

## A STYLISH EXIT: MARCUS TERENTIUS' SWANSONG (TACITUS, *ANNALS* 6.8), CURTIUS RUFUS AND VIRGIL\*

### ABSTRACT

*Within the narrative for A.D. 32, Tacitus recreates a spirited speech delivered before the Senate by the eques Marcus Terentius (Ann. 6.8), defending himself retrospectively for having been a 'friend' of Sejanus. This speech, the only extended speech in oratio recta to feature in Annals Book 6, is historiographically rich and suggestive.*

*This article first analyses the speech as a compelling piece of oratory in its own right. It then explores the provocative mirroring of another important speech in Curtius Rufus (7.1.19–40). This is where the general Amyntas, defending himself before Alexander the Great against charges of participation in an alleged conspiracy, refuses to deny his friendship with the conspirator Philotas (now dead). Scholars have rightly acknowledged the significant intertextuality of these two speeches in Curtius Rufus and Tacitus. Yet the interest in this mirroring between Amyntas and Terentius has overshadowed another important intertext. This article demonstrates how Tacitus also engages with a programmatic moment from the opening of Virgil's Aeneid when Aeolus is cajoled by Juno to unleash a devastating storm. Terentius wittily casts Tiberius as a powerful divinity whose whims had to be obeyed and himself as a helpless Aeolus doing his will.*

*This article demonstrates that the two passages from Virgil and Curtius Rufus underpinning Terentius' speech work together powerfully, challenging Tacitus' readers to reflect on the difficulties of 'speaking to power' and on the compromises involved for men like Terentius in negotiating the complex political realities of the imperial system.*

**Keywords:** Tacitus; Curtius Rufus; Virgil; Sejanus; Marcus Terentius; Philotas; Amyntas; Aeolus; Juno; speeches; conspiracy; historiography; speaking to power

Within the narrative for A.D. 32, Tacitus recreates a spirited speech delivered before the Senate by the *eques* Marcus Terentius (*Ann.* 6.8).<sup>1</sup> Although Terentius is not known beyond this episode, this is his moment in the sun. Here, Tacitus illuminates for posterity the principled actions of a brave man candidly defending himself because (like many

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<sup>1</sup> *PIR*<sup>2</sup> 8.18 no. 64. R.H. Martin, *Tacitus Annals V and VI* (Warminster, 2001), 121–4 and A.J. Woodman, *The Annals of Tacitus Books 5 and 6* (Cambridge, 2017), 121–6 discuss the speech. Dio covers the same episode at 58.19.1–5 and includes a very much shorter version of this same speech (also in *oratio recta*). Martin (this note), 121 is confident that Dio's speech 'clearly derives from Tacitus'. Woodman (this note), 121 agrees: 'the consensus seems to be that on this occasion Dio used T.'

others) he had previously been a ‘friend’ of Sejanus. Yet, whereas most had frantically tried to distance themselves from their previous association with Sejanus, now disgraced and dead after his dramatic downfall (18 October A.D. 31), Terentius instead goes on the attack: he openly ‘admits’ his *amicitia* with Sejanus and suggests that in fact he has only jumped on the bandwagon and mirrored everyone else in courting this powerful intimate of the Emperor Tiberius.<sup>2</sup> As with all speeches in Tacitus, this one contains much that is of historiographical interest, as this article will explore further.<sup>3</sup> Since it is ‘the only extended oration in book 6’, it is a significant case-study.<sup>4</sup>

Sejanus fell a long way (and rapidly), triggering danger for his former associates (or indeed for anyone vulnerable to attack on such a charge, whether or not they had been closely associated with Sejanus). Terentius, facing an imminent threat to his life, might have opted to appeal for *clementia* without unmasking an awkward and embarrassing truth (that is, that if he were guilty, then they were *all* guilty by association). Yet by speaking in realistic terms and openly revealing the political reality brushed under the carpet by the silent majority, Terentius potentially breaks a central unwritten rule of the principate (at least the principate as represented by Tacitus), namely that artful pretence (and staying alive) is better than uncomfortable candour (and embracing death).<sup>5</sup> His ruthlessly honest speech is high risk, overturning doublespeak—and becoming a beacon of honesty in an otherwise murky rhetorical landscape.<sup>6</sup>

None the less, Terentius’ impressive candour still allows scope for historiographical subtlety: as we will see, Tacitus’ version of the speech has embedded within it two sets of significant and expressive literary allusions both of which engage with the issues relevant to ‘speaking to power’. In this article, I will first consider Terentius the orator

<sup>2</sup> Sejanus’ sharp, sudden *peripeteia* provoked reactions in the literary tradition (Sen. *Tranq.* 11.11; Juv. 10.56–114 on the futility of striving for political pre-eminence).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, N.P. Miller, ‘Dramatic speech in Tacitus’, *AJPh* 85 (1964), 279–96; J.N. Adams, ‘The vocabulary of the speeches in Tacitus’ historical works’, *BICS* 20 (1973), 124–44; N.P. Miller, ‘Dramatic speech in the Roman historians’, *G&R* 22 (1975), 45–57; E. Aubrion, *Rhétorique et histoire chez Tacite* (Metz, 1985), 491–678; E. Keitel, ‘Homeric antecedents to the *cohortatio* in the ancient historians’, *CW* 80 (1986–1987), 153–72; J. Dangel, ‘Les discours chez Tacite: rhétorique et imitation créatrice’, *Ktema* 14 (1989), 291–300; M.H. Hansen, ‘The battle exhortation in ancient historiography: fact or fiction?’, *Historia* 42 (1993), 161–80; O. Devillers, *L’art de la persuasion dans les Annales de Tacite* (Brussels, 1995), 195–261; R. Brock, ‘Versions, “inversions” and evasions: classical historiography and the “published” speech’, *PLLS* 8 (1995), 209–24; A. Laird, *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power: Speech Presentation in Latin Literature* (Oxford, 1999), 116–52; D.S. Levene, ‘Speeches in the *Historiae*’, in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2009), 212–24; R. Mayer, ‘Oratory in Tacitus’ *Annals*’, in D. Berry and A. Erskine (eds.), *Form and Function in Roman Oratory* (Cambridge, 2010), 281–93 and D. Pausch (ed.), *Stimmen der Geschichte: Funktionen von Reden in der antiken Historiographie* (Berlin and New York, 2010).

<sup>4</sup> Martin (n. 1), 121.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Tacitus’ reflections (*Agr.* 42.4) about productive collaboration vs futile resistance (often culminating in an *ambitiosa mors*). See further W. Turpin, ‘Tacitus, Stoic *exempla*, and the *praecipuum munus Annalium*’, *CLAnt* 27 (2008), 359–404, especially 396–7.

<sup>6</sup> On doublespeak, see S. Bartsch, *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian* (Cambridge, MA and London, 1994). F.M. Ahl, ‘The art of safe criticism in Greece and Rome’, *AJPh* 105 (1984), 174–208 is an important discussion. See too H. Haynes, ‘Tacitus’ dangerous word’, *CLAnt* 23 (2004), 33–61; A. Gallia, ‘*Potentes* and *potentia* in Tacitus’ *Dialogus de oratoribus*’, *TAPhA* 139 (2009), 169–206, T. Strunk, ‘Offending the powerful: Tacitus’ *Dialogus de oratoribus* and safe criticism’, *Mnemosyne* 63 (2010), 241–67; and A. Dressler, ‘Poetics of conspiracy and hermeneutics of suspicion in Tacitus’ *Dialogus de oratoribus*’, *CLAnt* 32 (2013), 1–34. On speaking truth to power in Tacitus, see E. O’Gorman, *Tacitus’ History of Politically Effective Speech: Truth to Power* (London, 2020).

and how he deploys arguments within his speech in Tacitus; I will then trace the significant and provocative mirroring of another important speech in Curtius Rufus (also taking into account the relative dates of Curtius Rufus and Tacitus); and finally, I will direct the spotlight at Tacitus' remarkable and meaningful engagement with a powerful and programmatic moment in Virgil's *Aeneid*. As I will demonstrate, this vibrant intertextual web of prose and poetry taken together is highly expressive, raising wider issues about Tacitus' creative historiography and its impact on readers.

