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Alyson Wright.

The Concept and Context of Fear in Tacitus.

Submitted for the degree of M.Litt

September, 1996.

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Submitted for the degree of M.Litt, September 1996.

In this thesis I have studied some of the many instances of fear words to be found in the works of the Roman historian Tacitus. Chapter 1 deals with the way in which the soldiers involved in the army mutinies in Pannonia and Germany are presented in *Annals* 1 as being both fearful and terrifying. Chapter 2 comprises a study of *horror* words in Tacitus and in particular, how they contribute to the description of Tiberius at *Ann.* 4.7,1 as 'horridus'. In Chapter 3 I have considered the description of the murder of Britannicus and especially Agrippina's reaction to the events she witnesses. Here I examined the way in which Tacitus presents the psychology of fear within a dramatic account. Chapter 4 is concerned with Tacitus' presentation of the emperor Nero as a paranoid tyrant and the way in which this feature is constantly asserted in the text. Finally, Chapter 5 looks at the emperor Vitellius in the final moments before his death and the fear which he experiences when his power is stripped from him. In conclusion, I assert that we can learn a great deal about the motivation of the historian himself from the episodes I have analysed.

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I am very grateful to the members of the Classics Department at Durham University who have given me help and advice since I began my research, in particular Professor P.J. Rhodes. Professor A.J. Woodman has been an outstanding supervisor whose attention to detail has improved my work immensely. I would also like to mention the friends who have supported and encouraged me over the years, especially this summer. You have made all the difference. Finally, I owe so much to my parents and brother, whose support, both emotional and financial, has been crucial.

Contents.

Introduction

- Chapter 1 Fear and the Army in *Annals* 1.
- Chapter 2 Tacitus' use of *Horror*.
- Chapter 3 The Murder of Britannicus (*Ann.* 13.16)
- Chapter 4 The Fear of Nero in *Annals* 13-16.
- Chapter 5 The Death of Vitellius (*Hist.* 3.84 - 3.86).

Conclusion:

Appendices.

Abbreviations and Bibliography.

Introduction.

*Truly the hearts of men are full of fear.
You cannot scarcely reason with a man
That looks not heavily and full of dread.
Shakespeare, Richard III.*

This thesis began life as a survey of synonyms in Tacitus. It seemed appropriate to look at fear words, of which there are a startling number to be found in Tacitus' works. This is evident from even a cursory glance through the lexicon. Appendix 1 gives some idea of the sheer quantity of fear words that lay before me when I began the work. Inevitably, my study necessitated a great deal of selection and I was initially guided in my choice of passages by observation of clusters of fear words, usually containing different expressions of fear. This approach is reflected in the way that the thesis is arranged. The work comprises both studies of some of the most remarkable passages concerned with fear in Tacitus (Chapters 1, 3 and 5) and discussions of fear in relation to what are probably the two most important characters in the *Annals*, Tiberius and Nero (Chapters 2 and 4 respectively). Within the scope of this thesis I have also been able to explore more thoroughly elements of Tacitus' style and motivation.

The extent to which the accounts of the mutinies dominate *Annals* 1 is hardly news. However, I was intrigued by observing the statistics for fear words in the book, which led me to wonder to what extent this fear was concerned with the accounts of the soldiers in Pannonia and Germany. A study of the relationship between fear and the army in *Annals* 1 forms my first chapter. *Horror* and related expressions provide the material for Chapter 2, in which I have studied the performance of the words throughout the works. It was a revealing exercise to be able to

study the use that Tacitus makes of *horror* words, which was made possible by the relatively few instances of these expressions to be found in his works. I was fascinated to discover on the one hand the variety of uses to which Tacitus applies the expressions and on the other hand what I believe to be a trend in their application which has implications for the description of the emperor Tiberius as *horridus* at *Ann.* 4.7,1. The murder of Britannicus at *Ann.* 13.16 is a great passage which gave me the opportunity to explore Tacitus' presentation of the psychology of fear as well as to analyse in more detail the role of the historian as dramatist in his crafted presentation of alarming events which retain an element of theatre.

On reading the Neronian books of the *Annals*, I was struck by the number of episodes dominated by fear and, more particularly, the number of occasions where this fear was applied to the emperor himself. The portrayal of Nero in this fashion is one that has been discussed at greater length by E. Mastellone Iovanne in her study of *Paura e Angoscia in Tacito. Implicazioni ideologiche e politiche*. However, in my study of Nero, I have concentrated upon the relationship between fear and hatred and the presentation of Nero as a paranoid tyrant. My final chapter once more presented me with the need to explore the psychology of fear in relation to an emperor. However, the passages concerning Vitellius' death (*Hist.* 3.84,4 - 86) not only represent the final degradation of an emperor, but they also offer an insight into Tacitus' opinion of the trend of government that would be adopted by Domitian in the future (Tacitus' recent past).

For many years I have been attracted to Tacitus' style of writing and especially to the way in which his text reveals many of the subtleties

of human behaviour, usually touching upon the darker side of life. Through my study of fear in his works, I have gained an insight into the extremities of human endurance and emotion. I also feel that I have learnt more about Tacitus' own fear. For I believe that it is no coincidence that time and again my discussions of fear have been drawn back to one basic concern on the part of the historian - namely the reliance of successive emperors upon military force and the subsequent effect this had upon the freedom of the Roman people. It is particularly appropriate, then, that the first chapter of my thesis deals with the way in which this threat is expressed in Tacitus' accounts of the army mutinies at the beginning of the 1st century A.D. and that my final chapter considers the situation when army power has run out of control. The final message of the thesis, and of Tacitus' history, is of further promise of military rule in the future under Domitian.

Chapter 1

Fear and the Army in *Annals* 1.

History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.

James Joyce.

Fear is an emotion that pervades Tacitus' work in its entirety. This is clearly seen in the volume and spread of the examples of fear words present in his writing and is not a surprising phenomenon in an author who, for the most part, records in his work a bleak account of life under imperial rule, having himself experienced at first hand the life and times of the emperor Domitian. His work is as much a reflection of the times through which he had lived as a perception of life under previous emperors whose reigns provided his subject matter. Heinz (1975.2), by way of introduction to his study of fear as a political phenomenon, remarks upon the quantity of fear in Tacitus. He has calculated that in Tacitus' works overall there are on average 1.05 words denoting fear on each page of text (Teubner). For the *Histories* alone he estimates this figure to be 1.04 words per page and for the *Annals* 0.93. By Heinz's general reckoning, then, neither Tacitus' *oeuvre* as a whole (in comparison to Sallust's 1.25 fear words per page) nor the *Annals* in particular (compared to the *Histories*, *Germania* and *Agricola*) contains an excessively large amount of fear words. This changes, however, when the same evaluation is applied to individual books of the *Annals* and *Histories*. For there appears to be an above average amount of fear in *Ann.* 1, where approximately 1.30 words appear on each page.¹

¹ Summary of Fear words throughout the books of the *Annals*.

<i>Ann.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
Number of fear words	60	33	21	39	6	33	22	31	33	37	47	16

Annals 1 is a book that is dominated by Tacitus' accounts of the army mutinies in Pannonia and Germany, with the latter leading into the first portion of Tacitus' description of the war in Germany.² Indeed, in *Ann.* 1, 16-71, the narrative of the mutinies and war is interrupted on only two occasions. What is more, the first of these (1.46-7) is still directly concerned with the mutinies. For in it Tacitus chronicles the alarm created in Rome when news of the mutinies was received, even though they were taking place in far off frontier lands. Goodyear explains this digression as being due to the increase in dramatic tension that it contributes at this point.³ The second (1.53-4) occurs at the end of the narrative of A.D. 14, when Tacitus describes the deaths of Julia and Sempronius Gracchus, the establishment of a new priesthood of *Augustales* and the quarrels among actors which disturbed the subsequent Augustal games. With this second break in the narrative, Tacitus abides by the annalistic format of his history and, therefore, completes his description of other notable events of the year A.D.14 before he begins the account of A.D.15 with the campaigns in Germany (1.55). This section does not constitute a major distraction from the narrative chiefly

cf. Appendix 2.

²The accounts of military activity in *Ann.* 1 are laid out in the following chapters: mutiny in Pannonia 16-30; mutiny in Germany 31-45, 48-52; war in Germany 55-71.

³Goodyear (1972.303) writes, 'He [Tacitus] has chosen a most apt moment dramatically for this interruption of the narrative. The German mutiny is now drawing to an end, and we know that very soon, one way or another, it will finally be suppressed. But suspense remains, since we still do not know what exactly will happen, and the last words of 1.45 ["igitur Caesar arma classem socios demittere Rheno parat, si imperium detrectetur, bello certaturus"] are well contrived to heighten this uncertainty.'

concerned with the actions of the soldiers in Germany. Therefore, neither interruption distracts the audience for long from the main narrative of the mutinies and German war. Indeed Ginsburg (1981.84) notes that, in his historical works generally, Tacitus' treatment of the 'material within the annalistic framework' does not fit into any particular pattern (as does Livy's) but rather there are places where the author 'selects a major episode for detailed narration'. Tacitus' account of the mutinies in Pannonia and Germany is a clear example of his tendency to do this.

In total the passages detailing the events of the mutinies and war dominate the chapters from 1.16 and take up 64% of the whole of *Ann.* 1. This is a truly remarkable amount and one which led Goodyear to come to the following conclusion (1972.194-5):

'The very generous scale of treatment which Tacitus accords to the mutinies in Pannonia and Germany cannot adequately be explained by supposing that he [Tacitus] regarded them as exceptionally important historically.'⁴

Indeed by comparison Cassius Dio (57,3-6) gives a comparatively small amount of attention to the mutinies.⁵ Goodyear (1972.195) goes on to explain this Tacitean phenomenon purely in terms of the author's desire for 'vivid and arresting scenes' to create 'the most extensive and elaborate

⁴Ginsburg (1981.85) also notes that the length of this account is exceptional: 'he narrates at considerable length the role of Drusus and Germanicus in the suppression of the Pannonian and German mutinies (1.16-52) and Germanicus' campaigns on the German frontier (1.55-71, 2.5-26), but his treatment of such material elsewhere shows that these instances are exceptions to his general practice.'

⁵cf. also Velleius Paterculus (2.125), although his aim was not to write about events in such detail.

example of "pictorial-dramatic" narrative anywhere in his writings'. Martin (1989.115) also addresses this problem. He attributes slightly more historical importance to the mutinies, arguing that

'The revolt of the major legionary armies before Tiberius' position as Augustus' successor was assured was a matter of considerable political importance, but neither the mutinies nor Germanicus' German campaigns justify the amount of space that Tacitus gives to them.'

However, by way of explanation for the amount of space given to the mutinies, Martin appears to fall in with Goodyear, concluding that the subject matter 'allowed for graphic description and pathetic detail' (ibid.).

Few would doubt Tacitus' obvious relish for retelling events which contribute to his historiography scenes loaded with dramatic action. However, I would contend that there was also a further, as yet unexplained but crucial factor at play in Tacitus' composition of these passages. In *Ann. 1*, Tacitus clearly displays the main themes that will be pertinent to the rest of the *Annals*. For instance, Martin has argued convincingly that the positioning of *servitium* as the last word in *Ann. 1* foreshadows the overall theme of the contrast between *servitus* and *libertas* in the *Annals*. Similarly, then, the more conspicuous presence of the army and the increased amount of fear in *Ann.1* represent two of the main themes which in turn prefigure the rest of the text. What is more, these two themes appear to be intrinsically linked together in *Ann. 1*. For out of the 81 chapters that make up *Ann. 1*, the army or soldiers have a significant part to play in 60 of them. Words denoting fear can be found in 39. All except four of these are situated between 1.16 and 1.71, the passages concerned with the mutinies and the German war. Thirty chapters contain both expressions of fear and mention of the army.

In this chapter I propose to consider some of the places where these two key themes intersect and examine their relationship to reveal the extent to which they are interrelated and the ways in which this relationship reveals itself throughout the narrative of mutiny and war in *Ann.* 1. I believe it was the author's desire to emphasise relatively minor events on the frontier of the empire in order to communicate his feelings about the nature and power of the Roman army, on the one hand, as a prelude (in the text) to the threat that the soldiers were to provide for the city and people of Rome only decades later in A.D.69 and, on the other, as a symbol of his concern for the increasingly militaristic rule of successive emperors since that date, especially Domitian.

* * * * *

There are two passages which in particular represent these two key themes. Both contain examples of the soldiers' behaviour on occasions when Drusus addresses the troops (1.25; 1.29). In the first of these passages, Drusus, having been sent to Pannonia by his father Tiberius, calls together the soldiers in order to read out a letter from the emperor explaining his own presence there (1.25). The description of the response he received is as follows:

1. Postquam vallum introi<i>t, portas stationibus firmant, globos armatorum certis castrorum locis opperiri iubent; ceteri tribunal ingenti agmine circumveniunt. stabat
2. Drusus silentium manu poscens. illi quotiens oculos ad multitudinem rettulerant, vocibus truculentis strepere, rursum viso Caesare trepidare; murmur incertum, atrox clamor et repente quies; diversis animorum motibus
3. pavebant terrebantque. tandem interrupto tumultu

litteras patris recitat, in quis perscriptum erat praecipuam ipsi fortissimarum legionum curam, quibuscum plurima bella toleravisset; ubi primum a luctu requiesset animus, acturum apud patres de postulatis eorum; misisse interim filium, ut sine cunctatione concederet quae statim tribui possent; cetera senatui servanda, quem neque gratiae neque severitatis expertem haberi par esset.

When he had entered the vallum, they secured the gates with guards and ordered armed groups to be stationed at certain points around the camp. The rest gathered round the platform in a dense crowd. Drusus stood there motioning for silence with his hand. As the soldiers cast their eyes back over the crowd, they yelled out menacing shouts, then in contrast as they caught sight of Caesar, they were struck with fear. There was a confused murmuring, a fierce shouting and sudden quiet; moved by contrasting emotions they were fearful and terrifying. At last, when the noise abated, he read out a letter from his father, in which it was written that he was especially concerned for the extremely brave legions, with whom he had spent a good many campaigns; that as soon as his mind had recovered from its grief, he would bring their demands before the senate and that in the meantime he had sent his son to concede without delay whatever could be granted immediately; the rest must be entrusted to the senate which was justly considered as capable of favour as of severity.

After Drusus has entered the camp and the place has been secured, the soldiers gather around the platform as in one large group ('ingenti agmine').⁶ Drusus by contrast stands alone. Indeed the emphatic word order of 'stabat' at the beginning of the next sentence, juxtaposed with

⁶Here by the use of *agmen*, Tacitus enforces the idea of the soldiers as a potentially hostile and combative group as *agmen* is generally used of soldiers in a marching column (OLD 5a) or sometimes in battle ranks (OLD 7a).

'circumveniunt', may be said to add to the sense of Drusus' isolation on his solitary mission.⁷

A series of visual factors seems to have an impact upon the behaviour of the soldiers at this point. Drusus, we are told, gestures for silence with a movement of his hand ('silentium manu poscens'). The soldiers, looking back over the crowd that has gathered, take courage from the sight of one another's presence. They even begin to have the confidence to shout out menaces ('illi quotiens oculos ad multitudinem rettulerant, vocibus truculentis strepere'). However, when they look back again at Drusus, their resolve goes and they feel afraid. There is a parallel pattern of noise in these moments. At first there is a *murmur incertum* as their confidence builds up. This rises to a violent shout ('atrox clamor'), which corresponds to the earlier phrase 'vocibus truculentis strepere'. Finally, their fear ('trepidare') is accompanied by silence that comes over them suddenly ('repente quies'). Therefore, the changing emotions felt by the soldiers (uncertainty becomes confidence which then turns to fear) are expressed through the noise that they make. The more confident they are, the greater the level of noise. Silence becomes a hallmark of their fear. The response of the soldiers including their fear, then, has clear physical pointers. It can be identified in their behaviour and is audibly perceptible. Moreover, 'trepidare' conveys the sense of trembling carrying through the idea of a visible and physical

⁷Walker 1960.55n. Furneaux (1884) on this passage recalls Nipperdey's note that 'the verb is here, as often, placed first to give liveliness to the description'. cf. 14.30,1, 'stabat pro litore diversa acies densa armis virisque intercurantibus feminis.'

manifestation of the fear.⁸ This is especially neat as they themselves are reacting, so Tacitus tells us, to a visual prompt, this sight of Drusus ('viso Caesare trepidare').

However, Paulus, an 8th century Latin commentator, writing much later than Tacitus, defines *trepidatio* purely in terms of the mind,

'trepit vertit, unde trepido et trepidatio, quia turbatione mens vertitur'.⁹

This, the only extant ancient definition of *trepidatio*, according to Maltby (1991), calls to mind the expressions *turbata mens* and *turbida mens* which do occur in Tacitus, although only in the *Annals* and never in the same context as words denoting fear.¹⁰ Martin and Woodman (1989.154) note that *turbare* 'is often used of a mental disorder (as 13.3,2, cf. 4.67,3; *O.L.D.* 5b).' Although the expressions *turbata/turbida mens* are not themselves used to describe the state of mind of the soldiers in *Annals* 1, *turbo/turbatus* words and *turbidus* occur in total 16 times in the book, the majority of which (13) are to be found in passages concerned with

⁸'Trepidare' here has been rendered in translation as 'they trembled', Church and Brodribb (1895), although Grant (1977,'their nerve faltered') and Burnouf and Bournecque (1965, 'ils s'intimidaient') prefer more neutral translations.

⁹Paulus' edition of Festus (late 2nd C), 367.

