

The Bacchanalia (39.8-19)

8. insequens annus Sp. Postumium Albinum et Q. Marcium Philippum consules ab exercitu bellorumque et provinciarum cura ad intestinae coniurationis vindictam avertit. [2] praetores provincias sortiti sunt T. Maenius urbanam, M. Licinius Lucullus inter cives et peregrinos, C. Aurelius Scaurus Sardiniam, P. Cornelius Sulla Siciliam, L. Quinctius Crispinus Hispaniam citeriorem, C. Calpurnius Piso Hispaniam ulteriorem. [3] consulibus ambobus quaestio de clandestinis coniurationibus decreta est. Graecus ignobilis in Etruriam primum venit nulla cum arte earum, quas multas ad animorum corporumque cultum nobis eruditissima omnium gens invexit, sacrificulus et vates; [4] nec is qui aperta religione, propalam et quaestum et disciplinam profitendo, animos errore imbueret, sed occultorum et nocturnorum antistes sacrorum. [5] initia erant, quae primo paucis tradita sunt, deinde vulgari copta sunt per viros mulieresque. additae voluptates religioni vini et epularum, quo plurium animi illicerentur. [6] cum vinum animos incendisset, et nox et mixti feminis mares, aetatis tenerae maioribus, discrimin omne pudoris extinxissent, corruptelae primum omnis generis fieri coptae, cum ad id quisque, quo natura pronioris libidinis esset, paratam voluptatem haberet. [7] nec unum genus noxae, stupra promiscua ingenuorum feminarumque erant, sed falsi testes, falsa signa testamentaque et indicia ex eadem officina exhibant: [8] venena indidem intestinaeque caedes, ita ut ne corpora quidem interdum ad sepulturam exstarent. multa dolo, pleraque per vim audebantur. occulebat vim quod pre ululatibus tympanorumque et cymbalorum strepitu [p. 9] nulla vox quiritantium inter stupra et caedes exaudiri poterat.

9. huius mali labes ex Etruria Romam veluti contagione morbi penetravit. primo urbis magnitudo capacior patientiorque talium malorum ea celavit: [2] tandem indicium hoc maxime modo ad Postumium consulem pervenit. P. Aebutius, cuius pater publico equo stipendia fecerat, pupillus relictus, mortuis deinde tutoribus sub tutela Duroniae matris et vitrii T. Sempronii Rutili educatus fuerat. [3] et mater dedita viro erat, et vitricus, quia tutelam ita gesserat, ut rationem reddere non posset, aut tolli pupillum aut obnoxium sibi vinculo aliquo fieri cupiebat. via una corruptelae Bacchanalia erant. [4] mater adulescentem appellat: se pro aegro eo vovisse, ubi primum convaluisse, Bacchis eum se initiataram; damnatam voti benignitate deum exsolvere id velle. decem dierum castimonia opus esse: decimo die cenatum, deinde pure lautum in sacrarium deducturam. [5] scortum nobile libertina Hispala Faecenia, non digna quaestu, cui ancillula adsuerat, etiam postquam manumissa erat, eodem se genere tuebatur. [6] huic consuetudo iuxta vicinitatem cum Aebutio fuit, minime adulescentis aut rei aut famae damnsa: ultro enim amatus appetitusque erat, et maligne omnia praebentibus suis meretriculae munificentia sustinebatur. [7] quin eo processerat consuetudine capta, ut post patroni mortem, quia in nullius manu erat, tute ab tribunis et praetore petitio, cum testamentum faceret, unum Aebutium institueret heredem.

10. haec amoris pignora cum essent, nec quicquam secretum alter ab altero haberent, per iocum adulescens vetat eam mirari, si per aliquot noctes secubuisse: [2] religionis se causa, ut voto pro valetudine sua facto liberetur, Bacchis initiari velle. id ubi mulier audivit, perturbata "dii meliora!" inquit: mori et sibi et illi satius esse quam id faceret; et in caput eorum detestari minas periculaque, qui id suassissent. [3] admiratus cum verba tum perturbationem [p. 10] tantam adulescens parcere exsecrationibus iubet: matrem id sibi adsentiente vitrico imperasse. "vitricus ergo" inquit "tuus— [4]

matrem enim insimulare forsitan fas non sit—pudicitiam famam spem vitamque tuam perditum ire hoc facto properat." [5] eo magis mirabundo quaerentique, quid rei esset, pacem veniamque precata deorum dearumque, si coacta caritate eius silenda enuntiasset, ancillam se ait dominae comitem id sacrarium intrasse, liberam numquam eo accessisse. [6] scire corruptelarum omnis generis eam officinam esse; et iam biennio constare neminem initiatum ibi maiorem annis viginti. [7] ut quisque introductus sit, velut victimam tradi sacerdotibus. eos deducere in locum, qui circumsonet ululatibus cantuque symphoniae et cymbalorum et tympanorum pulsu, ne vox quiritantis, cum per vim stuprum inferatur, exaudiri possit. [8] orare inde atque obsecrare, ut eam rem quocumque modo discuteret nec se eo praecipitaret, ubi omnia infanda patienda primum, deinde facienda essent. [9] neque ante dimisit eum, quam fidem dedit adulescens ab his sacris se temperaturum.

11. postquam domum venit, et mater mentionem intulit, quid eo die, quid deinceps ceteris, quae ad sacra pertinerent, faciendum esset, negat eorum se quicquam facturum, nec initiari sibi in animo esse. [2] aderat sermoni vitricus. confestim mulier exclamat Hispalae concubitu carere eum decem noctes non posse; illius excetrae delenimentis et venenis imbutum nec parentis nec vitrici nec deorum verecundiam habere. iurgantes hinc mater, hinc vitricus cum quattuor eum servis domo exegerunt. [3] adulescens inde ad Aebutiam se amitam contulit, causamque ei, cur esset a matre ejectus, narravit, deinde ex auctoritate eius postero die ad consulem Postumium arbitris remotis rem detulit. [4] consul post diem tertium redire ad se iussum dimisit; ipse Sulpiciam gravem feminam, socrum suam, percunctatus est, ecquam anum Aebutiam ex Aventino nosset. [5] cum ea [p. 11] nosse probam et antiqui moris feminam respondisset, opus esse sibi ea conventa dixit: mitteret nuntium ad eam, ut veniret. [6] Aebutia accita ad Sulpiciam venit, et consul paulo post, velut forte intervenisset, sermonem de Aebutio fratris eius filio infert. [7] lacrimae mulieri obortae, et miserari casum adulescentis coepit, qui spoliatus fortunis, a quibus minime oporteret, apud se tunc esset, ejectus a matre, quod probus adulescens — dii propitii essent—obscenis, ut fama esset, sacris initiari nollet.

