentions this in the lead up to his account of Julius Caesar's invasion of Britain (Cass. Dio 39.50.4). The statement is particularly noteworthy in that it links Agricola to Septimius Severus, the emperor whom he supported, and names them as the only two individuals to have ascertained Britain's

circumnavigation of Britain escapes their notice (ἔλαθον), and it is only through the chain of experience, beginning with the unaware mutineers and ending with an affirmative report by Agricola's men, that Agricola learns (ἔμαθε) of its veracity. Dio's use of an explanatory γάρ indicates that he viewed Agricola's discovery of Britain's island status (καὶ πρῶτός γε ῾Ρωμαίων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ἔγνω τοῦθ᾽ ὅτι ἡ Βρεττανία περίρρυτός ἐστιν) to be a direct result of the mutiny (στρατιῶται γάρ τινες στασιάσαντες), a point that is further emphasized by having the limiting particle γε accompany ῾Ρωμαίων. This is confirmed in his final sentence about the mutiny, in which he once again attributes Agricola's knowledge about Britain's insular status as well as the circumnavigation he ordered (ἄλλους ὁ Ἀγρικόλας πειράσοντας τὸν περίπλουν πέμψας ἔμαθε καὶ παρ᾽ ἐκείνων ὅτι νῆσός ἐστιν) to the mutiny and its resulting circumnavigation (κἀκ τούτου καὶ). For Cassius Dio, the primary symbol of Gnaius Julius Agricola's conquest of Britain is founded upon the mutiny of the Usipi.

Regardless of the differences between the two accounts of the mutiny, one important conclusion can be drawn: Dio was certain that Agricola's circumnavigation of Britain was based on an earlier *periplous* by the mutineers. Regardless of whether or not Tacitus was a source for Dio's account, Dio's impact on how we read Tacitus' Usipi narrative in relation to the remainder of the *Agricola* is significant. In all likelihood, Tacitus was Dio's primary source.[243] Following this inference, the reader cannot help but

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insular status (προϊόντος δὲ δὴ τοῦ χρόνου πρότερόν τε ἐπ᾽ Ἀγρικόλου ἀντιστρατήγου καὶ νῦν ἐπὶ Σεουήρου αὐτοκράτορος νῆσος οὖσα σαφῶς ἐλήλεγκται, 39.50.4).

[243] This does not rule out the possibility that Dio had an additional source. Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) count multiple versions existing in antiquity: "Four accounts at least existed in antiquity of this famous mutiny, which gave rise to an accidental circumnavigation of Britain. The best known and most detailed is that of Tacitus (*Agr*. 28). But it had been preceded by a version which was drawn upon by Pompullus, a rival poet mocked by Martial (*Epigr*. 6. 61, I-4) about A.D. 90. The latest account is by Cassius Dio (66, 20), and this, differing in certain respects from that by Tacitus, may also draw upon the unknown source used by Pompullus," p. 321.

notice the extent to which Dio's account focuses on the mutiny and its influence on Agricola's actions. After only briefly mentioning that Agricola completely conquered the island (Γναῖος Ἰουλιος Ἀγρικόλας πάντα κατέδραμε) – a fact that certainly invites a more detailed explanation – Dio emphasizes that Agricola's importance lay in proving that Britain was an island (καὶ πρῶτός γε Ῥωμαίων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν ἔγνω τοῦθ᾽ ὅτι ἡ Βρεττανία περίρρυτός ἐστιν). This suggests that Dio, too, saw significance in Tacitus' three mentions of the British circumnavigation. Indeed, Dio explicitly links the voyage of the Usipi to the corresponding voyage ordered by Agricola (κἀκ τούτου καὶ), which indicates that he also saw a clear metatextual relationship between the three *periplous* passages. More significant still is the great extent of Cassius Dio's description of the mutiny in comparison to his overall treatment of Agricola's life: the mutiny takes up two-thirds of his chapter on Agricola. By making the story of the mutiny his primary focus, Dio is highlighting the significance of *Agricola* 28 for his own readers. In fact, he is indicating that it is the most important moment in Tacitus' work.

Even if Tacitus was not a source for Dio's account, Dio's version of events still offers an important perspective on how we ought to interpret the Tacitean episode. If Dio has chosen, without having read the *Agricola*, to make the mutiny and the subsequent circumnavigations the focus of his Flavian British history, then these events clearly left their mark on contemporary writers. This would suggest that Tacitus has downplayed the event in the biography of his father-in-law, something that should be expected given that Agricola and his unique exploits form the crux of Tacitus' monograph. After all, Tacitus' ostensible purpose from the outset of his work is to recount the accomplishments of great men (*Clarorum virorum facta moresque posteris tradere*, *Agr*. 1.1) and in particular those

of his father-in-law (*hic interim liber honori Agricolae soceri mei destinatus*, 3.3). That such a detailed report of the mutiny of the Usipi should find a place at the heart of the *Agricola* is no small nod to their significant achievement.

Whether Cassius Dio read the *Agricola* or not, his version of events suggests that Tacitus' positions the Usipi in a way that reflects the mutineers' centrality. If Dio has in fact read Tacitus, he has recognized the symbolic role played by the Usipi in the *Agricola*. In this case he has deciphered the circumnavigation by which Tacitus connects the cohort to the work's protagonist and makes the mutineers a prerequisite for Agricola's emblematic triumph over Britain. Based on this supposition, Tacitus has written a work-defining moment in the mutiny of the Usipi, one that has been noticed by a fellow historian over a century later.[244] If, however, Dio has not read Tacitus, we can still infer through his later interpretation of these events that the story of the Usipi became very well known to Tacitus' contemporaries. We might even suppose that the story of their circumnavigation became more famous than Agricola's own conquest and subsequent circumnavigation of the island. In this case, Tacitus has found a way to give the Usipi their due without overshadowing the exploits of his father-in-law. By placing the mutineers in a centrally located *mise en abyme* without explicitly stating that they were the primary reason for Agricola's knowledge and triumph over Britain's insularity, Tacitus leaves it to his readers to make their own insinuations about the crucial role they played.

[244] The fact that the Agricola sections of Cassius Dio's *Roman History* are not part of the original excerpts, but instead belong to later Epitomes by Ioannes Xiphilinus of Trapezus (c. 1010-75 CE) and Ioannes Zonaras (c. 1100-69 CE), shows that the importance of the Usipi was not lost on later compilers. For more on the topic of Byzantine compilation, see Millar (1964), pp. 1-4.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Tacitus' account of the mutiny of the Usipi is more than just a sensational story. From the historiographical, biographical and rhetorical, to the ethnographic, geographical and symbolic, the story of the Usipi brings together many if not all of the elements that define the *Agricola*. On the historiographical and biographical front, we see the accomplishment and commemoration of great deeds, and how the story is transmitted from the very edge of the Roman Empire. In terms of rhetoric, the Germanic conscripts offer an additional means of examining the Domitianic problem as well as the interrelated conflict between liberty and slavery which spans the entirety of Tacitus' work. Ethnographically speaking, the Usipi stand out as a cohort of German auxiliaries who end up interacting with a large number of other peoples – Roman soldiers and officers, coastal Britons, and even other German nations – and in so doing reflect Tacitus' view that the British geography and ethnography defines itself through the nations which border it (*Agr*. 10-12). Lastly, the story of the mutiny offers an additional perspective on both the primary narrative and the geography where it takes place through the symbolic link between the circumnavigation by the Usipi and the emblematic *periplous* ordered by Agricola (10.4, 38.3).[245]

[245] Clarke (2001) provides the strongest argument in favor of linking Britain with the *Agricola*, pp. 94-95. She writes, "I have chosen, however, to explore a different angle on the issue of geographical location: namely, the light shed by the *Agricola* on the Roman view of Britain as a geographical entity and potential subject nation. I aim to show that Tacitus manipulates traditional aspects of this geographical conception, in particular Britain's place in relation to the Continent, in ways which illuminate not only Roman Britain, but also the nature of Rome itself. A consideration of the *Agricola*, which takes the geographical vision of

