



AGRIPPINA'S (UN-)AUGUSTAN ANGER: TACITUS, *ANNALS* 12.22.3 AND OVID, *TRISTIA* 2.127*

ABSTRACT

Book 12 of Tacitus' Annals spotlights the ascent of Agrippina, the new wife of Claudius and mother of Nero, to the heights of power in imperial Rome. This paper examines how Tacitus deepens and complicates that characterization through an allusion to Ovid's depiction of Augustus in Tristia Book 2. The allusion, coming in Ann. 12.22 as Agrippina is consolidating her power, serves to cast her as a figure of awesome anger and authority on a par with Augustus himself, but also as lacking the ability Augustus had to put limits on that anger. The allusion thus underscores the Annals' broader arc of the unruly collapse of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, while at the same time revealing the deftness of the historian of the Julio-Claudians at continuing and complicating the themes of the famed poet of Augustus.

Keywords: Tacitus; Ovid; Agrippina; Julio-Claudians; intertextuality; Latin historiography

Book 12 of Tacitus' *Annals* is Agrippina the Younger's book. From the opening chapters in which she bests competitors to become Claudius' new bride (12.1–9), to the central section in which she exerts tremendous power over palace affairs (12.22–6) and foreign relations (for example 12.27 and 12.37), to the book's final tableau in which Claudius is poisoned and her sixteen-year-old son Nero emerges as *princeps* (12.66–9), Agrippina's sway over the events of Book 12 is commanding and complete. During that period of time, Tacitus tells us, 'the state was transformed, and all things were obedient to a woman' (*uersa ... ciuitas et cuncta feminae oboediebant*, 12.7.3).¹

* For their comments on earlier versions of this essay, I would like to thank Salvador Bartera, Elizabeth Keitel, Victoria Pagán and *CQ*'s anonymous referee. I am also grateful for the input and encouragement, at a later stage, from colleagues gathered for the panel 'Poeticis magis decora? Latin Prose and the Limits of Intertextuality' at the 13th Celtic Conference in Classics, in particular the panel's organizers, Scott DiGiulio and Dominic Machado. The text for the *Annals* is that of E. Koestermann, *Cornelii Taciti libri qui supersunt. Ab excessu diui Augusti* (Leipzig, 1965); all translations are my own.

¹ On Tacitus' depiction of Agrippina as a potent *dux femina*, especially in *Annals* Book 12, see F. Santoro L'Hoir, 'Tacitus and women's usurpation of power', *CW* 88 (1994), 5–25; T. Späth, 'Skrupellose Herrscherin? Das Bild der Agrippina minor bei Tacitus', in T. Späth and B. Wagner-Hasel (edd.), *Frauenwelten in der Antike: Geschlechterordnung und weibliche Lebenspraxis* (Berlin, 2000), 262–81; J. Ginsburg, *Representing Agrippina: Constructions of Female Power in the Early Roman Empire* (Oxford, 2006), 9–54 (23: 'the *dux femina* par excellence'); S.J.V. Malloch, 'Hamlet without the prince? The Claudian *Annals*', in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2009), 116–26, at 118–19; T. Späth, 'Masculinity and gender performance in Tacitus', in V.E. Pagán (ed.), *A Companion to Tacitus* (Malden, MA, 2012), 431–57, at 448; and C. Gillespie, 'Agrippina the Younger: Tacitus' *unicum exemplum*', in C. Pieper and J. Ker (edd.), *Valuing the Past in the Greco-Roman World* (Leiden, 2014), 269–93. See too S.J.V. Malloch, *The Annals of Tacitus. Book 11* (Cambridge, 2013), 3–9 on the arc of the Claudian books, with consideration of Agrippina's place in that movement. E. Keitel, 'The role of Parthia and Armenia in Tacitus, *Annals* 11 and 12', *AJPh* 99 (1978), 462–73, at 464–5 brings out how Tacitus' treatment of foreign affairs in *Annals* Books