12. satis exploratum de Aebutio ratus consul non vanum auctorem esse, Aebutia dimissa socrum rogat, ut Hispalam indidem ex Aventino libertinam, non ignotam viciniae, arcesseret ad sese: eam quoque esse quae percunctari vellet. [2] ad cuius nuntium perturbata Hispala, quod ad tam nobilem et gravem feminam ignara causae arcesseretur, postquam lictores in vestibulo turbamque consularem et consulem ipsum conspexit, prope exanimata est. [3] in interiorem partem aedium abductam socrum adhibita consul, si vera dicere inducere in animum posset, negat perturbari debere; fidem vel a Sulpicia, tali femina, vel ab se acciperet; [4] expromeret sibi, quae in luco Stimulae Bacchanalibus in sacro nocturno solerent fieri. [5] hoc ubi audivit, tantus pavor tremorque omnium membrorum mulierem cepit, ut diu hiscere non posset. [6] tandem confirmata puellam admodum se ancillam initiatam cum domina ait: aliquot annis, ex quo manumissa sit, nihil quid ibi fiat scire. iam id ipsum consul laudare, [7] quod initiatam se non infitiaretur: sed et cetera eadem fide expromeret. [8] neganti ultra quicquam scire, non eandem dicere, si coarguatur ab alio, ac per se fatenti veniam aut gratiam fore; eum sibi omnia exposuisse, qui ab illa audisset.

13. mulier haud dubie, id quod erat, Aebutium indicem arcani rata esse, ad pedes Sulpiciae procidit, et eam primo orare coepit, [2] ne mulieris libertinae cum [p. 12] amatore sermonem in rem non seriam modo sed capitalem etiam verti vellet: se

terrendi eius causa, non quod sciret quicquam, ea locutam esse. [3] hic Postumius accensus ira tum quoque ait eam cum Aebutio se amatore cavillari credere, non in domo gravissimae feminae et cum consule loqui. et Sulpicia attollere paventem, simul illam adhortari, simul iram generi lenire. [4] tandem confirmata, multum incusata perfidia Aebutii, qui optime de ipso meritae talem gratiam rettulisset, [5] magnum sibi metum deorum, quorum occulta initia enuntiaret, maiorem multo dixit hominum esse qui se indicem manibus suis discepturi essent. [6] itaque hoc se Sulpiciam, hoc consulem orare, ut se extra Italiam aliquo ablegarent, ubi reliquum vitae degere tuto posset. [7] bono animo esse iubere eam consul, et sibi curae fore dicere, ut Romae tuto habitaret. [8] tum Hispala originem sacrorum expromit. primo sacrarium id feminarum fuisse, nec quemquam eo virum admitti solitum. tres in anno statos dies habuisse, quibus interdiu Bacchis initiantur; sacerdotes in vice matronas creari solitas. [9] Pacullam Anniam Campanam sacerdotem omnia, tamquam deum monitu, immutasse: nam et viros eam primam filios suos initiasse, Minium et Herennium Cerrinios; et nocturnum sacrum ex diurno, et pro tribus in anno diebus quinos singulis mensibus dies initiorum fecisse. [10] ex quo in promiscuo sacra sint et permixti viri feminis, et noctis licentia accesserit, nihil ibi facinoris, nihil flagitii praetermissum. plura virorum inter sese quam feminarum esse stupra. [11] si qui minus patientes dedecoris sint et pigriores ad facinus, pro victimis immolari. nihil nefas ducere, hanc summam inter eos religionem esse. [12] viros, velut mente capta, cum iactatione fanatica corporis vaticinari; matronas Baccharum habitu crinibus sparsis cum ardentibus facibus decurrere ad Tiberim, demissasque in aquam faces, quia vivum sulphur cum calce insit, integra flamma efferre. [13] raptos a diis homines [p. 13] dici, quos machinae illigatos ex conspectu in abditos specus abripant: [14] eos esse, qui aut coniurare aut sociari facinoribus aut stuprum pati noluerint. multitudinem ingentem, alterum iam prope populum esse; in his nobiles quosdam viros feminasque. biennio proximo institutum esse, ne quis maior viginti annis initiaretur: captari aetates et erroris et stupri patientes.

14. peracto indicio advoluta rursus genibus preces easdem, ut se ablegaret, repetivit. [2] consul rogat socrum, ut aliquam partem aedium vacuam faceret, quo Hispala immigraret. cenaculum super aedes datum est, scalis ferentibus in publicum obseratis, aditu in aedes verso. [3] res omnes Feceniae exemplo translatae et familia arcessita, et Aebutius migrare ad consulis clientem iussus.

ita cum indices ambo in potestate essent, rem ad senatum Postumius defert, omnibus ordine expositis, quae delata primo, quae deinde ab se inquisita forent. patres pavor ingens cepit, [4] cum publico nomine, ne quid eae coniurations coetusque nocturni fraudis occultae aut periculi importarent, tum privatim suorum cuiusque vicem, ne quis adfinis ei noxae esset. [5] censuit autem senatus gratias consuli agendas, quod eam rem et cum singulari cura et sine ullo tumultu investigasset. [6] quaestionem deinde de Bacchanalibus sacrisque nocturnis extra ordinem consulibus mandant; indicibus Aebutio ac Feceniae ne fraudi ea res sit curare et alios indices praemiis invitare iubent; [7] sacerdotes eorum sacrorum, seu viri seu feminae essent, non Romae modo sed per omnia fora et conciliabula conquiri, ut in consulum potestate essent; edici praeterea in urbe Roma et per totam Italiam edicta mitti, [8] ne quis, qui Bacchis iniciatus esset, coisse aut convenisse sacrorum causa velit, neu quid talis rei divinae fecisse. ante omnia ut quaestio de iis habeatur, qui coierint coniuraverintve, quo stuprum flagitiumve inferretur. haec senatus decrevit. [9] consules aedilibus curulibus [p. 14] imperarunt, ut sacerdotes eius sacri omnes conquirerent, comprehensosque libero conclavi ad quaestionem servarent; aediles plebis viderent,

ne qua sacra in operto fierent. [10] triumviris capitalibus mandatum est, ut vigilias disponerent per urbem servarentque, ne qui nocturni coetus fierent, utque ab incendiis caveretur; adiutores triumviris quinqueviri uti cis Tiberim suae quisque regionis aedificiis praeessent.