Given the all-encompassing nature of the episode, it makes a great deal of sense to view it through the theoretical framework of the *mise en abyme*. For the large-scale synecdoche and "similar yet different" re-presentation that is at work throughout the episode lends itself well to being viewed as an *Agricola* in miniature. Nor does the seemingly problematic difference between the Usipi (a cohort of non-Roman, Germanic conscripts with slave status who would be at the very bottom of the military and social hierarchy) and Agricola (a Roman proconsul, governor of a province still undergoing annexation for an uncommonly long period of time, having numerous legions at his disposal, whose position could only be superseded by the emperor himself) mean that we should dismiss the metatextual parallels which the episode provokes. Indeed, even though Agricola and the Usipi are the text's polar opposites in terms of social status, it is important to note that the *mise en abyme* is never an exact reproduction of the work it imitates.[246] It allows for differences or alterations of the original by offering a view of that original in a changed shape and from a shifted perspective.[247] In many instances it

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Britain as its starting point, may unexpectedly offer new insights into set pieces such as the pre-battle speeches of Agricola and Calgacus, as well as bringing into sharper focus the question of how Romanness could be constructed and negotiated. The key to this reading lies in a feature of Britain which has remained contentious to this day, periodically threatened and fiercely defended, namely its insularity," p. 95. For the interconnectedness of geography and historiography in classical literature, see Engels (2007), esp. pp. 541-46. More importantly, Engels describes a key link between the *periplous* and the historiographical genres in Hecataeus of Miletus: "These *periplous* and *periēgēsis* works already combine historical, ethnographic, and geographic interests, and the *periplous*, the earliest genre of geography, remained one of the most successful and long-lived in antiquity," p. 547.

[246] For this aspect of the *mise en abyme*, see Martin (2000), p. 63; Ron (1982), p. 434; et al.

[247] A number of excellent examples of the shift in perspective and additional vantage point created by the *mise en abyme* can be seen through its use in visual art. One particularly noteworthy example is the *Arnolfini Portrait* by Jan van Eyck (1434 CE), whose convex mirror in the background of the painting offers a view of the scene from behind, including blurred versions of the couple as well as of the artist himself. The effect is noted by Dällenbach (1989), who describes the work at length, pp. 10-12. Quoting Gide, he writes of the mirror in this and other paintings, "It is not merely that they only *partially* reflect 'the interior of the room in which the action of the painting takes place'; the duplication that they give rise to, far from being faithful, is distorted by the convexity of the mirror or, at any rate, by its reversal of right and left…For the optical illusion sought in all these pictures, which is their main attraction, lies in bringing into the painting items that are fictively outside it: the reflexions provided in the mirrors complete the picture

features a complete inversion of the primary narrative, which only it can offer, given its privileged narratological position.

Furthermore, it makes perfect sense for the Usipi – the lowest members of the Roman hierarchy – to take on an emblematic role in light of Tacitus' view of the Domitianic regime. For Tacitus, the Domitianic principate has led to a systemic enslavement of all peoples living under Roman rule.[248] The problem is so pervasive that it has brought about a sea change in the status hierarchy, one that is described in terms of a disease (*Agr*. 3.1).[249] The Roman senate, with the exception of a few individuals, has lost its sole means of self-representation and personal glory and become a slave body.[250] Imperial freedmen now act with seemingly greater authority than Roman proconsuls (40.2).[251] Even Britons, under the lure of Roman luxury and refinement, have been lulled into willful servitude (*idque apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, cum pars servitutis*

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and function primarily as a medium for interchange. At the frontier between interior and exterior, they are a way of taking two-dimensionality to its limits," pp. 11-12. See also Martin (2000), p. 63.

[248] Lavan (2011), in arguing for a stronger link between the servility in the Roman and British narratives, notes of this pervasive theme, "Nevertheless, the *Agricola* is remarkable for the sheer scale of its use of servile imagery in both contexts. The following sections will argue that the theme of enslavement has a special importance in this text, because Tacitus turns to the psychology of slavery (as he imagines it) to explain the persistence of domination in both Rome and Britain," p. 297. For the classic treatment, see Liebeschuetz (1966), who focuses primarily on Domitian, Agricola, and the martyr accounts, pp. 126-35, although he does devote some space to the British narrative, pp. 135-39. For an excellent, highly nuanced account of the role of the Domitianic tyranny in the *Agricola*, see Sailor (2008), pp. 51-118.

[249] For the medical aspect of the preface, see Sailor (2008), pp. 66-67, Sailor (2004), pp. 153-54, and Leeman (1973), pp. 203-5. In this regard, it is worth noting that Tacitus narrates at least one series of mutinies in language describing illness and medical metaphor, as Woodman (2006) clearly illustrates.

[250] Sailor (2008): "On this view, the 'servitude' engendered by Domitian's attacks on representation meant not only that individual men of the elite were kept from asserting themselves verbally in public but also that the medium through which social distinction is enacted and preserved was shut down entirely. If men of the elite cannot talk about and celebrate each other's 'deeds and ways', then in a way they cease to be an elite, and the gulf between the highest (elite) and lowest (slave) becomes, rhetorically at least, negligible," p. 64. For more on the breakdown of the distinction between speaking and writing, see Sailor (2004), p. 152.

[251] Sailor (2008) is once again instructive: "The idea that the Principate has eroded distinction between Roman social categories is widespread in Tacitus' later work as well: the conversion of the *res publica* into a possession of the *domus* of the *princeps* exalts freed slaves over the freeborn elite (and sometimes over the *princeps*), the women of he Imperial household over the heads of other households (and sometimes over the *princeps*), the mob (in the form of the army) over their betters (and sometimes over the *princeps*), and all of the several ranks of society, from consular to ditchdigger, into a single *vulgus* governed by an elite of one," p. 64.

esset, 21.2). And it is these non-Romans, as exemplified by the speech of Calgacus, who have come to discern the shifts and find inspiration for the cause of freedom in Rome's "foreign army" (32.1) and the uprising of the Usipi (32.3). In light of this, we might even see additional meaning in Tacitus' often quoted statement – "that there can be great men even under bad emperors" (*posse etiam sub malis principibus magnos viros esse*, 42.4) – by viewing the Usipi through the altered perspective of the *mise en abyme*. For if all class distinctions have been removed under Domitianic rule, then the celebrated, even glorified story of the Usipi – whose words as slaves would have been silenced under *any* emperor – serves as a perfect embodiment of an age in which dramatic deeds and physical proof have become the only path to glory.[252]

This of course raises the interesting possibility of reading the Usipi alongside the Domitianic martyrs.[253] For it is now permissible for Tacitus to glorify a group of slaves from Germany whose actions were no doubt a grave embarrassment to the emperor who based his false triumph off that province (39.1). Had Tacitus sung their praises while Domitian was still alive, that too would have undoubtedly been a "capital offense" (*capital fuisse*, 2.1). Yet as a result of their hierarchical inversion, and also by making themselves into their own *monumenta* (2.1), the Usipi can easily be viewed as outstripping the slavish Domitianic senate in embodying "freedom" and maintaining the "conscience of the human race" (*libertatem senatus et conscientiam generis humani*,

[252] Regarding "the conditions of historiographical transmission" in the *Agricola*, Sailor (2004) notes that "transmission [is] conditional on [an] exceptional event (*quotiens magna aliqua ac nobilis virtus vicit ac supergressa est vitium* 1.1), p. 144. In terms of physical proof, he writes, "First, we discover that the present generation does not produce texts but rather itself is the material for the production of historical texts: it is the *documentum* that future historians will record," p. 152.

[253] The notion of Tacitus creating a literary martyr pair out of himself and Agricola is discussed at length by Sailor (2004), pp. 147-48 and (2008), pp. 70-71, 100-103, 110-17.

2.2).[254] This holds particularly true in light of an additional statement in Tacitus' account of the martyrs.