Tacitus captures the strength of Agrippina's position in this book by emphasizing her unmatched number of familial connections to those in power, making her 'a unique example to this day' (*unicum ad hunc diem exemplum*, 12.42.2),² and especially by highlighting at several points the formalities of her elevated status. At 12.26.1, for example, he notes that in 50 C.E. 'Agrippina is augmented by the cognomen "Augusta"' (*augetur et Agrippina cognomento Augustae*)—the etymological wordplay underlining the heightened stature that comes with this title that previously had gone only to Livia.³ In 12.37.4 we read that the defeated British general Caratacus and his family 'venerated [Agrippina] with the same praise and gratitude they had extended to the *princeps*' (*isdem quibus principem laudibus gratibusque uenerati sunt*). Tacitus goes on in 12.37.4 to note that for a woman to preside over the standards was unprecedented, and resulted from the fact that 'she was carrying herself as a partner in the command won by her ancestors' (*ipsa semet parti a maioribus suis imperii sociam ferebat*). In the final line of Book 12, the historian explicitly casts Agrippina as a majestic Livia figure, when 'the rite of [Claudius'] funeral is celebrated in the same way it was for the deified Augustus, with Agrippina emulating the magnificence of her great-grandmother Livia' (*funeris sollemne perinde ac diuo Augusto celebratur, aemulante Agrippina proauiae Liviae magnificentiam*, 12.69.3).⁴ When Book 13 and Nero's Principate commence, Tacitus demonstrates just how high she has risen by spotlighting the murders of the perceived threats Junius Silanus (13.1.1) and Narcissus (13.1.3), both killed on Agrippina's orders, with the young *princeps* unaware.

Yet in presenting Agrippina ascendant Tacitus goes beyond depicting her as another Augusta, a co-*princeps*, and a de facto regent for her teenaged son. Prior to each of the characterizations noted above, the historian had already cast Agrippina in the role of someone much greater, more powerful, indeed supremely powerful. In 12.22, through an allusion to Book 2 of Ovid's *Tristia*, Tacitus pointedly aligns Agrippina at the height of her powers with none other than Augustus himself.

In what follows I will consider how this Ovidian allusion operates and its relevance to both Book 12 and Tacitus' depiction of the Julio-Claudian dynasty as a whole. But I begin with a contextualization and summary of 12.22, which falls amid the historian's account of the year 49. After an extended treatment of *res externae* (12.12–21), Tacitus returns to Rome and immediately directs the reader's focus to the actions of Agrippina, whose marriage to Claudius had been formalized earlier that year (12.7–8). He begins this section on *res internae* by writing (12.22.1):

11–12 serves to highlight Agrippina's trajectory, noting that '[d]ominatio and *regnum*, the standard vocabulary for the eastern monarchies here as throughout the *Annals* (11.8.1; 11.8.3; 11.9.2; 11.10.1), are used of Agrippina's single-minded quest for power in Book 12' (464). See also the historical account of A.A. Barrett, *Agrippina: Mother of Nero* (London, 1996), with a focus at 95–142 on Agrippina's marriage to Claudius and ascent.

² See Gillespie (n. 1), 282 on Agrippina's 'singular exemplarity' in the *Annals* and also Tacitus' portrayal of her 'as a woman who misreads her own symbolic presence in public material culture as representative of her actual roles' (289).

³ Suetonius (*Claud.* 11.2) writes that Claudius' mother Antonia Minor rejected the title, but that Claudius gave it to her posthumously upon his succession in 41 C.E.

⁴ See R.H. Martin, 'Tacitus and the death of Augustus', *CQ* 5 (1955), 123–8, at 128 for the suggestion that the interplay in the characterizations of Livia and Agrippina works in two directions, namely that Tacitus modelled his presentation of Livia's involvement in Augustus' death and Tiberius' accession in *Ann.* 1.5–6 on the traditional account of Agrippina's role in Claudius' death and in Nero's rise.

isdem consulibus atrox odii Agrippina ac Lolliae infensa, quod secum de matrimonio principis certauisset, molitur crimina et accusatorem qui obiceret Chaldaeos magos interrogatumque Apollinis Clarii simulacrum super nuptiis imperatoris.

When the same men were consuls, Agrippina, fierce in her hatred and hostile to Lollia because she had been a rival for marriage with the *princeps*, trumps up charges and an accuser to make the claim that [Lollia] had asked the Chaldaeans, magicians and a shrine for Apollo Clarius about the emperor's marriage.

