BARBARIAN NATION: ETHNIC TERMS IN CAESAR'S BELLVM GALLICVM[1]

Rhiannon Evans

The vocabulary of identity, allegiance and ethnicity is, perhaps more than any other, fraught with difficulty and the potential to cause offence or connote an apparently pejorative sense. Although many of these words, such as *ethnos*, *barbaros/barbarus* and *natio* are derived from Greek and Latin, the situation is not necessarily easier when we translate them from the ancient languages into English. Instead, these are words which cause considerable problems for translation; one of the consequences of English derivation is that when the words occur in ancient texts, it is all too easy to translate them into the English derivative: 'ethnic group', 'barbarian', 'nation'. This however not only leads to various types of anachronism, but also occludes the complications of the term in its ancient context—for students of ancient languages, they really are false friends. This article addresses some of the issues around ethnic terms, through the lens of several translations of Caesar's work, to highlight the preconceptions which translators bring to the text, focusing particularly on their response to the words *natio* and *barbarus*.

The forms of identity which coalesce around these words are telling—both in terms of the components involved in collective identity for ancient Romans, and for translators of Latin—whose attempts to convey the original intent of the vocabulary of identity are necessarily compromised by our concepts of these words. 'Tribe' for *natio*, and 'savage' for *barbarus* in particular often seem derogatory words to twenty-first century ears, tainted by early anthropologists' application of the terms as ones which imply low cultural status. It may be tempting, as many of my students have done in the past, to avoid any problems which arise from translating these words as 'nation' and 'barbarian' by not translating the words at all—instead, they might write that Tacitus' Germani are 'uncontaminated by marriage with any other *nationes*' (*nullis aliis aliarum nationum conubiis infectos*, *Ger*. 4.1) or that the Semnones 'carry out the terrifying beginnings of their *barbari ritus*' (*celebrant barbari ritus horrenda primordia*, *Ger*. 39.1). So *natio* and *barbarus* join the body of words so culturally specific that they are untranslatable, along with *pietas* or *amicitia*. Teachers are often complicit in this, and with some reason: it makes a point to say that English does not have a word which corresponds closely to this, or can approach the multivalence of the Latin term. That point is that the Roman concept is vastly different from our own, and we should be aware of this difference, rather than trying to shoehorn it into our own language, our own version of *interpretatio Romana*.

I am not going to suggest that there is an easy answer—or indeed any specific answer at all—to this problem. What I want is to explore the usage of ethnic terminology in one of our earliest Latin texts which deals with the encounter between Roman and other: that is Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*. To start with though, I shall look at the particular historical and ideological issues which concern the word *natio*, and, especially, the concept of the nation.

1 This paper was first given as a seminar at the ANU Classics Seminar Series. I would like to thank the participants there for their comments, and particularly Dr Jessica Dietrich for inviting me to speak. The comments of the anonymous reviewers were also invaluable.

natio: what is a nation?

The most serious problem with translating *natio* is that the English derivation is loaded with centuries of political change—the cultural burden of the modern nation-state, which had no direct correlative in antiquity. Could the word 'nation' ever be applied to ancient states? There are many definitions of the nation, but most of them agree that it should have: self-definition (that is, a name everyone adheres to), a historic homeland with (nominally) fixed boundaries, shared culture and memory, sovereignty, and a political and legal framework that applies to all. As ethnicity and nationhood have become increasingly important in historical and cultural studies scholars have debated the origins of the 'nation-state', but most place it in the modern era.[2] In general, the concept of the nation or nation-state is not a useful way to approach Rome or its vast empire, with ever-increasing territories and peoples both enslaved and made citizens. Indeed, many years ago Frank Walbank posed the question of whether nationality was a viable concept in antiquity in a pair of articles, 'The Problem of Greek Nationality' and 'Nationality as a Factor in Roman History'.[3] For different reasons, he rejected the validity of the term in both cases, although there was more of a case for Greece.[4] On the Roman side, he saw the extension of citizenship to Italy in the first century BCE as a brief moment when an Italian nation *could* have been created,[5] while the term could not be applied to Rome's enemies, who (with the exception of the Jews) were too internally fragmented to embrace anything approaching nationalism.[6]