> dedimus profecto grande patientiae documentum; et sicut vetus aetas vidit **quid ultimum in libertate esset**, ita nos **quid in servitute**, adempto per inquisitiones etiam **loquendi audiendique commercio**.
>
> We have certainly given a grand proof of our submissiveness; and just as the past age saw the farthest frontier of freedom, thus did we see the ultimate limit of servitude, after the exchange even of speaking and hearing had been removed through inquisitions.
> (2.3)

By considering the Usipi alongside this account, it is perhaps possible to see them as accessing an extreme version of what the prior age had seen. For the Usipi, more than anyone else in the text, experience "the farthest frontier of freedom" (*quid ultimum in libertate esset*).[255]

Along those same lines, the Usipi as a group had always been exempt from "the exchange of speaking and hearing" (*loquendi audiendique commercio*), an attribute which Tacitus regards as having belonged to an earlier, free senatorial class.[256] Of course, the Usipi are a group of enslaved foreigners, so their exemption is guaranteed without Tacitus' commemoration. As such, they are plainly assigned to a different "exchange"

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[254] The slavish Senate becomes a standard trope in Tacitus. A particularly notable example is when the senatorial sycophancy becomes so unrestrained that it even overwhelms the emperor Tiberius himself. Tacitus writes, "It is handed down to memory that Tiberius, as many times as he left the Curia, was accustomed to exclaim thus with Greek words, 'Oh men prepared for slavery!' Scarcely even that man, who in no way desired public freedom, grew weary of such abject servitude from his subordinates" (*memoriae proditur Tiberium, quotiens curia egrederetur, Graecis verbis in hunc modum eloqui solitum 'o homines ad servitutem paratos!' scilicet etiam illum, qui libertatem publicam nollet, tam proiectae servientium patientiae taedebat*, *Ann*. 3.65.3).

[255] We might here keep in mind the kind of inversion seen time and time again new comedy, in which the slave experiences a type of unbridled freedom. After all, the mutiny narrative demonstrates a remarkable degree of intertextuality with Roman comedy.

[256] Sailor (2008) emphasizes the connection between the Roman senate's loss of voice and its servitude: "This silence has grave implications for social distinction. As we saw in chapter I, using your voice in public was the mark of the elite male citizen. To stop speaking, then, means losing that status: it is here the particular question of speech ('the traffic in speaking and hearing was taken away') that supports Tacitus' contention that 'we' experienced the outer limits of servitude," p. 64.

(*quos per commercia venumdatos*, 28.3), one that reflects the wholesale commercialization of the era.[257] So it is all the more striking, albeit fitting for the present, contradictory age, that the story of the Usipi has found a path to fame and glory. Even so, the Usipi also begin and end their narrative in "the ultimate limit of servitude" (*quid in servitute*) that characterizes the present age. In this regard, the Usipi clearly demonstrate that liberty in the age of Domitian is to be found only in and around the province of Britain.[258]

The pivotal location of the mutiny story in the overall narrative of the *Agricola* makes the theory of *mise en abyme* all the more relevant for understanding how it ought to be read against the backdrop of the work. As discussed earlier, the episode sits wedged between the annals of Agricola's campaigns (18-27) and the narratological sequence of Mons Graupius (29-38), both of which are 10 chapters long. There can be little doubt that the account serves as a bridge between the yearly campaigns and the climactic battle.[259] As such, it essentially functions as the "keystone" of Agricola's British campaign

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[257] Sailor (2004): "The relationship between value and abundance, which in the past denied an economic character to historiography, in the present creates a perverse economic system in which although excellence itself has grown scarce its value cannot be maintained. The metaphorical *pretium* of a clear conscience that used to draw writers becomes a real *pretium*, moving within the same lines of obligation as *gratia* and *ambitio*. And so historiography is helplessly interwoven with other relationships, subject to the worst features of the market – the retreat of excellence from circulation – and at the same time denied what would presumably be the best feature, that is, that rare excellence would be prized when found," p. 145. See also Sailor (2008), pp. 55-58.

[258] The unique position of Britain in this regard is discussed by Sailor (2008), pp. 73, 78-80. He writes, "In order to show the economy of glory operating as it should, though, Tacitus has to mark Britain off as a space apart from the rest of the empire, as a field for elite activity largely insulated from the influence of the *princeps* back at Rome and of the cultural and political system organized around the *princeps*," p. 73. Then, once more: "Although every reader knows, of course, that the island is an Imperial province, the point is that in this presentation it *looks* as if it is not," p. 78.

[259] Ogilvie and Richmond (1967) give the earliest indication of reading the chapter along these lines, although they seem more interested in the way Tacitus follows in the footsteps of Sallust and Livy, p. 245. Martin (1981) develops the importance of the break in the narrative structure: "In case there can be any doubt in the reader's mind of the importance that is to be assigned to the battle Tacitus has deliberately separated his account of the final year from that of the previous six years by the insertion of a remarkable, indeed melodramatic episode, the mutiny and subsequent voyage of a German auxiliary cohort recruited from the Usipi (c. 28)…Structurally it affords a break before the narrative of the culminating events of Agricola's governorship is reached," p. 43.

narrative, a title that is made all the more fitting by Tacitus' description of Britain's northernmost tip wherein Agricola's decisive campaigns took place.

> formam totius Britanniae Livius veterum, Fabius Rusticus recentium eloquentissimi auctores oblongae scutulae vel bipenni adsimulavere. et est ea facies citra Caledoniam, unde et in universum fama: sed **transgressis** inmensum et enorme spatium procurrentium extremo iam litore terrarum velut **in cuneum** tenuatur. **hanc oram** novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britaniam adfirmavit, ac simul incognitas ad id tempus insulas, quas Orcadas vocant, invenit domuitque.
>
> As for the shape of Britain in its entirety, the most eloquent writers – Livy of the earlier ones, Fabius Rusticus of the more recent – have likened it to an oblong little shield or a double-axe. And this is its appearance without Scotland, whence its general reputation. But, for those having crossed, the immense and enormous tract of lands running forth from the furthest shore is thinned into a wedge. Then, the Roman fleet, having for the first time circumnavigated *this shoreline* of the remotest sea, confirmed that Britain is an island, and at the same time came upon islands unknown until now, which they call the Orkneys, and conquered them. (10.3-4)

For it is the previously unknown tapering wedge of Scotland (*in cuneum*) that makes Tacitus' description of Britain unique vis-à-vis other accounts of the island.[260] It is near this very shore (*hanc oram*) – long since Agricola has "crossed over" into Britain (*transgressus Agricola invenit*, 18.1) – that Agricola's *aristeia* at Mons Graupius takes place, where the tale of the Usipi reaches its apex, and where Agricola's men thus circumnavigate Britain for the first time in Rome's history.

[260] The importance of the "wedge" of Caledonia – the *cuneus* of Britain – becomes even greater in light of the architectural usages of the word elsewhere. In Vitruvius, for instance, the word is used to denote the wedge that holds together key components in arches and walls (*De arch*. 6.8.3), catapults (10.12.1-2), and seating in the theater (5.6.2). When, towards the end of *De Architectura*, he describes of the use of wedges in catapults, he links the key structural object to musical intonations: "Thus with the fastenings of wedges the catapults are modified by listening the sound of their music" (*ita cuneorum conclusionibus ad sonitum musicis auditionibus catapultae temperantur*, 10.12.2). What is more, he ends his work by linking the architectural forms of the machines he has just described to their key role in defending cities, which form the basis for his work: "In this way, states remain free not through the use of machines but by the ingenuity of the architects in dealing with the structure of machines" (*ita ea victoria civitates non machinis sed contra machinarum rationem architectorum sollertia sunt liberatae*, 10.16.12). In essence, the wedge (*cuneus*) functions as both an intratextual structure (in the machines defending the cities) and metatextual device (in a literary device keeping the text together).

In his geography of the island, Tacitus makes a strong statement of authorial intent in order to link this chapter to the corresponding conquest. He states that it is not the purpose of his present work to describe the Ocean and its tide,[261] and in so doing stresses that Britain's geography, while important, is not the primary reason for his work. At the same time, he goes on to note the exceptional nature of the North Sea and its resulting impact on the island.[262] In essence, Tacitus' seemingly contradictory statement serves a twofold purpose: on the one hand, it firmly matches the geographic elements of the *Agricola* with the corresponding conquest of that geography by Agricola; on the other hand, in highlighting the oceanic nature of Britain, it necessitates a central naval presence in the upcoming campaigns, in the pivotal mutiny of the Usipi, and following the victory at Mons Graupius.