15. ad haec officia dimissis magistratibus consules in rostra escenderunt, et contione advocata cum sollemne carmen precationis, quod praefari, priusquam populum adloquantur, magistratus solent, peregisset consul, ita coepit. " [2] nulli umquam contioni, Quirites, tam non solum apta sed etiam necessaria haec sollemnisi deorum comprecatio fuit, quae vos admoneret hos esse deos, quos colere venerari precarie maiores vestri instituissent, [3] non illos, qui pravis et externis religionibus captas mentes velut furialibus stimulis ad omne scelus et ad omnem libidinem agerent. [4] equidem nec quid taceam nec quatenus proloquar invenio. si aliquid ignorabitis, ne locum neglegentiae dem, si omnia nudavero, ne nimium terroris offundam vobis, vereor. quidquid dixero, [5] minus quam pro atrocitate et magnitudine rei dictum scitote esse: ut ad cavendum satis sit, dabitur opera a nobis. [6] Bacchanalia tota iam pridem Italia et nunc per urbem etiam multis locis esse, non fama solum accepisse vos sed crepitibus etiam ululatibusque nocturnis, qui personant tota urbe, certum habeo, ceterum quae ea res sit, ignorare: [7] alios deorum aliquem cultum, alios concessum ludum et lasciviam credere esse, et qualecumque sit, ad paucos pertinere. [8] quod ad multitudinem eorum attinet, si dixero multa milia hominum esse, illico necesse est exterreamini, nisi adiunxero qui qualesque sint. [9] primum igitur mulierum magna pars est, et is fons mali huiusce fuit; deinde simillimi feminis mares, stuprati et constupratores, fanatici, vigiliis, vino, strepibus [p. 15] clamoribusque nocturnis attoniti. [10] nullas adhuc vires coniuratio, ceterum incrementum ingens virium habet, quod in dies plures fiunt. [11] maiores vestri ne vos quidem, nisi cum aut vexillo in arce posito comitiorum causa exercitus eductus esset, aut plebi concilium tribuni edixissent, aut aliquis ex magistratibus ad contionem vocasset, forte temere coire voluerunt; et ubicumque multitudo esset, ibi et legitimum rectorem multitudinis censebant esse debere. [12] quales primum nocturnos coetus, deinde promiscuos mulierum ac virorum esse creditis? [13] si quibus aetatibus initientur mares sciatis, non misereat vos eorum solum, sed etiam pudeat. hoc sacramento initiatos iuvenes milites faciendo censem, Quirites? his ex obsceno sacrario eductis arma committenda? [14] hi cooperti stupris suis alienisque pro pudicitia coniugum ac liberorum vestrorum ferro decernent?

16. minus tamen esset, si flagitiis tantum effeminati forent—ipsorum id magna ex parte dedecus erat—, a facinoribus manus, mentem a fraudibus abstinuissent: [2] numquam tantum malum in re publica fuit, nec ad plures nec ad plura pertinens. quidquid his annis libidine, quidquid fraude, quidquid scelere peccatum est, ex illo uno sacrario scitote ortum esse. [3] neandum omnia, in quae coniurarunt, edita facinora habent. adhuc privatis noxiis, quia nondum ad rem publicam opprimendam satis virium est, coniuratio sese impia tenet. crescit et serpit quotidie malum. iam maius est, quam ut capere id privata fortuna possit: [4] ad summam rem publicam spectat. nisi praecavetis, Quirites, iam huic diurnae, legitimate ab consule vocatae, par nocturna contio esse poterit. nunc illi vos singuli universos contionantes timent: iam ubi vos dilapsi domos et in rura vestra eritis, illi coierint, consultabunt de sua salute simul ac vestra pernicie: tum singulis vobis universi timendi erunt. [5] optare igitur unusquisque vestrum debet, ut bona mens suis omnibus fuerit. si quem libido, si furor in illum gurgitem [p. 16] abripuit, illorum eum, cum quibus in omne flagitium et

facinus coniuravit, non suum iudicet esse. [6] ne quis etiam errore labatur vestrum, Quirites, non sum securus. nihil enim in speciem fallacius est quam prava religio. ubi deorum numen praetenditur sceleribus, [7] subit animum timor, ne fraudibus humanis vindicandis divini iuris aliquid immixtum violemus. hac vos religione innumerabilia decreta pontificum, senatus consulta, haruspicum denique responsa liberant. [8] quotiens hoc patrum avorumque aetate negotium est magistratibus datum, uti sacra externa fieri vetarent, sacrificulos vatesque foro circo urbe prohiberent, vaticinos libros conquererent comburerentque, omnem disciplinam sacrificandi praeterquam more Romano abolerent. [9] iudicabant enim prudentissimi viri omnis divini humanique iuris nihil aequa dissolvenda religionis esse, quam ubi non patrio sed externo ritu sacrificaretur. [10] haec vobis praedicenda ratus sum, ne qua superstitione agitaret animos vestros, cum demolientes nos Bacchanalia discutentesque nefarios coetus cerneretis. [11] omnia diis propitiis volentibusque ea faciemus; qui quia suum numen sceleribus libidinibusque contaminari indigne ferebant, ex occultis ea tenebris in lucem extraxerunt, nec patefieri, ut impunita essent, sed ut vindicarentur et opprimerentur, voluerunt. [12] senatus quaestionem extra ordinem de ea re mihi collegaeque meo mandavit. nos, quae ipsis nobis agenda sunt, impigre exsequemur; vigiliarum nocturnarum curam per urbem minoribus magistratibus mandavimus. [13] vos quoque aequum est, quae vestra munia sunt, quo quisque loco positus erit, quod imperabitur, impigre praestare, et dare operam, ne quid fraude noriorum periculi aut tumultus oriatur."