So Tacitus begins the passage with a juxtaposition that is characteristic of his style in the *Annals*: in the manner of Republican historiography, he marks the year by reference to its consuls (*isdem consulibus*—Gaius Pompeius and Quintus Varanius, named at 12.5.1), but then moves right to a demonstration of where power really existed under the Principate: in the imperial house—and at that time in the person of Agrippina.⁵ She exhibits that power through her effort to destroy Lollia Paulina, the famously wealthy ex-wife of Caligula who, we learned in 12.1–2, had been Agrippina's chief rival for the marriage of Claudius.⁶ After writing in 12.22.1 that Agrippina had trumped up charges against Lollia, Tacitus recounts in 12.22.2 that, as a result, Claudius brought the matter of Lollia's destructive plans (*perniciosa in rem publicam consilia*) before the Senate, and decreed that her wealth would be confiscated and that she would be exiled. This all leads up to the final step in Agrippina's demolition of her rival—her murder. But Tacitus prefaces the chilling conclusion of the episode by shoehorning in a counterexample, writing (12.22.3):

et Calpurnia inlustris femina peruertitur, quia formam eius laudauerat princeps, nulla libidine, sed fortuito sermone, **unde ira Agrippinae citra ultima stetit**. in Lolliam mittitur tribunus, a quo ad mortem adigeretur.

The distinguished woman Calpurnia is also destroyed, because the *princeps* had praised her beauty—not out of lust but in a chance conversation; as a result Agrippina's anger stopped short of lethal action. To Lollia is sent a tribune, by whom she was led off to death.

The insertion into the narrative of the case of a certain Calpurnia⁷ is somewhat jarring, but it works to underline a contrast and thus highlight the deadly extremity reached in Lollia's case. The critical issue for the prospects of each rival of Agrippina's was how far her anger would proceed; and so the force of the expression *ira Agrippinae citra ultima stetit* carries over from the counterexample of Calpurnia to apply, in inverse, to the more significant matter of the punishment of Lollia. The adversative asyndeton⁸

⁵ See J. Ginsburg, *Tradition and Theme in the Annals of Tacitus* (New York, 1981), 10–30 and S. Bartera, 'Year-beginnings in the Neronian books of Tacitus' *Annals*, *MH* 68 (2011), 161–81 on Tacitus' fraught use of consular dating in the Tiberian and Neronian books, respectively.

⁶ See J.H. Oliver, 'Lollia Paulina, Memmius Regulus, and Caligula', *Hesperia* 35 (1966), 150–3 and P. Burgeon, 'La vie de Lollia Paulina à travers celle des empereurs Caligula et Claude', *Eruditiio Antiqua* 9 (2017), 87–108 on the testimonia for the life of Lollia Paulina, who, as Tacitus notes in *Ann.* 12.22.2, had been married to Memmius Regulus before Caligula wrested her away. The elder Pliny writes of her opulent attire at *HN* 9.117, and Dio Cassius (61.32.3) also recounts her murder, with the detail that Agrippina confirmed it by inspecting the head for Lollia's distinctive teeth. On the murder, see further Barrett (n. 1), 107–8 and K. Shannon-Henderson, *Religion and Memory in Tacitus' Annals* (Oxford, 2018), 262–3.

⁷ Mentioned again at *Ann.* 14.12.3; seemingly different from the concubine of Claudius with the same name at 11.30.1.

⁸ Note that in his translation A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus. The Annals* (Indianapolis, IN, 2004), 223 includes a 'but' to connect the sentences.

operative between *stetit* and *in Lolliam* in a sense opens a path for Agrippina's anger to carry into the actions of the next sentence, while also punctuating the contrast: in Lolliam's case, unlike in Calpurnia's, the anger of Agrippina did not stop short of lethal action.

Scholars have long noted that the description of Agrippina's anger in 12.22.3 closely recalls Ovid's use of nearly identical language in a very similar context in *Tristia* Book 2.⁹ This is the poet's long address to Augustus, in which he defends the *Ars amatoria* and requests reprieve from his exile in Tomis. In making his case to the *princeps*, Ovid writes (*Tr.* 2.121–8):

corruit haec igitur Musis accepta sub uno
 sed non exiguo crimine lapsa domus:
 atque ea sic lapsa est, ut surgere, si modo laesi
 ematurerit Caesaris ira, queat.
 cuius in euentu poenae clementia tanta est, 125
 uenerit ut nostro lenior illa metu.
 uita data est, **citraque necem tua constitit ira**,
 o princeps parce uiribus use tuis!