Indeed, Tacitus uses language that echoes this passage when he describes a significant military campaign that is successfully undertaken by Agricola with the aid of naval forces. In recounting the sixth season of the campaigns, he defines the powerful impact of the navy.

> ***Ceterum aestate***, qua sextum officii annum incohabat, amplexus civitates trans Bodotriam sitas, quia motus universarum ultra gentium et infesta hostili exercitu itinera timebantur, ***portus classe exploravit***; quae ab Agricola primum adsumpta in partem virium sequebatur egregia specie, **cum simul terra, simul mari bellum impelleretur**, ac saepe iisdem castris pedes equesque **et nauticus miles** mixti copiis et laetitia ***sua*** quisque ***facta, suos casus adtollerent***, **ac modo silvarum ac montium profunda, modo tempestatum ac fluctuum *adversa*, hinc terra et hostis, hinc victus Oceanus militari iactantia compararentur**. **Britannos quoque**, ***ut ex captivis audiebatur***, ***visa classis obstupefaciebat*, tamquam aperto maris sui secreto *ultimum* victis perfugium clauderetur**.

[261] *naturam Oceani atque aestus neque quaerere huius operis est*, *Agr*. 10.6.
[262] The sea dominates the island (*nusquam latius dominari mare*, 10.6), bears river-like currents all about Britain (*multum fluminum huc atque illuc ferre*, 10.6), and actually forces its way deep inland as though the island were in its possession (*sed influere penitus atque ambire, et iugis etiam ac montibus inseri velut in suo*, 10.6).

> The following summer, in which he entered upon the sixth year of his governorship, having encompassed the states located across the Bodotria, because the movements of the collective enemy from beyond and the routes frequented by the hostile army were feared, he explored the ports with the fleet. The fleet, initially employed by Agricola as part of his force, followed up with illustrious splendor, when the war was being driven forward at once by land and by sea. And often in the same camps the infantryman, the equestrian, and the naval soldier, sharing their rations and exultation, would each one extol his deeds, his experiences, and would compare with a soldier's boast at one moment the depths of the forests and the mountains, at another the adversities of storms and waves, from one side the land and the enemy that was conquered, from the other the Ocean having been overthrown. The sight of the fleet even stupefied the Britons (or so it was heard from captives), as though, once the secret of their ocean was revealed, the last refuge was being closed off to the conquered.
> (25.1-2)

In his digression on Britain, Tacitus had similarly described the sea as being completely integrated with the British island, saying that nowhere else does it dominate so widely, that it carries streams across the island, and that it flows deeply, winding and inserting itself throughout the British landscape (10.6).[263] Tacitus echoes those remarks here in order to stress how Agricola followed the dictates of the island he wished to conquer and made the navy an important part of that project.[264] He states that Agricola explored the ports with his fleet (*portus classe exploravit*, 25.1), which like the commander shone illustrious in its military feats such that the war took on a parallel naval front (*cum simul terra, simul mari bellum impelleretur*, 25.1).

Tacitus' use of repeated parallel syntax (*simul terra, simul mari*) emphasizes the navy's position alongside the army. Indeed, later in the sentence we see additional parallelism (*modo silvarum ac montium profunda, modo tempestatum ac fluctuum adversa, hinc terra et hostis, hinc victus Oceanus*, 25.2) which underscores the unity

[263] See note 262 above.
[264] Tacitus highlights the importance of the navy from the very outset of Agricola's British campaigns, when he states that the governor's blitz of Mona lacked ships, the usual preparations for this kind of military operation (*sed, ut in subitis consiliis, naves deerant*, 18.4).

amongst the land and naval forces in their comparative boasts. Moreover, it is partly through the assertions of the soldiers that Tacitus recalls the language of his earlier digression,[265] and in so doing tests the veracity of the claims made by Agricola's men.

For Tacitus had also indicated that it was his belief that the currents of the North Sea were particularly sluggish for rowers given that lands and mountains which cause storms were rarer, and due to the overwhelming mass of the Ocean.[266] Thus, the bragging by the infantryman and horseman can be seen as being somewhat exaggerated, at the very least since their claim of deep ravines (*modo silvarum ac montium profunda*, 25.1) and conquered land (*hinc terra et hostis…victus*, 25.1) does not correspond to Tacitus' claim of the rarity of lands and mountains in Britain (*credo quod rariores terrae montesque*, 10.5).[267] Nevertheless, we can be certain that the army routed the enemy, and that the claim to deep forests is nowhere disputed.[268] Moreover, the soldier's claims of conquered land corresponds to Tacitus' description of Scotland, where the sixth season of campaigns is taking place.[269] On the other hand, while the nautical soldier can lay claim

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[265] *montium* (25.1) for *montesque* (10.5) and *montibus* (10.6); *tempestatum* (25.1) for *tempestatum* (10.5); *terra* (25.1) for *terris* (10.2), *terrarum* (10.3), and *terrae* (10.5); *Oceanus* (25.1) for *Oceani* (10.6).

[266] *credo quod rariores terrae montesque, causa ac materia tempestatum, et profunda moles continui maris tardius impellitur*, 10.5.

[267] It is also worth mentioning that the soldiers are engaging in these rhetorical comparisons out of friendly competition (*militari iactantia compararentur*, 25.1), which, productive as it may be for morale building and comradery, is markedly different from Tacitus' anti-comparative authorial intent when describing the geography of Britain: *Britanniae situm populosque multis scriptoribus memoratos non in comparationem curae ingeniive referam, sed quia tum primum perdomita est. ita quae priores nondum comperta eloquentia percoluere rerum fide tradentur* ("I will mention the site and peoples of Britain, remembered by many writers, not with a view to comparison of study or literary talent, but because it was thoroughly conquered then for the first time. Thus, the things not yet known, which prior men beautified with fine language, will be handed down from the truth of facts," 10.1). Note too the similar language in *Britanniae situm* (10.1) and *trans Bodotriam sitas* (25.1).

[268] In fact, the near-victory during the sixth season of campaigns that is hampered by forests (26.2), along with the events towards the end of the battle of Mons Graupius – the British rally along the edge of the forest (37.3-4), Agricola's orders to the cavalry to scour the woods (37.4), and Tacitus' announcement that 10,000 Britons had died compared to only 360 Romans (37.5-6) – confirm that the soldiers' boasts are not just empty words.

[269] *sed transgressis inmensum et enorme spatium procurrentium extremo iam litore terrarum velut in cuneum tenuatur*, 10.3.

to much maritime conquest, his tales of the adversity of storms and waves (*modo tempestatum ac fluctuum adversa*, 25.1) is directly contradicted by Tacitus, and his boast of a completely conquered Ocean (*hinc victus Oceanus*, 25.1) is nowhere supported.[270]

Even Tacitus himself develops his earlier statements in order to reflect the significant progress made by Agricola, and likewise to remind the reader that his earlier details about Britain showed a commanding authority of his subject matter. For example, *septentrionalia eius, nullis contra terris, vasto atque aperto mari pulsantur* (10.2), in order to reflect the Britons' view of the devastating conquest, becomes *tamquam aperto maris sui secreto ultimum victis perfugium clauderetur* (25.2). As such it highlights both Agricola's unprecedented advance and Tacitus' proven awareness of the "British secret." What is more, Tacitus' play on words shows that while the islanders believe that "the secret of their sea has been revealed" (*aperto maris sui secreto*) and that their final refuge is thereby being closed off to them (*ultimum victis perfugium clauderetur*), Tacitus had long before shown it to be both vast and open (*vasto atque aperto mari*, 10.2), and therefore ripe for conquest.[271]

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[270] In many ways, the claims of the naval soldier foretell those made in the *Annals* by Germanicus' men upon their return from Britain (*Ann*. 2.24.4).