Walbank's last point is significant for this study, as Latin writers tend not to use the word *natio* to define themselves or their own state, preferring the specificity of *res publica*. This term, although occasionally applied to other states, usually implies the Roman *res publica*.[7] In Caesar, *natio* is a term which identifies a group of people as non-Romans—although it does not perform quite the same function as the Greek polarities *Hellen* and *barbaros*, it is significant that there is no Roman or Latin *natio*.[8] It is also worth noting that the noun *patria* is never used by Caesar of

2 Hobsbawm (1990) and Anderson (1991), both writing from a Marxist viewpoint, emphasise the constructed and historicised nature of the nation-state. Smith (2004) on the other hand, in a book entitled *The Antiquity of Nations*, argues for significant overlap between the shared cultural experience involved in ethnic and national allegiances, but exempts Rome on the basis of 'the absence of clear borders…the narrow patrician circumscription of rights and the lack of an ideology of nationhood' (132). Among Classical scholars, Hansen (2006), 63-65, considers that the Greek polis fulfils some, but no means all, of the criteria which make up a modern state; and recently Romanists have tended to move away from defining 'Romanness' in terms which might parallel the modern nation-state, that is based on the legalistic criteria of Roman citizenship. Instead the moral and hierarchical values by which Romans defined themselves and others are often stressed, e.g. Edwards (1993), Dench (2005), 138f., Evans (2008), 82-188.

3 Walbank (1951); Walbank (1972).

4 Walbank (1972), 147.

5 Walbank (1972), 152-54.

6 Walbank (1972), 165.

7 This is how *res publica* is used in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* (1.20.5, 1.33.3, 1.35.4, 2.5.2, 4.16.6, 4.25.4, 5.46.4, 6.1.2, 6.1.4, 6.33.5, and probably 1.34.1, although whether this refers to the Roman or Germanic state, or both, is unclear). The one exception is the occasion on which it refers to Gallic state affairs, in the technical ethnography of Gaul (6.20.1), which deserves further study, but is outside of the scope of this article.

8 *natio* sets a group apart: Plautus' Trachalio castigates fishermen as *fures maritumi…famelica hominum natio* ('sea-going thieves…a famished tribe of men', *Rud.* 311), and Cicero refers ironically to an in-

the Gauls, Germans or Britons,[9] even though the supposed speeches of Gallic and German leaders are not infrequently reported and in them they often talk about encroachments on to their land.[10] Caesar's Gauls, indeed, have a clear historical link with their land—after all Caesar's avowed reason for entering Gaul in Book 1 of the *Bellum Gallicum* is that first the Helvetii,[11] then the Germani, are intruding upon the territory of other Gauls.

Of course, in terms of historical 'realities', it is difficult to determine whether Gauls, Germans or Britons might have qualified for nationhood: the partiality of our information makes problematic any historical judgement based on texts, as Roman constructions are unlikely to reflect the native experience. In his 1972 article, Walbank rejects the idea of barbarian nationalism, as already mentioned. He deals with the Gauls as one of his case studies, and his main criterion for determining nationalism is unity which might lead to a sustained rebellion against Rome—on this basis, the Gauls fail miserably.[12] While Walbank's discussion is by no means simplistic, it does little to address the problem of what terms implying allegiance, such as *natio*, might have meant. Walbank was interested in whether ancient forms of allegiance and statehood could be assimilated to the prevailing modern ones; by and large he decided that they could not. The analysis of written texts cannot realistically hope to prove 'nation status', but it might help us to understand how the Romans generated taxonomies of identity, and how they comprehended those around them. Perhaps then, *natio* indicates a coherent group, which *fails* to unify when allegiance is needed. This, for Rome, was a crucial factor in the domination of areas such as Gaul.