17. recitari deinde senatus consulta iusserunt, indicique praemium proposuerunt, si quis quem ad se deduxisset nomenve absentis detulisset. [2] qui nominatus profugisset, diem certam se finituros, ad quam nisi citatus respondisset, absens damnaretur. si quis eorum, [p. 17] qui tum extra terram Italiam essent, nominaretur, ei laxiorem diem datus, si venire ad causam dicendam pellet. [3] edixerunt deinde, ne quis quid fugae causa vendidisse neve emisse vellet; ne quis reciperet, celaret, ope ulla iuvaret fugientes. contione dimissa terror magnus urbe tota fuit, [4] nec moenibus se tantum urbis aut finibus Romanis continuuit, sed passim per totam Italiam, litteris hospitum de senatus consulto et contione et edicto consulum acceptis, trepidari coeptum est. [5] multi ea nocte, quae diem insecura est, quo in contione res palam facta est, custodiis circa portas positis fugientes a triumviris comprehensi et reducti sunt: multorum delata nomina. quidam ex iis viri feminaeque mortem sibi conciverunt. [6] coniurasse supra septem milia virorum ac mulierum dicebantur. capita autem coniurationis constabat esse M. et C. Atinios de plebe Romana et Faliscum L. Opiternum et Minium Cerrinium Campanum: [7] ab his omnia facinora et flagitia orta, eos maximos sacerdotes conditoresque eius sacri esse. data opera, ut primo quoque tempore comprehendenderentur. adducti ad consules fassique de se nullam moram indicio fecerunt.

18. ceterum tanta fuga ex urbe facta erat, ut, quia multis actiones et res peribant, cogerentur praetores T. Maenius et M. Licinius per senatum res in diem tricesimum differre, donec quaestiones a consulibus perficerentur. [2] eadem solitudo, quia Romae non respondebant nec inveniebantur, quorum nomina delata erant, coegit consules circa fora proficiisci ibique quaerere et iudicia exercere. [3] qui tantum initiati erant et ex carmine sacro, praeeunte verba sacerdote, precatioes fecerant, in quibus nefanda coniuratio in omne facinus ac libidinem continebatur, nec earum rerum ullam, in quas iureiurando obligati erant, in se aut alios admiserant, eos in vinculis relinquebant: [4] qui stupris aut caedibus violati erant, qui falsis testimoniis,

signis [p. 18] adulterinis, subiectione testamentorum, fraudibus aliis contaminati, eos capitali poena adficiebant. [5] plures necati quam in vincula coniecti sunt. magna vis in utraque causa virorum mulierumque fuit. [6] mulieres damnatas cognatis, aut in quorum manu essent, tradebant, ut ipsi in privato animadverterent in eas: si nemo erat idoneus supplicii exactor, in publico animadvertebatur. [7] datum deinde consulibus negotium est, ut omnia Bacchanalia Romae primum, deinde per totam Italiam diruerent, extra quam si qua ibi vetusta ara aut signum consecratum esset. [8] in reliquum deinde senatus consulto cautum est, ne qua Bacchanalia Romae neve in Italia essent. si quis tale sacrum sollemne et necessarium duceret, nec sine religione et piaculo se id omittere posse, apud praetorem urbanum profiteretur, praetor senatum consuleret. [9] si ei permissum esset, cum in senatu centum non minus essent, ita id sacrum faceret, dum ne plus quinque sacrificio interessent, neu qua pecunia communis neu quis magister sacerorum aut sacerdos esset.

[39.8] During the following year the consuls Sp. Postumius Albinus and Q. Marcius Philippus had their attention diverted from the army and the wars, and the administration of provinces, by the necessity of putting down a domestic conspiracy. The provinces were allotted to the praetors as follows: the civic jurisdiction to T. Maenius, the alien to M. Licinius Lucullus, Sardinia to C. Aurelius Scaurus, Sicily to P. Cornelius Sulla, Hither Spain to L. Q. Crispinus, and Further Spain to C. Calpurnius Piso. Both the consuls were charged with the investigation into the secret conspiracies. A low-born Greek went into Etruria first of all, but did not bring with him any of the numerous arts which that most accomplished of all nations has introduced amongst us for the cultivation of mind and body. He was a hedge-priest and wizard, not one of those who imbue men's minds with error by professing to teach their superstitions openly for money, but a hierophant of secret nocturnal mysteries. At first these were divulged to only a few; then they began to spread amongst both men and women, and the attractions of wine and feasting increased the number of his followers. When they were heated with wine and the nightly commingling of men and women, those of tender age with their seniors, had extinguished all sense of modesty, debaucheries of every kind commenced; each had pleasures at hand to satisfy the lust he was most prone to. Nor was the mischief confined to the promiscuous intercourse of men and women; false witness, the forging of seals and testaments, and false informations, all proceeded from the same source, as also poisonings and murders of families where the bodies could not even be found for burial. Many crimes were committed by treachery; most by violence, which was kept secret, because the cries of those who were being violated or murdered could not be heard owing to the noise of drums and cymbals.

[39.9] This pestilential evil penetrated from Etruria to Rome like a contagious disease. At first, the size and extent of the City allowing more scope and impunity for such mischiefs, served to conceal them, but information at length reached the consul, mainly through the following channel. P. Aebutius, whose father had served in the cavalry and was dead, had been left under guardians. On their death he had been brought up under the care of his mother Duronia and his stepfather T. Sempronius Rutilus. The mother was completely in her husband's hands; and as the stepfather had so exercised his guardianship that he was not in a position to give a proper account for it, he was anxious that his ward should either be put out of the way or placed at his mercy through his getting some hold upon him. One way of corrupting the youth's morals was through the Bacchanalia. The mother told the youth that she had made a vow on his behalf during an illness, namely, that as soon as he recovered she would

initiate him into the Bacchic mysteries, and in that way would through the kindness of the gods discharge the vow by which she was bound. He must preserve his chastity for ten days, then after supper on the tenth day she would take him to a place set apart for the rite of initiation.

There was a freedwoman named Hispala Fecenia who, though she was a courtesan, was worthy of better things than the gains to which she had been accustomed from her girlhood, and by which she supported herself even after she had been manumitted. As their houses were near one another, an intimacy had sprung up between her and Aebutius, which was in no way injurious to either his reputation or his purse. She sought his company and his love unsolicited, and as his parents kept him close in every way, he was maintained by the girl's generosity. Her passion for him had gone so far that after her guardian had died, and she was no longer a ward, she begged the tribunes and the praetor to appoint a guardian for her. Then she could make a will and she constituted Aebutius her sole heir.