[271] Much of this is repeated in Agricola's speech prior to his victory at Mons Graupius. Echoing his geographic digression at *Agr*. 10, Tacitus has Agricola mention Britain numerous times as an object of conquest (*Britanniam vicistis*, 32.2; *finem Britanniae…tenemus*, 33.3; *inventa Britannia et subacta*, 33.3) just as he himself did earlier in the work (*Britanniae situm…referam, sed quia tum primum perdomita est*, 10.1; *Britannia*, 10.2; *totius Britanniae*, 10.3; *insulam esse Britanniam adfirmavit*, 10.4). Both lay claim to *fides* as an inherent part of their work: for Tacitus, it is the authorial *fides* (*ita quae priores nondum comperta eloquentia percoluere rerum fide tradentur*, 10.1), for Agricola, it is the *fides* belonging to acts of conquest (*fide atque opera nostra Britanniam vicistis*, 33.2). Just as Tacitus gives Britain's total subjugation as the reason for his corrective geography (*Britanniae situm…referam, sed quia tum primum perdomita est*, 10.1), so too does Agricola follow suit by citing his and his soldiers' role in this complete conquest of the island (*finem Britanniae…tenemus: inventa Britannia et subacta*, 33.3). However, in order to inspire his men for the upcoming battle, Agricola echoes the boasts of his troops and shows a thorough understanding of how to counter their fears: in citing the numerous challenges they faced victoriously (*omniaque prona victoribus atque eadem victis adversa*, 33.4), he gives successful confirmation to their earlier boastful claims (*sua quisque facta, suos casus adtollerent…adversa…victus*, 25.1); by citing the adverse conditions of the British terrain which they covered (*nam ut superasse tantum itineris, evasisse*

This maritime campaign by Agricola is also noteworthy for its hints of language and themes that will soon appear in the Usipi narrative. First, Tacitus begins the chapter with an annalistic temporal marker *ceterum aestate* ("In the following summer," 25.1) that looks ahead to the retroprospective phrase, *eadem aestate* ("In the same summer," 28.1), found at the beginning of the mutiny narrative.[272] Next, when Tacitus states that Agricola "explored the ports with the fleet" (*portus classe exploravit*, 25.1), he hints at the ventures into unknown ports that will soon be undertaken by the Usipi (*mox ubi aquam atque utensilia raptum exissent*, 28.2). Later in the passage, Tacitus indicates that the various groups of soldiers were comparing their deeds and military outcomes (*sua quisque facta, suos casus adtollerent*, 25.1), and in so doing looks ahead to the opening and closing phrases of the Usipi narrative, which begins with the cohort's daring a great and memorable deed (*magnum ac memorabile facinus*, 28.1) and concludes with a reflection on the result (*indicium tanti casus inlustravit*, 28.3). Even more striking is the fact that captives play a key role in relating the terrifying yet wondrous impact of Agricola's fleet (*Britannos quoque, ut ex captivis audiebatur, visa classis obstupefaciebat*, 25.2), which is developed to an even greater extent in the mutiny episode, wherein the Usipi become a wonder in everyday conversation (*vulgato rumore ut miraculum*, 28.1) as the result of their capture and reentering the slave trade (28.3). Finally, the transgression of a new liminal space plays a key role in the campaign (*ultimum…perfugium*, 25.2) just as it will in the story of the Usipi (*ad extremum*, 28.2).

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silvas, transisse aestuaria, 33.5), he likewise validates their own view of a broad accomplishment (*ac modo silvarum ac montium profunda*, 25.1).

[272] I use the term "retroprospective" to mean looking both forward and backward in the narrative, a quality which the *mise en abyme* often displays. For a discussion of the concept, see Ron (1987), p. 432 and Dällenbach (1977), p. 83. See also Chapter 1 of this thesis for the term and Chapter 2 for discussion of the temporal phrase *eadem aestate*.

Given the position of the mutiny of Usipi at the midpoint of the British campaign storyline, and given the account of Agricola's navy several chapters earlier, it is important to note the events which take place in the immediately adjacent chapters. For they provide guidance to the structural impact of the episode on the primary narrative. In *Agricola* 27, Tacitus describes the Romans clamoring for an advance and the Britons preparing to wage open revolt.

> Cuius conscientia ac fama ferox exercitus nihil virtuti suae invium **et penetrandam Caledoniam inveniendumque tandem Britanniae terminum** continuo proeliorum cursu fremebant. atque illi modo cauti ac sapientes prompti post eventum ac magniloqui erant. iniquissima haec bellorum condicio est: prospera omnes sibi vindicant, adversa uni imputantur. at Britanni non virtute se victos, sed occasione et arte ducis rati, nihil ex adrogantia remittere, quo minus iuventutem armarent, coniuges ac liberos in loca tuta transferrent, coetibus et sacrificiis **conspirationem** civitatum sancirent. **atque ita** inritatis utrimque animis discessum.
>
> Fierce from the awareness and report of this, the army clamored that nothing stood in the way of its valor and that Scotland must be penetrated and the farthest edge of Britain be discovered through the continued succession of battles. And those who were just now cautious and rational became after that outcome readily inclined and boastful. Such is the most unjust condition of wars that all claim favorable outcomes for themselves while misfortunes are ascribed to one person alone. But the Britons, thinking themselves conquered not by valor, but by the opportunism and stratagem of the leader, were renouncing none of their arrogance, but instead were arming their youth, were transferring their wives and children to safe places, and were sanctioning the sedition of their peoples with collusions and sacrifices. And thus they departed with spirits roused on each side. (27)

Tacitus draws attention once more to the premise of conquering Britain in its entirety, all the way to its northernmost tip in Scotland (*et penetrandam Caledoniam inveniendumque tandem Britanniae terminum*), a goal now shared by Agricola and his troops. In this regard, he reflects a point he first made in his geography,[273] hinted at again in his

[273] "I will mention the site and peoples of Britain…because it was thoroughly conquered then for the first time" (*Britanniae situm populosque…referam…quia tum perdomita est* (*Agr*. 10.1); "Then, the Roman fleet, having for the first time circumnavigated this shoreline of the remotest sea, confirmed that Britain is

description of previous expeditions to Britain (through Agricola's suggestion that even Ireland could have easily been conquered),[274] mentioned a third time during and immediately after the sixth season of campaigns in Scotland,[275] will further develop in the speeches of Calgacus and Agricola which follow the Usipi narrative,[276] and will resolve in his description of Agricola's final semiotic act of ordering his fleet to circumnavigate Britain and in the successful completion of his tenure as governor.[277] Furthermore, by initiating the British revolt (*conspirationem*) in this chapter and bridging it with another insurrection – the mutiny of the Usipi – Tacitus draws attention to the central conflict between slavery and liberty that defines the work, and further stresses the ties between

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an island, and at the same time came upon islands unknown until now…and conquered them" (*hanc oram novissimi maris tunc primum Romana classis circumvecta insulam esse Britanniam adfirmavit, ac simul incognitas ad id tempus insulas…invenit domuitque*, 10.4).

[274] "I often heard from him that Ireland could be subjugated and held with a single legion and a moderate number of auxiliaries; and it also would be of profit against Britain, if Roman arms were everywhere and it appeared that freedom was being lifted from sight" (*saepe ex eo audivi legione una et modicis auxiliis debellari obtinerique Hiberniam posse; idque etiam adversus Britanniam profuturum, si Romana ubique arma et velut e conspectu libertas tolleretur*, 24.3). Tacitus' use of the verb *debello* should once again be noted.

[275] "But if the marshes and forest had not provided cover to those fleeing, it would have been fought to a finish with that victory" (*quod nisi paludes et silvae fugientes texissent, debellatum illa victoria foret* (*Agr*. 26.2); "Fierce from the awareness and report of this, the army clamored that nothing stood in the way of its valor and that Scotland must be penetrated and the farthest edge of Britain be discovered through the continued succession of battles" (*Cuius conscientia ac fama ferox exercitus nihil virtuti suae invium et penetrandam Caledoniam inveniendumque tandem Britanniae terminum continuo proeliorum cursu fremebant*, 27.1).