And so this house of mine, though welcomed by the Muses, has come crashing down, after collapsing under the weight of a single—though not thin—charge. And just as it has fallen, so it may be able to rise up, if only the injured Caesar's anger may soften. In the event the clemency of this punishment is so great that it has turned out to be lighter than I had feared. Life was granted to me, and your anger stopped short of death, o *princeps*, you who are sparing in the use of your strength!

After proposing that Augustus soften and rethink the exile, Ovid adroitly turns to credit the *princeps* for the leniency of his initial sentence of exile, with a conspicuous pivot to the second person in the words 'your anger stopped short of death, o *princeps*.' So the poet highlights Augustus' great strength and capacity for anger but also his moderation and discretion in deploying that strength and indulging that anger.¹⁰ The pentameter o *princeps parce uiribus use tuis* ('o *princeps*, you who are sparing in the use of your strength') neatly captures both the emperor's awesome powers and his restraint.

Tacitus' *ira Agrippinae citra ultima stetit* in *Ann.* 12.22.3 clearly evokes Ovid's *citraque necem tua constitit ira* in *Tr.* 2.127. In each statement *ira* is the subject of a form of *sto*, a *iunctura* that Tacitus employs only here;¹¹ and Tacitus' prepositional phrase *citra ultima*, his only use of *citra* in the *Annals*,¹² is synonymous with Ovid's

⁹ See A. Draeger, *Über Syntax und Stil des Tacitus* (Leipzig, 1882²), 129; A. Gerber and A. Greef (edd.), *Lexicon Taciteum* (Leipzig, 1903), 171; H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus. Vol. II: Books XI–XVI* (Oxford, 1907), 86 ('an evident reminiscence'); Ginsburg (n. 1), 24; and J. Ingleheart, *A Commentary on Ovid, Tristia 2* (Oxford, 2010), 143. I have found no scholarship offering interpretative analysis of the correspondence.

¹⁰ On the mixed messaging in this line, see Ingleheart (n. 9), 143: 'on one reading, Augustus shows the self-restraint expected of leaders ... On the other hand, death is the ultimate penalty, and it is hardly praising Augustus to mention his *ira* in the context of his choice of punishment.' See similarly the readings of *Tristia* Book 2 as a whole by G. Williams, *Banished Voices: Readings in Ovid's Exile Poetry* (Cambridge, 1994), 154–209; and A. Barchiesi, *The Poet and the Prince: Ovid and Augustan Discourse* (Berkeley, 1997), 24–34, concluding: 'Everything the poem says of and to the prince lends itself to a double interpretation, depending on the angle from which it is looked at' (30).

¹¹ Ovid does so two other times, at *Met.* 6.627 (*infractaque constitit ira*) and *Pont.* 1.4.44 (*perstiterit laesi si grauis ira dei*).

¹² Tacitus uses the word elsewhere at *Agr.* 1.3, 10.4, 25.3 and 35.2; *Germ.* 16.3; *Dial.* 27.2 and 41.5; and *Hist.* 3.23.3.

citra necem. Just as significantly, the contexts of the two passages are nearly identical, as both authors are addressing specifically whether the grievance of the individual in power (Augustus and then Agrippina) will stop short of capital punishment and be content with exile for the accused—or not.

Through this careful allusion, then, Agrippina is equated with a figure of imperial sway no less authoritative than Augustus himself. The anger of Ovid's addressee Augustus (*tua ... ira; Caesaris ira* above in *Tr.* 2.124), who had the agency to proceed or to show restraint, carries over and lives on, taking on a new driving force as Agrippina's anger (*ira Agrippinae*). Like Ovid's Augustus, Tacitus' Agrippina has an anger with the power and the range of movement to make the ultimate decisions, to determine life or death.