[39.10]With these proofs of her love they had no secrets from each other, and the youth told her in a jocular tone not to be surprised if he absented himself from her for some nights; he had a religious duty to perform, the discharge of a vow made while he was ill, and he intended therefore to be initiated into the Bacchic mysteries. On hearing this she was terribly upset and exclaimed, "Heaven forbid. Better for us both to die than that you should do this," and then invoked deadly curses on the heads of those who had advised him to take this course. The youth, astonished at her outburst and excitement, bade her spare her curses; it was his mother who had given him this command with the consent of his stepfather. "Your stepfather, then," she replied, "for, perhaps, it is not right to charge your mother with it, is by this act hurrying on the ruin of your modesty, your reputation, your hopes and your life." Still more astonished, he asked her what she meant. With a prayer to the gods and goddesses to forgive her if, constrained by her affection, she disclosed what she ought to be silent about, she explained that when she was in service she had accompanied her mistress into that place of initiation, but had never gone near it when once she was free. She knew it to be a sink of every form of corruption, and it was a matter of common knowledge that no one had been initiated for the last two years above the age of twenty. As each person was brought in, he was handed over to the priests like a victim and taken into a place which resounded with yells and songs, and the jangling of cymbals and drums, so that no cry from those who were suffering violation could be heard. She then begged and implored him to get out of the affair in whatever way he could, and not to rush blindly into a place where he would first have to endure, and then to commit, every conceivable outrage. Until he had given his word to keep clear of these rites she would not let him go.

[39.11]After he reached home his mother brought up the subject of the initiation and told him what he had to do in connection with it on that day, and what on the following days. He informed her that he would do nothing of the kind; he had no intention of being initiated. His stepfather was present. The mother at once exclaimed, "He cannot pass ten nights away from Hispala's embraces; he is so intoxicated with the fascinations of that venomous serpent, that he has no respect for either his parent or his stepfather or the gods." Amid the objurgations of his mother on the one side and his stepfather on the other, he was finally, with the assistance of four slaves, driven out of the house. The youth betook himself to his aunt Aebutia, and explained why he had been expelled from his home, and at her suggestion laid the matter privately before the consul the following day. Postumius told him to come again in three days' time, and in the meantime inquired of Sulpicia, his mother-in-law, a grave

and judicious woman, whether she knew an old woman called Aebutia living in the Aventine quarter. She replied that she knew her to be a woman of respectable and strictly moral character; on which the consul said that it was important that he should have an interview with her, and Sulpicia must send for her to see her. Aebutia came to Sulpicia, and the consul coming in as though by accident turned the conversation on to her brother's son. The woman burst into tears and began to lament the youth's misfortunes, robbed as he had been of his fortune by those who ought to have been the very last to do so. He was, she said, at her house at the time, "he had been driven away by his mother because the honest and respectable youth refused - may the gods forgive me - to be initiated into what were commonly believed to be impure and obscene mysteries."

[39.12]As the consul considered that he had ascertained all that was necessary about Aebutius, and that the evidence was trustworthy, he dismissed Aebutia and asked his mother-in-law to send for Hispala, a freedwoman, who was well known round the Aventine, as there were some questions he wished to put to her. Hispala was alarmed at the message, and at being summoned into the presence of a woman of such high rank and character, without knowing the reason, and when she saw the lictors and the consul's attendants in the vestibule, she nearly fainted. She was conducted into an inner apartment where the consul and his mother-in-law were present, and the consul told her that there was nothing to be afraid of if she could make up her mind to speak the truth; she might trust the pledged word of such a woman as Sulpicia and his own promise of safety, but she must give him a description of what usually went on at the nocturnal Bacchic rites in the grove of Simila. On hearing this, the woman was seized with such a fright and a trembling in all her limbs that she could not open her lips. At last she recovered her nerves, and said that when quite a girl she had been initiated, together with her mistress, but since she had been manumitted, now some years ago, she knew nothing of what went on there. The consul commended her for having confessed that she had been initiated and begged her to be equally truthful in the rest of her story. She avowed that she knew nothing further, on which the consul warned her that she would not receive the same consideration and forbearance if she were confuted by some one else, as she would if she made a free confession, for the person who had heard these things from her had disclosed everything to him.

[39.13]The woman being convinced, and quite rightly, that Aebutius was the informer, flung herself at Sulpicia's feet and implored her not to let a conversation between a freedwoman and her lover be treated so seriously as to amount to treason. What she had told him was for the purpose of frightening, not because she really knew anything. Postumius was very angry, and told her that she must be imagining that she was joking with her lover, and not speaking in the house of a grave and august lady and in the presence of the consul. Sulpicia raised the terrified woman from the floor, spoke soothingly to her and tried to quiet her. At length she became calm, and after bitterly reproaching Aebutius for the return he had made after all she had done for him, and declared that while she stood in great fear of the gods, whose occult mysteries she was revealing, she stood in much greater fear of men who would tear her to pieces if she turned informer. So she begged Sulpicia and the consul to remove her to some place outside the borders of Italy where she could pass the rest of her days in safety. The consul bade her be under no apprehension; he would see to it that she found a safe home in Rome. Then Hispala gave an account of the origin of these rites.

At first they were confined to women; no male was admitted, and they had three stated days in the year on which persons were initiated during the daytime, and

matrons were chosen to act as priestesses. Paculla Annia, a Campanian, when she was priestess, made a complete change, as though by divine monition, for she was the first to admit men, and she initiated her own sons, Minius Cerinnius and Herennius Cerinnius. At the same time she made the rite a nocturnal one, and instead of three days in the year celebrated it five times a month. When once the mysteries had assumed this promiscuous character, and men were mingled with women with all the licence of nocturnal orgies, there was no crime, no deed of shame, wanting. More uncleanness was wrought by men with men than with women. Whoever would not submit to defilement, or shrank from violating others, was sacrificed as a victim. To regard nothing as impious or criminal was the very sum of their religion. The men, as though seized with madness and with frenzied distortions of their bodies, shrieked out prophecies; the matrons, dressed as Bacchae, their hair dishevelled, rushed down to the Tiber with burning torches, plunged them into the water, and drew them out again, the flame undiminished, as they were made of sulphur mixed with lime. Men were fastened to a machine and hurried off to hidden caves, and they were said to have been rapt away by the gods; these were the men who refused to join their conspiracy or take a part in their crimes or submit to pollution. They formed an immense multitude, almost equal to the population of Rome; amongst them were members of noble families both men and women. It had been made a rule for the last two years that no one more than twenty years old should be initiated; they captured those to be deceived and polluted.