¹⁰*Ann.* 4.22,1, 'tractusque ad Caesarem ab L. Apronio Socero *turbata mente* respondit'; 13.3,2, 'etiam C.Caesaris *turbata mens* vim dicendi non corrumpit'; 12.66,1, 'quod *turbaret mentem* et mortem differet'; 16.1,1, 'et promissa Caeselli Bassi, qui origine Poenus, *mente turbida* nocturnae quietis imaginem ad spem haud dubiae re<i> traxit...'. cf. also a related expression at *Hist* 1.17,1, 'Pisonem ferunt ... nullum *turbati* aut exultantis *animi motum* prodidisse'.

accounts of the army in Pannonia and Germany.¹¹ However, *turbare* implies several aspects of disturbance including not only the psychological and emotional responses such as those characteristic of the mutinous soldiers in *Ann.* 1 but also the very actions of revolt.¹² Therefore, *trepidatio* may be an appropriate choice of word in this context if, as the Paulus definition suggests, it was associated with *turbatio mentis*. For soldiers in revolt such as those in *Ann.* 1 can be described as *turbati vel sim*.

Tacitus then comments in greater detail upon the fear that the soldiers are experiencing: 'diversis animorum motibus pavebant terrebantque'.¹³ Tacitus thus expresses *pavor* and *terror* in terms of *motus*

¹¹1.2,1 '...postremo [provinciae] pecunia turbabantur'; 1.8,5 'remisit Caesar adroganti moderatione, populumque edicto monuit ne, ut quondam nimiis studiis funus divi Iulii turbassent, ita Augustum in foro potius quam in campo Martis, sede destinata, cremari vellent'; 1.22,1 '... apud turbatos et quid pararet intentos 'vos quidem' inquit 'his innocentibus et miserrimis lucem et spiritum reddidistis'; 1.26,1 'ad ea Drusus cum arbitrium senatus et patris obtenderet, clamore turbatur'; 1.31,1 'isdem ferme diebus isdem causis Germanicae legiones turbatae'; 1.43,4 'discede a contactu ac dividite turbidos'; 1.51,3 'turbanturque densis Germanorum catervis leves cohortes'; 1.54,2 'ludos Augustales tunc primum coeptos turbavit discordia ex certamine histrionum'; 1.55,2 'Arminius turbator Germaniae'; 1.58,3 'vetera nobis et quieta turbidis antehabeo'; 1.63,2 'tunc nova acie turbatus eques'; 1.65,4 'turbati circum milites'; 1.66,1 'quosdam occurrentium obturbavit'; 1.81,3 'ne ambitu comitia turbarent'. cf. also 1.28,6, 'commotis ... mentibus'.

¹²cf. *O.L.D.* *turbo* 7,8.

¹³cf. Goodyear 1972.224 who compares the passage to 1.29,3 'terrere, ni paveant; ubi pertimuerint, impune contemni'. Also at *Ger.* 3,1, the Germans are described as both

animi. This is consistent with the definitions of fear words given by Varro (*D.L.L.* 6.48) and Cicero (*Tusc.* 4.19). Varro and Cicero strongly disagree on the relative strengths of emotions represented by the individual words *pavor* and *formido*. Varro believes that *formido* denotes the stronger emotion, Cicero considers the opposite to be the case. However, both explain that the difference between the two expressions of fear lies in the extent to which the mind is said to be *moved* in either state.

Tacitus here gives us no clue to his belief about the relative qualities of *pavor* and *terror* but merely states that the emotions are different for each. However, this is shown by the fact that 'pavebant' represents the passive experience of the fear felt by the solidiers ('they were fearful') whereas 'terrebant' refers to the fear that they actively caused in others ('they were terrifying'). This phrase, then, contains in the 'Oxymoron'¹⁴ of the passive 'pavebant' and active 'terrebant' the culmination of a sentence of opposites which characterise the soldiers' collective response. First there was the contrast of 'strepere' and 'trepidare', which was then further symbolised by 'clamor' and 'quies'.

causing and feeling fear in battle 'terrent enim trepidantve prout sonuit acies, nec tam voces illae quam virtutis concentus videntur'. The relationship between fearing and causing fear is even more evident in the description of the emperor Otho whom Tacitus described as inspiring fear in others particularly when he was alarmed himself, 'cum timeret Otho timebatur.' (*Hist* 1.81,1) Heubner (1963.172) cites Plut. *Otho* 3,8, 'φοβούμενος γὰρ ὑπερ τῶν ἀνδρῶν αὐτὸς ἦν φοβέρος ἐκείνος'; Cic. *Rep.* 2.45, 'cum metueret ipse poenam sceleris sui summam metui se volebat' and Sall. *Iug.* 20.2, 'metuens magis quam metuendus'. Also Liv. 42.50,3; Sen.*Oed.* 706, *Ep.* 14.10, 105.4; Lucan 5.527; Quint. *Inst.* 1.10.28; Plin. *Ep.* 9.33,6, *paneg.* 35.3, 46.8.

¹⁴cf. Koestermann (1963.135).

As Tacitus is describing the change that came over all the soldiers when they caught sight of Drusus and as they have so far been described collectively ('ingenti agmine'), it is logical to understand that the different and contrasting emotions represented by 'pavebant' and 'terrebant' do not refer to different groups of soldiers there present but rather to sudden changes of emotion within them all. When he refers to *motus animorum* he here means only two - the fearful and the fearsome. Therefore, the historian does not acknowledge the reactions of individual soldiers.¹⁵ Indeed Tacitus elsewhere describes how the soldiers reacted as one body (1.32,3):

'sed pariter ardescerent, pariter silerent, tanta aequalitate et constantia, ut regi crederes'

The order of the words in the phrase 'pavebant terrebantque' is also interesting - 'they were fearful and fearsome'. Tacitus does not merely portray a rowdy and once menacing army that is suddenly overwhelmed at the sight of the emperor's son, to the point of feeling fear ('trepidare'). For the final image in these words is not one of the soldiers' fearfulness. Rather the residual picture of the soldiers is that of a group of men quick to change in emotion, feeding off the crowd mentality and, moreover, who are deeply menacing still ('terrebant'). Despite their own fear, the soldiers have not lost the capacity to generate fear in others. Stobaeus (2.88) describes how the Stoics believed in the impulsiveness and irrationality of passions. Fear was one of the four main passions and was considered, along with appetite, the most powerful. In fact the only

¹⁵The soldiers are usually described in the singular as *miles*. The emotions of individuals are only given rarely and mostly in the case of commanders, for example, Caecina's *terror* at Varus' ghost ('ducemque terruit dira quies' 1.65,2).

difference between the two was that appetite relates to something good and healthy, fear to what is bad and unhealthy.¹⁶ Yet here the picture of the troops following a natural impulse is far from reassuring. They are subject to a tyranny of fear which has potentially serious repercussions for others. There is no direct object given for the verbs 'pavebant' and 'terrebant'. The recipients of the fear caused by the soldiers ('terrebant') are not identified and this has a sinister effect as the language appears to allow for the possibility that the soldiers can alarm *anyone*, not merely the legitimate enemy.

There is also a further point to be made about this phrase. It concerns the strengths of emotion implied by *pavor* and *terror*. Are the two words strictly synonymous to the extent that they convey the same intensity of fear? At *Ann.* 16.15,1, Tacitus writes that Nero was always fearful but more terrified once Piso's conspiracy against him had been revealed ('pavidum semper et reperta nuper coniuratione magis exterritum'). Although the contrast here is largely between 'semper' and 'reperta nuper coniuratione', if *magis* is taken in the sense of *potius* (meaning 'rather') then the passage would suggest that *exterritus* as well as being a form of variation for Nero's fear also expresses a greater degree of fear than *pavidus*. Adams (1972.363) observes that Tacitus revives the usage of *exterreo* as opposed to *terreo* in the later books of the *Annals*. Therefore, by extension, *terror* may be considered to be greater than *pavor*, which is logical in this context as the emotion expressed by 'exterritum' is caused by an added burden to Nero's mind - that being the new fear ('metus') which Ostorius, the staff officer of the guard, now inspires in him ('ingenti corpore armorumque scientia metum Neroni fecerat').

¹⁶On a similar note, cf. *Juv. Sat.* 10.4-5, 'quid enim ratione timemus / aut cupimus?'

Therefore, *metus* added to Nero who is already *pavidus* contributed to making him *exterritus*. If, then, in Tacitus' mind *terror* constituted a greater degree of fear than *pavor*, then at 1.25 his choice of words in 'pavebant' and 'terrebant' would imply that the fear which the soldiers were made to feel was not as great as that which they themselves could still generate in others.

The next day Drusus addresses the soldiers himself. In this account (1.29) there are certain echoes of the earlier passage at 1.25.¹⁷

1. Drusus orto die et vocata contione, quamquam rudis dicendi, nobilitate ingenita incusat priora, probat praesentia; *negat se terrore et minis vinci: flexos ad modestiam si videat, si supplices audiat, scripturum patri ut placatus legionum preces exciperet.*
2. orantibus rursum idem Blaesus et L. Aponius, eques Romanus e cohorte Drusi, Iustusque Catonius, primi ordinis centurio, ad
3. Tiberium mittuntur. certatum inde sententiis, cum alii opperiendos legatos atque interim comitate permulcendum militem censerent, alii fortioribus remediis agendum: *nihil in vulgo modicum; terrere, ni paveant; ubi pertimuerint, impune contemni: dum superstitio urgeat, adiciendos ex duce metus*
4. *sublatis seditionis auctoribus.* promptum ad asperiora ingenium Druso erat: vocatos Vibulenum et Percennium interfici iubet. tradunt plerique intra tabernaculum ducis obrutos, alii corpora extra vallum abiecta ostentui.

At daybreak, having called an assembly, Drusus, although not a good orator, spoke with natural dignity condemning their previous acts and approving their current behaviour. He said that he was not overcome by terror and threats and that if he saw them inclined to moderation and heard them in supplication, he would write and placate his father so that he would receive the pleas of the legions. At the soldiers' demand, Blaesus and Lucius

¹⁷cf. Goodyear 1972.224.

Aponius, a Roman knight from Drusus' cohort, and Iustus Catonius, a first-rank centurion, were sent to Tiberius. There followed a conflict of opinions. When some decided that they must wait for the envoys and in the meantime humour the soldiers, others considered that they ought to employ stronger remedies, for there is no moderation in a crowd, and they would terrify others unless they were terrified; once afraid they could be despised with impunity. While superstition ruled them, fear must be increased by their commander removing the ringleaders of the mutiny. Drusus was naturally inclined to severity. He summoned Vibulenus and Percennius and ordered them to be executed. Some say that they were buried in the general's tent, others that their bodies were thrown outside the vallum for all to see.

At 1.29,3 Tacitus uses *pavor* and *terror* in a way similar to 1.25,2 when he records the arguments of those in the army camp who want to keep the mutinous soldiers under strict discipline. The delicate balance of power between army and commanders is expressed in terms of the changed nature of the army from fearful to fearsome, thus, 'terrere ni paveant; ubi pertimuerint, impune contemni'.¹⁸ In other words the *terror* that they can cause (to their commanders) can only be overcome when they themselves are *thoroughly* afraid ('*pertimuerint*').¹⁹ Also at this point, Tacitus judges the behaviour of the soldiers to be immoderate ('*nihil in vulgo modicum*' 29,3). They behave only in an extreme way. Here they are either terrified or terrifying.

¹⁸Note how Tacitus makes a similar comment about German warriors at *Ger.* 3,1 where their courage or timidity depends upon the solidarity in the battle ranks.

¹⁹Indeed on occasions throughout *Ann.* 1 fear is presented as being used by the commanders of the army as a tactic not against the enemy but against their own men: cf. 21,1 '*ad terrorem ceterorum*'; 28,4 '*spem offerunt, metum intendunt*'; 29,3 '*adiciendos ex duce metus*'.

A fine example of exactly this sort of extreme and at times irrational behaviour is to be found in Tacitus' account of the German wars when he recalls how a horse broke loose in camp causing great panic amongst the soldiers, who thought that the Germans had broken into the enclosure (1.66). The passage is loaded with different phrases expressing fear.

1. Forte equus abruptis vinculis vagus et clamore territus quosdam occurrentium obturbavit. tanta inde consternatio inrupisse Germanos credentium, ut cuncti ruerent ad portas, quarum decumana maxime petebatur, aversa hosti et fugientibus tutior.
2. Caecina comperto vanam esse formidinem, cum tamen neque auctoritate neque precibus, ne manu quidem obsistere aut retinere militem quiret, proiectus in limine portae miseratione demum, quia per corpus legati eundem erat, clausit viam. simul tribuni et centuriones falsum pavorem esse docuerunt.

By chance a horse which had broken its chains was wandering about and, once terrified by the shouting, it alarmed some of the men running about. So great was the fear of the soldiers believing that the Germans had broken in that they all rushed to the gates, especially the decumana because it faced away from the enemy and was safer for flight. Caecina realised that the panic was groundless but when he could not stop or restrain the soldiers with commands, entreaties or even force finally by an appeal to their pity, he lay down on the threshold of the gate and because it would have meant them treading on the officer's body, he managed to block off the route. At the same time, the tribunes and centurions convinced them that it was a false alarm.

The *terror* of the horse, then, transmits itself to the soldiers who are nearby. Tacitus must mean that they began to run about after the alarm set in. At any rate, they are disturbed by the horse ('obturbavit'). Their

belief that the Germans had invaded is described as *consternatio*. *Consternatio* is associated generally with thought²⁰ and in one other particular case in Tacitus with the realisation that things are not as they should be. For it is *consternatio mentis* that makes Agrippina see, suddenly and dramatically, that Nero is behind the murder of Britannicus.²¹ So the soldiers run around in order to find the safest place of escape from the camp by the *decumana*.²² At this point, Caecina perceives what is happening. He diagnoses their *formido* as being misguided but is unable to calm the soldiers either by his authority or by entreaties ('neque auctoritate neque precibus'). The soldiers are behaving irrationally and in the world of the soldiers extreme acts demand extreme solutions. This is indeed what happens. Caecina is forced to lie down in front of the men in an action in which Tacitus later tells us Caecina was grossly outnumbered ('unus inter plures'). It is only when faced with having to run across their commander's body that the troops stop their flight. Moreover, Tacitus reinforces how groundless their fear was in the words 'falsum pavorem' which refers to the same sentiments as 'vanam ... formidinem'. It was only by Caecina's near self-sacrifice that the force of the troops was obstructed, all reasonable means having been tried unsuccessfully.

Elsewhere the soldiers' irrational behaviour is shown to be a major part of Tacitus' collective characterisation of the army and an aspect of

²⁰O.L.D. *consternatio*: 'Unsettlement or confusion (of the mind), shock, dismay'

²¹*Ann.* 13.16; see chapter 3.

²²Furneaux (1884) on this passage explains that the *decumana* was opposite the *porta praetoria* which 'always faced the enemy, or the direction of march or, in stationary camps, the East.' cf. Veget. 1.23.

their behaviour that has most sinister implications for their increasing power and influence over the imperial government and succession at Rome. The soldiers of *Ann.* 1 are driven by forces that are often fickle and changeable. At 1.28,2 when Tacitus describes the effects upon the mutinous soldiers of an eclipse of the moon, he comments that unbalanced minds are more ready to believe any superstition ('ut sunt mobiles ad superstitionem percussae semel mentes').²³ That the potential violence of the night was averted Tacitus credits to *fors*. For the highly superstitious nature of the soldiers responded readily to this 'omen praesentium', as they saw it, although Tacitus does not himself identify with their credulity, dismissing them as 'rationis ignarus'.²⁴ In a phrase that appears to echo 1.25,2 and the characterisation of their behaviour as fluctuating, he describes their reaction as mirroring the phases of the moon, 'prout splendidior obscuriorve, laetari aut maerere'. Superstition then has a tremendous influence upon the troops ('dum superstitio urgeat') and one that is enduring. At 1.30,3 Tacitus notes that the soldiers fear divine retribution ('durabat et formido caelestis irae') and it is this factor alone that calms the soldiers and dissuades them from mutiny. But they do not stop at that. Being as they are in Tacitus' account creatures of extremes, they feel they must purge themselves and

²³cf. Dio (64.11) who observes that phenomena such as the eclipse of the moon cause fear in men who are excited, 'καίτοι τοῖς θορυβουμένοις καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα φόβον φέρει'.

²⁴Goodyear (1972.232) however, comes to the conclusion that Tacitus is not himself 'fully *rationis gnarus* on these matters [and] imagined there are such fluctuations'. Goodyear considers the possibility that in the account of the eclipse Tacitus 'represents the persuasions of the soldiers, who believed their magic was, or was not, having effect' but he rules this out on the grounds that if Tacitus had intended this, he would have been more explicit.

their polluted camp ('castra infausta intemerataque'²⁵) of what has happened and seek a *piaculum* in the face of the supposed divine anger that has caused the eclipse:

'non aliud malorum levamentum, quam si linquerent castra infausta temerataque et soluti piaculo suis quisque hibernis redderentur.'

Goodyear (1972.296), moreover, notes that 'the idea of pollution is a recurrent theme in Tacitus' presentation of the mutinies.' For also after the German mutiny these feelings emerge and indeed are given as the reason behind the attack upon the Germans. At 1.39,6, according to Germanicus, the reason why the mutiny began again was 'deum ira'. Later his speech to the soldiers continues the religious tone as he offers himself as a sacrifice if they will only stop the violence against one another, 'sanguine pietur'.²⁶ He asks 'quid enim per hos dies inausum intemeratumve vobis?', adding that they have abused the rights of the enemy ('hostium ... ius'), the *sanctity* of embassy ('*sacra* legationis') and the *moral code* of nations ('*fas* gentium'). The first stage of this *piaculum* takes the form of a witch-hunt against members of the mutiny. But Tacitus

²⁵1.30,3. Goodyear (1972.296) compares Otho's description of the army barracks under Galba, 'castra ... cruenta et maculata' (*Hist.* 1.37,4).