## 1. TERENCE'S SPEECH IN TACITUS

Tacitus introduces the speech by emphasizing that, although Terentius' case was worthy of recognition, unfortunately it had been neglected by other historians, tired out by the steady stream of similar punishments being inflicted and concerned that such narratives might bore their readers (*Ann.* 6.7.5).<sup>7</sup> Despite the superficially apologetic tone of this introduction, Tacitus is elegantly setting up a competition, both with other historians and even with himself, since 'the present speech also resembles the incomplete speech delivered by an unidentified senator' and partially preserved at *Ann.* 5.6.2–3 (A.D. 31).<sup>8</sup> The end of this earlier (incomplete) speech comes just after the lacuna of indeterminate length (and the loss of almost three years of material from the narrative of Tiberius' principate). Although the earlier speaker is unknown because of the lacunose text, the situation is almost identical, as the man defends himself for his association with Sejanus before, at the finale of the speech, celebrating the *egregius finis* (suicide) which he himself is about to deliver. There is therefore typically artful Tacitean narrative complexity in the framing which primes us to expect that Terentius too will come to a similarly sticky end and commit suicide. Tacitus presents the incident as follows (*Ann.* 6.8):<sup>9</sup>

Nam ea tempestate qua Seiani amicitiam ceteri falso exuerant, ausus est eques Romanus M. Terentius, ob id reus, amplecti, ad hunc modum apud senatum ordiendo: 'Fortunae quidem meae fortasse minus expedit agnoscere crimen quam abnuere, sed, utcumque casura res est, fatebor et fuisse me Seiano amicum et ut essem expetisse et, postquam adeptus eram, laetatum. [2] Videram collegam patris regendis praetoriis cohortibus, mox urbis et militiae munia simul obeuntem. Illius propinqui et adfines honoribus augebantur; ut quisque Seiano intimus, ita ad Caesaris amicitiam ualidus; contra quibus infensus esset, metu ac sordibus conflictabantur. [3] Nec quemquam exemplo adsumo: cunctos qui nouissimi consilii expertes fuimus meo unius discrimine defendam.

'Non enim Seianum Vulsiniensem set Claudiae et Iuliae domus partem, quas adfinitate occupauerat, tuum, Caesar, generum, tui consulatus socium, tua officia in re publica capessentem colebamus. [4] Non est nostrum aestimare quem supra ceteros et quibus de causis extollas: tibi summum rerum iudicium di dedere, nobis obsequii gloria relicta est. Spectamus porro quae coram habentur, cui ex te opes, honores, quis plurima iuuandi nocendique potentia, quae Seiano fuisse nemo negauerit. Abditos principis sensus et si quid occultius parat exquirere

<sup>7</sup> For similar disingenuous 'apologies' for monotony, see Tac. *Ann.* 4.33.3 and 16.16.1. At the opening of *Ann.* 6.8.1 the introductory *nam* (translated by A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus The Annals* [Indianapolis, 2004] as 'for example') implies that this is one of several notable examples involving *pericula et poenas*.

<sup>8</sup> Martin (n. 1), 121. Only 72 words of this now fragmentary speech survive (cf. 245 words of Terentius' speech).

<sup>9</sup> The text is from Woodman (n. 1).

inlicitum, anceps; nec ideo adsequare.

[5] ‘Ne, patres conscripti, ultimum Seiani diem sed sedecim annos cogitaueritis. Etiam Satrium atque Pomponium uenerabamur; libertis quoque ac ianitoribus eius notescere pro magnifico accipiebatur. [6] Quid ergo? Indistincta haec defensio et promisca dabitur? Immo iustis terminis diuidatur. Insidiae in rem publicam, consilia caedis aduersum imperatorem puniantur; de amicitia et officiis idem finis et te, Caesar, et nos absoluerit.’

For example, at the time when everyone else had fraudulently discarded the friendship of Sejanus, the Roman equestrian M. Terentius, a defendant on that account, dared to embrace it, embarking in this fashion before the senate: ‘Of course it may perchance be less helpful to my chances to admit the charge than to abjure it; but, however the affair turns out, I will acknowledge both that I was a friend of Sejanus and that I sought earnestly to be, and that, after achieving it, I was delighted. [2] I had seen him as his father’s colleague in directing the praetorian cohorts, then meeting the responsibilities of City and soldiery simultaneously. His relatives and connections were being enhanced with honors: intimacy with Sejanus meant an effective claim on Caesar’s friendship; but those to whom he was hostile were constantly belabored by the dread of tatters [*that is, becoming a defendant in court*]. [3] I enlist no individual as an example; all of us who were not participants in his final plan I shall defend at the cost of danger to myself alone.

‘It was not Sejanus the Vulsinian whom we courted, but part of the Claudian and Julian house, which he had taken over by his connection with it; it was your son-in-law, Caesar, the partner of your consulship, performing your duties in public life. [4] It is not ours to assess whom you exalt above the rest and for what reasons: to you the gods have given the supreme judgement of affairs; to us is left the glory of compliance. Further, we look only at what is held in front of us, to whom you dispense wealth and honors, who is possessed of the greatest power for aiding or harming (which no one is likely to deny that Sejanus had); but to search out the hidden feelings of the princes, and his still more concealed intentions, is unlawful, perilous. Nor would you necessarily grasp them.

[5] ‘Do not, conscript fathers, think of Sejanus’ last day but of his sixteen years. We actually used to venerate Satrius and Pomponius; becoming known even to his freedmen and doorkeepers was interpreted as magnificent. [6] Well, then: is this defense to be offered comprehensively and indiscriminately? Rather let it divide along proper lines: plots against the state, schemes of slaughter against the Commander should be punished; but, concerning friendship and its services, let the same boundary absolve both you, Caesar, and us.’<sup>10</sup>

Even before Terentius has started to speak, Tacitus accentuates his daring: so we have the verb *ausus est* even before getting the speaker’s name. The very first word of his speech (*fortuna*) might (after the filter of *ausus est*) momentarily conjure up the proverbial idea of ‘fortune favouring the daring’ (*audentes Fortuna iuuat*, Verg. *Aen.* 10.284).<sup>11</sup> Terentius certainly delivers an arresting and paradoxical opening by pointedly acknowledging that, even though it will potentially threaten his own fortune to admit the ‘charge’ (*crimen*), that is just what he will do.<sup>12</sup> Given that his life is at stake, this is an unexpected but bold opening gambit. Effective too is his tripartite escalation of ‘admissions’ in polysyndeton (*et ... et ... et*), moving first from his concession that he was Sejanus’ friend, then to the bolder revelation that he had actually sought that friendship, and finally (and most spectacularly) to his candid summary that he had been delighted to win this status: that extraordinary word *laetatum* is an

<sup>10</sup> Translated by Woodman (n. 7), 169–70.

<sup>11</sup> S.J. Harrison, *Vergil Aeneid 10* (Oxford, 1991), 149–50 cites Enn. *Ann.* 233 Skutsch and Sen. *Ep.* 94.28. See too Plin. *Ep.* 6.16.11. The earlier speech at Tac. *Ann.* 5.6.2 also introduces the concept of fortune (*uersa est fortuna*) in relation to Sejanus (as Woodman [n. 1], 68 notes, quite possibly alluding in a subtle way to Sejanus’ personal statue of *Fortuna* turning its back on him before his fall; Cass. Dio 58.7.2–3).

<sup>12</sup> The assonance of *fortuna* and *fortasse*, elegantly captured in Woodman’s translation (n. 7), reprises effective usage in Cicero (*Pis.* 71; *Sull.* 73), as Woodman (n. 1) observes.

unexpected sentence finale in this grim setting. In this connection, Woodman points to Quintilian's distinction between a harmless confession (*confessio nihil nocitura*) and a risky one where we admit something damaging precisely in order to show confidence in our cause (*Inst.* 9.2.51): Terentius' candid admission is in this second category, except that previously friendship with Sejanus would not have been damaging (quite the opposite).<sup>13</sup> He then introduces a powerful piece of autopsy (*uideram*, *Ann.* 6.8.2), clarifying that he, Terentius, had seen Sejanus as his father Seius Strabo's colleague as Prefect of the Praetorian Guard and observed that effectively Sejanus and Tiberius had had the same friends and enemies. Here the first-person singular of *uideram* is striking: Terentius lays claim to observe a situation which they had all witnessed, but by avoiding a first-person plural he makes himself stand out from the crowd (cf. *spectamus*, *Ann.* 6.8.4).<sup>14</sup> This sets up a further compelling moment when Terentius says that he will not introduce anybody else as an *exemplum*, but will defend them *all* at the cost of danger to himself *alone* (*Ann.* 6.8.3). By rejecting the familiar forensic route of introducing historical *exempla* from outside the case, Terentius implies that they are currently in uncharted waters.<sup>15</sup> At the same time, by projecting himself as the single brave individual intervening selflessly on everyone's behalf, his altruism still hints at an impressive historical precedent (despite the lack of individual *exempla* available), namely the model of Cicero confronting Catiline, regardless of the danger posed to his own life.<sup>16</sup> By calling Sejanus' activity *nouissimum consilium*, he pushes this line a little further by aligning it with conspiracy.<sup>17</sup> This is another risky move, because, in defending his previous friendship with a 'conspirator', he risks himself being tarred with the same brush. However, he simultaneously makes the point that any one of them could have found themselves in this position: his expressive contrast between *cuncti* and *unus* (Tacitus uses similar rhetorical tricks elsewhere) underscores the fact that Terentius steps out of a group to which actually they all belong.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Woodman (n. 1), 122.