[276] "The remoteness itself and this enclave of rumor has defended us, the farthest reach of lands and of freedom, until this day; now the end of Britain lies open…but there is now no tribe beyond, nothing except waves and rocks" (*nos terrarum ac libertatis extremos recessus ipse ac sinus famae in hunc diem defendit: nunc terminus Britanniae…sed nulla iam ultra gens, nihil nisi fluctus ac saxa*, 30.3); "In this way we have gone outside the limits (I myself of former governors, you of previous armies) and we hold the farthest point of Britain not through fame and rumor but with camps and arms: Britain has been found and conquered" (*ergo egressi, ego veterum legatorum, vos priorum exercituum terminos, finem Britanniae non fama nec rumore sed castris et armis tenemus: inventa Britannia et subacta* (33.3). One wonders whether the phrase *non fama nec rumore* is an attempt by Agricola to correct the fame that has now been obtained by the Usipi (*nondum vulgato rumore ut miraculum praevehebantur*, 28.1) and proclaimed by Calgacus (32.3).

[277] "Then, with hostages having been received, he ordered the prefect of the fleet to circumnavigate Britain…Meanwhile the fleet with favorable weather and fame held the port of Trucculensis, from which it had returned in full after having sailed along the adjacent shore of Britain" (*ibi acceptis obsidibus, praefecto classis circumvehi Britanniam praecepit…et simul classis secunda tempestate ac fama Trucculensem portum tenuit, unde proximo Britanniae latere praelecto omnis redierat*, 38.3-4); "In the meantime Agricola had handed over to his successor the province, subdued and secure" (*tradiderat interim Agricola successori suo provinciam quietam tutamque*, 40.3).

the *periplous* of the Usipi and the events in Britain (*atque ita circumvecti Britanniam*, 28.3).

Similarly, *Agricola* 29 discusses Agricola's naval preparations which will culminate in the Roman circumnavigation, and then goes on to initiate the sequence of events at Mons Graupius. Yet before doing so, the chapter briefly mentions the death of Agricola's second son, which is particularly striking in light of the mutiny narrative which precedes it.

> **Initio aestatis** Agricola domestico vulnere ictus anno ante natum filium amisit. quem **casum** neque ut plerique fortium virorum ambitiose neque per lamenta rursus maerorem muliebriter tulit; et in luctu bellum inter remedia erat. igitur **praemissa classe, quae pluribus locis praedata magnum et incertum terrorem faceret**, expedito exercitu, cui ex Britannis fortissimos et longa pace exploratos addiderat, ad montem Graupium pervenit, quem iam hostis **insederat**. nam Britanni nihil fracti pugnae prioris eventu et **ultionem aut servitium expectantes**, **tandemque docti commune periculum concordia propulsandum**, legationibus et foederibus omnium civitatium vires exciverant.
>
> In the beginning of the summer Agricola was struck with a familial wound and lost his son born in the previous year. This misfortune he bore neither ostentatiously like many brave men, nor did he bear his grief in turn through laments in the manner of a woman. Even in grief was war considered among the remedies. Therefore, with his fleet having been sent ahead, which having plundered at many locations was creating great and unpredictable terror, and with the army lacking heavy baggage, to which he had added the strongest from among the Britons and those secured by long peace, he arrived at Mons Graupius, which the enemy now occupied. For the Britons – in no way broken from the outcome of the previous conflict and awaiting revenge or enslavement, and having finally learned to repel a common threat through cooperation – had roused with envoys and treaties men from all of their nations.
> (29.1-3)

Given that the account of the Usipi ends with the phrase *indicium tanti casus inlustravit* (28.3), the reference to the death of Agricola's son as *quem casum* suggests an ironic parallel between the German conscripts and the protagonist. The closeness of the two passages seems to invite it. Indeed, both the Usipi and Agricola were dealt significant

misfortunes on their path to glory, but the temptation to draw a parallel can only be ironic. After all, Tacitus evokes sympathy for Agricola's loss, which in many ways reclaims the text from the Usipi (at least until Calgacus attempts to reinstate their narrative).

Tacitus also draws a connection between the Usipi and their British counterparts through the manner in which he describes the Britons' preparations as they await their last stand at Mons Graupius. His choice of the verb *insido* to describe their military presence upon the hill is etymologically related to *insideo*, which can mean "to lie in ambush."[278] As such it certainly recalls the preceding Usipi narrative. Tacitus also states that the Britons were "awaiting revenge or enslavement" (*ultionem aut servitium expectantes*, 29.3), both of which were recently obtained by the Germanic auxiliaries as part of the work's slavery versus liberty theme. Finally, when stating that the Britons finally sought cooperation in repelling a shared threat (*tandemque docti commune periculum concordia propulsandum*, 29.3), Tacitus is forced to modify an initial statement from his British ethnography.

> rarus duabus tribusve civitatibus **ad propulsandum commune periculum conventus**: ita singuli pugnant, universi vincuntur.[279]
>
> Rare is the gathering of two or three states to repel a common threat: as they fight alone, so all are conquered.
> (12.2)

Indeed, it would appear that the mutiny of the Usipi and its daring success has inspired the Britons to work together in order to ward off a shared danger. In fact, given the

[278] *OLD* 3c. One might also look to words like *insidiae* and *insidior* for such meanings, as Varro mentions a link between *insido* and *insidiae* when he describes words with military origin (*Insidiae item ab insidendo, cum id ideo facerent quo facilius deminuerent hostis*, *Ling*. 5.16).
[279] The parallel is also noted by Ogilvie and Richmond (1967), p. 252.

upcoming reference to the Usipi by Calgacus (32.3), we can assume that the phrase *tandemque docti* points in some degree to the Usipi.

Tacitus makes an effort to suggest that these events took place in the same year (*initio aestatis*) as both the mutiny of the Usipi and the beginning of the British revolt. A quick look at the preceding chapters shows their temporal proximity.

> *Agr*. 25.1 – **Ceterum aestate**, qua sextum officii annum incohabat…portus classe exploravit
> *Agr*. 26.1 – Quod ubi cognitum hosti
> *Agr*. 27.1 – Cuius conscientia ac fama ferox exercitus
> *Agr*. 28.1 – **Eadem aestate** cohors Usiporum…magnum ac memorabile facinus ausa est
> *Agr*. 29.1 – **Initio aestatis** Agricola…ad montem Graupium pervenit

Thus, Tacitus leads us to believe that the sixth season of Agricola's campaigns included all of the following events: the invasion of Scotland, the British revolt, the mutiny of the Usipi and their circumnavigation of Britain, and the battle of Mons Graupius, at least until we read Agricola's speech.[280] For it is not until he utters the words *septimus annus est* ("It is the seventh year," 33.2) that we realize that some time has lapsed between the mutiny of the Usipi and the events at Mons Graupius.

By leading us to believe that chapters 25-33.2 of the *Agricola* constitute a single year, Tacitus further underscores the remarkable impact of the mutiny narrative on subsequent events. It essentially takes a number of issues from the campaign narrative – the development of the Roman navy in Agricola's campaigns, the Roman invasion of the northernmost region of Britain, the eagerness of the army to annex the region, and the

[280] The use of *mise en abyme* in the British Royal coat of arms provides an interesting visual framework for understanding Tacitus' narratological display. Just as Tacitus uses a number of lexical signs to suggest that the events are happening in close succession (i.e. the same year) – repeated temporal phrases, anaphora, similar thematic concepts – so too do the various Royal coats of arms often compress hundreds of years of history into a single icon through their repetitions of signs and emblems in various escutcheons and inescutcheons, with little to no means of discerning what came first without prior or secondhand knowledge.