The lines of connection that Tacitus draws between his Agrippina and Ovid's Augustus also point towards an important contrast. Scholars have focussed on the historian's depiction of Agrippina in *Annals* Books 12–14 as a transgressive figure, one who crosses boundaries between male and female, who attains great power but also hurtles out of control, swept up by the *muliebris impotentia* ('womanly unruliness') that Narcissus attributes to her at 12.57.2.¹³ In this vein Judith Ginsburg has written of Agrippina's destruction of Lollia in 12.22: 'Once again, both Agrippina's masculine and her feminine qualities emerge: on the one hand, she is moved by a ferocity and an anger that are more often associated with men; on the other, it is female jealousy that motivates her behavior.'¹⁴ And when we look at the actions of her anger in 12.22.3 alongside those of Augustus' anger in *Tristia* Book 2, another instance of boundary-crossing comes into focus. Ovid's Augustus was sparing in the use of his strength (recall *parce uiribus use tuis* in *Tr.* 2.128); his anger had limits. The gesture of stopping (*constitit*) on one side of the death penalty (*citraque necem*), without crossing over, is a firm and final one—and exile is deemed a sufficient punishment for Ovid. We have seen that Agrippina's anger comes to what is essentially an identical stop in the case of Calpurnia (*citra ultima stetit*); but that boundary is immediately transgressed in the following sentence detailing the assassination mission to Lollia: *in Lolliam mittitur tribunus, a quo ad mortem adigeretur*. Following the adversative asyndeton, the opening accusative prepositional phrase *in Lolliam* captures the rapid motion towards and against Agrippina's victim, as do the hurried images expressed by the swift expressions *mittitur tribunus* and then *ad mortem adigeretur*, with the repetition of *ad* accentuating the rush to execution. Unlike for Ovid in *Tristia* Book 2, for Lollia the punishment of exile is not sufficient. The anger of Agrippina crosses over that intertextual and syntactic point of stopping, heads to her chief rival's place of exile, and expeditiously exacts lethal punishment.

The transgressiveness displayed when Agrippina's anger blows past the limits her intertextual forbear—and historical great-grandfather—had honoured also foreshadows her eventual doom. In 59 C.E. Nero, set off by his mother's imperiousness and usurpation of his own standing, will plot her assassination, which Tacitus narrates over the opening chapters of Book 14. After recounting the matricide, he writes of

¹³ See Santoro L'Hoir (n. 1), 17–25 on the 'special type of abuse' (17) that the term *muliebris impotentia* implies in Latin rhetoric, with a focus on the depiction of Agrippina at 21–3. See too K. Milnor, 'Women and domesticity', in V.E. Pagán (ed.), *A Companion to Tacitus* (Malden, MA, 2012), 458–75, at 469–70; and Gillespie (n. 1), 283 on how '*impotentia* marks [Agrippina] as a woman who tests the boundaries of her authority, often in a political context'.

¹⁴ Ginsburg (n. 1), 23.

Nero's efforts to slander Agrippina and separate himself from her deeds (14.11–12).¹⁵ Here we read that 'he even permitted the ashes of Lollia Paulina to be brought back [to Rome] and a tomb to be built' (*etiam Lolliae Paulinae cineres reportari sepulcrumque exstrui permisit*, 14.12.4), restorative honours that read as direct responses to the punishments of exile and murder abroad. This detail is revealing of the long shadow of Agrippina's destruction of Lollia ten years earlier and perhaps, since it is included in the treatment of Nero's post-matricide political messaging, of a long-held public perception that the banishment and assassination of Lollia were undue and excessive. While underscoring the notion that Agrippina's unleashing of her un-Augustan anger on Lollia was emblematic of her transgressiveness, the evocation of the murder just after the account of Agrippina's own murder also compels us to see the former as a harbinger of the latter, a flashpoint in both the empress' consolidation of power and the overreach that spelled her eventual ruin.

While pointing to Agrippina's personal downfall later in the *Annals*, the intertextual contrast between Agrippina's boundary-crossing anger and Augustus' temperate anger in *Tristia* Book 2 also speaks to a larger arc in the work. Francesca Santoro L'Hoir has read the depiction of Agrippina in *Annals* Books 12–14 as key to understanding Tacitus' characterization of the Julio-Claudian dynasty as a whole, writing that 'the continuous female ascent and usurpation of male authority—a reversal of the natural order of the universe—has predicted the inevitable descent and destruction of the Julio-Claudian dynasty.'¹⁶ Indeed, the end result of Agrippina's actions in Book 12 is the calamitous rule of Nero and, in turn, the end of the family's reign. In this light Tacitus' allusion in *Ann.* 12.22.3 to *Ov. Tr.* 2.127 is all the more revealing, marking as it does a distinction from the very founder of the imperial line. While at the beginning of the dynasty the fearsome but restrained anger of Augustus had communicated potency, the unrestrained anger of Agrippina represents unruliness and ultimately the loss of power for the Julio-Claudians. We come to see that the transformation of the state that Agrippina carries out (recall *uersa ... ciuitas* at 12.7.3) not only harks back to Augustus' own transformation of the state into a dynastic autocracy (*uerso ciuitatis statu*, *Ann.* 1.4.1) but also threatens to unravel that very accomplishment.¹⁷ This trajectory from Augustus to Agrippina, from great-grandfather to great-granddaughter, from a dynasty's beginning to its undoing is tautly captured in the allusion to *Tristia* Book 2.