Questions of translation

At this point it is worth looking at how this word is defined by Latin linguists, because there are two significant core reference works which strongly shape the way we as classicists think about terminology and translation. So, for example, in Lewis and Short's Latin dictionary *natio* is defined as follows:

> **I.** *a being born, birth*: hence, transf.
> Personified, Natio, *the goddess of birth*
> **II.** *A breed, stock, kind, species, race* (rare but class.)

group *tota natio candidatorum* ('the whole tribe of candidates', *Mur*. 69), thus deliberately distancing himself from them; the tone at Cic. *Sest*. 96 may also be flippant. See further examples at *OLD s.v.* 3.

9 There is one possible exception, although here it is the adjective *patrius* which is used in a negative sense, and not directly by Caesar, but by one of the Belgic groups, the Nervii, who accuse other Belgae of losing their *patriam uirtutem* ('ancestral courage', *Gal.* 2.15.6).

10 E.g. *Gal.* 1.11.2-5, 1.31-2, 4.20.1.

11 *Gal*. 1.2-7. This is followed up by the invasion of the Germani under Ariovistus, at which point the Aedui actively request Caesar's help to drive the Germani back over the Rhine (*Gal*. 1.31).

12 Walbank (1972), 163-65. The most notable example is the near break-up of the Gallic alliance in Book 7, as Vercingetorix is suspected by the other Gauls of harbouring ambitions of imperial domination and collusion with Caesar (*Gal*. 7.20.1-2). Gallic disunity is emphasised in all of the later books (*Gal.* 4.22.5, 5.3.2, 5.6.6, 6.3.5, 6.31.5).

> **B. 1.** In a more restricted sense, *a race of people*, ***nation****, people* (used commonly in a more limited sense than *gens*, and sometimes as identical with it; usually applied to distant and barbarous people)
>
> **2.** Ad Nationes, *the name of a portico in Rome, built by Augustus*
>
> **3.** In eccl. Lat., like *gens*, and the Gr. *ethnos*, opp. to Christians, *the heathen*

The *Oxford Latin Dictionary* has:

> **1**. The birth of a child; also a goddess of birth worshipped at Ardea. **b**. (concr.) issue
>
> **2**. A people, race, nation. **b**. *ad nationes* the name of a portico at Rome
>
> **3.** A class of people, set
>
> **4**. Race as a characteristic of persons, nationality
>
> **5**. The place of origin (of natural products)

I include Lewis and Short because, even though it has now been superseded by the *OLD* for Classical Latin, it is still widely used and has moulded many of the translations in general use; but the differences between the two (or perhaps lack of them) are interesting, given that these two reference works were published one hundred years apart. In both cases, the translations 'race', 'nation' and 'people' are given, which, taken together, makes this word extremely vague in modern ethnographic terms. But Lewis and Short are right about *natio* referring to others, to non-Romans, while the *OLD* does not even mention this, although all the examples it cites at 2a *do* refer to foreign peoples. So the 'birth' element of *natio* (derived from *nascor*) implies 'birth elsewhere'. *natio* is primarily used to describe peoples who live *outside the Roman empire*, or those who live in regions relatively recently incorporated.

In the 50s BCE, the Gauls were exactly on the threshold of incorporation: when Caesar writes about them at this time, he is constructing the idea of Gaul—an area which he will both conquer and create as a province.[13] So, reading Julius Caesar's writing on Gaul and the contexts in which *natio* occurs it is interesting to look at the way that translations into English have dealt with this potentially multivalent word. Together with the two dictionaries, three translations, the 1917 Loeb translation of H.J. Edwards, an older 1851 version by W.A. M'Devitte and W.S. Bohn and the most recent English translation by Carolyn Hammond (Oxford World's Classics, 1996) give a good idea of how the word has been dealt with over time.[14] The first two occurrences of the word *natio* in Caesar's *Gallic Wars* give us a good indication of usage and translation (hereafter each translation is referred to by date). Towards the end of Book 1, Caesar describes how most of the Germani were captured and slaughtered, while their leader Ariovistus escaped, although two of his wives, *una Sueba natione*, were killed (*Gal.* 1.53.4). This phrase is translated variously as 'one a Suevan by nation' (1851), 'one of Suebian nationality' (1917), and 'a woman of the Suebi' (1996), the latter neatly avoiding (and perhaps tacitly acknowledging the difficulty of) any direct

13 For the Romans' more limited understanding of *Gallia* before the 50s, see Riggsby (2006), 30f., and Williams (2001), 16.