²⁶1.42,1; Goodyear (1972.289) on *pietur* observes that atonement is a possible sense of this word and that Germanicus may feel that he ought to share the guilt for the mutiny. In the light of the dangerous situation he had found himself in at 1.39,4, this is an unwise tactic for Germanicus to adopt. Pelling (1993.59) recognises the problem of 'reconciling the apparently inept Germanicus of much of book 1 of the *Annals* with the generally heroic tone in which he is described, and indeed with the much more satisfactory figure presented in parts of book 2'. He later (61) goes on to argue that Germanicus' actions are consistent with his character although they do not always produce consistently good results.

shows by his description that the trial by the crowd, with their shouts declaring each man innocent or guilty and the violence of the punishment, possesses several of the characteristics that the mutiny itself had and he notes with some irony that the soldiers see this violence as a form of absolution, ('gaudebat caedibus miles, tamquam semet absolveret' 1.44,3).

The second stage of the *piaculum* takes the form of the attack upon the enemy and Tacitus writes,

'truces etiam tum animos cupido involat eundi in hostem, piaculum furoris; nec aliter posse placari commilitonum manes, quam si pectoribus impiis honesta vulnera accepissent.' (49,3).

Germanicus encourages this and sends out troops including eight squadrons of cavalry whose discipline has not been *defiled* by the mutiny ('quarum ea seditione *intemerata* modestia fuit'). Once there, the soldiers rush to turn their guilt into glory ('properant culpam in decus vertere'). However, this action is not straightforward. For ironically they attempt to do this by laying waste, amongst other things, a temple ('profana simul et sacra et celeberrimum illis gentibus templum, quod Tanfanae vocabant' 1.51,1).

Other than fear the emotions that most often influence the soldiers during the mutiny are ones identified with great passion and intense feeling, namely *furor* and *ira*. In Pannonia *furor* leads the soldiers to try and join three legions together as one but their *aemulatio* ruins this plan as each legion wants the chief honour for itself (1.18,1). Yet it is in the account of the rising among the German legions that the idea of the mutiny as the manifestation of a madness amongst the soldiers is developed much further. Tacitus at the beginning of his account

comments: 'inferioris exercitus miles in rabiem prolapsus est' (31,3). By describing the revolt as *rabies*, he writes in terms which, as Goodyear (1972.243) notes, echo accounts of army uprisings in both Livy and Velleius Paterculus, the latter describing this same mutiny.²⁷ The soldiers' behaviour is also expressed as *vaecordia* on two occasions.²⁸ Tacitus on three occasions describes the soldiers of the German legions as *furentes*. Once he comments directly himself ('saevum id malique moris etiam *furentibus* visum' 1.35,5); twice the information is given in speech by *rumores* and by Germanicus.²⁹ These all serve to promote the idea in the mind of the audience that the revolt was the act of an irrational and dangerously unpredictable group. In addition, what enhances this impression further is the fact that the uniting factor for the soldiers is their *ira*. At 20,1 it is their *ira* that binds them together in the attack upon the vicious camp prefect Aufidienus Rufus. Tacitus then recounts how *ira* is one of the emotions that the soldiers are aiming to rouse in their contemporaries in order to solidify support for the mutiny: 'nihil reliqui faciunt quo minus invidiam misericordiam metum et *iras* permoverent'(21,2).³⁰ Finally, when the mutiny is over in Germany, the

²⁷Liv 28.34,4 where Mondonius describes incidents among the Ilergetes, Lucetani and Roman troops, 'fatalem *rabiem* temporis eius accusat cum velut contagione quadam ... castra quoque Romana *insanierint*' and Vell. 2.125,1 '*rabiem* quadam et profunda confundendi omnia cupiditate.'

²⁸32,1 'quippe plurimum *vaecordia* constantiam exemerat' and 39,2 'pavidos et conscientia *vaecordes* intrat metus'.

²⁹40,2 'inter *furentes* et omnis humani iuris violatores'; 42,1 'nunc procul a *furentibus* summoveo'.

³⁰Here also is a sinister element and another symptom of the war they are waging against each other in that they are aiming to arouse fear in one another.

soldiers then turn the *ira* they had used against one another towards the appropriate target - the enemy (62,1).

Therefore the soldiers are presented as irrational beings who cause fear as easily as they feel it. The fact that they are often seen as fearful themselves does not diminish the threat that Tacitus wishes to express to his audience. This paradoxical quality makes them the perfect instrument for the emperor in Tacitus' work. For throughout *Annals* 1 and indeed the whole of Tacitus' historical works, from Augustus' reliance on bribery to the violent end of Vitellius at *Hist.* 3.86, the historian articulates his deep concern for the potential threat posed by the soldiers to the stability of the government of Rome and the freedom of her citizens. Tacitus focuses upon the mutinies in Pannonia and Germany and, as far as we are able to assess, makes much more of them than was perhaps justified by their historical significance. However, he appears to be aware of this problem and makes some attempt to justify the historical importance of these events in his text. For at 1.24.1 Tacitus describes events in Pannonia as '*tristissima*' and comments upon Tiberius' inscrutability in a crisis ('*occultantem*'). But on this occasion, he implies, the situation was so grave that Tiberius was less concerned with the public image and sends his son Drusus out immediately. Tacitus thus enforces the idea that this is an event that the Roman people were uncharacteristically made aware of due to its severity and significance for their livelihood.

He is even more explicit about the nature of the threat to Rome posed by the army at 1.28,4 where he describes the Roman officers trying to break up the Pannonian mutiny by demoralising the mutineers in conversations. There is a reference to the designs upon the Empire

which the soldiers may have had implicit in the words spoken by the officers sent round by Drusus to cause unrest in the camp. They ask, 'Do [Percennius and Vibulenus] wish to take over the sovereignty of the Roman people?', ('denique pro Neronibus et Drusis imperium populi Romani capessent?'). Earlier, Tacitus alleged that Tiberius shared a similar concern about the army, namely that Germanicus might use his popularity with the legions to take the empire by force by means of a military coup in case he should prefer to hold power rather than wait for it, ('ne ... habere imperium quam expectare mallet'.)³¹ This is not merely a feature of Tiberius' fears about Germanicus' ambition but is something that the legions may have considered and which indeed may have lain behind their demands for fair terms of service. The timing of the mutinies is also expedient, occurring as they do when the government is most vulnerable. Both armies revolt as soon as they hear of Augustus' death.³² Moreover, at the start of the German mutiny, Tacitus makes this thought explicit when he records that the legions rebelled hoping that Germanicus would challenge Tiberius' authority with the army supporting him to this end, 'magna spe fore ut Germanicus Caesar imperium alterius pati nequiret daretque se legionibus vi sua cuncta tracturis' (1.31,1). Tacitus describes the outbreak of the mutiny in Pannonia thus (1.16,1):

'Hic rerum urbanarum status erat, cum Pannonicas legiones seditio incessit, nullis novis causis, nisi quod mutatus princeps licentiam turbarum et ex civili bello spem praemiorum ostendebat.'

³¹*Ann.* 1.7,6. Tacitus includes this by way of explanation for Tiberius' alleged hatred for his nephew.

³²1.16,1 'fine Augusti et initiis Tiberii auditis' cf 1.31,4 'audito fine Augusto'.

The timing of the mutiny is presented as having been deliberate, or at least expedient for the soldiers' purpose. Perhaps, as in Germany ('magna spe' 1.31,1), the army may have held out some hope that the government could be toppled or at least partially undermined by their action. Whether this was their motive or not is inconsequential as long as the general impression seemed to be that the troops were holding Rome to ransom.³³

Tacitus also describes the mutiny in Pannonia as verging on civil war ('*ex civili bello spem praemiorum ostendebat*'). Later (1.36,2) he again portrays the army as being on the brink of civil war when he writes '*si auxilia et socii adversum abscedentis legiones armarentur, civile bellum suscipi*' and goes on to claim that, whether everything or nothing were conceded to the army, the state was in jeopardy ('*in ancipiti res publica*'). Tacitus, then, is in no doubt as to the power and influence of the army over the state and, therefore, the emperor. Elsewhere he speaks of the mutineers in the army in terms of an enemy within the camp when he observes that the soldiers in Germany were ready to abuse the right of sanctuary, depths to which Tacitus declares even the enemy would not stoop ('*rarum etiam inter hostes*' 1.39,4). At 1.41,1 the Roman army camp is compared to a conquered city, '*velut in urbe victa facies*'. In the light of Rome's history since the mutinies, Tacitus might well have intended to suggest that the army mutinies had potentially great significance for the

³³The relationship between the emperor and the army was a precarious one with the emperors literally having to pay for the loyalty of the soldiers. Augustus in his struggle for supremacy first bribed the army (1.2,1) and Tiberius is aware that the army will follow the person who pays the best, for Germanicus proves this when he buys the army off with gifts of money ('*largiendis pecuniis*', 1.52,1).

inhabitants of Rome. Furthermore, Tacitus' audience at the start of the 2nd century A.D., blessed with the benefit of hindsight, would have understood that by ascribing to the events in Pannonia and Germany elements of civil war, Tacitus was ironically foreshadowing A.D.69, when Rome did literally become a conquered city,³⁴ thereby outlining the development of the singular power of the army to control the fortune and accession of subsequent Roman emperors.

At 1.46,1 Tacitus states explicitly for the first time that so great are the repercussions of the mutinies for the people of Rome that they are in a state of panic ('*trepida civitas*').³⁵ Previously it was only Tiberius' anxiety (that Germanicus might use the army to seize power) which was described. Now, according to Tacitus, his panic has spread throughout Rome. If this is the case, then it supports Tacitus' motives for lengthening the account of the mutinies. However, there are further implications for the presentation of the army in the book. *Trepidatio* words have been used twice by Tacitus already in book 1, both times during passages on the mutinies. At 1.25,1 he records how soldiers in Pannonia feel *trepidatio* at the *sight* of Drusus, '*rursum viso Caesare trepidare*' and later he contrasts the Pannonian and German legions, of whom the latter are roused into mutiny not because they feel fear ('*nec apud trepidas militum aures*' 1.31,5) but for other reasons. Here (at

³⁴cf. *Hist.* 3.84, where the emperor's Palatine residence is transformed into a conquered city.

³⁵ N.B. Nisbet and Hubbard (1978.170) on *Hor. Carm.* 2.11,4, '*nec trepides in usum*' note the poet's use of *trepido* to mean not 'fear and trembling' but rather 'bustling and excitement'. Perhaps this is generally a more appropriate description for a *civitas* but it is logical that fear should be implied in this instance.

1.46,1) the tables are turned and it is the Roman people who are experiencing *trepidatio* at the hands of the army - an irony itself as the army by its very nature ought only to alarm the enemy. In contrast, we are told at 1.36,2 that the enemy themselves are relatively unconcerned by the army because they know about the sedition in the ranks. It is another hallmark of the Tacitean world turned upside down that here we have the irony of the Roman army having become a source of fear for the very people it is enlisted to protect, while the enemy appear unmoved. Tacitus reports the complaints of the panic-stricken people, including their observation that the senate and people are no match for the Roman army, the former being extremely vulnerable 'invalida et inermia' in comparison with the latter.³⁶ But Tiberius is anxious also ('multa quippe et diversa angebant' 47,1) and Tacitus lists his concerns. Although the stronger army is in Germany, the closer one is in Pannonia. Here is a clear expression of the threat that both posed to Rome, 'ille Galliarum opibus subnixus, hic Italiae imminens'. In 'imminens', the fact of the geographical proximity of the Pannonian legions takes on a potentially sinister import. The vast presence of the frontier army in *Ann* 1 has menacing implications for the people of Rome. By emphasising this particular threat, Tacitus not only looks back to the civil wars of the previous century and forward to the turmoil of A.D. 69, but also provides by the account of the violence of the mutinies a reminder of the situation at Rome, where the city and rulers were becoming increasingly dependent upon the army.³⁷ This was a situation which became even

³⁶cf. 1.6,1. Agrippa Postumus was unarmed ('inermum') against a soldier and came to no good ('quem ignarum inermumque quamvis firmatus animo centurio aegre confecit').

³⁷There is no difficulty in the fact that Tacitus holds back from commenting directly on the moral issue here. In his discussion of Tacitus' presentation of Germanicus, Pelling

more marked by the events of A.D.69 and in the increasingly militaristic role of later emperors, especially Domitian. The changed nature of the city under the emperors is summed up early on in the *Annals* by the Tacitean description of the new, imperial Rome no longer SPQR but rather 'senatus milesque et populus' (1.7,2).³⁸ Since Augustus, the acts of a society at peace have begun to resemble rather the events on a battlefield. The extended and pervasive influence of the soldiers only serves to symbolise the reality of this 'bloody peace'.

'pacem sine dubio post haec, verum cruentam: Lollianas
Varianasque clades, interfectos Romae Varrones Egnatios Iullos.'

(1993.60) considers the reason why Tacitus writes in such a morally inexplicit fashion, 'Perhaps Tacitus refrains from straightforward moral comment because straightforward moral comment is not his central interest or would not be adequate; perhaps this Germanicus serves a more sophisticated purpose in the general narrative strategy. That, surely, is the right approach.'

³⁸This is a recurrent device in Tacitus. Goodyear (1972.139) cites Koestermann's note, writing that 'mention of the soldiery is deliberately intruded into the traditional formula *senatus populusque*' and he compares passages at 11.30,2, 'populus et senatus et miles' (when Claudius is under threat from the marriage of Messalina to Silius) and 14.11,1, 'militi patribusque et plebi' (when Nero is threatened by a reaction against the murder of Agrippina and he is compelled to draw false treason charges against her). In both cases these groups are presented as those by whose support political power was achieved and maintained.

Chapter 2

Tacitus' use of *Horror*.

*Considerate la vostra semenza
fatti non foste a viver come bruti
ma per seguir virtute e canoscenza*

Dante *Inferno* XXVI 118

Horror, its derivatives and compounds occur in total on 30 occasions in Tacitus' works.¹ Although expressions of *horror* are not among the most frequently employed words of fear in Tacitus' writing, yet within the major historical works there is a noticeable decline in their numbers. Whereas expressions of *horror* are to be found 14 times in the *Histories* (including the only instance of *horror* itself²), with good use made especially of the compounds of *horreo*, there are fewer examples to be found in the *Annals*, where he only uses *horridus* 5 times, *abhorreo* 4 times and *inhorreo* only once. Furthermore, of these three, only *abhorreo* has survived as far as the later books, 13-16. However, I would contend that examples of *abhorreo* can be disregarded for the purpose of analysing the conveyance of fear. For in Tacitus' works there appears to be no clear

1

	<i>Dial.</i>	<i>Ger.</i>	<i>Agr.</i>	<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Ann.</i> 1-6	11-12	13-16	Total
<i>abhorreo</i>	1	-	-	4	1	-	3	9
<i>exhorreo</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>horreo</i>	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	6
<i>horridus</i>	1	2	-	3	5	-	-	11
<i>horror</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>inhorreo</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>inhorresco</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
Total	2	4	-	14	6	1	3	30

cf. Appendix 1.

²*Hist.* 2.37,3, '*horror* animum subit quotiens recordor feralem introitum'.

connection between *abhorreo* and descriptions of outright fear.³ As only a relatively few expressions of *horror* are to be found throughout Tacitus' surviving works, it is perhaps misleading to speculate too greatly upon their apparent decline towards the later parts of his work. However, an analysis of Tacitus' use of these words in individual contexts illuminates not only the complexities and subtleties of the expressions themselves but also Tacitus' intricate and powerful use of language.

Horror and related expressions function at different levels of meaning and are applied in a broad range of contexts. Literally, *horror* words can express the idea of hair standing up on end, a bristling, rough or hairy appearance, such as is used often by Vergil, thus, 'glacie riget horrida barba' (*Aen.* 4.251).⁴ Additionally, perhaps as an extension of this meaning, they can convey a rough demeanour, hence Quintus Curtius Rufus' reference to savage characters.⁵ The expressions can also act metaphorically to describe a certain way of speaking, for instance in

³Fear is not necessarily implied by the meaning of the word itself. Of the nine examples of *abhorreo*, four occur in close proximity to an expression of fear ('metum', *Hist.* 2.2,1; 'metuebatur', *Hist.* 3.65,2; 'metuebatur', *Ann.* 13.12,2 and 'metum', *Ann.* 13.47,3). Yet there is no direct relationship between these expressions and the sentiment represented by the forms of *abhorreo*.

⁴*T.L.L. horridus* 2991.26ff. cf. also Cic. *Agr.* 2.13, 'iam designatus alio vultu, alio vocis sono, alio incessu esse meditabatur vestitu obsolete corpore inculto et horrido, capillatior quam ante barbaque maiore, ut oculis et aspectu denuntiore omnibus vim tribuniciam et minitari rei publicae videretur.'

⁵*Hist.* 4.6,3, 'sunt autem Bactriani inter illas gentes promptissimi, horridis ingeniis multumque a Persarum luxu abhorrentibus.'

Quintilian's advice on the pronunciation of the sound *fr* in 'frangit'.⁶ It is by extension that expressions of *horror* come to be associated with fear, describing either the symptoms of fear (such as hair standing up on end) or an appearance that could evoke fear in a person.⁷ Expressions of *horror* can be either active or passive in meaning; that is to say that they can be used to describe either the person who feels fear or the object that causes fear. In Tacitus' works, expressions of *horror* can be gathered broadly into two groups; those that through their context appear to employ *horror* as a representation of fear and those that do not.⁸ A few, however, are ambiguous.⁹ It seems to me that the issues to be addressed when considering Tacitus' use of expressions of *horror* are as follows. First, in contexts where the expression of *horror* has been chosen primarily to describe appearance, to what extent does the word also communicate a sense of fear? Secondly, to what extent is the converse the case; that is to say, how far is some kind of visual concept (in the form of a symptom of fear or a terrifying appearance) implicit within Tacitus' expressions of *horror* where the *horror* initially appears to signify fear?