[39.14]When she had finished giving her evidence, she fell on her knees and again begged the consul to send her abroad. He asked his mother-in-law to set apart some portion of her house where she could take up her abode. An upper room was assigned to her which was approached by a flight of steps from the street; these were blocked up and an entrance made from inside the house. All Fecenia's effects were at once transferred, and her household slaves brought in, and Aebutius was ordered to take up his quarters with a client of the consul's. As both his informants were now in his hands, Postumius reported the affair to the senate. Everything was explained as it occurred, the information which he had first received, and then that which he had obtained in answer to his questions. The senate were greatly alarmed for the public safety; these secret conspiracies and nocturnal gatherings were a danger to the State; and they were alarmed for themselves, lest their own relations and friends might be involved. They passed a vote of thanks to the consul for having conducted his investigations so carefully and without creating any public disturbance. Then, arming the consuls with extraordinary powers, they placed in their hands the inquiry into the proceedings at the Bacchanalia and the nocturnal rites. They were to take care that Aebutius and Fecenia suffered no injury for the information they had given, and they were to offer rewards to induce other informers to come forward. Those who presided over these mysteries were to be sought out not only in Rome, but everywhere where people were in the habit of assembling, so that they might be delivered up to the consuls. Edicts were published in Rome and throughout Italy forbidding any who had been initiated from meeting together to celebrate their mysteries or performing any rites of a similar character, and above all, strict inquiry was to be made in the case of those who attended gatherings in which crime and debauchery had occurred. These were the measures which the senate decreed. The consuls sent orders to the curule aediles to search out all the priests of those rites and, when they were arrested, to keep them in such custody as they thought best until their trial. The plebeian aediles were to see that no rites were performed in open day; the police commissioners were instructed to post watches throughout the City and take care that no nocturnal

gatherings took place; and as a precaution against fires, five men were appointed to assist the commissioners and take charge of the buildings assigned to them on this side the Tiber.

[39.15]When the various officials had been told off to their duties, the consuls convened the Assembly and mounted the Rostra. After the usual prayers with which proceedings are opened before the magistrates address the people, the consul began thus: "In no meeting of the Assembly has this solemn appeal to the gods been so appropriate and, I would add, so necessary. For it reminds you that it is these gods whom your ancestors ordained that we should worship, reverence, and pray to; not those who have driven the minds of people enslaved by foul and foreign superstitions, as though by goading furies, into every form of crime and every kind of lust. I am at a loss to know how far I ought to keep silence, and how far I ought to go, in what I have to say. I fear, if you remain in ignorance of anything, that I may leave an opening for neglect, whilst, if I disclose everything, I may create too much alarm. Whatever I say, you may be certain that it does not come up to the enormity and horror of the thing. We shall make it our business to say enough to put you on your guard. That the Bacchanalia have for some time been going on throughout Italy and are now practiced in many parts of the City you have, I am sure, learnt not only by report, but also by the nightly noises and yells which resound all over the City; but I do not think you know what it all means. Some of you fancy that it is a particular form of worship; others think that it is some permissible kind of sport and dalliance; its real nature is understood by few. As to their numbers, you would inevitably be very much alarmed if I were to say that there are many thousands of them, unless I went on to explain who and what sort of people they are.

"In the first place, then, women form the great majority, and this was the source of all the mischief. Then there are the males, the very counterparts of the women, committing and submitting to the foulest uncleanness, frantic and frenzied, driven out of their senses by sleepless nights, by wine, by nocturnal shouting and uproar. The conspiracy does not so far possess any strength, but its numbers are rapidly increasing day by day, and its strength is growing. Your ancestors would not have even your Assembly meet in an irregular and haphazard way, but only when the standard was hoisted on the citadel and the centuries in their array marched out, or when the tribunes had given notice of a meeting of the plebs, or the Assembly had been duly convened by one of the magistrates. Whenever the people met together there was bound to be a lawful authority to preside over it. Have you any idea what these nocturnal gatherings, these promiscuous associations of men and women are? If you knew at what age those of the male sex are initiated, you would feel not only compassion for them, but shame as well. Do you consider, Quirites, that young men who have taken this unhallowed oath are to be made into soldiers? That after the training they have received in that shrine of obscenity they are to be entrusted with arms? Shall these men, reeking with their impurity and that of those round them, wield their swords in defence of the chastity of your wives and children?

[39.16]"The mischief would not be serious, if they had only lost their manhood through their debauchery - the disgrace would fall mainly upon themselves - and had kept from open outrage and secret treason. Never has there been such a gigantic evil in the commonwealth, or one which has affected greater numbers or caused more numerous crimes. Whatever instances of lust, treachery, or crime have occurred during these last years, have originated, you may be perfectly certain, in that shrine of unhallowed rites. They have not yet disclosed all the criminal objects of their conspiracy. So far, their impious association confines itself to individual crimes; it has

not yet strength enough to destroy the commonwealth. But the evil is creeping stealthily on, and growing day by day; it is already too great to limit its action to individual citizens; it looks to be supreme in the State. Unless, Quirites, you take precautions, this Assembly legally convened by a consul in the daylight will be confronted by another assembly gathered together in the darkness of the night. Now they, disunited, fear you, a united Assembly, but when you are dispersed to your homes and your farms they will hold their assembly and plot their own safety and your ruin. It will then be your turn, scattered as you will be, to fear them in their united strength.

"You ought, therefore, every one of you, to pray that your friends may have preserved their good sense. If unbridled and maddening lust has swept any one away into that whirlpool, you must judge him as belonging not to you but to those whom he has joined as fellow-conspirators in every kind of wickedness. I do not feel sure that even some of you may not have been misled. For there is nothing which wears a more deceptive appearance than a depraved superstition. Where crimes are sheltered under the name of religion, there is fear lest in punishing the hypocrisy of men we are doing violence to something holy which is mixed up with it. From these scruples you are delivered by numberless decisions of the pontiffs, resolutions of the senate and responses of the augurs. How often in the times of your fathers and grandfathers has the task been assigned to the magistrates of forbidding all foreign rites and ceremonies, prohibiting hedge-priests and diviners from entering either the Forum, the Circus, or the City, seeking out and burning all books of pretended prophecies, and abolishing every sacrificial ritual except what was accordant with Roman usage! Those men were masters of all human and divine love, and they believed that nothing tended so much to destroy religion as the performance of sacrificial rites, not after the manner of our fathers, but in fashions imported from abroad. I thought I ought to tell you this beforehand, so that none of you may be distressed by fears on the score of religion when you see us demolishing the seats of the Bacchanalia and dispersing their impious gatherings. All that we shall do will be done with the sanction of the gods and in obedience to their will. To show their displeasure at the insult offered to their majesty by these lusts and crimes they have dragged them out of their dark hiding-places into the light of day, and they have willed that they shall be exposed not to enjoy impunity, but to be punished and put an end to. "The senate has entrusted my colleague and myself with extraordinary powers for conducting an inquiry into this matter. We shall make an energetic use of them, and we have charged the subordinate magistrates with the care of the night-watches throughout the City. It is only right that you should show equal energy in doing your duty in whatever position you may be placed and whatever orders you receive, and also in making it your business to see that no danger or disturbance arise through the secret plots of the criminals."