14 The reader will note that the Penguin edition, originally translated by S.A. Handford (1951 as *The Conquest of Gaul*) and subsequently updated by Jane P. Gardner (1983) is omitted. The short reason for this is lack of space, and the longer reason is that Handford's use of terms does not differ dramatically from the Loeb, while the 1983 adaptation is almost as recent as Hammond's Oxford translation.

translation of *natio* at all. The second occurrence is in the final chapter of Book 2 (*Gal.* 2.35.1), as Caesar claims to have created peace throughout Gaul, and that envoys were sent to him *ab iis nationibus quae trans Rhenum incolerent*: 'by those nations who dwelt beyond the Rhine' (1851), 'from the tribes dwelling across the Rhine' (1917), 'the peoples living on the other side of the Rhine' (1996). In both cases *natio* refers to Germani, and both appear in the closing lines of a book, as Caesar reviews the situation and outcome of the year's events—this seems to be a particularly significant location within Caesar's work, and therefore one in which he deliberately places the group he has encountered within this book firmly into its ethnic or spatial category. In the translations, there is a definite change in usage: 'nations' and 'tribes' have become loaded terms by the late twentieth century; thus Hammond translates generically as 'peoples'. This may not sound elegant, but is probably as close as possible to the original meaning, without using the technical and rather longwinded 'ethnic group'.

Throughout, in the older texts, the two most common translations are, as here, 'nation'/'nationality' or 'tribe'. There are thirteen other examples in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and all follow this pattern. Obviously, both of these expressions are very suggestive: for us, 'nation' raises the complex ideas of statehood and a common identity, with borders recognised by the Gauls or Germani and their neighbours (if not, ultimately, by Caesar). But this is not the picture which archaeological finds suggest, with similar cultural artefacts found on the 'Gallic' and 'German' sides of the Rhine.[15] Nor is it the image which Caesar gives of the state of Gaul before and during his invasion. The Gauls themselves rarely appeal to a shared, common identity, and are frequently hostile to one another. Nevertheless the text gives very clear geographical definition to Gaul, and an ethnography which cements them together, as it suits Caesar's purpose to create a definitive ethnocultural difference between the Gauls and the invading Germani. It is not until Book 6 that these differences are set out, and Caesar introduces them as distinct *nationes*, claiming that he will lay out their customs and the differences between them (*Gal.* 6.11.1). Here, surprisingly, all three translators use 'nations', so it is clear that Hammond has not decided to reject this term entirely. In this instance it is arguable that the large-scale ethnographic 'excursus' encourages the reader to think in terms of grand political structures, but it is not the only occasion on which she uses 'nation'. Although she regularly translates *natio* as 'peoples', she uses 'nation' in legalistic contexts, usually involving the sending of envoys.[16] Thus it seems that in such diplomatic contexts Hammond is indicating that the Gauls do participate in the formal framework of nationhood.

The ethnography itself presents selective information about the religious and social systems of the Gauls (*Gal.* 6.11-20); but the discussion of the Germani is much briefer (*Gal.* 6.21-23), and is largely an inversion of what he has said about the Gauls: they have no Druids, no sacrifices, no anthropomorphic gods; they have no agriculture or property and are obsessed with warfare and violence. Caesar even claims that the Gauls used to be tougher than the Germani, but have been

15 Cunliffe (1997), 237, comments that the Rhine as an ethnic divider is convenient for Caesar, but that the situation was in fact much more complex, with Germanic and Gallic tribes found on both sides of the river. Similarly Powell (1980), 191; Powell also suggests that the name Germani was originally the name of a Celtic tribe. See also Chapman (1992), 39-41.