British recognition of the advance and decision to make a final stand – and, through the compressed, parallel lens of the account of the Usipi, projects them onto the events during and after the battle of Mons Graupius. For example, we see through Calgacus' assertion that the Roman conscripts will abandon their masters an *argumentum a fortiori* based upon the prior actions of the Usipi: "So too will the other Germans desert them, just as the Usipi have recently abandoned them" (*tam desererent illos ceteri Romanos quam nuper Usipi reliquerunt*, 32.3).[281] Calgacus claims that everyone in Britain now knows about the Usipi, and his statement attempts to join the anti-Roman rhetoric, which reaches a climax in his *declamatio*, to the developing theme of circumnavigation in the surrounding chapters.

Yet Agricola's corrective statement ensures that the rhetoric of Calgacus will not overtake his own achievement: the conquest of Britain (*septimus annus est, commilitones, ex quo virtute et auspiciis imperii Romani, fide atque opera nostra Britanniam vicistis*, 33.2).[282] Nevertheless, Tacitus has already created a permanent link between the central chapters of the *Agricola*. He has made the exploits of the Usipi a vital part of the climactic events in Britain which culminate in the Roman circumnavigation of the island. In fact, we already see this in the immediate aftermath of the mutiny narrative, when Agricola dispatches the fleet ahead of his army (*praemissa classe, quae pluribus locis praedata magnum et incertum terrorem faceret*, 29.2). Furthermore, by using language and syntax which mirrors a key phrase in his account of the Usipi (*magnum ac*

[281] I owe the idea of Calgacus' argument being *a fortiori* to Nancy Felson.
[282] Just as it ensures, through its subsequent words (*tot expeditionibus, tot proeliis, seu fortitudine adversus hostes seu patientia ac labore paene adversus ipsum rerum naturam opus fuit*, *Agr*. 33.2), that his achievement will not be overshadowed by Domitian's (*tot exercitus in Moesia Daciaque et Germania et Pannonia temeritate aut per ignaviam ducum amissi, tot militares viri cum tot cohortibus expugnati et capti*, 41.2).

memorabile facinus ausa est, 28.1), Tacitus emphasizes the pervasive impact of the cohort on his narrative.

Even so, the mutiny of the Usipi is still a spectacularly outlandish story, all the more since we least expect to hear about a Germanic cohort as we approach the final showdown between the Britons and the Romans. First, the overthrow of a Roman military group presumably on its way to fight under *Agricola* appears problematic, even if the soldiers' origin as a Domitianic contingent seems to render this negligible. The Usipi also fail to maintain control of their ships and lose them as a result, which differs sharply from the military successes of Agricola.[283] Most noticeable of the shocking elements, and therefore the most likely to raise concern, is the cannibalism to which the Usipi end up resorting. After all, the Usipi are engaging in what is under any circumstances the epitome of barbarism.[284] For example, in the case of Roman starvation, the means of coping almost always consists of some sort of vegetal diet, and never of cannibalism.[285] It is especially problematic when Tacitus has created an undeniable link between the Usipi and Agricola, as well as between their account and the *Agricola*.[286]

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[283] Clarke (2001), p. 110. See also Chapter 3 of this thesis.

[284] In this regard, fair consideration must be given to the point made by Clarke (2001): "Their behaviour is the least civilized to find a place in the work…Their difficulty in procuring food led to acts of cannibalism (28) by contrast with the relatively normal diet of the inhabitants of the island (12). Their level of barbarism was so great that they appeared uncivilized even in the context of the wild North-West, with Britain providing the ultimate opportunity for behavioural libertas," p. 110.

[285] Such has already been seen with Caesar's men in Book 4 of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, who resort to eating grass in order to cope with a lack of food (*et attonso miseris iam dentibus aruo / castrorum siccas de caespite uolserat herbas*, Luc. 4.413-14). See Chapter 2 of this thesis for how this and another adjoining episode informs Tacitus' account of the Usipi. As for Roman cannibalism, the one notable instance – the rumor of Catiline's ritual of drinking of human blood mixed with wine (Sall. *Cat*. 22) – has nothing to do with starvation. After all, Catiline possessed a wondrous ability to go without food (*corpus patiens inediae*, 5.3).

[286] Even Clarke (2001) picks up on this on this connection: "But the Usipi, antithetical though their behaviour may be to the civilizing force of Agricola, are also paradoxically reminiscent of some of the qualities associated with him," p. 110.

On the other hand, by viewing the actions of the auxiliaries through the lens of the *mise en abyme*, the synecdoche between the work, its hero, and its metaphorical counterpart becomes uniquely flexible. This is particularly important in the case of Cassius Dio's account. If, in fact, it is true that Agricola learned of Britain's insularity through the mutineers' accidental circumnavigation, Tacitus must find a way to attribute events to their proper causes, even if they involve a remarkable lack of Romanization.[287] But there is still one additional reason why Tacitus may have chosen to include the mutiny narrative and present it in such a conspicuous manner: because it is a fascinating story. After all, there is no reason to doubt that Tacitus would choose to record a unique and bizarre historical event, especially when it had a plausible relationship with central elements in his work.[288]

Such a conjecture is made all the more reasonable in light of the well-documented Flavian obsession with mass spectacles and naval reenactments.[289] Moreover, it is Cassius Dio himself – very soon after his own account of the mutiny (Cass. Dio 66.20) – who details the inauguration of the Flavian Amphitheater in 80 CE with an impressive series of maritime exhibitions (66.25.2-4).[290] Likewise, Suetonius, in recounting the "painstakingly magnificent and lavish spectacles" which Domitian put on

[287] Perhaps in this instance we might see, in stark contrast to the Romanization of Britain being coupled with its enslavement (*Agr*. 21.2), a link between complete British *libertas* and savagery.
[288] Tacitus' later historical works present a number of strange incidents, whose relevance to the central narrative seems far more indirect. In the *Histories*, these include several imposter accounts, such as the stories of the Neronian impersonator (*Hist*. 2.8-9) and Geta (2.72), as well as the revolts of Mariccus (2.61), Venutius (3.45), and Anicetus (3.57). Notable in the *Annals* are the impersonation of Agrippa Postumus (*Ann*. 2.39-40), the Brundisian slave insurrection (4.27), the gladiatorial skirmish at Pompeii (14.17) and the minor events of 64 CE (15.46).
[289] Especially valuable is Coleman (1993), who elaborates on both the venues used for these displays and the written accounts of Cassius Dio, Suetonius, and Martial.
[290] As mentioned previously, Dio dates the mutiny and Agricola's conquest to 79 CE in the reign of Titus. For a detailed account of these "aquatic displays" and their role in Flavian Rome, see Coleman (1993), esp. pp. 48-50, 60-74.

(*Spectacula assidue magnifica et sumptuosa edidit*, *Dom*. 4.1), describes Domitian's fascination with naval spectacles.

> edidit navalis pugnas paene iustarum classium, effosso et circumstructo iuxta Tiberim lacu, atque inter maximos imbres perspectavit.
>
> He put on naval battles of fleets nearly at full strength, with a lake having been dug out and erected close to the Tiber, and he watched them until completion during the greatest of storms.[291]
> (4.2)

Dio, in his own account (Cass. Dio 67.8), specifies that Domitian put on such naval spectacles in celebration of his "Dacian victory,"[292] for which he has just decried Domitian's utter lack of participation therein and staged triumph (67.6-7). It is quite difficult not to view Dio as borrowing the notion of the false triumph from Tacitus' *Agricola* (*Agr*. 39.1). Furthermore, it is tempting to trace a link between the mutiny of the Usipi and the Domitianic *naumachia*, whereby the Usipi, in contrast to the staged spectacle that Domitian forced people to endure, put on their own spectacular display that becomes the talk of the town.

Given the well-documented occurrence of maritime spectacles in the early Roman Empire, going back to the dictatorship of Julius Caesar and taking place ever more frequently in the reigns of Nero, Titus and Domitian, it is tempting to seek out other nautical episodes in Tacitus' narrative works. Nor would we be mistaken to do so, since the Tacitean corpus utilizes a number of them. Featured among these, on the one hand, are purely naval scenes, such as the already discussed story of Germanicus' soldiers being blown off course to Britain (*Ann*. 2.23-24) and the near-naval engagement of

[291] Dio elaborates on this event, although he focuses more on Domitian forcing the other spectators to remain during the storm and causing the deaths of at least several of them (Cass. Dio 67.8.2-4). For additional discussion, see Coleman (1993), pp. 54-55.
[292] Cf. Coleman (1993), p. 55.

