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**Diviciacus' Tears: the Portrayal of the Aedui in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum***

In the *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar's loyalty to the Aedui appears unbounded, as does his admiration for one of their leading men, Diviciacus. Caesar justifies his determination to take military action in book 1 by invoking the Aedui (1.14.6; 1.33.2) and Caesar's portrait of Diviciacus has recently been cited as evidence of the author's tendency to burnish the reputations of Gauls loyal to Rome (Barlow, in Powell and Welch, 1998). But Diviciacus and his fellow tribesmen display one trait, often ignored by scholars, that suggests Caesar's portrayal of them may not be entirely positive ñ their propensity to weep. I will argue that tears characterize weakness within the *BG*. Defeated enemies cry twice (1.27.2; 7.78.3), as do barbarian women (1.51.3; 7.26.3). Romans cry at their lowest, most unroman moments ñ during the panic that precedes their encounter with Ariovistus (1.39.4), and shortly before Ambiorix's fatal attack on Sabinus and Cotta's men (5.33.5). The Aedui, and Diviciacus in particular, are responsible for all other spates of weeping (1.20; 1.31.2; 1.32.1). The frequent appearance of Aeduan tears signals a feeble nature, and subtly undercuts Caesar's apparent esteem.

The representation of the Aedui as helpless gives credence to Caesar's claim that his attacks on the Helvetii and the Germans in book 1 are utterly necessary. But the depiction of the Aedui as weaklings has perhaps a deeper significance. Caesar often claims that tribes such as the Belgae and the Suebi, who reject *humanitas* in the form of foreign goods and customs, maintain a position at the top of the Gallic pecking order (1.1.3-4; 2.15.4-5; 4.2.1-6; 6.24). In contrast, the Aedui were recently displaced from their once lofty position in the hierarchy, and only Roman intervention has restored them to their former place (6.12). Caesar's seeming admiration for Gallic independence might imply an accompanying contempt for those tribes unable to rely on their own ferocity. This notion is borne out by the numerous scenes of the Aedui weeping. The portrayal of the Aedui as weak and helpless increases a reader's perception of Caesar's power, while simultaneously disparaging any tribe too dependent on that power.