<sup>14</sup> There is a striking movement from the first-person singular to the first-person plural in Terentius' speech: *fortunae meae, fatebor, me, esse, adeptus eram, uideram, adsumo, defendam* (*Ann.* 6.8.1–3) as opposed to *fuimus, colebamus, nostrum, nobis, spectamus, uenerabamur, nos* (*Ann.* 6.8.3–6). This shift elegantly backs up Terentius' basic point about collective guilt. It also mirrors the opening of the *Agricola* where first-person singular (*at nunc narraturo mihi uitam defuncti hominis, Agr.* 1.4) shifts to first-person plurals (*dedimus profecto grande patientiae documentum ... ita nos quid in seruitute ... perdidissemus ... in nostra potestate, Agr.* 2.3), painfully showcasing collective guilt, even if Tacitus is taking more blame than he should: 'The plural verb refers to T. and his contemporaries, especially his fellow-senators, but it disguises the fact that, when the philosophers were banished, T. was almost certainly absent from Rome and could not be held to share in responsibility' (A.J. Woodman with C.S. Kraus, *Tacitus Agricola* [Cambridge, 2014], 80–1).

<sup>15</sup> A.R. Dyck, *Cicero Catilinarians* (Cambridge, 2008), 68 comments: 'Rhetorical theory recognized the example ... as a means of persuasion ... introduced from outside the case (*Quint., Inst.* 5.11.1).'

<sup>16</sup> Cicero's disregard for his own life while confronting Catiline's conspiracy features, for example, at *Cat.* 3.28. Compare the difficulty of finding *qui auderent se et salutem suam in discrimen offerre pro statu ciuitatis et pro communi libertate*, 'men who would dare to expose themselves and their very lives to danger for the stability of our constitution and for the general liberty' (*Sest.* 1). As noted by Woodman with Kraus (n. 14), 90, Cicero saw his return from exile after the conspiracy as the 'start of a second life' (*Att.* 4.1.8) and a 'birthday' (*Att.* 3.20.1).

<sup>17</sup> Whether Sejanus really engaged in conspiracy remains uncertain: '... victims and an informer do not prove treason' (R. Syme, *Tacitus* [Oxford, 1958], 406).

<sup>18</sup> Cf. the lament *tot hominum milibus unum iam reliquum diem*, 'that for so many thousands one day was now left' (*Ann.* 1.65.7). The juxtaposition *meo unius* is also emphatic (Woodman [n. 1] compares Livy 28.28.12).

It is also expressive that Terentius boldly reminds his senatorial audience that they should think *not* about Sejanus' last day but about the sixteen years before that: Woodman compares Terentius' focus on *sedecim anni* and a memorable *praeteritio* of Velleius Paterculus, who explains that he will not narrate in detail all Tiberius' 'accomplishments of these past sixteen years' (*horum sedecim annorum opera*, 2.126.1).<sup>19</sup> Terentius' focus on sixteen years in Tacitus and the evocation of the Velleian intertext intertwine Tiberius and Sejanus as they are represented as dominating politics in tandem over an extended period of time. It is possible too that Terentius' argument may evoke (anachronistically) the prologue of Tacitus' *Agricola* (3.2).<sup>20</sup> This is where Tacitus looks back over the last fifteen years, *quindecim annos* (*grande mortalis aevi spatium*, 'a large portion of a human life') when many men fell to chance circumstances (*fortuitis casibus*) and when Domitian's savagery had eliminated the bravest, so that the few 'survivors' (*superstites*) are only just now regaining their voices.<sup>21</sup> Of course, fifteen years is not sixteen years, but the *Agricola* passage none the less presents a suggestive parallel scenario where prolonged oppression (under Domitian [*Agr.*]/Sejanus–Tiberius [*Ann.*]) is halted by a violent *peripeteia* (facilitated by an imperial woman, Domitian's wife Domitia [*Agr.*]/Tiberius' sister-in-law Antonia [*Ann.*]) and where one outspoken individual (Tacitus [*Agr.*]/Terentius [*Ann.*]) reflects candidly on communal experience of oppression. The dynamics which underpin Terentius' speech in *Annals* Book 6 project a very similar trajectory to Tacitus' authorial overview at the opening of the *Agricola*, even if the timbre of the authorial voice in the prologue of the *Agricola* is perhaps in some ways less candid and more elusive than the outspoken voice of Terentius is here.

Terentius also stands out because he reworks (with *uariatio* and a positive spin) a compelling theme from Tacitus' earlier *Histories*. This is the trope whereby in the perverted moral climate of civil war, individuals distastefully and openly even claim *credit* for treachery (*Hist.* 2.60.1, 3.86.2, 5.24.1). Terentius instead showcases his friendship, even when the focus of that friendship, Sejanus, has been such a corrosive presence in the state, as they can now belatedly acknowledge. We can also compare the specific example of Marius Celsus, who stridently claims credit before Otho for his loyalty to the dead Galba: *Celsus constanter seruatae erga Galbam fidei crimen confessus, exemplum ultro imputauit*, 'bravely pleading guilty to the charge of fidelity to Galba, Celsus voluntarily claimed credit for setting an example' (*Hist.* 1.71.2). Celsus is not exactly a hero because (as Tacitus makes clear) Otho is cynically engaging in a publicity stunt so that he can win a reputation for *clementia*.<sup>22</sup> None the less, in parading his loyalty to Galba, the tarnished Celsus seems (however imperfectly) to be trying to embrace outspokenness and to deliver the same sort of exemplary steadfastness as Terentius actually does succeed in delivering.<sup>23</sup> Tacitus' paradoxical language stands out, as the unexpected oddity of Celsus confessing to a charge of *loyalty* (rather than

<sup>19</sup> Woodman (n. 1), 125: 'Terentius' 16 years are A.D. 15–30 inclusive i.e. excluding the part-years of Tib.'s accession and Sejanus' execution. Velleius' 16 years are likely to be A.D. 14–29 inclusive, unless he projected himself counting twelve-month periods backwards from some point within A.D. 30.' Velleius' history was published in A.D. 30 before Sejanus' fall.

<sup>20</sup> See Woodman with Kraus (n. 14), 88–91 on this passage.

<sup>21</sup> There is tension in the notion that, although Tacitus in the *Agricola* is one of the *superstites*, it is unclear whether Terentius himself will survive the current danger.

<sup>22</sup> C. Damon, *Tacitus Histories Book I* (Cambridge, 2003), 244 notes that Tacitus' version of the scene, 'a "reconciliation comedy" (Heubner *ad loc.*), is less favourable to Otho than Plutarch's'.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Polyb. 38.4.1–2 criticizing the timid man fearful of free speech who is not a sincere friend,



treachery) reflects wider linguistic patterns in Tacitus where, as Plass emphasizes, ‘strange things happen to language itself ... and the double take forced on the ear by such sentences unmasks what is wrong’.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, it is important to stress that Terentius’ defence blends powerful elements of forensic technique from the wider rhetorical tradition. First, he comes close to suggesting that formally this is a *honesta causa*, where the very nature of the case removes the need for a defence (*Rhet. Her.* 1.5; *Cic. Inu. rhet.* 1.20; *Quint. Inst.* 4.1.40).<sup>25</sup> Second, in pointing the finger at the Emperor *Tiberius* for creating the uncomfortable circumstances where everyone in Rome (like it or not) had to embrace *amicitia* with Sejanus, Terentius’ defence also uses a technique similar to those speeches where the defence lawyer presents the jury with an alternative suspect. This is a form of ‘counter-accusation’ (*anticategoria*; *Quint. Inst.* 3.10.4, 7.2.9), a technique which Cicero memorably used at *Rosc. Am.* 83–123 in relation to the alternative suspects Magnus and Capito.<sup>26</sup> And after Terentius has finished speaking, Tacitus comments positively on his *constantia*, announcing with some satisfaction that unusually the vindictive accusers themselves then suffered exile or death (*Ann.* 6.9.1).<sup>27</sup> Remarkably, Terentius’ speech allowed him to escape the threat posed by the opportunistic and morally flawed prosecutors.<sup>28</sup> His steadfastness amidst mortal danger recalls positive precedents such as Seneca the Younger, *Ep.* 120. Here, Seneca celebrates consistency as an ideal trait of the Stoic *sapiens* and condemns inconsistency (*fluctuatio*) as the *maximum indicium ... malae mentis*, ‘greatest indication of an evil mind’ (*Ep.* 120.20).<sup>29</sup> Terentius seems to combine the uplifting roles of articulate, courageous orator and idealized Stoic *sapiens* in one impressive figure. And last but not least, he breaks the usual pattern of such cases in Tacitus’ narrative (and overturns the expectations raised by the earlier speech at *Ann.* 5.6.2–3). As Martin observes: ‘not only does an innocent man secure his acquittal by his *constantia*: for once, the tables are turned, and those who sought to capitalize on their hoped-for-victim’s friendship with Sejanus are themselves accused and condemned to exile or death.’<sup>30</sup> Tacitus only reveals the satisfying outcome after the end of the speech (*Ann.* 6.9.1), whereas Dio defuses any suspense by making it clear before the speech that Terentius was spared (58.19.3).<sup>31</sup>

and the bad citizen who omits the truth because he fears a hostile reaction. Terentius is the polar opposite.