16 For the translation as 'nation' in episodes dealing with diplomacy, see Hammond (1996) at *Gal.* 3.9.3, 3.28.2 and 4.16.7.

softened by trade with and proximity to Rome's empire (*Gal.* 6.24). The construction of Germani as robust and independent and the French as somewhat more pliable could be said to start here. These are of course later stereotypes, but they clearly inform the identity that we, the readers and translators of Caesar, impose upon the ancient Germani or Gauls, and this is why it is such a mistake to translate *natio* as 'nation'. Whatever one might think of the possibility, or otherwise, for the existence of a pre-modern nation, there is an overwhelming temptation to equate the ancient and modern and assume a continuity. In terms of the attempt to investigate Caesar's construction of the enemy, the heavy overload of nineteenth and twentieth century imperialist terms makes it even more difficult to think about how a Roman might have perceived the Gauls: as a coherent group? a collection of disparate peoples fighting a common enemy? part of a much larger European community of Celts?

What Caesar's text does suggest is that *natio* covers two levels of allegiance: firstly, it can refer to the Gallic or Germanic group as a whole, an umbrella term, which allows Caesar to distinguish and delineate these two sets of people, as described above (and as such, probably a convenient fiction). This is the sense in which it is used in Book 6. And secondly, it describes groups of people within the proto-province, some of whom are hostile, some friendly, some moving between the two. This level is often translated as 'tribe' (Aedui, Sequani et cetera).

Thus, on both sides of the Rhine, *natio* can be a subdivision of 'Germani' or 'Gauls', and can also be used in the plural: when the Veneti (a coastal group in what is now north-west France) revolt, Caesar worries that other *nationes* might think that they could do the same (*Gal.* 3.10.2) The two older translations use 'nations' here, but Caesar is clearly thinking that other Gallic peoples might strive to escape Roman rule. This is in fact the sort of situation where translators often use the term 'tribes'. Later in the same book, almost all of Gaul has sent ambassadors to Caesar, but the Morini and Menapii still defy him and fight on:

> qui longe alia ratione ac reliqui Galli bellum gerere coeperunt. nam quod intellegebant maximas **nationes** quae proelio contendissent pulsas superatasque esse, continentisque siluas ac paludes habebant, eo se suaque omnia contulerunt.[17]
>
> (*Bellum Gallicum* 3.28.1-2)

Edwards' Loeb translation gives:

> These tribes, however, started upon the campaign with tactics quite different from the rest of the Gauls. For, perceiving that the most powerful tribes which had fought an action had been beaten and vanquished, and possessing continuous forests and marshes, they conveyed all their stuff thither.

'Tribes' is used twice in this passage—the first being an extrapolation of the opening *qui*, while the second renders *nationes.* While 'tribes' sounds archaic and pejorative, this fact may not make it entirely inappropriate to the scenario of the *Gallic War*. Although written in the third person, it is Caesar's own account of his own war. He is not without admiration for some Gauls, but they

17 The Latin text is the Oxford Classical Text of du Pontet (1900).

are depicted as savage, most obviously in their practice of human sacrifice (6.16.2-5), disunited and disorganised. Here it is interesting that Gauls *themselves* implicitly think of their fellow Gauls as members of *nationes*. Of course, this too is ventriloquised through the mouth of Caesar, but it does show the potential for confusion between the micro- and macro- level of *natio*. The confusion in terms seems deliberate: it is the lack of coherence in Gaul which allows Caesar to dominate the space and the people. Ignoring the actual cultural ties of northern Europe, he creates an extension of Rome's small Gallic province to construct a new entity, which he claims is mirrored by ethnic realities. This will no longer be a *natio* or even a collection of *nationes*, but a province, a conquered space, rather than a territory controlled by its native peoples.