⁶T.L.L. *horridus* 2993.60ff. Quint. 12.10,29, 'illa, quae est sexta (sc. littera) nostrarum, paene non humana voce vel omnino non voce potius inter discrimina dentium efflanda est: quae, etiam cum vocalem proxima accipit, quassa quodam modo, utque quotiens aliquam consonantium frangit, ut in hoc ipso 'frangit' multo fit *horridior*'. cf. Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.74,1, 'horridi sermone' and *Dial.* 18,1, 'sunt enim horridi et impoliti et rudes et informes'

⁷T.L.L. *horridus* 2995.21ff.

⁸*Horror* as a representation of fear: *Ger.* 39,1; *Hist.* 1.37,3; 1.50,4; 2.70,4; 3.84,4; 4.58,5; 4.62,3; *Ann.* 11.28,1. Instances where *horror* does not appear to convey fear: *Dial.* 18,1; *Ger.* 2,1; 5,1; 38,2; *Hist.* 1.82,2; 2.11,3; 2.74,1; 2.88,3; *Ann.* 2.23,3; 4.16,3.

⁹Cases where *horror* is ambiguous: *Ann.* 1.17,6, 4.7,1, 6.34,3.

* * * * *

Barbarian foreigners were traditionally perceived as *horridus/horrens*.¹⁰ Moreover, the editors of the *T.L.L.* consider such a use of *horridus* to indicate in these cases the physical appearance of the subjects.¹¹ In a barbarian context, Tacitus uses *horridus/horrens* on a number of occasions, mostly, although not exclusively, in passages concerned with the Germans. At *Ann.* 1.17,6 Tacitus describes the German enemy as 'horridas gentes'. In this passage, a spokesman for the soldiers, Percennius, states that these 'horridas gentes' could be seen ('aspici') and so this might tend to suggest that 'horridas' is merely describing their appearance. But the point of Percennius' speech is to emphasise the dangers which are close at hand for the rank and file soldiers. Therefore the Germans are also intended to be presented as a cause for alarm. Later (*Ann.* 6.34,3) Tacitus records the Parthian king Pharasmanes proudly describing his troops as a 'horridam ... aciem'. He contrasts the *horridus* appearance of his own men with that of the enemy who are over-ornate in their dress ('picta auro Medorum agmina'). The overall impression of the passage is that the desirable approach was to appear *horridus* rather than *fulgens* in battle; and the aim in battle is to cause fear to the enemy. Therefore, the use of *horridus* to describe the Parthian appearance here is not only effective in drawing a contrast with the dress of the enemy but also communicates the effect that their

¹⁰Cf *T.L.L. horridus* 2993.22ff.

¹¹*T.L.L. horridus* 2992.33f, 'generatim fere i.q. rudis, ferus, incultus (in neutram vel malam partem)'.

appearance will have, a 'terrifying' one. Elsewhere (*Ger* 38,2), Tacitus writes thus of the Suebi:

'in aliis gentibus seu cognatione aliqua Sueborum seu, quod saepius accidit, imitatione, rarum et intra iuventae spatium, apud Suebos usque ad canitiem *horrentes* capilli retorquentur ac saepe in ipso vertice religant; principes et ornatiorem habent. ea cura formae, sed innoxia; neque enim ut ament amenturve: in altitudinem quondam et *terrorem* adituri bella comptius hostem oculis ornantur.'

Here Tacitus presents explicitly the idea that the appearance of the barbarians (conveyed by *horrens*) is deliberate and part of their tactics to instil deep fear ('*terrorem*') into the troops that engage with them in battle. Therefore, in these instances *horridus/horrens* words appear to represent not only the physical appearance of the barbarians (the primary meaning of the expression) but additionally they describe the ability of that appearance to cause *terror* in others.

Elsewhere Tacitus uses expressions of *horror* to portray other elements of the Germanic experience. Their religious rites are said to be awe-inspiring ('*horrenda*').¹² Even their land is *horridus*. Of the woods Tacitus writes, 'terra etsi aliquanto specie differt, in universum tamen aut silvis *horrida* aut paludibus foeda' (*Ger*. 5,1). No doubt the 'bristly' quality of *horridus* justifies its usage here. However, it is arguable that

¹²*Ger*. 39,1, 'stato tempore in silvam auguriis patrum et prisca formidine sacram <eiusdem> nominis eiusdemque sanguinis populi legationibus coeunt caesoque publice homine celebrant barbari ritus horrenda primordia.' Of interest also in this passage is the use of *formido*, again in the sense of religious awe, which adds indirectly to the potential presence of fear in the episode. cf. also *T.L.L. horror* 3000.72ff.

the implication of fear inspired by these woods is not inappropriate given Tacitus' later description of the Teutoburgian forest, the final resting place of Varus and his legion, and the ambush there of Germanicus' troops by the German leader Arminius.¹³ Tacitus' description of the sea that adjoins their land as *horridus* ('praeter periculum horridi et ignoti maris' *Ger.* 2,1) does not only refer to the 'rough' waves but also to the fear felt by the sailors. For Tacitus emphasises the potential danger ('periculum'), especially for those to whom the area is unfamiliar ('ignoti').¹⁴ Previously I observed that an arousal of fear is implied through the 'horrific' appearance of the barbarians. This has implications for sections of the ethnographic accounts also. For these descriptions of the geography and religious practices of the Germans are also presented in terms of *horror*. Therefore, details of the German experience appear to contain a sinister tone, as their land and sea are described in the same terms as their troops in battle. This serves to enhance the menacing picture of the Germans as a nation.

With the one exception (*Ann* 6.34,3), Tacitus appears to view only the German barbarian as 'horridus'. The other main group of northern barbarians, the Britons, are not depicted in this way. Indeed no instance of an expression of *horror* is to be found in the *Agricola* at all. It is true that Tacitus appears to have found much to admire in the German way of life. It is also true that there is much comparable treatment of the Britons and the Germans in his works. Both are fighting for their freedom and

¹³cf. *Ann.* 1.62.

¹⁴cf. also Tacitus' description of the shipwreck that befell Germanicus and his men on the North Sea off the coast of Germany where the wind was described as 'horridior' (*Ann.* 2.23,3) and *T.L.L. horror* 2997.68.

their leaders often come in for particular praise.¹⁵ However, the Britons are at no time described in such an insidiously sinister way. Strange and foreign they may be, and no doubt a threat also, but, unlike the Germans, their foreign characteristics are not presented as symbolic of the fear that they evoke in their enemies. The Germans of course were closer to Rome and, therefore, of the two presented the more real threat. But, in addition, native Germans had exercised influence even closer to home as members of the *Germani corporis custodes*, a personal bodyguard for the emperor active under Augustus and Nero.¹⁶ Nero's reliance upon such troops is chillingly described at 15.58,2, when Tacitus records the precautions taken by Nero against conspiracy, adding that the emperor trusted the German troops because they were foreigners.¹⁷

'quin et urbem per manipulos occupatis moenibus, incesso etiam mari et amne, velut in custodiam dedit. volitabantque per fora, per domos, rura quoque et proxima municipiorum pedites

¹⁵cf. on Boudicca, *Ann.* 14.35,1; Calgacus, *Agr.* 30; Caratacus, *Ann.* 12.36,2 and Mithridates, *Ann.* 12.21,1. Arminius is even given a short obituary at *Ann.* 2.88.

¹⁶Suetonius (*Aug* 49) records how Germans were removed from the imperial guard after the disaster involving Varus' legions in A.D.9. Tacitus tells us that this corps was reinstated under Nero, 'et Germanos nuper eundem in honorem custodes additos degredi iubet' *Ann.* 13.18,3. Nero is also depicted addressing these German troops on a coin issued c. A.D. 64-66, cf. Keppie 1984.231 and plate 17d.

¹⁷Furthermore, in his description of Sejanus' mobilisation of the Praetorian Guard at *Ann.* 4.2,1, Tacitus claims that these guards were mustered into one camp not only to receive orders more efficiently but also to intimidate others, i.e. the citizens of Rome ('ut simul imperia acciperent numeroque et robore et visu inter se fiducia ipsis, in ceteros metus creretur').

equitesque, permixti Germanis, quibus fidebat princeps quasi externis.'¹⁸

* * * * *

Out of the 21 expressions of *horror* in Tacitus (excluding *abhorreo*), the majority are to be found in a military context.¹⁹ This perhaps is hardly surprising as the words are used more often in the *Histories* than any other book, in the account of the turbulent events of A.D. 69-70.²⁰ As in the case of the barbarians, Tacitus on occasions uses *horridus* and *horrens* to describe the appearance of the soldiers. At *Hist.* 2.11,3, Tacitus describes the journey of Otho and his troops. The emperor was attended by many men, including a personal bodyguard, praetorian cohorts and veterans, and a large naval team. But the emperor, we are told, did not travel in any degree of luxury. Rather he is depicted as marching along like a common foot soldier, 'lorica ferrea usus est et ante signa pedes ire, horridus, incomptus famaеque dissimilis'. Here 'horridus' is representative of Otho's appearance. It is paired with and partially synonymous with 'incomptus'. Moreover, the passage is emphatic, for Otho appears 'famaеque dissimilis'. Tacitus is stressing the difference between the reality of Otho's appearance with the expected conduct and dress of an emperor, elements of which *are* present. For he has a personal bodyguard and praetorian cohorts with him. Yet he is playing the part

¹⁸By contrast, Nero fails to trust the veterans of the Roman army (*Ann.* 15.59,4).

¹⁹*Ger.* 38,2; *Hist.* 1.37,3, 1.50,4, (1.82,2,) 2.11,3, 2.70,4, 2.74,1, 2.88,3, 3.84,4, 4.58,5, 4.62,3; *Ann.* 1.17,6, 2.23,3, 6.34,3.

²⁰Therefore, expressions of *horror* are naturally more appropriate in a military context. Or, perhaps its usage lapsed later in Tacitus' writing career.

of the *miles horridus*.²¹ To the Romans, good soldiers should look rough and ought not to dress lavishly for battle as certain barbarian races were accustomed to do. The latter was a mark of degenerate foreign behaviour. Indeed as early as the 3rd century B.C. Ennius was writing, 'spernitur orator bonus, horridus miles amatur' (*Ann.* 249).²² Livy, writing some centuries later, expressed his own approval of the *miles horridus*, thus,

'notus iam Romanis apparatus insignium armorum fuerat, doctique a ducibus erant horridum militem esse debere non caelatum auro et argento, sed ferro et animis fretum' (9.40,4).²³

Tacitus also expresses such sentiments explicitly at one point in his work, where he describes the leader who prides himself because his troops are *horridi* while the army which they are facing are over-ornate, although here, in a typical Tacitean reversal, the traditional Roman virtue is displayed by a foreigner instead of a Roman.²⁴ A feature of a good and

²¹*T.L.L.* 2992.52f.

²²Skutsch (1985.434) writes, '*bonus* is a qualifying attribute, *horridus* an inherent one, unless Livy 9.40,4 ... is held to show that *horridus* too can be qualifying'.

²³cf. 10.38, where Livy describes the Romans facing the Samnites who are adorned in gold and silver; also, 45.36,4 and Sil. 8.424-6, 'quid qui Picenae stimulat telluris alumnos, / horridus et squamis et equina curio crista, / pars belli quam magna venit.' Similarly, Propertius (4.10, 19-22) describes a triumphal procession thus, 'idem eques et frenis, idem fuit aptus aratris, / et galea hirsuta compta lupria luba. / pictor neque inducto fulgebat parma pyropo: / praebebant caesi baltea lenta boves' (The italics are mine).

²⁴*Ann.* 6.34,3. There is evidence of similar sentiments in Greek writing also. Xenophon (*Hell.* 4.1.30-1) in his account of a conference between the Persian Satrap Pharnabazus and the Spartan King Agesilaus describes the Persian's embarrassment at his own

effective soldier is, naturally, to instill fear into the enemy. That goes without saying. Therefore, the *miles horridus* is a good and effective soldier; his appearance ought to add to the anxiety of the enemy. Therefore, it is impossible to separate the two aspects of *horridus* in the context of the *miles horridus*. The word conveys not only the physical appearance (shaggy dirty animal skins for clothes, unkempt hair perhaps) but also the prospect of the effect that this sight will have upon the enemy, that is to say, fear in the form of *horror*. The conclusion must be that even in a relatively innocuous passage such as *Hist.* 2.11,3, where there is no explicit sign of fear, there can be found, nonetheless, implications of fear in the physical manifestation of a soldier as *horridus*.

Another illustration of the complexity of the relationship between the two aspects of *horror* as fear and as a feature of the appearance of soldiers can be found later on in *Histories* 2 but here the relationship with the arousal of fear is much clearer. At 2.88,3, Tacitus depicts the troops inside Rome in terms of *horror*. Although he very rarely on the whole gives details of physical appearance, here he paints a vivid picture of the 'saevum spectaculum' which the soldiers created.

'nec minus saevum spectaculum erant ipsi, tergis ferarum et ingentibus telis horrentes, cum turbam populi per inscitiam parum vitarent, aut

luxurious clothing in comparison with Agesilaus' dress and demeanour. cf. also Dauge 1981.433 and 656 on the illusion of barbarian appearances and 661 where he discusses *Juv. Sat.* 15.44-6. On the Egyptians he writes, 'une étonnante alliance de grossièreté - sensualité - *luxuria*'.

For Tacitus using foreigners to demonstrate traditional Roman ideals, see especially on *libertas / servitus*: Arminius (*Ann.* 1.55ff) in Germany; Caratacus (*Ann.* 12.33ff), Boudicca (14.31,35,37) and Calgacus (*Agr.* 30ff) in Britain.

ubi lubrico viae vel occursu alicuius procidissent, ad iurgium, mox ad manus et ferrum transirent.²⁵

Here 'horrentes' is clearly synonymous with such words as *squalidus* or *hirsutus* and refers to the way in which the soldiers were dressed.²⁶ The animal skins that they wear give them a shaggy appearance. At the same time, they carry large weapons and there are precedents for using *horridus/horrens* to describe columns of troops in battle with spears at the ready, standing up on end and giving the group a bristled appearance.²⁷ Therefore, in a mild syllepsis, Tacitus, with his usual ingenious economy of expression, uses 'horrentes' to fulfil two slightly different roles at once. It conveys both the 'shagginess' of the soldiers' clothing as well as the bristling effect of their erect weapons.

In addition, it is interesting to note that there is also a large element of fear expressed in this passage. First of all, earlier in the

²⁵cf. Keitel 1992.344f.

²⁶cf. T.L.L. on *horridus*, 2992.17ff 'squalidus, incomptus, turpis' and 2991.25ff 'asper tactu, hispidus, hirsutus'

²⁷The kind of weapon at 2.88,3 is not specified. However, *horridus/horreo* occur elsewhere both with *hasta*: cf. 'horruit hastis' Ver. *Geo.* 2.142; 'densis hastilibus horrida myrtus' *Aen.* 3.23; 'horrentibus hastis' 10.178; 'ferreus hastis horret ager' 11.601-2 and 'intentis horrentis hastis' Liv. 44.41,6. Also with *iaculum*: cf. 'horrentem iaculis' Val.Flacc. 1.486. Heubner (1968) cites 'horridus in iaculis et pelle ursae' (Ver. *Aen* 5.37) and '(pubes) horrebat telis et tergo hirsuta ferarum' (Sil. 8.57) as being particularly close to the passage at 2.88,3.

This use of *horridus/horreo* with weapons may also be implicit in the phrase 'horridam ... aciem' at *Ann* 6.34,3, which I have already discussed.

chapter, Tacitus has told of some of the slaughter ('multae et atroces inter se militum caedes') which took place outside Rome involving Vitellius' troops, who are quick to resort to violence, even in the face of a practical joke (*Hist.* 2.88,1-2). Then the historian turns to look at events in Rome itself where he notes real cause for fear ('trepidatum') as he describes the soldiers dressed in animal skins who likewise are too trigger-happy when they slip or are accidentally jostled. Indeed the final image of this chapter is that of the *terror* caused by army officers rushing around, 'quin et tribuni praefectique cum *terrore* et armatorum catervis volitabant'. Here, then, are signs of a third side to 'horrentes'. Not only is the word applied to the dress and weapons of the soldiers but also it is used to depict a group of soldiers who are causing fear in innocent civilians and revealing a terrifying aspect to civil war. In this context, therefore, it is perhaps possible to detect in 'horrentes' a hint of the evocation of fear, a sense that *horrens* elsewhere represents. Therefore, Tacitus has taken the main ingredients for the description of a good soldier, who creates fear in the enemy, but he twists this so that the image is one not of security but of fear for the citizens of Rome whom the troops are charged to defend.²⁸

Therefore, in certain contexts at least, it is impossible to consider *horridus/horrens* as being representative merely of the appearance of a barbarian or a soldier with not a hint of *horror* as an expression of fear. Furthermore, in these cases, fear is aroused both by an appearance and in the context of battle. The threat implicit in *horror* is, in Tacitus, at times barbarian but essentially militaristic. This is supported by a number of other examples of *horror* words in the *Histories* which express the fear

²⁸Note that Tacitus' treatment of the soldiers in *Ann.* 1 is similar, see Chapter 1.

either of war itself or of a particular military force.²⁹ The appearance and clothing of the soldiers, then, can be seen to be related directly to the fear that they arouse in others. A parallel phenomenon is to be found in the visual arts also. For material evidence survives which supports the use of the army dress as a medium for expressing images of fear, but in a more focussed and specific way. Zanker (1988.200), in his study of images of power as Augustan propaganda, describes the cult statue of Mars Ultor as follows:

The breastplate was dominated by two heraldic griffins. These and the gorgoneion refer to the arms of Mars that spread terror (to the Romans the griffin was the animal not only of Apollo but of Nemesis as well). The elephants' and rams' heads on the *pteryges* (leather lappets) are also to be understood as symbols of might.³⁰

Moreover, and directly representing Roman soldiers rather than deities in military dress, there are also cuirassed statues of Roman army officers and, naturally, of emperors that display the same or similar features with

²⁹cf. 'ita bellum aliud atque alias clades *horrebant*' *Hist* 1.50,4; '*horret* animus tanti flagitii imagine' 4.58,5; 'cuncti, qui paulo ante Romanorum nomen *horrebant*' 4.62,3. Also, 'horror animum subit, quotiens recordor feralem introitum et hanc solam Galbae victoriam' (1.37,3). For comparison with 1.37,3, it is interesting to note 1.6,2 describing an earlier entry into Rome by Galba. Although there is no reference to *horror* here (the fear is expressed by 'formidolosus'), there are a striking number of parallel words and phrases in both passages: 'innocentes' / 'innocentissimum'; 'trucidatis' / 'trucidaverit'; 'tot milibus' / 'tot milia'; also there are references to religious signs in both ('omine', 1.6,2 and 'auspiciis', 1.37,3).