<sup>24</sup> P. Plass, *Wit and the Writing of History: The Rhetoric of Historiography in Imperial Rome* (Madison, WI, 1988), 47.

<sup>25</sup> H. Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric: A Foundation for Literary Study* (Leiden, 1998), §64 (including the point that ‘the opposing party represents a *causa turpis*’). See too Woodman (n. 1), 122: ‘Honourableness was intrinsic to friendship (*Cic. Part. or.* 88, *honestati, quae maxime spectatur in amicitia*), and much of Terentius’ defence will rest on the implicit assumption that his friendship with Sejanus was honourable, as Quintilian recommends (7.4.4).’

<sup>26</sup> Lausberg (n. 25), §197: ‘In response to the prosecutor’s accusation of *Fecisti*, the defendant thus charges the prosecutor with *Fecisti*—the same particular (identical) *crimen*’; A.M. Riggsby, *Crime and Community in Ciceronian Rome* (Austin, 1999), 38, 58; A.R. Dyck, *Cicero Pro Roscio Amerino* (Cambridge, 2010), 76, 147–50.

<sup>27</sup> ‘*constantia* refers not so much to the speech as to the character or views of the speaker’ (Woodman [n. 1], 127). In Stoic thought, *constantia* was a virtue.

<sup>28</sup> The formal charge against Terentius was presumably *maiestas*.

<sup>29</sup> C. Star, ‘Commanding *constantia* in Senecan tragedy’, *TAPhA* 136 (2006), 207–44, especially 211–16, usefully discusses this letter.

<sup>30</sup> Martin (n. 1), 121.

<sup>31</sup> Dio’s short version of the speech is as follows: ‘ὄστ’ εἰ μὲν ἐκεῖνος ὀρθῶς’ εἶπεν ‘ἐποίησεν

## 2. AMYNTAS' SPEECH IN CURTIUS RUFUS

There is clearly much that is rhetorically striking about Terentius' defence. Yet so far the speech has primarily attracted scholarly attention for one main reason, namely its significant points of contact with a speech in Quintus Curtius Rufus' *Historiae Alexandri Magni* (7.1.19–40).<sup>32</sup> This (much longer) address occurs in the aftermath of a conspiracy against Alexander the Great, allegedly formed by Philotas, who is arrested and imprisoned.<sup>33</sup> Although Philotas vigorously denies the charges (Curt. 6.10), he is tortured until he confesses, and finally he is stoned to death (Curt. 6.11).<sup>34</sup> The story does not end there however (at least in Curtius Rufus and Appian). After Philotas' violent death, his close friends fall under suspicion, including the Macedonian general, Amyntas, who, on the day before Philotas' alleged conspiracy was discovered, had unleashed some bad-tempered remarks on an unrelated matter, after getting annoyed about an order he had received to hand over some horses to associates who had lost theirs (Curt. 7.1.15). As a result of this outburst, Amyntas later finds himself charged as a co-conspirator. Yet in a compelling speech (Curt. 7.1.19–40) Curtius Rufus' Amyntas (whose very name means 'defender' in Greek) defends himself before Alexander against charges of conspiracy.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, Amyntas actively goes on the offensive by refusing to deny his friendship with Philotas. This was on the grounds that *everyone* at court (including Alexander the Great) had sought association with the man. Here is the relevant section (Curt. 7.1.26–30) from his (much longer) speech:

'... Amicitiam, quae nobis cum Philota fuit, adeo non eo infitias, ut expetisse quoque nos magnosque ex ea fructus percepisse confitear. [27] An uero Parmenionis, quem tibi proximum esse uoluisti, filium omnes paene amicos tuos dignatione uincemem cultum a nobis esse miraris? [28] Tu, hercules, si uerum audire uis, rex, huius nobis periculi es causa. Quis enim

τοιούτω φίλω χρώμενος, οὐδὲ ἐγὼ τὴ ἡδίκηκα· εἰ δ' ὁ αὐτοκράτωρ ὁ πάντα ἀκριβῶς εἰδὼς ἐπλανήθη, τί θαυμαστὸν εἰ καὶ ἐγὼ οἱ συνεξηπατήθην; καὶ γὰρ τοι προσήκει ἡμῖν πάντας τοὺς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ τιμωμένους ἀγαπᾶν, μὴ πολυπραγμονοῦντας ὁποῖοι τινές εἰσιν, ἀλλ' ἕνα ὄρον τῆς φιλίας σφῶν ποιούμενους τὸ τῷ αὐτοκράτορι αὐτοὺς ἀρέσκειν', "Consequently", he said, "if the emperor did right in having such a friend, I, too, have done no wrong; and if he, who has accurate knowledge of everything, erred, what wonder is it that I shared in his deception? For surely it is our duty to cherish all whom he honours, without concerning ourselves overmuch about the kind of men they are but making our friendship for them depend on just one thing—the fact that they please the emperor" (Cass. Dio 58.19.3–4).

<sup>32</sup> Martin (n. 1), 121; Woodman (n. 1), 121; T. Wiedemann, 'Über das Zeitalter des geschichtsschreibers Curtius Rufus', *Philologus* 30 (1870), 241–64, at 244; A.M. Devine, 'The Parthi, the tyranny of Tiberius and the date of Q. Curtius Rufus', *Phoenix* 33 (1979), 142–59; J.E. Atkinson, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 3 and 4* (Amsterdam and Uithoorn, 1980), 37; A.B. Bosworth, 'Mountain and molehill? Cornelius Tacitus and Quintus Curtius', *CQ* 54 (2004), 551–67. Bosworth's piece is a significant treatment of Tacitus and Curtius in general (and refers to further scholarship on the topic).

<sup>33</sup> Philotas' conspiracy has itself generated conflicting interpretations of what really lay behind it. See E. Badian, 'The death of Parmenio', *TAPhA* 91 (1960), 324–38. W. Heckel, 'The conspiracy against Philotas', *Phoenix* 31 (1977), 9–21. In addition to Curtius Rufus' account, we also have Diod. Sic. 17.79, Strabo 15.2.10, Plut. *Alex.* 48–9 with J.R. Hamilton, *Plutarch Alexander. A Commentary* (Oxford, 1969), 132–8, Arr. *Anab.* 3.26–27.4 with the useful appendix of P.A. Brunt, *Arrian Anabasis Alexandri Books I–IV* (Cambridge, MA, 1976), 517–21, and Just. *Epit.* 12.5.1–3.

<sup>34</sup> Alternatively, he is killed by a barrage of javelins hurled by the Macedonians (Arr. *Anab.* 3.26.3). The pattern of one unsuccessful defence speech (Philotas, Curt. 6.10) followed by another successful one (Amyntas, Curt. 7.1.19–40) is exactly the same as the succession in Tacitus (*Ann.* 5.6.2–3, 6.8).

<sup>35</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 3.27.2 says that Amyntas defended himself vigorously before the Macedonians, but he does not give details of the speech.



alius effecit, ut ad Philotan decurrerent, qui placere uellent tibi? Ab illo traditi ad hunc gradum amicitiae tuae ascendimus; is apud te fuit, cuius et gratiam expetere et iram timere possemus. [29] Si non propemodum in tua uerba, at tui omnes te praeceunte iurauimus, eosdem nos inimicos amicosque habituros esse, quos tu haberes. Hoc sacramento pietatis obstricti auersaremur scilicet, quem tu omnibus praeferebas! [30] Igitur, si hoc crimen est, paucos innocentes habes, immo, hercules, neminem. Omnes enim Philotae amici esse uoluerunt sed totidem, quot uolebant esse, non poterant. Ita, si a consciis amicos non diuidis, ne ab amicis quidem separabis illos, qui idem esse uoluerunt.<sup>36</sup>

‘As for the friendship which we had with Philotas, I am so far from denying it that I confess we actually sought it out and won great advantages from it. [27] Or indeed are you surprised that the son of Parmenion, whom you were willing to be closest to yourself in rank, and who excelled almost all of your friends in distinction, was cultivated by us? [28] You, by Hercules, if you are willing to listen to the truth, O King, are the cause of our present danger. For who else brought it about that people who wanted to gratify you went running off to Philotas? Only when promoted by him did we ascend to our current rank in your friendship. He had such influence with you that we brought ourselves both to seek out his favour and fear his anger. [29] We have all sworn, almost coerced by threats of violence from you and in formulae dictated by you, to regard as enemies or friends the same people as you so regard. Bound by this sacred oath of allegiance, could we be expected to turn our backs on a man you used to set above all others? [30] So, if this is a crime, you have few blameless subjects—no by Hercules, not one. Everyone wanted Philotas’ friendship, but not all who wanted it could have it. So if you like to make no distinction between Philotas’ friends and those involved in the conspiracy, you will also make no distinction between his friends and those who wanted to be his friends.’<sup>37</sup>

Amyntas here exploits the compelling defence that, if he is guilty because of his friendship with Philotas, then indeed they must *all* be guilty. His conspicuous and insistent deployment of first-person plural pronouns (*nobis ... nos ... nobis ... nobis*) and first-person plural verbs (*ascendimus ... possemus ... iurauimus*) gives added weight to this basic point that they are all in this together. So too does the fact that his language has further powerful associations beyond the text, particularly by evoking the traditional language of international alliances whereby nations swore collectively to have the ‘same friends and enemies as the Roman people’.<sup>38</sup> This had long been an epigraphical staple in Greek interstate agreements, and it became part of the oath of allegiance to the Roman emperor in the eastern provinces: for instance, we have an example from Tiberius’ principate in the form of an inscription giving the Cypriot oath of loyalty to the emperor in the context of promised worship of Tiberius within the imperial cult.<sup>39</sup> Curtius’ Amyntas is casting Alexander in the manner of a Roman emperor who dictates the boundaries of friendship for all those in his orbit.