* * *

It is worth recalling that *Tristia* Book 2 includes a large section on the place of Ovid's poetry within the Greek and the Roman literary traditions. As part of his defence for

¹⁵ T. Luke, 'From crisis to consensus: salutary ideology and the murder of Agrippina', *JCS* 38 (2013), 207–28 considers multiple sources on the aftermath and Nero's political strategy after the assassination.

¹⁶ Santoro L'Hoir (n. 1), 25.

¹⁷ I am thankful to Christopher Whitton for pointing out the verbal parallel between *Ann.* 1.4.1 and 12.7.3. On the appearances and echoes of Augustus in the *Annals*, see H. Willrich, 'Augustus bei Tacitus', *Hermes* 62 (1927), 54–78; S. Thom, 'What's in a name? Tacitus on Augustus', *AClass* 51 (2008), 145–61; E. Cowan, 'Tacitus, Tiberius, and Augustus', *CIAnt* 28 (2009), 179–210; and C. Gillespie, 'Agrippina the Elder and the memory of Augustus in Tacitus' *Annals*', *CW* 114 (2020), 59–84 (80: 'The memory of Augustus emerges as a site of conflict in Tacitus' text').

writing the *Ars amatoria*, he commits over one hundred lines to the discussion of literary precedents in Greek (361–420) and Latin (421–66) that also dealt with matters of love and sex. These, Ovid explicitly states, are the authors he has succeeded (*his ego successi*, 467).¹⁸ The passage thus emerges as a sort of Ovidian literary manifesto on his understanding of the tradition and his place in it. When in *Annales* Book 12 Tacitus evokes an earlier moment in this Ovidian poem of self-fashioning, is the historian making a similar statement about literary succession? Might the allusion at 12.22.3, however compressed, speak to a broader engagement with Ovid?

Readers of Tacitus have focussed on the historian's adaptation of language and imagery from a number of poetic predecessors, most of all Virgil and Lucan.¹⁹ His engagement with Ovid's language seems to be more limited,²⁰ but we have seen here that the most celebrated and controversial poet of the Augustan era also has a meaningful spot on the intertextual palette of the historian of Augustus' successors. While Ovid had told the tale of Augustus' anger, its power and its capacity for restraint, Tacitus un-checks, perpetuates and creatively stretches out the story of that anger in his narration of Agrippina's rise, overreach and fall. In the exploration of this dynastic arc, Tacitus' writing on the Julio-Claudians thus stands as an extension but also a transformation of Ovid's own consideration of the potent forces latent in Augustus and his burgeoning regime. Moreover, it is surely significant that in *Ann.* 12.22 Tacitus chooses to direct the reader to the banished Ovid of the *Tristia*, and so to bring to mind his status as a Roman author writing from the outside looking in. This element of Ovid's identity—the onetime insider who then chose to showcase, even flaunt, his vantage point from the outskirts—doubtless appealed to Tacitus, who himself is constantly negotiating and leveraging his position as insider/outsider to the seat of imperial power.²¹ The evocation of Ovid the exiled and endangered victim of the emperor brings to the passage a cachet in critiquing imperial hubris and heavy-handedness that few other intertextual models carry. We might say that the allusion points to a sort of ideological intertextuality operative between Ovid and Tacitus, of the sort that Ellen O'Gorman has discussed as existing among Thucydides, Sallust and Tacitus.²²

¹⁸ On Ovid's self-fashioning in *Tristia* Book 2, see Williams (n. 10), 193–201; Barchiesi (n. 10), 24–34; and B. Gibson, 'Ovid on reading: reading Ovid. Reception in Ovid *Tristia* II', *JRS* 89 (1999), 19–37 with a discussion at 34 of his effort at 2.467–70 to 'affirm his canonical status within the history of Roman poetry'. See too J. Ingleheart, 'The literary "successor": Ovidian metapoetry and metaphor', *CQ* 60 (2010), 167–72 on 2.467–70 and Ovid's metapoetic uses of forms of *succedo* here and elsewhere.