natio here means nothing like any modern concept of nation. Even if we extend the possibility of nation-status to some ancient cultures, there is nothing in this text to suggest a parallel in Roman culture. Instead, *natio* should be thought of as representing a potentially conquerable area for the Roman mind—the antithesis of a sovereign state. For although the Germani and Britons remain unconquered by Caesar, his very presence in their lands represents the possibility of future incorporation. And the situations in which *natio* is used of both peoples is suggestive. In Book 4 Caesar gives his reasons for going to Britannia, so that he can gather information about the geography of the island and *quae et quantae nationes incolerent* ('which, and how many, *nationes* inhabit it', *Gal.* 4.20.4). A little earlier in the same book, the Ubii, a Gallic people, beg Caesar to help them, and claim that the fame of the Roman army has spread to the Germanic Suebi, whom they call the *ultimas Germanorum nationes* ('the most remote of the Germanic peoples', *Gal.* 4.16.7). These are not scenarios which directly imply invasion, but both concern the possession of information. In the second example the Romans are not gathering that information, but the reputation of the Romans is apparently so powerful that their very presence would drive the Germani back. The reach of Roman power, we are told, has spread practically to the ends of the earth.[18]

There is a frequently made argument that the Germani are so primitive (or at least are presented as so primitive in this text) that they cannot provide good material for colonisation, a view most recently taken by Hester Schadee.[19] This is not necessarily the conclusion to be drawn from the Germani's 'backwardness' alone, but the formal ethnography of Gauls and Germani in Book 6 does point to different levels of development, and ultimately it is the Gauls who will be conquered, while the Germani remain free. One of the major divergences in terms of vocabulary is the use of *barbarus*, which is far more prevalent when the Germani enter the text. It does refer to Gauls occasionally, but given that they are the focus of this work it is surprising that the Gauls seem to be almost exempt from the *barbarus* tag. All but one of the occurrences of the word in Book 1 refer to the Germanic king Ariovistus or his followers.[20] It then appears most frequently in Book 6 when Caesar encounters the Germanic Suebi and in Book 4 when Caesar visits Britannia.[21] *barbarus* also proves a difficult word to translate: both the 1851 and 1996 translations lurch

18 *ultimas* also implies that the Germani have adopted Roman concepts of centre and periphery. There is also one occasion on which Gauls call Germanic peoples *nationes* (*Gal*. 6.10.1), indicating that they too see the Germani as outsiders.

19 Schadee (2008).

20 *Gal.* 1.31.5, 1.31.13, 1.33.4, 1.44.9; the exception is 1.40.9, discussed below.

21 *Gal.* 4.24.1, 4.25.1, 4.25.2, 4.32.2, 4.34.5, 6.10.2, 6.29.2, 6.34.3, 6.35.7, 6.37.7, 6.37.9, 6.39.3, 6.40.8, 6.42.2. The word appears a total of eight times in the rest of the work, and not at all in Book 7.

between 'savage' and 'barbarian',[22] while the Edwards in the Loeb seems to make his own arbitrary distinction between translating as 'barbarian' for Germani, and 'natives' for Britons and Gauls. This edition was published in 1917, so there is a good argument that the decision is anachronistic rather than arbitrary.

This word can cause particular problems for translators when it is put into the mouth of one of the non-Romans themselves. Ariovistus complains that Caesar's reasons for aiding the Aedui are spurious:

> quod fratres Aeduos appellatos diceret, **non se tam barbarum neque tam imperitum esse rerum** ut non sciret neque bello Allobrogum proximo Aeduos Romanis auxilium tulisse neque ipsos in eis contentionibus quas Aedui secum et cum Sequanis habuissent auxilio populi Romani usos esse.
>
> (*Bellum Gallicum* 1.44.9)[23]

> As for Caesar's statement that the Aedui were called 'brothers', Ariovistus was **not such a barbarian, not so ignorant of affairs** as not to know that neither in the last campaign against the Allobroges had the Aedui rendered assistance to the Romans, nor in the disputes of the Aedui with himself and the Sequani had they enjoyed the assistance of the Roman people.
>
> (tr. Edwards)