<sup>36</sup> The text is from E. Hedicke’s Teubner (Leipzig, 1908).

<sup>37</sup> Translated by J. Yardley and W. Heckel, *Quintus Curtius Rufus The History of Alexander* (Harmondsworth, 1984).

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Livy 35.50.2 *eosdem ... hostes et amicos quos populus Romanus*, 37.1.5, 38.8.10, 38.11.3. See further L. de Libero, “‘VT EOSDEM QVOS POPVLVS ROMANVS AMICOS ATQVE HOSTES HABEANT’”: die Freund-Feind-Klausel in den Beziehungen Roms zu griechischen und italischen Staate’, *Historia* 46 (1997), 270–305.

<sup>39</sup> ‘We ourselves and our children swear to harken unto and to obey alike by land and sea, to regard with loyalty and to worship Tiberius Caesar Augustus, son of Augustus, with all his house, [(lines 15–17) καὶ v. | τὸν αὐτὸν ἐκέλευς φίλον τε καὶ ἐχθρὸν v. | ἔξειν v.] ‘to have the same friends and the same enemies as they ...’: see T.B. Mitford, ‘A Cypriot oath of allegiance to Tiberius’, *JRS* 50 (1960), 75–9. I am grateful to Panayiotis Christoforou and Alison Cooley, both of whom independently mentioned this inscription to me as a relevant intertext. See too J.E. Atkinson, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus’ Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 5 to 7.2* (Amsterdam, 1994), 253–4 and

As should already be clear, Amyntas' broad strategy of self-defence at this point is very similar to the one used by Tacitus' Terentius (*Ann.* 6.8), that friendship with Sejanus should *not* be taken to indicate disloyalty to the *princeps*. As Bosworth observes: 'Terentius takes on the colour of Amyntas, pleading his case before the army assembly, and there is a secondary parallel between Philotas and Seianus. Both were favourites brought low by the guile of their rulers.'<sup>40</sup> Ancient historical writers from the Classical world regularly exploit patterns where one set of characters is expressively mapped onto another earlier, and usually more prominent, set of characters. A well-known example is Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.1, where he redeploys Latin terms designed to align Sejanus with Sallust's Catiline.<sup>41</sup> These two speeches of Terentius under Tiberius and Amyntas under Alexander are another such case, and verbal and thematic echoes again underpin the connection. Certainly, there are many points of contact between Tacitus and Curtius Rufus throughout their surviving texts, and these two authors clearly have interconnections. Yet there are particularly close verbal and conceptual links between *these* two speeches, which commentators have convincingly highlighted. Bosworth, for example, picks out Terentius' phrase *utcumque casura res est* (*Ann.* 6.8) as 'the most significant correspondence', because Amyntas says something very similar towards the end of his speech: *utcumque cessura res est* (7.1.37).<sup>42</sup> Woodman also notes a similar concept introduced by Amyntas right at the start of his speech: *qualiscumque ... exitus nos manet*, 'whatever end remains in store for us'.<sup>43</sup> Martin and Woodman each point to the similarities between Terentius' opening assertion, *fatebor ... ut essem expetisse* (*Ann.* 6.8.1), and *ut expetisse ... confitear*, 'I confess that we actually sought it out', at the start of the extract from Amyntas' speech (Curtius Rufus 7.1.26).<sup>44</sup>

One further detail in Amyntas' speech suggests conceptual interconnections between the two conspiracies. This is the intriguing point that Amyntas and his brothers had been the subject of damning letters written by Alexander's mother, Olympias, warning her son against them (*quo facto dictoue nostro mota, tam trepidas tibi litteras scripsit?*, 'stirred by which deed or word of ours did she write such an agitated letter to you?', 7.1.36; cf. 7.1.12). Given the pivotal role played by the letter of Antonia (Tiberius' sister-in-law) in accusing Sejanus, the significant role of the earlier letter by Olympias denouncing Amyntas looks like a powerful historical precedent, as two prominent women each make compelling epistolary interventions to protect a close relative.<sup>45</sup> Certainly, the overlap is not precise, since Olympias' letter accuses Amyntas

J. Gonzalez, 'The first oath *pro salute Augusti* found in Baetica', *ZPE* 72 (1988), 113–27 on an oath to Augustus and the male members of his family dateable to 5 b.c.

<sup>40</sup> Bosworth (n. 32), 565.

<sup>41</sup> See R.H. Martin and A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus Annals Book IV* (Cambridge, 1989), 84–7.

<sup>42</sup> Bosworth (n. 32), 565.

<sup>43</sup> Woodman (n. 1), 123.

<sup>44</sup> Martin (n. 1), 122; Woodman (n. 1), 122. F. Walter, *Studien zu Tacitus und Curtius* (Munich, 1887) assembles parallels between the two authors. S.P. Oakley, 'Style and language', in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2009), 195–211, at 196 observes: 'The similarity exhibited by Sallust, Livy, Quintus Curtius Rufus (in his *History of Alexander the Great*) and Tacitus in their choice of vocabulary allows the generalisation that Latin historical style was marked by frequent employment of archaisms.'

<sup>45</sup> See Joseph. *AJ* 18.6.6 on Antonia's letter to Tiberius on Capri, which was then followed up by Tiberius' *uerbosa et grandis epistula* to the Senate (Juv. 10.71; Cass. Dio 58.9–10). Atkinson (n. 39), 251 comments on Olympias' 'proclivity for accusatory letters' (citing Arr. *Anab.* 7.12.5–7, Diod. Sic. 32.1, 114.3, 118.1, Just. *Epit.* 12.14.3, Plut. *Alex.* 39.7, *Mor.* 180D and 332F).

(the Terentius figure) rather than Philotas (the Sejanus figure), whereas Antonia's letter accuses Sejanus (the Philotas figure) rather than Terentius (the Amyntas figure). None the less, the expressive potential of a written denunciation by a prominent imperial woman prompted somebody to compare the two conspiracies, whether in the aftermath of Sejanus' downfall or in the later literary tradition.<sup>46</sup> It is another significant association, suggesting that there is a strong 'dialogue' between these two narratives.<sup>47</sup>

Essentially, what scholars have found most intriguing about these points of contact between the speeches of Terentius and Amyntas is the light which they can potentially cast on the tricky question of the relative dates of Tacitus and Curtius Rufus.<sup>48</sup> Increasingly, critics support the idea that Curtius Rufus was the earlier writer, although opinions differ about how much earlier he was. Devine argues that Curtius came first and that his version of Amyntas' speech influenced Tacitus: 'it is distinctly possible, even probable, that Tacitus read and was influenced by Curtius.'<sup>49</sup> Martin is also confident about the relative dates of the two authors: 'there is no reason to doubt that Curtius' *History of Alexander* antedates Tacitus' *Annals*.<sup>50</sup> Others add nuance by suggesting that here we have some kind of window-reference so that both Tacitus and Curtius Rufus were each alluding to an earlier writer whose work is no longer extant.<sup>51</sup> So Atkinson speculates that both Tacitus and Curtius Rufus were inspired by the historical account of Aufidius Bassus.<sup>52</sup> Yet, as the next section will demonstrate,

<sup>46</sup> Atkinson (n. 39), 24 and 251 gives the credit to Curtius Rufus (whose history he thinks was published under Claudius), suggesting that Curtius Rufus drew directly on his personal knowledge of Terentius' actual speech in the Senate in shaping his version of the Amyntas story. That interpretation rests a great deal of weight on the assumption that Tacitus' version is an accurate record of what happened in A.D. 32, and it does not allow for the possibility that Tacitus was drawing on Curtius Rufus.

<sup>47</sup> See V. Pagán, *Conspiracy Narratives in Roman History* (Austin, 2004), 87–90 for the tendency for conspiracy narratives to share common elements and themes to cope with 'epistemological gaps'. C. Damon, 'Déjà vu or déjà lu? History as intertext', *PLLS* 14 (2010), 375–88 usefully reminds us that transhistorical connections between chronologically disparate episodes need not always be mediated through texts.