[39.17]They then ordered the resolutions of the senate to be read, and offered a reward for any one who should bring a guilty person before the consuls, or give in his name if he were not forthcoming. In the case of any one who had been denounced and then taken to flight, they would fix a day for him to answer the charge, and if he failed to appear, he would be condemned in his absence; for any one who was abroad at the time they would extend the date should he wish to make his defence. They then published an edict forbidding any one to sell or buy anything for the purpose of flight, or to receive, harbour, or in any way assist those who fled. After the Assembly had broken up, the whole of the City was thoroughly alarmed. Nor was the alarm confined within the walls of the City or the frontiers of Rome; there was uneasiness and consternation throughout the whole of Italy when letters began to arrive announcing

the resolutions of the senate, the proceedings in the Assembly and the edict of the consuls. During the night following the disclosure of the affair in the Assembly, guards were posted at all the gates, and many who tried to escape were arrested by the police commissioners and brought back. Many names were handed in, and some of these, both men and women, committed suicide. It was asserted that more than 7000 of both sexes were implicated in the conspiracy. The ringleaders were, it appears, the two Atinii, Marcus and Caius, both members of the Roman plebs; L. Opiternius of Falerium, and Minius Cerrinius, a Campanian. They were the authors of all the crime and outrage, the high priests and founders of the cult. Care was taken that they should be arrested as soon as possible, and when brought before the consuls they at once made a complete confession.

[39.18]So great, however, was the number of those who fled from the City that law-suits and rights of property were in numerous cases lost by default, and the praetors were compelled through the intervention of the senate to adjourn their courts for a month, to allow the consuls to complete their investigations. Owing to the fact that those whose names were on the list did not answer to the summons, and were not to be found in Rome, the consuls had to visit the country towns and conduct their inquiries and try the cases there. Those who had simply been initiated, who, that is, had repeated after the priest the prescribed form of imprecation which pledged them to every form of wickedness and impurity, but had not been either active or passive participants in any of the proceedings to which their oath bound them, were detained in prison. Those who had polluted themselves by outrage and murder, those who had stained themselves by giving false evidence, forging seals and wills and by other fraudulent practices, were sentenced to death. The number of those executed exceeded the number of those sentenced to imprisonment; there was an enormous number of men as well as women in both classes. The women who had been found guilty were handed over to their relatives or guardians to be dealt with privately; if there was no one capable of inflicting punishment, they were executed publicly. The next task awaiting the consuls was the destruction of all the Bacchanalian shrines, beginning with Rome, and then throughout the length and breadth of Italy; those only excepted where there was an ancient altar or a sacred image. The senate decreed that for the future there should be no Bacchanalian rites in Rome or in Italy. If any one considered that this form of worship was a necessary obligation and that he could not dispense with it without incurring the guilt of irreligion, he was to make a declaration before the City praetor and the praetor was to consult the senate. If the senate gave permission, not less than one hundred senators being present, he might observe those rites on condition that not more than five persons took part in the service, that they had no common fund, and that there was no priest or conductor of the ceremonies.

Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus

(bronze tablet, found in Calabria 1641, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna)

Transcription:

1. [Q] MARCIUS L F S POSTUMIUS L F COS SENATUM CONSOLUERUNT N OCTOB APUD AEDEM
2. DUELONAI SC ARF M CLAUDI M F L VALERI P F Q MINUCI C F DE BACANALIBUS QUEI FOIDERATEI

3. ESENT ITA EXDEICENDUM CENSUERE NEIQUIS EORUM BACANAL HABUISE VELET SEI QUES
4. ESENT QUEI SIBEI DEICERENT NECESUS ESE BACANAL HABERE EEIS UTEI AD PR URBANUM
5. ROMAM VENIRENT DEQUE EEIS REBUS UBEI EORUM VER[B]A AUDITA ESENT UTEI SENATUS
6. NOSTER DECERNERET DUM NE MINUS SENATOR[I]BUS C ADESENT [QUOM E]A RES COSOLORETUR
7. BACAS VIR NEIQUIS ADIESE VELET CEIVIS ROMANUS NEVE NOMINUS LATINI NEVE SOCIMUM
8. QUISQUAM NISEI PR URBANUM ADIESENT ISQUE [D]E SENATUOS SENTENTIAD DUM NE
9. MINUS SENATORIBUS C ADESENT QUOM EA RES COSOLERETUR IOUSISENT CE[N]SUERE
10. SACERDOS NEIQUIS VIR ESET MAGISTER NEQUE VIR NEQUE MULIER QUISQUAM ESET
11. NEVE PECUNIAM QUISQUAM EORUM COMOINE[M H]ABUISE VE[L]ET NEVE MAGISTRATUM
12. NEVE PRO MAGISTRATUD NEQUE VIRUM [NEQUE MUL]IEREM QUISQUAM FECISE VELET
13. NEVE POST HAC INTER SED CONIOURA[SE NEV]E COMVOVISE NEVE CONSPONDISE
14. NEVE CONPROMESİSE VELET NEVE QUISQUAM FIDEM INTER SED DEDISE VELET
15. SACRA IN OQVOLTOD NE QUISQUAM FECISE VELET NEVE IN POPLICOD NEVE IN
16. PREIVATOD NEVE EXSTRAD URBEM SACRA QUISQUAM FECISE VELET NISEI
17. PR URBANUM ADIESET ISQUE DE SENATUOS SENTENTIAD DUM NE MINUS
18. SENATORIBUS C ADESENT QUOM EA RES COSOLERETUR IOUSISENT CENSUERE
19. HOMINES PLOUS V OINVORSEI VIREI ATQUE MULIERES SACRA NE QUISQUAM
20. FECISE VELET NEVE INTER IBEI VIREI PLOUS DUOBUS MULIERIBUS PLOUS TRIBUS
21. ARFUISE VELENT NISEI DE PR URBANI SENATUOSQUE SENTENTIAD UTEI SUPRAD
22. SCRIPTUM EST HAICE UTEI IN COVENTIONID EXDEICATIS NE MINUS TRINUM
23. NOUNDINUM SENATUOSQUE SENTENTIAM UTEI SCIENTES ESETIS EORUM
24. SENTENTIA ITA FUIT SEI QUES ESENT QUEI ARVORSUM EAD FECISENT QUAM SUPRAD
25. SCRIPTUM EST EEIS REM CAPUTALEM FACIENDAM CENSUERE ATQUE UTEI
26. HOCE IN TABOLAM AHENAM INCEIDERETIS ITA SENATUS AIQUOM CENSUIT
27. UTEIQUE EAM FIGIER IOUBEATIS UBI FACILUMED GNOSCIER POTISIT ATQUE