³⁰This is a form of decoration which dates back to Homeric times, cf. the account of Athene's armour at *Iliad* 11.36ff.

griffins and gorgons heads depicted on the breastplates.³¹ Elsewhere, a tribune of the Praetorian Guard also is shown in a relief wearing the head of the gorgon on his breastplate.³² Therefore, by reinforcing the connection between the appearance of soldiers and fear arousal, in this way Tacitus may have been reflecting the symbolic use of images of fear on the military uniform employed under the early empire.

* * * * *

Given the predominantly military nature of Tacitus' usage of *horror* expressions,³³ passages which do not conform to this pattern deserve some explanation or qualification. Of the 'non-military' passages containing *horror* words (again excluding *abhorreo*), three have already been discussed in relation to Tacitus' presentation of the Germans.³⁴ There, the expressions of *horror* appear to complement the way in which Tacitus wishes the barbarians to be perceived at Rome and it can of course be argued, as we have seen, that there are hints of a military threat implicit in these.³⁵ *Horridus* can also describe a rough way of speaking. This explains the usage at *Dial* . 18,1 where Tacitus writes,

³¹cf. C. Vermeule (1980) eg. a Roman officer 94; Trajan 85, 88 (both with Gorgon's head and griffins), 95, 97. cf. also *OHCW* 1986.786ff.

³²Possibly once part of the Arch of Claudius erected in A.D.52, cf. Keppie 1984.233f

³³cf. above 6,n.18.

³⁴cf. above 3ff and *Ger.* 2,1; 5,1; 39,1.

³⁵Also at *Ann* 4.16,3, he describes some of Augustus' policies regarding marriage as 'quaedam ex horrida illa antiquitate', where, as Martin and Woodman (1989) point out 'horrida' is used to suggest 'unbending'.

'sunt enim horridi et impoliti et rudes et informes'. Here *horridus* is merely a rhetorical term.³⁶

However, one passage stands out as being particularly remarkable. At *Ann.* 4.7,1, Tacitus writes of Tiberius in this way:

Quae cuncta non quidem comi via, sed *horridus ac plerumque formidatus*, retinebat tamen, donec morte Drusi verterentur:

'All these [the policies outlined in 4.6], although not in a gracious fashion but bluntly and often terrifyingly, he nevertheless retained, until they were repealed upon Drusus' death.'

Aside from the fact that Tacitus here uses *horridus* in a non-military setting, this passage is outstanding for another reason. For it contains the only instance of the verb *formidare* to survive in Tacitus' works.³⁷ We have already observed an apparent decline in the usage of *horror* words throughout Tacitus' writing. The statistics for expressions of *formido* seem to follow a similar but more easily determinable trend, as their occurrence by the later books of the *Annals* has reduced dramatically.³⁸

³⁶cf. also *Hist.* 2.74,1, 'horridi sermone' and also Quintilian's advice on how to pronounce the sound *fr*.

³⁷cf. Martin and Woodman (1989) note the 'forceful language (T. uses *formidare* nowhere else)'.
38

	<i>Dial</i>	<i>Ger</i>	<i>Agr</i>	<i>Hist</i>	<i>Ann</i> 1-6	11-12	13-16	Total
<i>formido, are</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>formido, inis</i>	-	4	7	29	14	2	2	58
<i>formidolosus</i>	-	-	2	2	2	1	1	8
<i>reformido, are</i>	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
Total	1	4	9	32	17	3	3	69

A breakdown of the pattern throughout the books of the *Annals* looks like this:

<i>Ann</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16	Total
<i>formido</i>	8	3	1	4	-	1	2	1	1	-	2	-	23

This is a development that has been recognised, although without satisfactory explanation. For Lucas (1974.248) notes that '*formido* est remplacé par *pavor* sans qu'on voie la raison'. Furthermore, most occurrences of *formido* words (about two thirds) are to be found in a military context. As in the case of *horror* words, this may be explained by the number of instances in the *Histories*. These appear, then, to be characteristics shared by both *formido* and *horror* words.

Moreover, one can speculate further about the similarity of application of expressions of *horror* and *formido* in Tacitus. Varro defined *metus* and the relative terms *formido* and *pavor* in this way (*D.L.L.* 6.48):

'metuere a quodam motu animi, cum id quod malum casurum putat, refugit mens. cum vehementius in movendo ut ab se abeat foras fertur, formido; cum <parum movetur> pavet, et ab eo pavor.'

Of course this passage does depend upon the emendation '*parum movetur*'. However, Varro does perceive a fundamental difference between the concepts represented by *formido* and *pavor* and this is defined in terms of how much the mind is said to 'move'. *Formido* is said to be the stronger, affecting the mind the most.³⁹ Indeed, he seems to imply that the effects of this fear can be seen as a physical manifestation ('foras'). If that is the case, then there are parallels with *horror* as the latter derives its connotation with fear out of the physical symptoms of that emotion (hair standing on end, etc.) which it represents. If Tacitus

cf. Appendix 2.

³⁹But note that Cicero (*Tusc.* 4.19), who was writing roughly contemporarily with Varro, defines *formido* and *pavor* in similar terms but instead considers *pavor* to be the stronger.

followed Varro's interpretation of the relative terms *formido* and *pavor*, then this may explain Tacitus' choice of the passive 'formidatus' to complement 'horridus'.

However, there is also an important contrast between the phrases that describe the road to virtue that Tiberius could have taken ('comi via') and the behaviour he chose to adopt instead ('horridus ac plerumque formidatus').⁴⁰ Hellegouarc'h (1963.215) defines *comitas* as follows:

'La *comitas* est constituée par l'amabilité que manifeste celui qui désire se faire bien voir. En effet, bien que l'étymologie du mot soit très incertaine, il est généralement admis que l'adjectif *comis* est dérivé, par l'intermédiaire de **cosmis*, d'une racine **smei* - : «rire» ou «sourire». La *comitas* implique donc de la part de l'homme politique qu'il se comporte de façon souriante et avenante. Mais la *comitas* n'est pas un trait de caractère; elle est une attitude qui vise à un résultat déterminé: l'acquisition de la *gratia*.'

The implication in *comis/comitas* of a smiling face and pleasant welcoming features that Hellegouarc'h identifies can also be perceived in Tacitus' use of the expressions elsewhere in his writing. In Tacitus, *comis/comitas/comiter* occur on 32 occasions. Although he appears particularly to have identified the concept it represented with a certain

⁴⁰Wallace-Hadrill (1982.42), who also cites Hellegouarc'h, sets the concept of *comitas* into its political context and notes it as an example of praiseworthy behaviour for the governing classes, including emperors, 'The candidate for office ... did well to show *comitas* to his potential supporters. In the exercise of power, it was provincial government that especially called on qualities like *comitas*, *facilitas* and *humanitas*. ... Emperors too, like republican governors, ... were duly praised for *facilitas* in admissions and *comitas* to petitioners'.

way of speaking,⁴¹ there is also a relationship to be found between *comitas* and the *vultus* of an individual. Hence, when drawing one of his many contrasts between Germanicus and Tiberius, Tacitus praises the former for his 'mira comitas' and explains that the difference is in the *sermo* and *vultus*, 'mira comitas et diversa ab Tiberii sermone vultu, adrogantibus et obscuris' (*Ann* 1.33,2). Then, later (*Ann*. 6.50,1) when he describes the death of Tiberius, Tacitus writes, 'sermone ac vultu intentus quaesita interdum comitate quamvis manifestam defectionem tegebat'. Here Tiberius is described, in the days before his death, trying to hide his weakness ('defectionem') by a show of *comitas*. He does this by keeping his *sermo* and *vultus* 'under strict control'.⁴² The manifestation of *comitas*, then, appears to be, to Tacitus' mind at least, realised through the *sermo* and *vultus* of a person. This is an interesting suggestion in relation to its contrast at 4.7,1, 'horridus', especially when one considers the highly physical and visual connotations of the concept behind *horror*. It also adds strength to the possibility that here Tacitus intended to imply something of Tiberius' appearance in his choice of 'horridus'. For if *comitas* was displayed on his face, why should not the *horror*-creating faculty in Tiberius be connected to the face, as it was this latter, we are told, that replaced *comitas* in its absence. Indeed earlier Tacitus has set

⁴¹cf. 'Inde apud senatum non comptior Galbae, non longior quam apud militem sermo: Pisonis comis oratio' *Hist.* 1.19,1; 'Talia locutus, ut cuique aetas aut dignitas, comiter appellatos, irent propere neu remanendo iram victoris asperarent, iuvenes auctoritate, senes precibus movebat' *Hist.* 2.48,1; 'comitate et adloquiis officia provocans ac plerumque in opere' *Hist.* 5.1,1; 'sermo comis nec absurdam ingenium' *Ann.* 13.45,3; 'namque facundiam tuendis civibus exercebat, largitionem adversum amicos, et ignotis quoque comi sermone et congressu' *Ann.* 15.48,3.

⁴²Church and Brodribb (1869).

the precedent for this by attributing to Augustus the ability to cause terror by the look upon his face and his general appearance, 'divus Augustus vultu et aspectu Actiacas legiones exterruit' (1.42,3).

There is, however, a further possible explanation for the use of 'horridus' to describe Tiberius at this point. As we have observed, the predominant context of *horror* words is militaristic.⁴³ Its use here to describe Tiberius, then, is interesting. It is not impossible that Tacitus intended, by the use of this word, to convey a military air to Tiberius. In this case, the use of 'horridus' here to describe Tiberius would be metaphorical. But why would Tacitus want to depict Tiberius in terms of a soldier outside of an explicitly military setting? True enough, Otho was described as 'pedes' and 'horridus'⁴⁴ but that was a literal description; he was actually marching with his troops along with the other foot soldiers. By the military significance of 'horridus' at 4.7,1, it is possible that Tacitus was aiming to do nothing other than reinforce the sinister relationship, as he saw it, between emperor and army along with the resulting fear.⁴⁵ However, there is another possibility. Perhaps the militaristic subtext to 'horridus' here may reflect some aspects of Tacitus' presentation of the second half of Tiberius' reign which can be identified at other points in the narrative.

⁴³Indeed the only other use of an expression of *horror* in the context of the imperial palace in peacetime is at *Ann* 11.28,1 where Tacitus describes the reaction of the imperial retinue to the bigamous marriage of Messalina and Silius performed while Claudius is out of town, thus, 'Igitur domus principis inhorruerat'.

⁴⁴cf. *Hist.* 2.11,3.

⁴⁵cf. above, chapter 1.

Woodman (1988.186) has observed that,

'Tacitus in the *Annals* resorts to various devices to suggest that the Julio-Claudian era already displayed many of the symptoms of internecine strife long before the civil war actually broke out'.

One way of suggesting this, he notes, is by portraying 1st-century A.D. society as being 'peopled by characters who ... have republican counterparts', thereby foreshadowing by implication the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty and the civil discord that was to follow. But a second device that he identifies is the implication in Tacitus' text that Tiberius 'made war on his own people' after his withdrawal from Rome to Capri. Woodman supports his argument by citing passages where Tacitus appears to be presenting Tiberius and certain events under his rule as though they were part of a military campaign. Rome is a besieged city.⁴⁶ The youngsters that Tiberius (allegedly) wanted for his own pleasure are depicted as though they were prisoners of war, 'velut ... captos'.⁴⁷ He points out that even the collapse of the amphitheatre at Fidenae is described in accordance with the advice offered by Quintilian about how to report the fall of a besieged city.⁴⁸

Perhaps, then, the description of Tiberius as 'horridus' at 4.7,1 is another aspect of Tiberius the aggressor whom Woodman has identified in these other passages also taken from the second half of the Tiberian narrative. Tiberius did spend much of his early life as a commander under Augustus. Furthermore, twice in the *Histories*, expressions of *horror* have been used to represent reactions to the idea of war waged

⁴⁶1988.186f on *Ann* 4.58,2f, 'libens patria careret', *adsidere*.

⁴⁷1988.187 on *Ann* 6.1,1f; cp. 6.39,2.

⁴⁸1988.190 on *Ann* 4.62-3.

against Rome.⁴⁹ There is, then, a strongly militaristic aspect both to the concept of 'horridus' and also to the presentation of Tiberius in books 4-6 of the *Annals*. This may well account for the description of the emperor at 4.7,1 as 'horridus'.

Therefore, in a sense the only consequence of such observations is that one can note how the various complexities of the passage at 4.7,1 reinforce the manifold senses and applications of the various expressions of *horror*. However, it is not to overestimate Tacitus' abilities as an author to suggest that the passage was constructed with all the possibilities of an expression of *horror* in mind. It is, moreover, not only a reflection of his subtleties as an author but also is symbolic of the complexities which, in his presentation, the character of the emperor Tiberius possesses.

⁴⁹1.37,3, 4.58,5 (hypothetical); cf. also Vitellius' experience at 3.84,4.

Chapter 3.

Tacitus on the Murder of Britannicus (*Ann.* 13.16).

It's all that the young can do for the old, to shock them and keep them up to date.

George Bernard Shaw

An appreciation of Tacitus' dramatic technique is fundamental to an understanding of his concept of historiography and his aims as an author. Goodyear (1972.26) has recognised his 'desire, indeed determination to interest and move and enthral his audience ... [which] ... disposes him to select for full elaboration such material as is most susceptible of dramatic and moving treatment.' He goes on to discuss the serious purpose behind this.

'By eliciting from the events he narrates general lessons about human motivation and psychology, Tacitus elevates his history onto a philosophical plane, thus in one way fulfilling his aim to be instructive' (42)¹.

¹On two occasions in the *Annals* Tacitus appears to express this aim. At *Ann.* 3.65, 1, he writes, 'praecipuum munus annalium reor, ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia metus sit.' However, Woodman has reinterpreted this passage and argues that 'the phrase *praecipuum munus annalium* does not define "history's highest function" either in conventional terms ... or unconventional' (1995a.125). At *Ann.* 4.33,2, 'pauci prudentia honesta ab deterioribus, utilia ab noxiis discernunt, plures aliorum eventis docentur.' Goodyear elsewhere (1970.22) gives an analysis of some of the work on Tacitus as dramatist and writes, 'What emerges from all this work is that a 'pictorial-dramatic' presentation is a most important part of Tacitus' style, a manner of writing in which he excels and which he will gladly use if he can find opportunity.'

By a more organised arrangement of the material, he makes a real effort to explain cause and effect, rather than merely recording the facts². Walker (1960.36f) has analysed the dramatic potential within the structure of Tacitus' work. This is revealed not only when he occasionally diverges from the annalistic format of the genre he has espoused³ but also through the construction of individual books. Ginsburg (1981.97) supports the view that Tacitus does not restrict himself to strict chronology of events throughout the *Annals* and writes,

'Aside from the obligation to record events under the year in which they occurred ('suum quaeque in annum referre'), Tacitus appears to be bound by no restrictions in regard either to his selection of subject matter or his arrangement of it within the annual account. Within the annalistic framework he assumes a great deal of flexibility and he is able to use the traditional form to his own advantage.'

She later concludes that 'Tacitus has rejected traditional annalistic history, but he has not rejected its form.' Further to this, Martin (1989.163) claims that the 'traditional annalistic framework' of the Neronian books 'allows scope for writing that is varied, vivid and exciting' and of book 14 he observes that

'the manner in which Tacitus organises characters and events ... has been shown to involve some manipulation in the interests of dramatic effect' (1990.1570).

Woodman (1993.104) in addition argues that Tacitus manipulated the chronology of the events surrounding the Pisonian conspiracy to make the start of his account coincide with the beginning of the year 65 and the end with the end of book 15. By doing this, he 'has given to the conspiracy a coherence and unity it did not possess in real life'. As

²cf. *Ann.* 4.32,2, 'non tamen sine usu fuerit introspicere illa primo aspectu levia, ex quis magnarum saepe rerum motus oriuntur.'

³cf. Goodyear (1970.24) on *Ann.* 3.1-2.

Tacitus is not bound strictly by the annalistic format, he has the space to manipulate his material for effect.

In the light of these observations it is interesting to consider the context in which the account of the murder of Britannicus is to be found. The first ten chapters of book 13 bring the year A.D. 54 to an end but 13.1 also marks the start of Nero's reign. The beginning of the reign in Tacitus' account is strikingly introduced by a death. What is more, the first four words of the book, 'prima novo principatu mors', as has been frequently observed⁴, are reminiscent of those at the start of Tiberius' reign, 'primum facinus novi principatus' (*Ann* 1.6,1).⁵ Moreover, the victim, Junius Silanus, was not an aggressive man himself ('segnis et dominationibus aliis fastiditus') and was thus easy prey, just as Agrippa Postumus had been when he was taken by surprise whilst unarmed ('ignarum inermumque'). In addition, Martin observes that both victims were descended from Augustus. Agrippa Postumus was his grandson and Iunius Silanus his great-great-grandson and 'in both cases an

⁴Indeed, Martin (1955.123-128) makes a number of comparisons between Tacitus' accounts of the accession of Tiberius and of Nero. However, later (1989.162), he notes the differences between the two passages and writes, 'In the case of Tiberius the act is the first act of the principate; responsibility firmly attaches to the *princeps* himself. In the case of Nero Tacitus speaks of the first death *in* the new reign'. cf. Woodman 1995b.259ff.