<sup>48</sup> This is a potentially huge topic, but important surveys of the debate include: W.W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great*, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1948), 2.111–14; D. Korzeniewski, *Die Zeit des Quintus Curtius Rufus* (Diss., Cologne, 1959), 4–50; R.D. Milns, 'The date of Curtius Rufus and the *Historiae Alexandri*', *Latomus* 25 (1966), 490–507; E. Badian, 'Alexander the Great, 1948–67', *CW* 65 (1971), 37–83, at 47–8; Devine (n. 32), 142–4, 148; H. Boedefeld, *Untersuchungen zur Datierung der Alexandergeschichte des Q. Curtius Rufus* (Diss., Düsseldorf, 1982); J.R. Hamilton, 'The date of Quintus Curtius Rufus', *Historia* 37 (1988), 445–56, at 445–7; J. Fugmann, 'Zum Problem der Datierung der *Historiae Alexandri Magni* des Curtius Rufus', *Hermes* 123 (1995), 233–43, at 233–4; J.E. Atkinson, 'Q. Curtius Rufus' *Historiae Alexandri Magni*', *ANRW* 2.34.4 (1998), 3447–83, at 3451–5; E. Baynham, *Alexander the Great: The Unique History of Quintus Curtius* (Ann Arbor, 1998), 201–20; J.E. Atkinson and J.C. Yardley, *Curtius Rufus: Histories of Alexander the Great, Book 10* (Oxford, 2009), 2–14; and T. Power, 'Suetonius and the date of Curtius Rufus', *Hermes* 141 (2013), 117–20. Naturally, people have asked whether the Curtius Rufus mentioned at Tac. *Ann.* 11.20–1 is our historian or an ancestor. See S.J.V. Malloch, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 11* (Cambridge, 2013), 304–5 for a helpful summary of the scholarship.

<sup>49</sup> Devine (n. 32), 152.

<sup>50</sup> Martin (n. 1), 121.

<sup>51</sup> On window references, see R.F. Thomas, 'Virgil's *Georgics* and the art of reference', *HSPH* 90 (1986), 171–98.

<sup>52</sup> Atkinson (n. 39), 37. Aufidius Bassus (*FRHist* no. 78) wrote a *Bellum Germanicum* and a history of his own times. Pliny the Elder's history began a *fine Aufidi Bassi* (Plin. *Ep.* 3.5.6), though there are different views about the endpoint. His history 'might have reached Sejanus' death and become available for the elder Seneca to hear soon afterwards' (B.M. Levick in *FRHist* 1.520). If it was published soon after Tiberius' death, this 'would make it likely to be the first hostile account of his reign and influential in establishing the tradition' (B.M. Levick in *FRHist* 1.521). That scenario

there is another distinctive intertext embedded in Terentius' speech which does not feature in Curtius Rufus and seems uniquely Tacitean. Multiple intertexts often simultaneously hunt in packs, adding different layers of interest to a narrative, and in Terentius' speech there is another significant text in play. To this we will now turn.

### 3. VIRGILIAN INTERTEXTUALITY

Scholarly interest in questions surrounding the tantalizing chronological relationship between Tacitus and Curtius Rufus is understandable. However, it has distracted attention from another important and meaningful intertext at work in Tacitus' version of Terentius' speech. Let us return now to the relevant section. Terentius, after claiming that he had actively sought out Sejanus' powerful friendship, traces Sejanus' steady elevation through the praetorian cohorts and his meteoric rise through the imperial household. Terentius then engages in his striking and risky 'all-or-nothing' rhetorical gambit (*Ann.* 6.8.3–4):

'Non enim Seianum Vulsiniensem set Claudiae et Iuliae domus partem, quas adfinitate occupauerat, **tuum, Caesar, generum, tui** consulatus socium, **tua officia** in re publica **capessentem** colebamus. [4] **Non est nostrum** aestimare quem supra ceteros et quibus de causis extollas: **tibi** summum rerum iudicium di dedere, **nobis** obsequi gloria relicta est.'

'For it was not Sejanus from Vulsinii whom we were courting but a member of the Claudian and Julian household, which he had taken hold of by his connection—**your** son-in-law, Caesar, **your** fellow consul, the one executing **your** duties in the state. **It is not our place** to assess whom you raise up above the others and for what reasons: **to you** the gods have given the highest judgement over affairs, **to us** has been left the glory of obedience.'

This is an extraordinary moment. Tiberius himself was absent from the Senate, but Terentius apostrophizes him as if he were present, enumerating in tricolon crescendo three hugely important roles binding this *equus* from Vulsinii to the emperor—(i) Sejanus' family connection through his relationship with Livi(II)a (widow of Tiberius' son, Drusus),<sup>53</sup> (ii) the shared consulship of A.D. 31; and (iii) his day-to-day running of affairs of state after Tiberius' permanent withdrawal to Capri in A.D. 27 (*Ann.* 4.67; cf. 4.41). Woodman rightly likens the triple anaphora (*tuum ... tui ... tua*)

would certainly cohere with Aufidius Bassus composing a defiant speech from Terentius—but so too would later dates of publication, and the notion that Aufidius Bassus was a source for Tacitus' version of Terentius' speech must remain speculation.

<sup>53</sup> There are some complex questions about Sejanus' marital status in A.D. 31. Tacitus' Tiberius memorably wrote to Sejanus (A.D. 25) responding to his request for permission to marry Livi(II)a (*Ann.* 4.39–40). As a result, Sejanus *non iam de matrimonio, sed alius metuens tacita suspitionum, vulgi rumorem, ingruentem inuidiam deprecatur*, 'no longer talked about marriage, but, with a deeper dread, protested against the silent suspicions, the public rumours, the encroaching resentment' (*Ann.* 4.41.1). Yet at Tac. *Ann.* 5.6.2 the unnamed speaker claims that Sejanus in A.D. 31 was Tiberius' *gener*. Had Sejanus therefore married Livi(II)a? Or another woman? Zonaras (Cass. Dio 58.3.9) suggests that Sejanus had married Julia, that is, Livi(II)a's daughter. The *Fasti Ostienses* suggest that Sejanus' wife committed suicide eight days after Sejanus' death in October A.D. 31, but unfortunately the wife's name is missing: some restore Apicata (Sejanus' ex-wife). J. Bellemore, 'The wife of Sejanus', *ZPE* 109 (1995), 255–66 suggests (at 262) that Sejanus and Livi(II)a swiftly celebrated a clandestine marriage which was revealed to him by Antonia, Livi(II)a's mother. Bellemore ([this note], 266) proposes that the missing name from the *Fasti Ostienses* indicates Livi(II)a. If Terentius in A.D. 32 is alluding to these events, then calling Sejanus *gener* is another bold move.

in asyndeton to the “Du-Stil” used in prayers and hymns to divinities.<sup>54</sup> Terentius’ next assertion is where our new intertext starts to come in. Through the filter of *colebamus* and its connotations of divine worship (*OLD colo* 6), Terentius expresses *aporia* over the reasons why Tiberius chooses individuals as his particular favourites.<sup>55</sup> Terentius then draws a sharp dividing-line between *you* (Tiberius), to whom the gods have given the highest judgement over affairs, and *us* (everyone else), to whom is left the *obsequii gloria*, ‘the glory of obedience’—obviously in this setting, a sharply ironic and oxymoronic phrase.<sup>56</sup> Elegantly and provocatively, Terentius here plays with a pivotal moment from early in Virgil’s *Aeneid*.<sup>57</sup> When Juno aims to disrupt and destroy Aeneas and his men on their journey to Italy, she famously approaches the minor deity Aeolus and shamelessly flatters him to get him to unleash a storm to sink Aeneas’ fleet. As added persuasion, she bribes him with a particularly beautiful nymph, Deiopea, offered to him as a wife and mother of his future children.<sup>58</sup> When Juno dangles the tempting prospect of Deiopea before Aeolus, he quickly caves in, and indicates that he does so in a memorably oily and sycophantic reply, dripping with obsequiousness (Verg. *Aen.* 1.76–80):

Aeolus haec contra: ‘**tuus, o regina**, quid optes  
explorare labor; **mihī iussa capessere** fas est.  
**tu** mihī quodcumque hoc regni, **tu** scepra Iouemque  
concilias, **tu** das epulis accumbere diuum  
nimborumque facis tempestatumque potentem.’

In reply, Aeolus said this: ‘Your task, o queen, is to settle upon what you desire; my duty is to carry out orders. You bestow all this kingdom, such as it is, upon me, you bestow royal power

<sup>54</sup> Woodman (n. 1), 124, citing the helpful note of R.G.M. Nisbet and M. Hubbard, *A Commentary on Horace: Odes Book I* (Oxford, 1970), 131 on *Carm.* 1.10.9.

<sup>55</sup> As Woodman (n. 1), 124 notes, Tacitus’ choice of the verb *colebamus* ‘looks all the way back to Sejanus’ formal introduction at the start of Book 4 (2.3 “colique ... effigies eius”) and ‘constitutes a reminder that he too received worship: he and Tib. had been the presiding twin deities, their statues on either side of the *ara amicitiae* (4.74.2 and n.)’. Suetonius notes that Tiberius had rewarded the legionaries in Syria because they were the only soldiers who refused to cultivate Sejanus’ *imago* amongst their standards (*quod solae nullam Seiani imaginem inter signa coluissent*, *Tib.* 48.2; cf. *imagines aureas coli passim*, *Tib.* 65.1).