28. UTEI EA BACANALIA SEI QUA SUNT EXSTRAD QUAM SEI QUID IBEI SACRI EST
29. ITA UTEI SUPRAD SCRIPTUM EST IN DIEBUS X QUIBUS VOBIS TABELAI DATAI
30. ERUNT FACIATIS UTEI DISMOTA SIENT IN AGRO TEURANO

Translation into Classical Latin:

1. [Quīntus] Mārcius L(ūciī) f(īlius), S(purius) Postumius L(ūciī) f(īlius) cō(n)s(ulēs) senātūm cōnsuluērunt N(ōnīs) Octōb(ribus), apud aedem
2. Bellōnae. Sc(rībendō) adf(uērunt) M(ārcus) Claudi(us) M(ārcī) f(īlius), L(ūcius) Valeri(us) P(ubliī) f(īlius), Q(uīntus) Minuci(us) C (=Gaiī) f(īlius). Dē Bacchānālibus quī foederātī
3. essent, ita ēdīcendum cēnsuēre: «Nēquis eōrum [B]acchānal habuisse vellet. Sī quis
4. essent, quī sibī dīcerent necesse esse Bacchānal habēre, eīs utī ad pr(aetōrem) urbānum
5. Rōmam venīrent, dēque eīs rēbus, ubī eōrum v[e]r[b]a audīta essent, utī senātūs
6. noster dēcerneret, dum nē minus senatōr[i]bus C adessent, [cum e]a rēs cōsulerētur.
7. Bacchās vir nēquis adiisse vellet cīvis Rōmānus nēve nōminis Latīnī nēve sociōrum
8. quisquam, nisi pr(aetōrem) urbānum adiissent, isque [d]ē senātūs sententiā, dum nē
9. minus senatōribus C adessent, cum ea rēs cōsulerētur, iussissent. Cēnsuēre.
10. Sacerdōs nēquis vir esset; magister neque vir neque mulier quisquam esset.
11. Nēve pecūniā quisquam eōrum commūne[m h]abuisse vellet; nēve magistrātū,
12. nēve prō magistrātū, neque virum [neque mul]ierem qui[s]quam fecisse vellet,
13. nēve posthāc inter sē coniūrās[se nēv]e convōvisse nēve cōnspondisse
14. nēve comprōmīssisse vellet, nēve quisquam fidem inter sē dedisse vellet.
15. Sacra in occultō nē quisquam fēcisse vellet. Nēve in publicō nēve in
16. prīvātō nēve extrā urbem sacra quisquam fēcisse vellet, nisi
17. pr(aetōrem) urbānum adiisset, isque dē senātūs sententiā, dum nē minus
18. senatōribus C adessent, cum ea rēs cōsulerētur, iussissent. Cēnsuēre.
19. Hominēs plūs V ūniversī virī atque mulierēs sacra nē quisquam
20. fēcisse vellet, nēve inter ibī virī plūs duōbus, mulieribus plūs tribus
21. adfuisse vellent, nisi dē pr(aetōris) urbānī senātūsque sententiā, utī suprā
22. scrīptum est.» Haec utī in cōtiōne ēdīcātis nē minus trīnum
23. nūndinum, senātūsque sententiam utī scientēs essētis, eōrum
24. sententia ita fuit: «Sī quis essent, quī adversum ea fēcissent, quam suprā
25. scrīptum est, eīs rem capitālem faciendam cēnsuēre». Atque utī
26. hoc in tabulam ahēnam inciderētis, ita senātūs aequum cēnsuit,
27. utīque eam fīgī iubeātis, ubī facillimē nōscī possit; atque
28. utī ea Bacchānālia, sī quae sunt, extrā quam sī quid ibī sacrī est,
29. (ita utī suprā scrīptum est) in diēbus X, quibus vōbīs tabellae datae
30. erunt, faciātis utī dīmōta sint. In agrō Teurānō.

English translation by N. E. Weston (Thatcher, Oliver Joseph, ed. (1901). The ideas that have influenced civilization, in the original documents. Volume III: The Roman World. Roberts-Manchester Publishing Co. pp. 76–77.)

"Quintus Marcius the son of Lucius, and Spurius Postumius, consulted the senate on the Nones of October (7th), at the temple of Bellona. Marcus Claudius, son of Marcus, Lucius Valerius, son of Publius, and Quintus Minucius, son of Gaius, were the committee for drawing up the report.

Regarding the Bacchanalia it was resolved to give the following directions to those who are in alliance with us.

No one of them is to possess a place where the festivals of Bacchus are celebrated: if there are any who claim that it is necessary for them to have such a place, they are to come to Rome to the praetor urbanus, and the senate is to decide on those matters, when their claims have been heard, provided that not less than 100 senators are present when the affair is discussed. No man is to be a Bacchantian, neither a Roman citizen, nor one of the Latin name, nor any of our allies unless they come to the praetor urbanus, and he in accordance with the opinion of the senate expressed when not less than 100 senators are present at the discussion, shall have given leave. Carried.

No man is to be a priest; no one, either man or woman, is to be an officer (to manage the temporal affairs of the organization); nor is anyone of them to have charge of a common treasury; no one shall appoint either man or woman to be master or to act as master; henceforth they shall not form conspiracies among themselves, stir up any disorder, make mutual promises or agreements, or interchange pledges; no one shall observe the sacred rites either in public or private or outside the city, unless he comes to the praetor urbanus, and he, in accordance with the opinion of the senate, expressed when no less than 100 senators are present at the discussion, shall have given leave. Carried.

No one in a company of more than five persons altogether, men and women, shall observe the sacred rites, nor in that company shall there be present more than two men or three women, unless in accordance with the opinion of the praetor urbanus and the senate as written above.

See that you declare it in the assembly (contio) for not less than three market days; that you may know the opinion of the senate this was their judgment: if there are any who have acted contrary to what was written above, they have decided that a proceeding for a capital offense should be instituted against them; the senate has justly decreed that you should inscribe this on a brazen tablet, and that you should order it to be placed where it can be easiest read; see to it that the revelries of Bacchus, if there be any, except in case there be concerned in the matter something sacred, as was written above, be disbanded within ten days after this letter shall be delivered to you.

In the Teuranian field."