⁵However, *mors* is a more neutral word which does not necessarily suggest foul play as *facinus* appears to do. Mendell (1957.126) discusses the meaning of *facinus* at 1.6,1, writing: '*Facinus* once meant any act, good or bad, but always the tendency was toward the more sinister meaning and it is hard to find an instance after the Augustan Age in which it is used for an unequivocally good act. There is perhaps a technical ambiguity which no doubt determined in part at least the choice of word, but the connotation is clear beyond the vestige of a doubt'.

emperor is involved who, in Tacitus' opinion, had come to the throne through the scheming of his mother' (1989.162). In spite of the fact that the killing is not actually Nero's doing but his mother's, this still does not bode well for the prospect of Nero's principate, especially because of this comparison with Tiberius' reign. For the emphasis at this point is very much on 'prima', the implication being that this is the first of a number of deaths in similar circumstances. Sure enough, Tacitus arranges his material so that this account is followed straight away by the death of Narcissus, a suicide under suspicious circumstances ('aspera custodia et necessitate extrema ad mortem agitur', 13.1,3). Then 13.2 begins with the observation that without the restraining influence of Burrus and Seneca, further killings would have followed ('ibatur ... in caedes, nisi Afranius Burrus et Annaeus Seneca obviam isset'). In this comment, Tacitus hints at Nero's potential for violence. Chapter 3 concentrates upon the arrangements for Claudius' funeral and deification (with the farce of Nero's performing the eulogy). Therefore, the first three chapters of book 13 are monopolised by thoughts of death.

Up until this point Agrippina's actions have masked Nero's true potential for violence. She has so far been responsible for the political manoeuvres to displace Britannicus from the line of succession and establish Nero on the throne. It was she and not her son who removed the last obstacle, Claudius. Hence the full horror of Nero's character has not yet been revealed.⁶ But gradually Nero begins to resent Agrippina's influence, and her ploy to divert him by offering him Acte is unsuccessful

⁶Perhaps such a restraint upon Nero's character affords further comparison with Tiberius as it has been argued that similar controls upon Tiberius' actions, namely Livia and Sejanus, merely served to mask the emperor's true personality which did not change as his reign progressed but rather was gradually revealed. However, for a summary of the arguments against this, see Martin and Woodman 1989.27ff.

when her pawn becomes her rival ('aemulam' 13.13,1). Agrippina turns to support Britannicus openly (13.14), and when Britannicus begins to arouse the sympathy of the people on account of his displacement from the succession (13.15), Nero decides to take action. The first attempt fails (13.15,4); the successful poisoning is described at 13.16.

1. Mos habebatur principum liberos cum ceteris idem aetatis nobilibus sedentes vesci in adpectu propinquorum propria et parciore mensa. illic epulante Britannico, quia cibos potusque eius delectus ex ministris gustu explorabat, ne omitteretur institutum aut utriusque morte proderetur
2. scelus, talis dolus repertus est. innoxia adhuc ac praecalida et libata gustu potio traditur Britannico; dein, postquam fervore aspernabatur, frigida in aqua adfunditur venenum, quod ita cunctos eius artus pervasit, ut vox pariter et
3. spiritus [eius] raperentur. trepidatur a circumsedentibus, diffugiunt imprudentes: at quibus altior intellectus, resistunt defixi et Neronem intuentes. ille ut erat reclinis et nescio similis, solitum ita ait per comitalem morbum, quo prima ab infantia adflicteretur Britannicus, et redituros paulatim visus sensusque. at Agrippina<e> is pavor, ea consternatio mentis, quamvis vultu premeretur, emicuit, ut perinde ignarum fuisse <quam> Octaviam sororem Britannici constiterit: quippe sibi supremum auxilium ereptum et parricidii exemplum intellegebat. Octavia quoque, quamvis rudibus annis, dolorem caritatem, omnes adfectus abscondere didicerat. ita post breve silentium repetita convivii laetitia.
- 4.

It was the custom for the emperors' children to dine seated with other nobles of the same age in full view of their relatives at their own more frugal table. There Britannicus was eating and because a specially chosen servant tasted his food and drink, to make sure that the routine was not disturbed or the crime exposed by a second corpse, a special plan was devised (as follows). A drink was given to Britannicus, one which was still harmless and had been tasted but which was very hot; then, when he sent it back because it was too hot, some cold water containing the poison was added to it. The poison spread through his limbs in such a way

that it took his voice and breath simultaneously. There was great alarm amongst the people seated around him and the imprudent ran out in all directions: but those who understood better remained behind transfixed and studied Nero intently. He, lying back on his couch and appearing ignorant, remarked that this was a usual occurrence caused by the epilepsy with which Britannicus had been afflicted from his earliest infancy and that his sight and sense(s) would slowly return. However, Agrippina's terror, the panic in her head, quamvis vultu premeretur, emicuit⁷ which proved that she was just as innocent of the crime as Britannicus' sister Octavia: indeed she (now) understood that her last source of support had been taken from her and comprehended this precedent for parricide. Even Octavia, despite her young age, had already learnt to conceal grief, affection, (indeed) every emotion. Therefore, after a brief silence the lively festivities were resumed.

Tacitus' account of the murder begins with a description of the customary dining arrangements at the imperial court where the young people ate apart from the adults. The phrase 'mos habebatur' suggests the *est locus* formula, where from a general visual description of a place, the author then focuses upon the action that is taking place there.⁸ Similarly 'mos habebatur' here is followed by 'illic' where, from the generalisation of the first sentence, Tacitus turns to the circumstances of this particular occasion and signals the start of the show. This first sentence sets the scene and, by establishing themes for the passage, prepares us for what follows. For 'adspectu' makes it clear that vision will be a significant element in the episode (of which more later). Also 'propinquorum' foreshadows the family relationships that will soon be terminated, in the case of Britannicus, or threatened (Agrippina). This is

⁷I have not translated these words as I discuss their meaning later, cf. p 64ff.

⁸cf. also Livy 5.27,1, 'mos erat Faliscis eodem magistro liberorum et comite uti, simulque plures pueri, quod hodie quoque in Graecia manet, unius curae demandabantur.'

resumed at the end in 'sororem' and 'parricidii'.⁹ So Britannicus is dining at the customary place ('illic'). He has one of his servants to taste the food and drink and this is what necessitates the more sophisticated plan of the poisoned cold water. Furneaux on 'gustu explorabat' refers us to 'explorare gustu' at 12.66,2 (the murder of Claudius) but in the case of Britannicus the implication is very much that the taster is not an accomplice in the plot. For at 16,2 the administrator of the poison is remarkably anonymous. It is merely stated that the lethal dose of poison (already in the cold water) *was poured* into Britannicus' drink ('frigida in aqua adfunditur venenum').¹⁰ This adds to the mystery for the identity of the murderer is only gradually revealed. To begin with, the plan to kill Britannicus is described in very guarded terms with Tacitus making much use of the passive voice ('repertus est', 'traditur', 'adfunditur') to describe the actions that brought about his death.¹¹ By using the passive here, Tacitus avoids mentioning the performer of the actions. This person was obviously not Nero himself but by keeping the perpetrator anonymous, Tacitus does not link the crime specifically with anyone other than the emperor. Delvaux (1982.146) even goes so far as to suggest that the 'vagueness' of the passives implies a collective guilt ('cela peut suggérer une sorte de responsabilité diffuse mais collective').

⁹cf. Suet. *Nero* 35 on Nero's abuse of family relationships, 'nullum adeo necessitudinis genus est quod non scelere perculerit.'

¹⁰Koestermann here refers to *Ann.* 1.10,2, 'venenum vulneri adfusum' of the death of Pansa.

¹¹Although many other passives are also used to refer to the actions of innocent people and even innocent actions, including some by Britannicus himself ('aspernabatur'). Indeed it is likely from Tacitus' account that the actions of 'traditur' and even 'adfunditur' would not have been carried out by someone with prior knowledge of the crime for there is no evidence given that any of the servants assisted Britannicus' death knowingly.

However, in the text, the idea of Nero's guilt is only gradually acknowledged. The first hint is given through the eyes of the more perceptive members of the dinner party who realise that Nero must understand what is happening and thus look to him for guidance. But it is only in the next sentence when Tacitus describes Nero as '*nescio similis*' that he makes it clear that Nero is ultimately responsible for the crime.

The remainder of this passage (§§3-4) is dominated by Tacitus' description of the immediate reactions of the company to Britannicus' death. First he focuses upon the guests, then upon the host, Nero, and finally upon the other significant members of the imperial family, Agrippina and Octavia, the latter being introduced partly as a contrast to her step-mother. The unnamed guests behave in two different ways. Those who flee, Tacitus regards as '*imprudentes*' and he probably intended the ambiguity that this word conveys. For it could mean that they were unwise, reacting impetuously without thinking through the implications of their action (although it is never explained why it was unwise to flee) or simply that they are ignorant of the plot. Those who stay behind are said to have read the situation better and are the more perceptive ('*altior intellectus*'). In this respect the latter group behave much as Agrippina does, according to what Tacitus later tells us. Tacitus recounts in just five words the behaviour of these people, '*resistent defixi et Neronem intuentes*' ('they remained rooted to the spot, watching Nero closely'). *They* are waiting to take their cue from the emperor's reaction and, at the instance when Tacitus catches them, are holding themselves in a state of suspended animation until they can work out his next move. This partly explains why their movements are frozen ('*defixi*'). They dare not betray the thoughts in their minds or any hint of condemnation at the gruesome scene they are observing. On the other hand, as Tacitus goes on to tell us, Nero appears on the surface to be one of the '*imprudentes*',

which leaves the question open to them as to whether they have misread the situation after all.

The choice of 'defixi' emphasises and enhances the sense of 'Neronem intuentes'. For *defigere* can express the idea of fixing one's eyes on someone or something¹². Furthermore, *defigere* is also used in contexts where people are rooted to the spot through fear. Indeed of the six occasions where the word can be found in Tacitus, only one does not occur in close relation to fear¹³. Therefore, the association of 'defixi' with fear in Tacitus should not be disregarded. Tacitus uses *trepidare* to describe the initial reaction of all the guests ('trepidatur a circumsedentibus'). But the group of people who remain behind and are described as 'defixi' share more of an affinity with Agrippina, according to what Tacitus later tells us, especially in regard to their perception of the situation. Like her, they are afraid but also recognise the demands of the moment and do not succumb to the response of the panic-stricken by taking flight. Furthermore, her fear is, at least in part, expressed in terms of *pavor* ('is pavor, ea consternatio mentis') and the only other instance of *pavor* in *Ann.* 13 occurred a little earlier also with *defigere*, 'ceteris pavore

¹²*O.L.D.* §3 cf. 'in vultu regis defixerant oculos', *Curt. Hist.* 7.8,9; 'in mentibus vestris oculisque defixit' *Cic. de Prov. Cons.* 8. Also *Hor. Epist.* 1.6; *Quint. Inst. Orat.* 11.3,158; *Val. Max.* 8.7, ext.7 Especially close to *Ann.* 13.16,3 is *Cic. Orat.* 9, 'quam intuens in eaque defixus'.

¹³'extremus metus torpore defixere aciem in his vestigiis' (*Agr.* 34,3); 'quasi ob metum defixo' (*Ann.* 1.68,2); 'ceteris pavore defixis' (13.5,2), along with 13.16,3. 'modo per silentium defixus, saepius pavore exurgens' (14.10,1), whilst it does not refer to someone simultaneously suffering fear, there is still a close relationship. The odd one out is at *Ann.* 3.1,4 in Tacitus' description of Agrippina the elder returning with Germanicus' ashes, who keeps her eyes on the ground ('egressa navi defixit oculos') where there is no implication of fear and her action is one of dignity in her grief.

defixis', when Tacitus describes the visit of the Armenian deputation.¹⁴ There Agrippina prepared to ascend the emperor's tribunal along with Nero. It was only Seneca's quick thinking in contrast to the *pavor* of the onlookers that averted a situation that would have been awkward and embarrassing for the emperor. The passage at 13.5,2 serves to highlight the connection between *pavor* and *defixus* which may help to demonstrate the true nature of the guests' reaction at 13.16,3 by implying the fear they would have felt.¹⁵

¹⁴*Ann.* 13.5,2. For further examples of *pavor* and *defixus*, see Livy's description of the Gauls stunned by victory ('Gallos quoque velut obstupefactos miraculum victoriae tam repentinae tenuit' 5.39,1) who stand rooted to the spot with fear as though they did not understand what had happened, 'et ipsi pavore defixi primum steterunt, velut ignari, quid accidissent'; cf. also 7.10,2, 'defixerat pavor cum admiratione Gallos' and Val. Flacc. 4.226, 'tum pavor et gelidus defixit Castora sanguis'.

¹⁵In his account of the guests' reactions to the murder at 13.16,3, Tacitus is, at least in part, recreating a tableau which he had earlier presented (*Hist.* 1.81,1f) when he describes how those dining with Otho were affected by the news that Rome was under attack from the army. Both passages of course describe diners interrupted in their meal by a sudden shocking turn of events and one which could prove highly dangerous for themselves. Moreover, there are in the Britannicus episode certain significant expressions through which Tacitus appears to be echoing the earlier passage. 'trepidatur a circumsedentibus' writes Tacitus at 13.16,3, whilst Otho's guests were 'trepidi'. Also flight is an option that occurs to both groups, 'fugere' (1.81,1)/'diffugiunt' (13.16,3), but whereas Otho's group are considering the pros and cons of running away, the 'imprudentes' at Nero's table take off without any signs of deliberation. In both cases and in similar fashion the guests keep their eyes trained upon the emperor, trying to anticipate his feelings, 'simul Othonis voltum intueri' / 'Neronem intuentes' In the case of Otho, they specifically watch his 'voltum' where they would expect a reaction to be most easily read, as is the case with Agrippina later. Also 'modo constantiam simulare

by the 'double' use of *pavor* and *consternatio* to convey her fear, when *pavor* might have been sufficient in itself. Delvaux (1982.146) notes the potent combination of words ('mots très forts') used in this description of Agrippina. Of the two words, Tacitus employs *pavor* by far the more often. 97 examples of *pavor* and its related forms can be found in Tacitus' works, 47 in the *Annals*. They are distributed throughout the individual books as follows:

<i>Ann.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
No. of <i>pavor</i> words.	7	4	1	6	2	4	1	1	2	5	10	4
Totals of <i>pavor</i> words	24						2		21			

Although *pavor* words are distributed fairly evenly between books 1-6 and 11-16, they are noticeably more frequent during the Neronian narrative.¹⁸ Indeed no other 'fear' words appear to increase in numbers within these books to the extent that *pavor* and related forms do.¹⁹ Yet only one other instance of a *pavor* word occurs in book 13, at 5,2. There the *pavor* was felt (by an unnamed group of spectators) due to the embarrassment that Agrippina had caused Nero when she prepared to ascend the throne out of turn for the visit of the Armenian delegation. Here, in an ironic reversal of the earlier incident, Agrippina is experiencing *pavor* at something that Nero has done which has twofold implications for her, first because he has removed Britannicus, her 'supremum auxilium', and second because in doing so he has given her a sign of what her own fate could be ('parricidii exemplum').

¹⁸Especially in books 15 and 16. This can be shown by a a table containing the numbers of *pavor* expressions per page of Teubner text:

<i>Ann.</i>	14	15	16
<i>Pavor</i> words per page:	0.13	0.25	0.22

¹⁹cf. Appendix 2.

Consternatio occurs on eight occasions in Tacitus' works, with the verb *consternare* being used only twice. Yet even from these few examples, a pattern of the way in which Tacitus uses *consternatio* and *consternare* does seem to emerge. Still the nature of the episodes where these words are used is, superficially at least, of quite different context and character from the passage at *Ann.* 13.16. Unlike *pavor* words, *consternatio* and *consternare* do not in themselves literally evoke fear nor need they necessarily be assigned to contexts of fear.²⁰ However, in Tacitus, of the nine examples other than at *Ann.* 13.16,4, only one does not occur in a military context and even this one still describes the rioting and disturbance caused by a large and unruly group of people (the *vulgus*) attempting to affirm Piso as emperor.²¹ Tacitus uses these words, then, to describe great disturbance, the noisy, riotous behaviour of soldiers on the rampage or in headlong flight, once they have been routed in battle. In Sallust, the one instance to survive is of 'consternantur' (*Hist.* 1.139) and is also to be found in a military context.²²

In the light of this evidence, then, we can assume that *consternatio/consternare* evoked in Tacitus' mind a striking and particularly violent

²⁰O.L.D. 419 *consternatio*: unsettlement or confusion (of the mind), shock, dismay. b. excitement, confusion, disorder. 420 *consterno* (2) 1. To throw into confusion, confound, shock. b. To unsettle mentally, drive frantic. 2. (prol.) To drive or compel (by fear or other emotion).

²¹The 'military' cases are: *Hist.* 1.83,4; 2.49,1; 3.17,2; 3.79,2; *Ann.* 1.23,1; 1.39,4; 1.63,2; 1.66,1. The 'odd one out' is *Hist.* 4.50,1.