¹⁹ See e.g. B. Walker, *The Annals of Tacitus: A Study in the Writing of History* (Manchester, 1952), 154–7; M. Lauletta, *L'intreccio degli stili in Tacito: Intertestualità prosa-poesia nella letteratura storiografica* (Naples, 1998); A. Foucher, *Historia proxima poetis: l'influence de la poésie épique sur le style des historiens latins de Salluste à Ammien Marcellin* (Brussels, 2000); T. Joseph, *Tacitus the Epic Successor: Virgil, Lucan, and the Narrative of Civil War in the Histories* (Leiden, 2012); M. Daly, 'Seeing the Caesar in Germanicus: reading Tacitus' *Annals* with Lucan's *Bellum Civile*', *Journal of Ancient History* 8 (2020), 103–26; and L.D. Ginsberg, 'Allusive prodigia: Caesar's comets in Neronian Rome (Tac. *Ann.* 15.47)', *TAPhA* 150 (2020), 231–49.

²⁰ There has been little scholarly discussion. For brief considerations, see R.T. Bruère, 'Ovid, *Met.* XV, 1–5 and Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.11.1', *CPh* 53 (1958), 34; Lauletta (n. 19), 202 on *Dial.* 41.5 and *Fast.* 1.225; and R. Ash, *Tacitus Histories Book II* (Cambridge, 2007), index s.v. 'Ovidian language'. Tacitus names Ovid once, at *Dial.* 12.6, where Maternus cites his *Medea*, along with Varius' *Thyestes*, as examples of poems that won their authors fame.

²¹ See D. Sailor, *Writing and Empire in Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2008) and T. Joseph, 'The figure of the eyewitness in Tacitus' *Histories*', *Latomus* 78 (2019), 68–101.

²² E. O'Gorman, 'Intertextuality, ideology, and truth: re-reading Kristeva through Roman historiography', *Histos Working Papers* 2014.01: 1–9.

A possible marker of the meaningful afterlife of Ovid in Tacitus' writing appears in the latter's literary debut, the *Agricola*. The final words of Tacitus' biography of his father-in-law read: 'Agricola, his story told to posterity and handed down, will be a survivor' (*Agricola posteritati narratus et traditus superstes erit*, *Agr.* 46.4). A.J. Woodman describes the concluding pair of words *superstes erit* as 'an Ovidian tag', as the poet had used the phrase of himself and his legacy at *Am.* 1.15.42 and again at *Tr.* 3.7.50.²³ Tacitus also uses the term *superstes* of himself earlier in the *Agricola* (3.2), and so at the work's conclusion we see what is 'the final comparison between biographer and his subject: just as T[acitus] was a *superstes* after his metaphorical death in Domitian's reign (3.2), so A[gricola] will also be a *superstes* thanks to the power of literature'.²⁴ In this way the final sentence of the *Agricola* compels the reader to think of not just Agricola the subject but also Tacitus the author as one who will live on. And if Ovid's uses of *superstes erit* come to mind, the reader might imagine Tacitus' literary survival together and in lively rapport with Ovid's enduring afterlife. In the perpetuation and transformation at *Ann.* 12.22.3 of the Ovidian imagery at *Tr.* 2.127, the dynamic possibilities of Tacitus' engagement with his fellow survivor become apparent.

College of the Holy Cross

TIMOTHY A. JOSEPH
tjoseph@holycross.edu

²³ *Am.* 1.15.41–2 *ergo etiam cum me supremus adederit ignis, | uiuam, parsque mei multa superstes erit; Tr.* 3.5.69–70 *quilibet hanc saeuo uitam mihi finiat ense, | me tamen extincto fama superstes erit.*

²⁴ A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus Agricola* (Cambridge, 2014), 329–30. See too V. Rimell, 'I will survive (you): Martial and Tacitus on regime change', in A. König and C. Whitton (edd.), *Roman Literature under Nerva, Trajan and Hadrian: Literary Interactions, AD 96–138* (Cambridge, 2018), 63–85, at 78–9, also comparing Mart. 10.2.8.