<sup>56</sup> Martin (n. 1), 123 and Woodman (n. 1), 125 observe that this phrase features at Plin. *Pan.* 9.5, 83.7.

<sup>57</sup> Tacitus’ echoing of Virgil has prompted much interest. As well as the indices of the various commentaries on Tacitus, see, for example, R.T.S. Baxter, ‘Virgil’s influence on Tacitus *Histories* 3’, *CPh* 66 (1971), 93–107; R.T.S. Baxter, ‘Virgil’s influence on Tacitus in *Annals* 1 and 2’, *CPh* 67 (1972), 246–69; N.P. Miller, ‘Virgil and Tacitus again’, *PVS* 18 (1986), 87–106; M.C.J. Putnam, ‘Virgil and Tacitus *Annals* 1.10’, *CQ* 39 (1989), 563–4; E. Henry, ‘Virgilian elements in Tacitus’ historical imagination’, *ANRW* 33.4 (1991), 2987–3005; V. Pagán, ‘Beyond Teutoburg: transgression and transformation in Tacitus *Annales* 1.61–2’, *CPh* 94 (1999), 302–20, especially 305–6; M. Nickbakht, ‘Fighting for liberty, embracing slavery: Tacitus, *Annals* 1.7.1’, *MH* 63 (2006), 39–43; T. Joseph, ‘The metamorphoses of *tanta moles*: Ovid, *Met.* 15.765 and Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.11.1’, *Vergilius* 54 (2008), 24–36; E. Keitel, ‘The Virgilian reminiscences at Tacitus *Histories* 3.84.4’, *CQ* 58 (2008), 705–8; T.A. Joseph, *Tacitus the Epic Successor: Virgil, Lucan, and the Narrative of Civil War in the Histories* (Leiden, 2012). See too A. Foucher, *Historia proxima poetis. L’influence de la poésie épique sur le style des historiens latins de Salluste à Ammien Marcellin* (Collection Latomus 255) (Brussels, 2000) and the essays in D.S. Levene and D.P. Nelis (edd.), *Clio and the Poets: Augustan Poetry and the Traditions of Ancient Historiography* (Leiden, 2002) and in A.J. Woodman and J.F. Miller (edd.), *Latin Historiography and Poetry in the Early Empire: Generic Interactions* (Leiden, 2010).

<sup>58</sup> Virgil’s Aeolus is a very different character from Homer’s version (*Od.* 10.1–55), where Aeolus is happily married with a large family (6 sons and 6 daughters who have married one another).

and Jupiter's favour, you grant me permission to recline at the banquets of the gods, and you make me powerful over the storm-clouds.'

There are multiple points of contact with Tacitus' version of Terentius' speech. Terentius' sudden apostrophe to Tiberius, with the triple anaphora in asyndeton *tuum ... tui ... tua* and the vocative *Caesar*, mirrors Aeolus' vocative *o regina* (1.76) and the triple anaphora *tu ... tu ... tu* (1.78–9; also in asyndeton). In Virgil the playful hymnic *Du-Stil* is obviously apt for a minor deity directly addressing the queen of the gods.<sup>59</sup> For an equestrian addressing an absent elderly Roman emperor it might seem less apt—but herein lies the irony, as Terentius in retrospect wittily casts Tiberius as a powerful divinity whose whims had to be obeyed and himself as a helpless Aeolus doing his will.<sup>60</sup> There is also further overlap between the two passages of Virgil and Tacitus in the verb *capesso* (Verg. *Aen.* 1.77 *iussa capessere*, 'to carry out orders'; Tac. *Ann.* 6.8.3 *tua officia ... capessentem*, 'executing your duties').<sup>61</sup> Tacitus' combination *capesso + officia* would not on its own be sufficient to evoke this Virgilian scene, but it is another contributory element in a wider verbal and conceptual nexus interlinking the two passages.<sup>62</sup> So, Tacitus' Terentius echoes the expressive structure in the Virgilian passage where Aeolus (using adversative asyndeton, with a possessive pronoun *tuus* and dative pronoun *mihi* opening the clauses) sycophantically tells Juno that her task (*tuus ... labor*) is to settle upon what she desires, but that his duty (*mihi*) is to carry out orders.<sup>63</sup> In mimetic syntax the dominant Juno is flatteringly placed in the first clause, while the submissive Aeolus appears in the second clause. Tacitus' Terentius mimics and plays with this formulation, when (with opening pronouns in adversative asyndeton) he reminds his listeners that the gods have granted Tiberius (*tibi*, placed first) the highest judgement over affairs, but to us (*nobis*, placed second)

<sup>59</sup> R.G. Austin, *P. Vergili Maronis Aeneidos Liber Primus* (Oxford, 1971), 50 comments on Aeolus 'using the ceremonial style of hymns, with anaphora'.

<sup>60</sup> R. Rutherford, 'Herodotean ironies', *Histos* 12 (2018), 1–48 traces forms of irony on a spectrum ranging from those clearly indicated by the narrator to those demanding more by way of interpretation and supplement from the reader. Terentius' play with Virgil is closer to the second than the first, but the irony enhances the situational drama of his defence-speech. Wittily collapsing the distance between human and divine spheres is a trick used by Ovid in *Met.* 1.175–6: *hic locus est quem, si uerbis audacia detur | haud timeam magni dixisse Palatia caeli*, 'this is the place which, if boldness be granted to my words, I would not fear to call the Palatine district of heaven'. T. Fuhrer, 'Der Götterhymnus als Prahlrede—zum Spiel mit einer literarischen Form in Ovids *Metamorphosen*', *Hermes* 127 (1999), 356–67 explores how Ovid regularly exploits the comic potential of divinities engaging in self-aretaology in the *Metamorphoses*.

<sup>61</sup> *capesso* in the sense of carrying out orders (*OLD* 8c; *TLL* 3.311.15–31) is first attested in Plautus (*Trin.* 299). N. Horsfall, *Virgil Aeneid 11: A Commentary* (Leiden, 2003), 210 observes that *capesso*, the desiderative form of *capio*, appears eight times in the *Aeneid* and that it is Ennian in flavour, appearing in Ilia's dream (*Ann.* 40–2 Skutsch: ... *errare uidebar | tardaue uestigare et quaerere te neque posse | corde capessere*, '... I seemed to wander and to track with slow foot and seek you, but I was unable to embrace you [?]', translated by S.M. Goldberg and G. Manuwald, *Fragmentary Republican Latin: Ennius* [Cambridge, MA, 2018], 141). O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Q. Ennius* (Oxford, 1985), 199 discusses the 'very difficult phrase' *corde capessere*. B. Vine, '*corde capessere* (Ennius, *Ann.* 42 Sk)', *Glotta* 67 (1989), 123–6 suggests emending it to *corda capessere*.

<sup>62</sup> Tacitus has *capesso* once in the *Agricola*, eight times in the *Histories* and thirty-two times in the *Annals*. See R.H. Martin and A.J. Woodman, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 3* (Cambridge, 1996), 263 for *capesso* used of taking up magistracies or other specific duties (*TLL* 3.311.31–47; 'almost a technical political term [*OLD* 8]', as Woodman with Kraus [n. 14], 108 observe), first at Livy 6.34.4 (with *magistratus*), to which this more generalizing usage is related.

<sup>63</sup> Aeolus' use of *labor* is obsequiously hyperbolic: the goddess settling on a desire hardly involves much work.



has been left the glory of obedience.<sup>64</sup> All these points of contact together suggest that Tacitus' Terentius wryly casts himself as Virgil's smarmy Aeolus and, by extension, presents Tiberius as the manipulative and vindictive Juno.<sup>65</sup>

Finally, one further point may make Terentius' evocation of Virgil's Juno particularly telling. Suetonius preserves an important detail about Tiberius' behaviour after Sejanus was eliminated on 18 October A.D. 31: for the next nine months, the emperor 'did not leave the villa which is called Io's/Ion's' (*non egressus est uilla, quae uocatur Ionis, Tib. 65.2*). This is the text in Ihm's Teubner, indicating that Tiberius retreated to a place called the Villa of Io or Ion.<sup>66</sup> Yet, as Champlin observes, neither the female Io (who caught Jupiter's eye and was temporarily turned into a heifer to conceal her from Juno) nor male Ion (the illegitimate son of Creusa, born after she was raped by Apollo) has obvious relevance for the name of a clifftop villa on Capri.<sup>67</sup> Subsequent editors often emend this last word to *Iouis* to give the Villa of Jupiter (the name frequently used to designate the impressive physical remains of the extensive residence on 'the eastern height, just below the church of S. Maria del Soccorso').<sup>68</sup> Kaster's recent *OCT* instead reads *uilla quae uocatur Inonis*, indicating the Villa of Ino.<sup>69</sup> This is the daughter of Cadmus of Thebes, the woman who leapt from a cliff into the sea but was saved by Zeus to become the goddess Leukothea. That makes sense for the location and may well be what the text should read. One further possibility is Heinsius's reading *Iunonis*, indicating the Villa of Juno.<sup>70</sup> Champlin dismisses this reading as 'inexplicable and most unlikely', but there might just be a case for considering it (or at least for seeing how it might have been considered possible).<sup>71</sup> Underpinning the two readings *Iouis* and *Iunonis* (that is, the Villa of Jupiter and the Villa of Juno) lies a detail at Tac. *Ann.* 4.67.3 that on Capri there were twelve villas—the inference being that each of the twelve villas was named after a member of the divine pantheon (and therefore that amongst these there were two separate villas, one each named after Jupiter and Juno).<sup>72</sup> If Tiberius, anxious and afraid after Sejanus'

<sup>64</sup> It may be suggestive that Cicero in a letter to Appius Claudius Pulcher from 50 B.C. praises his *urbanitas* which (Cicero says) the Stoics very correctly call a virtue (*Fam.* 3.7.5). Terentius' witty allusion to Virgil in potentially deadly circumstances sees him displaying a Stoic virtue. See further E.S. Ramage, *Urbanitas: Ancient Sophistication and Refinement* (Norman, OK, 1973), 161–2.