²²'*equi sine rectoribus exterriti aut saucii consternantur*'. Incidentally, this occurs in a phrase which by its striking resemblance to *Agr.* 39,3 ('*exterriti sine rectoribus equi ut quemque formido tulerat, transversos aut obvios incursabant*'), appears to have influenced Tacitus elsewhere in his work.

image.²³ This conclusion is further supported by the fact that four out of the five cases of *consternatio/consternare* in the *Annals* are to be found in book 1, a section of Tacitus' work that is dominated by accounts of the army mutinies in Pannonia and Germany.²⁴ These observations serve to enhance our understanding of the strength of emotion represented by *consternatio* in our passage. Alternatively, we could note that Tacitus' choice of *consternatio* to express Agrippina's sense of panic is a rather logical one in the context of a killing, especially one that is shockingly gruesome and violent in appearance and one that marks the start of Nero's career of violence. Nor yet is it an inappropriate choice when describing the alarm (and mental anguish) of a mother who realises not so much that she has raised a murderer but rather that she sees before her a precedent for and a foreshadowing of her own death ('quippe sibi supremum auxilium ereptum et parricidii exemplum intellegebat'). Indeed the fear that Agrippina experiences is so great that she cannot fully control her reaction, 'quamvis vultu premeretur, emicuit'. Momentarily at least she appears to lose the composure with which Tacitus elsewhere identifies her.²⁵ Martin (1989.165) comments on this passage:

'Trained though she was to conceal her feelings, Agrippina could not prevent it being seen that her terror was genuine.'

²³Although this is quite consistent with standard Latin usage, the contrast between *Ann.* 13,16,4 and the other occurrences of *consternatio/consternare* is significant.

²⁴cf. 1.23,1; 39,4; 63,2; 66,1.

²⁵Furieux and Koestermann on 13.16,4 both cite the passage at 14.5,3 as an illustration of her characteristic self-control. Koestermann (at 13.16,4) observes,

'Die Selbstbeherrschung der Kaiserinwitwe wird ebenfalls 14.5,3 betont. Sie steht in starkem Gegensatz zu ihrer sonstigen unbeherrschten Art. Offenbar hatte sie sich in besonderen Krisenmomenten doch in der Gewalt, wenn sich ihr starker Wille regte.'

Tacitus, then, uses this fact as proof that Agrippina did not know anything about the crime beforehand and was therefore no more culpable in this instance than the innocent Octavia, herself also destined to be a victim at the hands of Nero. She was merely witnessing a violent debut to her son's murderous career.

Furthermore, there was a widely held belief among the ancients that the true state of the mind showed in the face.²⁶ Cousin (1951.242) notes that:

'il est juste de penser qu'il [Tacitus] s'insère dans une tradition et que, si l'expression de ses interprétations psychologiques est si fortement accusée c'est que la voie était préparée et qu'une certaine mode l'y portait ce sens de passions, cette mise en valeur de leur action latente cette expression forcée et vivante de leurs conséquences ont été l'objet des études des philosophes qui ont discuté de la vie affective, des critiques qui se sont appliqués à l'art, de comédien et à l'optique du théâtre, des rhéteurs qui ont enseigné les procédés de l'invention et surtout ceux de style, notamment en ce qui concerne la période, le rythme, les figures.'

Ovid described facial expressions (*vultus*) as 'certissima pignora mentis' (*Pont.* 3.4,27).²⁷ Cicero (*Pis.* 1) described *vultus* as 'sermo quidam tacitus mentis' while Quintus Tullius Cicero saw *vultus* (and *frons*) as 'animi ianua' (*Pet. Cons.* 11.44). The eyes also were perceived as reflecting inner feelings; 'nam ut imago est animi vultus, sic indices oculi' (*Cic Orat* 60).²⁸ Cicero summarised all these ideas when he wrote that one only had to

²⁶cf. R.J. Tarrant on Seneca *Ag.* 128, 'licet ipsa sileas, totus in vultu est dolor' who refers to Otto (1971.147) on *frons*. cf also Häussler (1968) on Otto §717.

²⁷cf. A.A. 2.378 where Ovid writes of a jealous woman, 'in vultu pignora mentis habet'.

²⁸As Pliny (*N.H.* 11.145) wrote 'profecto in oculis animus habitat'. For other examples, cf. Heubner on *Hist.* 2.65,1.

observe a man to see by the change in his features, voice, movements and attitude that he was gripped by some strong emotion.²⁹

Two observations can be made about the presentation of emotions in relation to *vultus* or facial expressions. First, there are occasions when Tacitus appears to show the *vultus* simply as an instrument to display emotions. He does not record physical appearance without good cause and his description of the face is often merely a testimony to the emotion (or lack thereof) felt by the individual concerned or a reflection of some aspect of their character, for example, 'minax vultus' (*Ger.* 30,2), 'laeto ... vultu' (*Hist.* 4.81,3) and 'maestos ... vultus' (*Ann.* 15.36,3). Fear also can manifest itself on the face ('vultu quoque et incessu trepidus' *Hist.* 3.56,2). Alternatively, there are those who genuinely do not feel fear and their courage is described in terms of a *vultus* that shows no fear, thus 'intrepidum vultum' used to describe Sejanus at *Ann.* 5.7,1 and 'vultu interrito' of the dignified posture adopted by Mithridates when he is brought back to Rome as a prisoner of war (*Ann.* 12.21,1). In a similar situation, Caratacus, once he has been captured and taken back to Rome, in contrast to the *metus* of the other prisoners, is said to have presented himself with his head held high ('non ... vultu demisso') which may well amount to the same thing (*Ann.* 12.36,3).

Secondly and leading on from this, Tacitus uses *vultus* to expose the contrast between the truth of an emotion and the impression which a person is wishing to give. There are some striking examples of this in respect of fear. For example, Rufus (*Hist.* 2.65,1) shows one set of emotions on his face ('laetitiam et gratulationem vultu ferens') but at the

²⁹*Off.* 1.102, 'licet ora ipsa cernere iratorum aut eorum, qui aut libidine aliqua aut metu commoti sunt aut voluptate nimia gestiunt; quorum omnium vultus, voces, motus, statusque mutantur'.

same time hides his true feelings of fear ('animo anxius et petitem se criminationibus gnarus'). Also Piso and Germanicus (*Ann.* 2.57,2) steel themselves with a resolute expression ('firmato vultu'), Piso so as not to show fear ('adversus metum'³⁰) and Germanicus so as not to appear threatening ('ne minari crederetur'). In other places, Tacitus makes the connection with *dissimulatio* more explicit. The emperor Domitian is described at one point as 'fronte laetus, pectore anxius' (*Agr* 39,1).³¹ *Dissimulatio* appears to Tacitus almost to be a generic trait of the imperial household but Domitian's emotions recorded at 39.1 seem all the more contrived in the light of the later passage at 43,3 where Tacitus explains that Domitian found it easier to hide his joy than his fear and this action is again described in terms of *dissimulatio* ('dissimularet')³². Here Tacitus implies that Domitian did not conceal his fear successfully and therefore perhaps Tacitus means to suggest that even when Domitian was 'fronte laetus' he was not actually fooling anybody about his true feelings. However, it is not just Domitian who uses *dissimulatio* to put on a show of bravery. For Silius (*Ann.* 11.32,1), at the time of the scandal concerning his 'marriage' to Messalina, puts on an act of fearlessness ('dissimulando metum') and carries on with his daily business in the forum. Vestinus (*Ann.* 15.69,2), when he gives a dinner party at a time when his life is in great danger and during which he is forced to commit suicide, is described as either feeling no fear or hiding it well, 'nihil metuens an dissimulando metu'.

³⁰According to Goodyear, the fear of 'the consequences of his insubordination'.

³¹Plass (1988.43) writes that in this passage, 'Tacitus first signals the conflict between true and false expression in an antithetic epigram that unmasks the truth.'

³²'speciem tamen doloris habitu vultuque prae se tulit, securus iam odii et qui facilius *dissimularet* gaudium quam metum'. Here Tacitus is thinking of the *gaudium* which he reckons that Domitian kept hidden when he heard that Agricola was dead. cf. Heubner, Furneaux/Anderson on this passage.

Now in the account of the murder of Britannicus, Agrippina, well experienced in the ways of the imperial house, would be expected to give the impression that she was not afraid and to feign composure, like the second group of examples above.³³ There was certainly some attempt on her part to do this, as the phrase 'quamvis vultu premeretur' tells us. But sometimes, as seems to have been Agrippina's experience, the more desperate one is to try and hide the emotion, the more impossible it becomes to do so. This is observed by Tacitus to be so at *Hist.* 1.88,2 when he writes about the attempt of the upper classes to hide their feelings at the beginning of the civil war, 'quanto magis occultare et abdere pavorem nitebantur, manifestius pavidi'.³⁴ In the description of Agrippina, 'premeretur' can be understood in two slightly different ways. First, if the verb is taken in a conative sense, we can observe Agrippina *trying* to compose her facial features (so that her fear may not become evident) but the very act of composing her features was unsuccessful and that is why her fear was there for all to see. But alternatively a second reading can be understood. The passage can be taken as expressing the idea that although the fear actually was 'repressed' (Furneaux) on her face and even perhaps quite successfully so, yet it was betrayed in some other way. This second reading will have especial ramifications for the

³³This kind of pretence was a survival skill that many of the Tacitean characters who came into contact with the emperor desired to cultivate in themselves. eg. *Ann.* 1.7,1, 'vultuque composito' of the consuls, senators and knights.

Tiberius (*Ann.* 3.44,4) keeps his own expression unchanged so that the senators cannot read his mood and thus vote accordingly. Tacitus alludes to the pliability of the features of those around the emperors at 14.10,3 when he describes Nero's feelings after the murder of Agrippina, 'quia tamen non, ut hominum vultus, ita locorum facies mutantur'.

³⁴cf. Draeger (1967) on *occultare* and *abdere*.

understanding of 'emicuit'. For if it can be assumed that it is not the *vultus* through which her fear is made conspicuous, then this will eliminate one possible action that 'emicuit' could actually represent.

At *Hist* 4.11,1, Tacitus, describing Mucianus' attempts to hide the resentment he feels for Antonius Primus and Arrius Varus, writes, 'male dissimulata in eos Muciani iracundia, quamvis vultu tegetur'. Here perhaps it is more likely that 'tegetur' can be taken in a conative sense. For Tacitus actually states that the emotion of *iracundia* was badly hidden ('male dissimulata') and the failure seems to be due to Mucianus' unsuccessful attempt to cover his emotion with his facial expression. However, in the case of Agrippina, Tacitus does not say that the emotion was badly disguised but instead he presents her fear as actively revealing itself, less as a consequence of the steps she took to conceal it but rather more in spite of them.³⁵ How we understand the act of revealing her fear is in part determined by how we take the phrase 'quamvis vultu premeretur'. For if we can assume that the action implied in 'vultu premeretur' was successful in concealing her fear as far as it could, then her fear was not betrayed by her facial expression. Therefore, in studying the meaning of 'emicuit', we must look for a way or ways in which her fear could be revealed *in spite of* the composure of the *vultus*.

Henne (1982.143) notes the impact which 'emicuit' makes in this passage ('l'emploi du verbe <<emicuit>> très violent'). (*E*)*mico* can embody a range of meanings and convey a variety of complementary

³⁵Furieux rather turns this whole discussion on its head in his belief that Agrippina's fear 'betrayed itself in a sudden expression of countenance, immediately suppressed'.

As he sees it, her fear was visible *before* she tried to suppress it.

images.³⁶ The translations of certain scholars who have worked on this passage seem to favour the imagery of light implied by *(e)mico*.³⁷ The phrase in question has been rendered variously as 'éclatèrent'³⁸, 'came a flash of terror'³⁹ and 'flashed out'.⁴⁰ This light may well be associated with the eyes. Ovid at *Met.* 8.356 writes, 'emicat ex oculis, spirat quoque pectore flamma'.⁴¹ This could make sense in the context of the description of Agrippina if her eyes were flashing and staring out in terror. But 'emicuit' also carries with it the implication of a twitching, flickering movement such as that of the fingers of an amputated hand (*Aen.* 10.395) and snakes' tongues (*Aen.* 2.475).⁴² If we consider 'premeretur' to represent Agrippina's attempt to control her expression, then 'emicuit' could denote the twitching of her face as she tried to compose her features. *Emico* can also be used to describe the glistening dampness of blood or sweat.⁴³ One of the first signs of panic can be when the victim breaks out into a cold sweat. Linking *(e)mico* more

³⁶I do not differentiate between *emico* and *mico* for by using *emico* in this context Tacitus is merely intensifying. The definition of *emico* in the *T.L.L.* (483.61) is given as follows, 'respicitur actio subito et quasi micante motu proveniendi'.

³⁷Both *mico* and *emico* are epic words which can denote the flashing of light off armour. cf. Verg. *Aen.* 2.734, 6.5, 7.743 and Val. Flacc. 5.92, 7.397.

³⁸Burnouff (Flammarion, 1965).

³⁹Jackson (Loeb, 1937).

⁴⁰Furneaux on 13.16,4. Grant's translation (Penguin, 1977) is more neutral: 'evident consternation'.

⁴¹cf also Verg. *Aen.* 9.189, 12.102.

⁴²The line is repeated at Verg. *Geo.* 3.439. cf. also 'micat auribus et tremit artus' *Geo.* 3.84.

⁴³*T.L.L.* (483.64), Val. Flacc. 3.557, 'stagna vaga quasi luce micant', Verg. *Aen.* 2.173ff, 'salsus per artus / sudor iit, terque ipsa solo (mirabile dictu) / emicuit parmamque ferens hastamque trementem'.

explicitly with fear, Ovid writes, 'metu micuere sinus' (*Epp* 1.45) and 'corque timore emicat' (*Fast* 3.36)⁴⁴. Thus 'emicuit' may even allude to the thudding of Agrippina's heart, although this is less plausible as her heartbeat would not provide a visible medium to convey her fear. Therefore, a great deal can be suggested about the symptoms of Agrippina's fear just from the use of 'emicuit'. It is an incredibly powerful and versatile word which gives many clues as to how Tacitus may have viewed the revelation of Agrippina's fear, even assuming that she had been able to control her facial expression. There are, then, two possible ways of looking at this passage describing the fear of Agrippina. It could be that Agrippina is so startled by the thought that she is viewing a precedent for her own murder that she loses her composure like never before. Alternatively, the betrayal of her fear may have been so subtle that the signs were not so obvious that they could be read in her facial expression.

The appeal to the audience's sense of sight was a long-standing device in ancient literature and was represented by the terms *ἔκφρασις* and *ἐνάργεια*. In contrast to *ἔκφρασις*, where objects and events are merely described in a 'strikingly pictorial way' (Zanker 1981.297), by the use of *ἐνάργεια* the author would actually appeal to the senses of the audience by describing the events in such a way that the listener would become an eyewitness. Zanker (311) records how Plutarch followed Simonides' dictum that 'painting is silent poetry and poetry is talking painting' (*Mor.* 346F cf. 17F 58B). Pictorial vividness is vital to both. Both seek to produce an emotional response in the audience by an accurate and perceptive description. The attachment of the author's audience to the events that are described in the text can be made stronger by the inclusion in the text of an 'inner' audience, that is to say the action

⁴⁴cf. Val. Flacc. 8.333, 'simul in vultus micat undique terror'.

is presented in the form of a spectacle. Feldherr (1991.3) defines the parameters of *spectaculum* for the purpose of his study on spectacle in Livy, thus,

'The essential characteristic of spectacle is visual contact. Thus the term spectacle will not be restricted to deliberately staged events like sacrifices or gladiatorial games but will be used for any action that takes place in the presence of observers, however few.'

He sees the device of *spectaculum* in Livy's work as a way of creating an emotional relationship between the two audiences and observes that the important events of Livy's history often take place with spectators present. Davidson (1991.13) notes how Polybius writes through the eyes of other people and thus offers several different points of view for the same event. Beyond the spectators in the text, Polybius appears to identify the 'silent spectators', his readers, and urges them always to keep the events ὑπὸ τὴν ὄψιν. He invites his readers mentally to turn and direct their gaze upon the locations as each is displayed. Polybius is trying to arouse the sympathy of his audience ('συμπαθεῖς ποιεῖν' 2.56,7 cf. 11). Both Feldherr and Davidson identify a didactic purpose behind this visualisation and Davidson (1991.16) writes,

'The historian controls the gaze of the reader ... sometimes crudely, when he orders us to turn our eyes to each location in turn, now to observe closely, now to sit back and assess and compare at a distance and now to apply what we see to ourselves; but sometimes more discreetly and subtly, when he induces us to look through the eyes of others.'

Feldherr (1991.2) recognises that in the case of Livy, it is only through 'the re-creation of events as spectacles, that the historian can portray the process of historical change and inject that portrayal into the discourse of his own society.'

Ann. 13.16 is a passage which creates a strong impression upon the visual sense of the reader or audience. As we have seen, Tacitus' account

of the death of Britannicus and the reaction of the various people in the room is both vivid and perceptive in its detail. Also there are more obvious allusions to the sense of sight in the passage, and in the way that the scene is arranged and recounted Tacitus does appear to be setting up an audience within his work who view the show put on by Nero at Britannicus' expense.⁴⁵ In the first sentence Tacitus describes how the imperial youth eat sitting at their own table and 'in adspectu propinquorum'. By doing this, he establishes early on the importance of the visual element in this episode, as well as setting the scene for the action.⁴⁶ Britannicus' table is centre stage, in full view of the other guests. The guests are sitting around in a similar circular arrangement to that of the theatre, or more likely the circus ('circumsedentibus'). They are simply in the role of an audience. They are not aware in advance of what will happen and are watching the action as outsiders. Those who stay behind keep their eyes fixed on Nero ('resistent defixi et Neronem intuentes'). There, as we have seen, the idea of looking represented by 'intuentes' is reinforced by the use of 'defixi'. There is another parallel with the circus as they look to Nero for guidance about how to behave in an action that is reminiscent of gladiatorial shows and the crowd looking to the emperor for a verdict of life or death over the conquered fighter. Here too Nero has exercised his power of life or death over Britannicus.