Cerialis and Civilis along the Meuse delta (*Hist*. 5.23). Such are the episodes we expect to hear about, given the role of the Roman navy in both civil wars and foreign campaigns, and due to the centrality of the Mediterranean Sea in Greco-Roman affairs and thought. On the other hand, they also include what might be called "maritime digressions": shorter descriptive episodes which, like the mutiny of the Usipi in the *Agricola*, have a relationship with the central narrative that is hard, if not impossible, to discern.

In Tacitus' *Histories*, we find three episodes falling into one or both of these two categories: the story of the Neronian impersonator (*Hist*. 2.8-9), the naval revolt in Pontus (3.47-48), and the mutiny of the fleet at Misenum (3.57, 3.76-77). Situated outside of the primary sequence of events, all three fall under of the rubric of "maritime digressions," either because of their anecdotal quality (2.8-9), because of their suspension of the main plot (3.57, 3.76-77), or because they fall under the category of *res externae* deep in the midst of a four-book civil war narrative (2.47-48). However, all of these affairs provide an additional means of reflecting upon the problems of civil war which Tacitus takes pains to call attention to throughout the extant *Histories*: the opportunities created for false claims to a principate that is in chaos; the inability of commanders to maintain control over their much needed fleets; and the revolts of barbarians and client kingdoms along its fringes and borders that have a direct impact on the imperial military apparatus. As such, their purpose in the metanarrative of the *Histories* functions in much the same way as the mutiny of the Usipi does in the *Agricola*.

In the *Annals*, too, we see a number of these events recorded, although there is a greater emphasis on the seemingly tangential and the maritime element becomes far less pronounced. The four most notable examples are the attempted impersonation of Agrippa

Postumus (*Ann*. 2.39-40), the Brundisian slave insurrection (4.27), the Cilician rebellion (12.55), and the minor events of 64 CE that culminate in the shipwreck at Cape Misenum (15.46). Yet unlike in the *Histories*, where the provincial and domestic narratives are highly interlaced due to the civil war, or in the *Agricola*, where we are dealing with a noticeably shorter text, it becomes much harder to discern a clear pattern for why Tacitus chooses to include such episodes in the narrative of his *Annals*. Surely Tacitus is presenting historically significant events to his readers, and this alone constitutes a good reason for their inclusion. However, because of the generic, thematic and structural complexity based around a single, nautical episode in his earliest of writings, it is hard not to want to see something far more intricate at work in his final literary achievement.

An additional justification for such a reading is given by the fact the naval digressions in all three works share a number of lexical and thematic features. They often begin with the annalistic temporal construction of an ablative of time coupled with the demonstrative pronoun *idem*: *eadem aestate* (*Agr*. 28; *Ann*. 4.27.1), *eodem anno* (*Ann*. 2.39.1). Otherwise they tend to feature a similar temporal expression to set them apart from the surrounding narration, such as *sub idem tempus* (*Hist*. 2.8.1), *nec multo post* (*Ann*. 12.55.1), or *per idem tempus* (15.46.1). As mentioned in the prior paragraph, the twin themes of commemoration and infamy occur frequently in these chapters (*Agr*. 28, etc.). In addition, Tacitus often attributes to these events a significant role in or connection with everyday conversation, rumor, and oral dissemination (*Agr*. 28; *Hist*. 2.8-9; *Ann*. 2.39-40, 15.46). Furthermore, they are frequently acts of significant daring and boldness (*Agr*. 28; *Hist*. 3.57; *Ann*. 2.39-40, 12.55), more often than not committed by slaves, foreigners, or rebellious Roman auxiliaries with at least some degree of

savagery and barbarism (*Agr*. 28; *Hist*. 2.8-9, 3.47-48; *Ann*. 2.39-40, 4.27, 12.55). As a result, one cannot help but wonder about the Usipi's lasting influence which Tacitus ensured by placing it at the heart of his *Agricola*.

In preparing a nautical exploration of Tacitus' *Histories* and *Annals*, it is worth concluding the present voyage with a *propempticon* to the *mise en abyme*. While it has hopefully been shown that the device's framework does much to explain the striking episode of the Usipi and its complex relationship with the *Agricola*, it would be highly optimistic to find it at work in Tacitus' longer historical narratives. A major problem lies in the fact that we do not have what we can assume to be the central moment in either the *Histories* or the *Annals*. If the *Annals* originally consisted of 18 books (a reasonable conjecture),[293] then a *mise en abyme* for the work would likely fall somewhere between Books 8 and 10 (a transition between the reigns of Caligula and Claudius would make for an excellent location),[294] of which we have no extant fragments. In the case of the *Histories*, the situation is much worse, given that the narrative breaks off early in Book 5 never to resume, although the suggestion of 12 books seems reasonable enough.[295] Furthermore, it would be extremely difficult and likely overreaching to try and define such large works through a single episode.

It is not that the *mise en abyme* is unique to Tacitus' *Agricola* and is nowhere else seen in Greco-Roman writing. Indeed, the possibility for its usage elsewhere is made all the more likely by the frequent employment of ekphrasis and other visual techniques in

[293] Syme (1958) aptly suggests the following reconstruction of the work's structure: Tiberius, Books 1-6; Caligula, Books 7-8; Claudius, Books 9-12; and Nero, Books 13-18, pp. 253-270.
[294] The divide between the emperors suggested at the outset of the work gives at least some credence to the possibility: *Tiberii Gaique et Claudii ac Neronis res* (*Ann*. 1.1). Given the British campaigns of both Caligula and Claudius, one could speculate on the role the province might have played in a *mise en abyme* in the central hexad. Cf. Syme (1958), pp. 256-57.
[295] Syme (1958), pp. 686-87.

Greek and Latin epic, the Latin novel, and other narrative works.[296] In addition, the emerging awareness of ring composition in a number of classical works certainly invites a search for other uses of the *mise en abyme*.[297] At the very least, narrative breaks and digressions, especially those found at central points and pivotal locations of texts, ought to be given greater scrutiny. We might also consider the question of how to read generic interactions in light of the multifarious character of the *Agricola* and the manner in which the mutiny narrative sheds light on it.

Beyond the *Agricola* lies a wide range of naval symbolism, not only in Tacitus, but also in a number of Greek and Latin authors. For this reason, it seems best to look for reflections of the kind of interplay seen in the mutiny of the Usipi in other maritime moments with which the Greco-Roman literary imagination frequently defines itself. The confluence of literature at Actium and the symbolic role of the battle as the starting point of the Augustan principate make it an obvious focal point for such a project. Yet a number of other battles crop up frequently in Greco-Roman literature and coinage, and appear to contain much symbolic value. In Greek historiography and tragedy, for example, we see much importance placed upon the Battle of Salamis. The Battle at Syracuse seems to take its place in the historiography of Thucydides. In early Roman coinage, too, we see particular emphasis placed on the importance of the navy, with the beaked rostra frequently appearing on the reverse of the 3rd century *as*. Then, beginning in the last century of the Republic, we see particular emphasis placed on Sicily as the

[296] Discussion and analysis of *mise en abyme* in Homer, Virgil, and the Greek novel can be seen, respectively, in Martin (2000), Fowler (2000), and Morales (2000). See also Chapter 1 of this thesis.
[297] For an overview of the "antique literary form," see Douglas (2007), pp. 1-16. For a detailed explanation of ring composition in Homer's *Iliad* and, to a lesser extent, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, see pp. 101-24. For its usage in Homer, Theocritus, and Tibullus, see Cairns (1979), pp. 192-213; in Tacitus, see Woodman (1998), pp. 229-30 and Woodman (1972), 152-155. A more detailed citation of the topic can be found in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

birthplace of Roman imperialism, from which point it continues to play a vital role in the Roman literary imagination. Therefore, when plotting the best approach to expanding this study – be it in historiography, epic and lyric poetry, or even numismatics – it seems only right to begin at sea.

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