<sup>65</sup> The fact that Juno, the goddess of marriage, has bribed Aeolus with the beautiful nymph Deiopea also seems expressive in light of Tiberius preventing some prospective marriages, including Sejanus and Livi(II)a (*Ann.* 4.39–40) and Agrippina the Elder (and anyone) (*Ann.* 4.53), and arranging others (e.g. Agrippina the Younger and Cn. Domitius Ahenobarbus, *Ann.* 4.75; her sisters Julia Drusilla and Cassius Longinus, Julia Livilla and Marcus Vinicius, *Ann.* 6.15.1; and Julia [Drusus' daughter] and Rubellius Blandus, *Ann.* 6.27.1).

<sup>66</sup> M. Ihm, *C. Suetoni Tranquilli opera. Vol. I: De Vita Caesarum libri VIII* (Leipzig, 1901).

<sup>67</sup> E.J. Champlin, 'The odyssey of Tiberius Caesar', *C&M* 64 (2014), 199–246, on 228. Io is the daughter of Inachus and (?) the nymph Melia, daughter of Oceanus. That family background might provide a watery connection, but it seems tenuous.

<sup>68</sup> G.W. Houston, 'Tiberius on Capri', *G&R* 32 (1985), 179–96, at 179.

<sup>69</sup> R.A. Kaster, *C. Suetoni Tranquilli de Vita Caesarum libros VIII et de Grammaticis et Rhetoribus librum* (Oxford, 2016), accepting the arguments of Champlin (n. 67), 225–30.

<sup>70</sup> Heinsius's reading is cited in Ihm's apparatus criticus and discussed in M. Ihm, 'Die sogenannte "Villa Iouis" des Tiberius auf Capri und andere Suetoniana', *Hermes* 36 (1901), 287–304, especially 287–91. On Daniel Heinsius (1580–1655), Professor of History at the University of Leiden, see M. Somos, *Secularisation and the Leiden Circle* (Leiden, 2011).

<sup>71</sup> Champlin (n. 67), 227.

<sup>72</sup> This inference does not depend on emending the corrupt portion of the text at Tac. *Ann.* 4.67.3 (*tum Tiberius duodecim uillarum † nominibus et molibus † insederat*) and reading *numinibus* for *nominibus*. Instead, it rests on the detail that there are twelve villas—and the number twelve has

elimination, had retreated to a place known as the Villa of Juno on Capri, then Terentius' gambit of playing Aeolus and addressing Tiberius as if he were Juno is more than a pointed literary allusion, but also engages with Tiberius' current location on Capri.<sup>73</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

By this stage, the Virgilian footprints in Terentius' speech at *Ann.* 6.8.4 are hopefully discernible. They rest not so much on highly distinctive lexical overlap of unusual Latin words but more on cumulative figures of speech common to both passages and on significant thematic and situational links.<sup>74</sup> Yet, if we do concede the presence of Virgilian footprints alongside (generally acknowledged) echoes of Curtius Rufus, what does this signify in historiographical terms? Is the fresh Virgilian *color* largely decorative? Of course, embedding epic moments in a later text always adds something aesthetic to the reader's experience, but there is more at stake than that here. The Virgilian intertext does not function alone but in combination with the Curtius Rufus passage. Both operating together are surely meant to be expressive for Tacitus' audience about the political realities of the imperial system and about the compromises involved for men like Terentius in negotiating its complexities. There is a further important question to pose. Are we to imagine that Tacitus' Terentius expected his listeners in the Senate in A.D. 32 to pick up on the Virgilian echo? It seems likely that this was not meant to be a heavily veiled allusion or a deeply hidden intertext, particularly since Terentius' chances of survival at this point must have looked slim, and Tiberius was not even present in person to be taken in by any doublespeak. Instead, the speech is Terentius' legacy in which, however belatedly, he admits the realities of life under Sejanus and gives a candid account of how the system really operated under such an all-powerful figure.

It is clear that Terentius' reprisal of Aeolus' sycophantic address to Juno within the speech is unique to Tacitus (and not discernible either in Amyntas' parallel speech in Curtius Rufus or in Dio's much later version of Terentius' speech). Indeed, Tacitus' general liking for Virgilian allusion elsewhere in his historical narratives might tip the balance and convince us that Tacitus himself, rather than any no longer extant source, introduced the Virgilian echo, although that can never be known absolutely.<sup>75</sup>

obvious associations with the Olympian divinities. Martin and Woodman (n. 41), 244–5 discuss the textual problems and elect to mark the text as corrupt. A.J. Woodman, *The Annals of Tacitus Book 4* (Cambridge, 2018), 308–9 comments further on the passage (still marked as corrupt), though he is cautious about whether twelve substantial villas could be contained on the small mountainous island of Capri.

<sup>73</sup> Again, there is cause here to regret the large lacuna of almost three whole years in Tacitus' narrative of Tiberius' principate, with the story only resuming (*Ann.* 5.6–11) towards the end of A.D. 31 and the aftermath of Sejanus' execution. On the lacuna, see Woodman (n. 1), 3–9 (including an illuminating and helpful facsimile of the problematic point in the manuscript) and 67.

<sup>74</sup> Not all alleged Virgilian echoes in Tacitus find acceptance. A.J. Woodman, 'Introduction', in A.J. Woodman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Tacitus* (Cambridge, 2009), 1–14 (especially 6–7) has an illuminating discussion.

<sup>75</sup> The anonymous reviewer for *CQ* asks a pertinent question about whether there are significant clusters of Virgilian resonances elsewhere in Tacitus *Annals* Book 6. Woodman (n. 1) points to a number of verbal echoes, particularly in the Parthian excursus at *Ann.* 6.31–7 (*Ann.* 6.25.2 *uirilibus curis* ~ *Aen.* 9.311 *curamque uirilem*; *Ann.* 6.32.1 *tardari metu* ~ *Aen.* 11.21 *segnisue metu sententia tardet*; *Ann.* 6.35.1 *horridam ... aciem* ~ *Aen.* 10.408 *horrida ... acies*; *Ann.* 6.35.2 *uulnus adegit* ~

Still, trying to track the provenance of this Virgilian echo is less compelling than thinking about its impact. The novel intertext has a significant effect on Terentius' characterization and on our response to him. His presence of mind is impressive as he shows himself able to embed a witty and apt echo of a darkly comic Virgilian scene into his speech in a life-threatening situation. If this is going to be his swansong, then evoking epic both adds weight to his words and unmasks a truth about the imperial system under Tiberius. As Elliott observes, repetition of material from that genre is a way of 'reflecting tradition as the repository of the true past and using it to assert the validity and relevance of that truth with regard to the lived and the textual present'.<sup>76</sup> In so doing, Tacitus' Terentius makes a serious point about hierarchy, friendship and power in looking back at Sejanus' 'sixteen years', reminding everyone that when a supremely powerful figure (whether the divine Juno or the godlike Tiberius) wants something to happen, then those lower down in the hierarchy (whether the minor divinity Aeolus or the equestrian Terentius; or indeed the senators listening in A.D. 32 or Tacitus' own contemporaries) have no choice but to comply. When the political landscape abruptly shifts (as it always seems to do), then belatedly punishing those who had been caught up in the previous hierarchy of power is hardly the most constructive move. Terentius' rhetorical gambit is bold, but in an unexpected twist which overturns the usual grim pattern in Tacitus his straight-talking speech secures his acquittal by reminding his audience that, if he is guilty, then so are they all.

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*Aen.* 10.850 *uulnus adactum*; *Ann.* 6.35.2 *clamore telis equis* ~ *Aen.* 11.609–10 *clamore ... equos ... tela*; *Ann.* 6.50.3 *instaurari epulas* ~ *Aen.* 7.146 and *Aen.* 8.283 *instaurant epulas*).

<sup>76</sup> J. Elliott, 'The epic vantage-point: Roman historiographical allusion reconsidered', *Histos* 9 (2015), 277–311, at 287.