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Fonte: Tácito, *Histórias*

Origem: Roma

Período: séc.I d.C.

Edição: *Complete Works of Tacitus*. Tacitus. New York: Random House, 1942 (trad. A.J. Church, W.J. Brodribb e S. Bryant).

Seções: 5.13

[13] Prodigies had occurred, which this nation, prone to superstition, but hating all religious rites, did not deem it lawful to expiate by offering and sacrifice. There had been seen hosts joining battle in the skies, the fiery gleam of arms, the temple illuminated by a sudden radiance from the clouds. The doors of the inner shrine were suddenly thrown open, and a voice of more than mortal tone was heard to cry that the Gods were departing. At the same instant there was a mighty stir as of departure. Some few put a fearful meaning on these events, but in most there was a firm persuasion, that in the ancient records of their priests was contained a prediction of how at this very time the East was to grow powerful, and rulers, coming from Judæa, were to acquire universal empire. These mysterious prophecies had pointed to Vespasian and Titus, but the common people, with the usual blindness of ambition, had interpreted these mighty destinies of themselves, and could not be brought even by disasters to believe the truth. I have heard that the total number of the besieged, of every age and both sexes, amounted to six hundred thousand. All who were able bore arms, and a number, more than proportionate to the population, had the courage to do so. Men and women showed equal resolution, and life seemed more terrible than death, if they were to be forced to leave their country. Such was this city and nation; and Titus Cæsar, seeing that the position forbade an assault or any of the more rapid operations of war, determined to proceed by earthworks and covered approaches. The legions had their respective duties assigned to them, and there was a cessation from fighting, till all the inventions, used in ancient warfare, or devised by modern ingenuity for the reduction of cities, were constructed.