The Loeb sticks to its script of *barbarus* = 'barbarian' when it refers to a German, but the 1851 translation veers away from its usual pattern of 'barbarian' or 'savage' to give us the slightly less insulting 'uncivilised', as though the translators could not bear to think of the *barbarus* stigmatising himself. The same squeamishness is mirrored in the only full English commentary on the *Gallic Wars* by T. Rice Holmes (1914), which advises translating *tam barbarum* as 'such a dolt'.[24] This might sound like a ridiculous face-saver—and indeed it does raise several issues: it assumes that Caesar is reporting Ariovistus' speech fully and truthfully, and it utilises much more subjective translation techniques than we generally find acceptable now. But the placing of *barbarus* throughout the text does suggest that it connotes a lack of awareness, as is more fully expressed in combination with *imperitus* ('ignorant') here. In fact the expression *barbarus atque imperitus* occurs several times, and Ariovistus himself seems to be echoing a section of Caesar's speech to his centurions, just a few chapters earlier, when he reminds them that Ariovistus cannot expect to defeat Romans with the same tactics he used against *homines barbaros atque imperitos* ('primitive and ignorant men', *Gal.* 1.40.9). This must refer to Gauls, specifically the Sequani, who are

22 Historically, 'savages' are less redeemable than barbarians: an entry from 1851 in the *OED* reads '[S]till a barbarian, but had ceased to be a savage', but there is no particular pattern of usage visible in the 1851 translation of Caesar.

23 For the highlighted phrase, the 1851 translation has 'not so uncivilized, not so ignorant of affairs', and the 1996, 'not such a barbarian, not so ignorant of affairs'.

24 Similarly there is an attempt to excuse Aeneas' use of *barbarico…auro* ('barbarian gold') to describe the doorposts of Priam's palace in John Conington's commentary on *Aeneid* 2.504, with the claim that 'Aeneas is forgetting himself' (Conington [1858], ii.48—although the term more likely refers to enemy spoils rather than Trojan artistry.

being driven out by the Germani. There is potentially a complex focalisation at play here: Caesar imagining the thought process of the German king, and his attitude towards Gauls and Romans respectively. At this point in the text it is a shock to see the Gauls called *barbari* for the first time, particularly if we translate it as 'savages' (as the 1851 text does). But it makes much more sense if we think of this word as denoting a primitivism connected with inexperience in warfare, as seen from the point of view of both Caesar and Ariovistus.

Elsewhere, too, *barbarus* it is often used in relation to Roman technologies which *barbari* do not have, or cannot overcome. The Britons, for example, are *barbari*, as they stare, stunned by the form of Roman ships appearing on their shores (*Gal.* 4.25.2); while Caesar wonders whether the *barbari* (Germani) on the banks of the Rhine might destroy his bridge (*Gal.* 4.17.10). Gallic peoples are also *barbari* when there is conflict over technology. A large section of Book 3 relates the conflict between Caesar and the Veneti, on the north-west coast of Gaul, who seem unconquerable for a time because they simply retreat to their oddly-constructed ships when attacked; these are both fast-moving and too tough to ram, but the boats and their sailors are referred to as *barbarus* (*Gal.* 3.14.4). Both the tides and the Gallic technology are against Caesar here, and it seems as though *barbarus* is an unfair designation. However, it is superior ingenuity that brings them down, as the Romans devise long-handled hooks to catch and break the Veneti masts (*Gal.* 3.14.5-7). Even when the foreigners are apparently skilled, their expertise proves inadequate when faced with Romans' resourcefulness. It is this which makes them *barbari*.[25]

Conclusion

It is easy to laugh at older translations, but I want to suggest that careful translation of slippery ethnic terms is not just about adopting politically correct language: 'tribe' may be a fairly representative way of translating *natio*, if, for example, its use seems to mirror a condescending attitude on the part of the colonisers. But I would generally argue against trying to second-guess authors like Caesar, and change vocabulary to 'match' the narrative: words which are as charged as this probably deserve to be translated consistently, where possible, so that when a Gallic commander calls the Germani *barbari*, we are reminded of the occasions on which Caesar has used this term for Gauls themselves. Certainly using one translation for Britannic *barbari* and one for Germani is hopelessly anachronistic; and although translators cannot help but write themselves into a text somehow, jingoism like this is something we can hopefully avoid.

La Trobe University
r.evans@latrobe.edu.au

25 On the Veneti and ethnography, see Erickson (2002), 605-11.

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