⁴⁵D'Arms (1984.328) in a discussion on the Roman communal meal recognises the possibility of viewing the arrangement at dinner in this way when he writes, 'An attempt should be made to establish how far the organisation of interior spaces encouraged diners to feel themselves to be an audience at a theatrical performance, and how far actual participants in spectacle'. Also Greenblatt (1988.13) in a comparable description of the court of King Henry VIII, tells how he sees Sir Thomas More, at the table of the great for dinner, 'as if he were watching the enactment of a fiction'.

⁴⁶Delvaux (1982.145) notes how the phrase 'in adspectu propinquorum' establishes the element of spectacle.

Then Nero, when he is trying to reassure people about Britannicus' attack, refers to the boy's senses returning and he specifies his sight ('visus').⁴⁷ Also there is still the possibility that Agrippina's fear is revealed by something in her eyes through the action represented by 'emicuit'. Tacitus afterwards describes Britannicus' death as having been carried out 'ante oculos inimici' (13.17,2).⁴⁸ Therefore, whilst the scene is not explicitly named a *spectaculum* by Tacitus⁴⁹, even so it is presented in the form of a spectacle. Furthermore, Malissard (1990.219) differentiates between 'la mise en scène de la mort' which he identifies as a purely literary effect and 'la mort en scène' which is a spectacle such as we have here and where 'la mort est l'acteur essentiel'. *Ann.* 13.16 contains all the elements that Malissard considers necessary for 'la mort en scène': certain characters are actors, others spectators; a space evoking the scene is reconstructed, the actors-spectators take their place in the areas suitable for viewing.⁵⁰ Like Borszák (1973.64-7) Malissard identifies episodes in the *Histories* to illustrate Tacitus' use of the *spectaculum* motif.⁵¹

By describing the events at dinner in the form of a spectacle, Tacitus is able to focus upon the individual reactions of different groups of people there. The passage is loaded with paradox, especially in regard

⁴⁷*Ann.* 13.16,3, 'ait ... redituros paulatim visus sensusque'.

⁴⁸Dio (61.7,4) notes that Britannicus' murder was well known in spite of Nero's attempts to hide it.

⁴⁹As he does for example at *Hist.* 3.84 when he uses the phrase 'foedum spectaculum' at the death of Vitellius.

⁵⁰Although he does not actually cite 13.16 as an example.

⁵¹219. 'Galba meurt ainsi [Hist 1.40] dans l'espace clos du Forum, sous les yeux du peuple romain massé dans les portiques et Vitellius offre de même un *foedum spectaculum* [Hist 3.84,5] dont les détails, pour être moins précis, n'en sont pas moins caractéristiques.' cf. Keitel 1992.342ff.

to the behaviour and reactions of those present.⁵² At first the pattern is declared to be that the ignorant flee while the perceptive stay. But then immediately Nero contradicts this, for he appears to be ignorant, 'nescio similis', (although he really is in the know) yet also stays behind. Also left behind are Agrippina who is *genuinely ignorant* but who also understands the significance of the event and Octavia who is also genuinely ignorant but stays behind because she has learned how to hide her feelings. Among other things, then, this episode is an illustration of understanding and ignorance at the imperial court. Malissard (1990.217) writes,

'l'ensemble du récit Tacitéen est ainsi animé de personnages aux sentiments perpétuellement masqués, qui ... composent leur corps et leurs traits pour assumer l'emploi qu'ils ont à tenir dans la société romaine; presque tous savent en outre adopter à l'occasion des poses et des attitudes théâtrales'.

Indeed all those who witness the murder of Britannicus in its entirety are putting on an act with the exception of Agrippina and in her case it is not through want of trying. The guests are hiding their true feelings until they know how Nero will react. Nero feigns innocence but is really the perpetrator. Octavia has been so well trained in the imperial court that she even hides the torrent of emotions that she must have experienced watching the death of her brother. Agrippina, ironically a past mistress of dissimulation and intrigue, is the only one who cannot hide her feelings. By associating her with Octavia, Tacitus emphasises Agrippina's innocence.⁵³ Furthermore, it is the paradox of Agrippina's overpowering fear that symbolises the diminution of her influence and

⁵²For instance, Henne (1982.142) notes that the wine which is too hot ('praecalida') for Britannicus is described as harmless ('innoxia'), because it does not contain the poison, yet it will become the vehicle for the poison.

⁵³ cf. Delvaux 1982.147.

the shift in the balance of power from her to Nero. For Tacitus presents the murder of Britannicus as a flamboyant and symbolic gesture on Nero's part to show to the world and especially his mother that he is assuming control. It is an action that would be entirely consistent with Nero's theatrical temperament and interests.⁵⁴

Borszák (1973.65) believes that Tacitus does not consistently use the *spectaculum* motif to re-create a tragedy but rather sees it as 'nur ein Mittel seiner souveränen Kompositionkunst'. There is, I would contend, more to it than that. Aside from the particular appropriateness when using *spectaculum* of an event that Nero is in control of, or indeed an event that takes place in the imperial court, the theatrical perspective may have appealed to Tacitus because it reflected his perspective upon the imperial court at Rome and his own relationship to it. Greenblatt (1988.27) describes how Thomas More 'uses theatrical imagery to depict a world living out rituals in which it has ceased fully to believe'. This could be compared to Tacitus' attitude towards the behaviour of the upper-class members of Rome, especially the senators, who hid their true feelings and literally acted out roles in Nero's stage productions (14.14,3-4). Greenblatt (1988.29) assessed Thomas More's perspective on court life in this way.

'if the theatrical metaphor expresses his inner sense of alienation and his observation of the behavior of the great, it also expresses his own mode of engagement in society.'

⁵⁴ The occurrences of *spectaculum* in the Annals look like this. There is an increase in the Neronian narrative to correspond with Nero's love of the theatre.

Book no:	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
No of refs:	1	-	2	1	-	1	1	3	3	7	4	1

This description may apply equally well to Tacitus and his own attitude to the social and political life which he witnessed.

Chapter 4

The Fear of Nero in Tacitus *Annals* 13-16.

Fear is the parent of cruelty.

J.A. Froude

The Neronian books of the *Annals* contain consistently high numbers of fear words.¹ These figures are roughly comparable to, and perhaps slightly higher than, the statistics for the Tiberian narrative. However, several fear words appear to occur more frequently in *Ann.* 13-16 than in books 1-6, as Mastellone Iovanne (1989.10) has observed:

‘Inoltre se si esamina la tabella² si deve constatare che in ben 10 casi i vocaboli denotanti la paura sono più ricorrenti nella terza esade in confronto alla prima [per una volta (*terror*) l’occorrenza è identica (8)] e che in molti altri lo scarto di incidenza a favore della prima è davvero esiguo.’

¹The following table gives the numbers for each book. See Appendix for a more detailed breakdown of the occurrences and a key to the words which have been considered as ‘expressions of fear’. *Ann.* 1 is an outstanding exception which I have discussed in Chapter 1 of this thesis.

<i>Ann.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
Total	60	33	21	39	6	33	22	31	33	37	47	16

The following table shows the ratio of fear words per page of Teubner text for each book of the *Annals*.

<i>Ann.</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
Ratio	1.30	0.74	0.53	0.91	1.2	1.12	0.98	0.87	0.94	0.99	1.12	0.89

²Mastellone Iovanne refers to a table recording occurrences of the fear words which she identified. In addition to the expressions I have considered in Appendix 1, she also includes *sollicitudo*, *maestitia* and their related forms.

Indeed it was this very fact which prompted Mastellone Iovanne to focus her investigation into fear in Tacitus upon aspects of the Neronian narrative, both at home and abroad.³ It is in the context of these observations that I shall consider two aspects of fear implicit in the title phrase 'the fear of Nero'. These are fear inspired in others by Nero and fear experienced by the emperor himself. My contention is that the relationship between fear and the principate of Nero in *Ann.* 13-16 holds the key to an understanding not only of Nero's characterisation but also of the nature of imperial rule, as presented in Tacitus' work.

* * * * *

The monarchic ruler demands the subjugation of his people to make his power secure. The pursuit of this policy naturally impinges upon the rights and privileges of all other levels of society. In attempting to give definition to the term 'tyrant', Latey (1969.18) writes,

'A tyrant is a ruler who exercises arbitrary power beyond the scope permitted by the laws, customs and standards of his time and society and who does so with a view to maintaining or increasing that power'.

'Tyrant', then, is a relative term. The point at which government becomes tyrannical is identified by the abuse of pre-existing laws and social conventions. As Latey shows in his study of tyranny, examples of this behaviour transcend all nations and ages. For instance, Aristotle (*Pol.* 1311a.13ff) noted that 'Tyranny, too, joins hands with oligarchy in

³'L'osservazione di questo fenomeno, nonostante la relatività del suo valore come fatto in sé, ha attirato la mia attenzione e mi ha sollecitata a concentrare la ricerca sui libri neroniani' (1989.10).

oppressing the common people'.⁴ The main tool that the tyrant needs to procure this domination is fear. One of the most horrific 20th century tyrants, Adolf Hitler, employed this strategy with great intensity, and gave an insight into his approach when he said, 'Terror is the most effective political instrument'.⁵ Moreover, he believed fear to be most successful when combined with an element of surprise. In 1933, he said,

'I shall spread terror by the surprise employment of all my measures. The most important thing is the sudden shock of an overwhelming fear of death ... People will think twice before opposing us when they hear what to expect in the camps.'⁶

In ancient literature the tyrant is often presented as favouring control by fear. An obvious example of this is found in the much-quoted phrase from Accius (Fr. 203R²), 'oderint dum metuant'. Moreover, Aristotle, discussing 'the method of government still favoured by the majority of tyrants'⁷, notes the policy whereby a spy network is established to monitor what the people are saying. He writes, 'Men are not so likely to speak their minds if they go in fear of a secret police' (*Pol.* 1313b.11ff). As in Hitler's regime, fear is created by the ready use of violence. Of Nero Griffin (1984.100) observes that he 'is presented in the *Octavia* as a tyrant who explicitly rejects Seneca's teachings about clemency and self-restraint, and who aims to rule by fear'. This is also true of Nero in Tacitus' account. Despite a cautious beginning to his reign⁸, he soon

⁴Translations of Aristotle from Barker (1958).

⁵H. Rauschning, *Hitler Speaks*, London (1939) 90.

⁶*ibid.*

⁷Barker 1958.244.

⁸Nero initially makes a diplomatic approach to the senate when he maps out his plans, claiming that his rule was to signal a change of tack and carefully avoiding anything that had inspired recent hatred ('nulla odia, nullas iniurias nec cupidinem ultionis adferre')

resorts to violent actions to establish his power, with the murder of Britannicus (13.16, cf. Chapter 3), which is followed soon afterwards by the murder of his mother , at the beginning of *Ann.* 14, and, as the Tacitean account develops through *Ann.* 15 and 16, by the hastened deaths of many leading citizens.⁹

Latey (1969.68) recognises that a common factor in the ascendancy of the tyrants is the use of para-military forces to seize power. Nero also uses the army to promote fear in the people. Civic disturbances are quickly dealt a blow by the militia. So, when riots occur in Puteoli, Nero quickly despatches a praetorian cohort to deal with the situation ,

'precante ipso ad Scribonios fratres ea cura transfertur, data cohorte praetoria cuius terrore et paucorum supplicio rediit oppidanis concordia'(13.48,1).

Tacitus states that *concordia* is restored when certain people are executed as an example to the others and the guard inspire *terror* in the people;

13.4,1). Griffin (1984.79) describes this as 'a reform in style, rather than content'. cf. also Wiseman (1982.57-67) on lines 33-88 of the first *Eclogue* of Calpurnius Siculus. As Wiseman (66) notes, these lines have been understood to represent in poetical form Nero's plans for the first year of his reign and so they contain parallels with Tacitus' comments at 13.4,1. He argues that these lines tell us more about how Claudius' reign was perceived, writing,

'The prophecy of Faunus reveals a conception of Claudius' reign as a usurpation, an anomalous interruption in the dynastic succession of Augustus' family, precariously maintained by military force in what amounted to a continuous civil war. With the succession of Nero, the Caesars returned to their rightful place, and the rabid Claudian war-goddess was bound and caged. (67)'

⁹The emperor even revives the treason law against Antistius who was accused of composing libellous verses about him and subsequently exiled (14.48,1).

and *terror*, as I have observed in Chapter 1 denotes a very strong emotion. Nero later employs similar tactics in Rome itself when public demonstrations take place in support of Octavia. The crowds are dispersed by threats of violence from armed soldiers ('*emissi militum globi verberibus et intento ferro turbatos disiecere*' 14.61,1). Moreover, the Roman people are not free from the military presence even in their leisure time. For, after trouble occurred among actors in the theatre, provoked (according to Tacitus) by Nero's encouragement of the games, the emperor re-installs troops in the theatre (13.25,4).

'*ludicram quoque licentiam et fautores histrionum velut in proelia convertit impunitate et praemiis atque ipse occultus et plerumque coram prospectans, donec discordi populo et gravioris motus terrore non aliud remedium repertum est quam ut histriones Italia pellerentur milesque theatro rursum adsideret.*'

Here Tacitus uses the word '*adsideret*' to denote Nero's action of 'stationing' them there but this word also carries the sense of 'besiege'. Indeed Woodman (1989.187) points out that Tacitus uses the term in the same sense to convey Tiberius' aggression towards Rome ('*adsidens*, 4.58,3). The presence of the soldiers around Rome carries with it a threat of violence which is made explicit at 16.5,1 when we learn that the audience was forced to applaud Nero on stage in order to avoid beatings from the soldiers who stood guard among them. Also at 14.8,2 Tacitus describes the reaction of the people in the house where Agrippina is staying when the soldiers arrive to kill her and writes, '*ceteris terrore irrumpentium exterritis*'. This repetition of the sound *terr-* highlights the shared derivation of *terrore* and *exterritis* and this emphasises the mention of fear in the phrase.¹⁰ This in turn conveys a heightened pitch of

¹⁰For similar etymological play in Livy, see Kraus on 6.22,7.

emotion, which illustrates the extreme fear with which the soldiers were associated.

* * * * *

La force a fait les premiers esclaves, leur lâcheté les a perpetués.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Du Contrat Social*, I.2.

Another aspect of tyrannical rule was expressed succinctly by Hitler when he described his own reasons for establishing such a harsh regime. His assessment of the situation was based upon not only the nature of the ruler but also the psychology of the ruled. Bramstedt (1945.118) explains his philosophy:

'Hitler has always regarded fear as the basic motive of the masses. To him the people not only need fear, they also alone respect the state executive that knows how to work upon it. People acknowledge brutality and physical strength, then cry for someone "to frighten them and make them shudderingly submissive". Hitler is deeply convinced that the masses today, as in the days of the Romans, need bread and shows that give them a thrill of horror.'

There is a reflection of this phenomenon in Tacitus' account of Nero's rule, where people enjoy the entertainments provided for them by the emperor. Indeed there is even evidence that these pleasures were dearer to them than food itself as Auguet (1972.187), reproducing the words of Fronto, writes,

'the people are, all in all, less avid for money than for spectacles; and ... though distributions of corn and foodstuffs are enough to satisfy men as individuals, spectacles are needed to satisfy the people as a whole.'

Indeed the demand among the people for shows at Rome was so great that the consequences of neglecting to put on a performance for them could be profound. Auguet (1972.187) writes,

'This provoked sullen, stubborn, and smouldering rancour, more dangerous than a riot; for the disaffection of the people created a climate favourable to the attempts of usurpers.'

There was also a positive reason for providing these shows. For they served as a means of distracting the people from the actions of government. Auguet (1972.184) comments on this correlation, stating that 'the more the public shouted itself hoarse at the circus, the less importance its voice had in the assemblies'.

Coleman (1990.45) has identified this demand from the public for entertainment as 'a "market force" in the selection of punishment at Rome'. Roman execution had long been carried out in the public view, which, as Coleman (1990.47) points out, had the effect of alienating the criminal from his social class and giving to the spectators a feeling of moral superiority. Deterrence was also undoubtedly a factor in the choice of this mode of punishment, for 'the prominence of gallows at crossroads and other public places made the deterrent purpose obvious' (1990.48). However, the ultimate association of criminal punishment and public entertainment came about in the amphitheatre itself. Coleman writes that,

'The disposal of lives as public entertainment presupposes a category of persons whom society regards as dispensable ... Leaving aside professional gladiators, and *venatores* and *bestiarii*, there are two categories of person who are disposed of in this manner: condemned criminals and prisoners of war; both have offended against society and the state, and therefore have a debt to discharge to that same state and society.'

The most elaborate form of entertainment to be gained from the disposal of lives in this way was the reenactment of mythological scenes, such as that of Pasiphae and the bull and the ill-fated flight of Daedalus and Icarus.¹¹ In her study of mythological enactments as executions, Coleman discusses at some length the reasons behind this form of entertainment, including the fact that criminals deserved a prolonged death and that such spectacles played to the audience's paradoxical feelings of eagerness and revulsion at the horror played out before them.

Aristotle in the *Poetics* wrote that fear (and pity) could be created by a spectacle,

'ἔστιν μὲν οὖν τὸ φοβερὸν καὶ ἐλεεινὸν ἐκ τῆς ὄψεως γίνεσθαι'
(1453b,1).¹²

Coleman cites instances of the extremely emotional reaction displayed by the audience to mimes, from which she argues that there must have been considerable realism in Roman spectacles.¹³ This frenzy of excitement brought on by fear was a popular form of entertainment given to the people by the emperor.¹⁴ In their leisure time, the Roman people wanted

¹¹cf. Suet. *Nero* 12.2.

¹²However, he went on to say that the better dramatist would create pity and fear from the action instead.

¹³1990.68 on Dio Chrysostom *Or.* 32.55 and Lucian *Salt.* 83.

¹⁴These shows appear to lie at the heart of Nero's popularity with his subjects which endured long after his death. The people loved him so much because he obviously loved the shows and involved himself personally. Other emperors, too, in order to court popularity, pretended to be revelling in the shows as much as the people (Auguet 1972.186).

and needed to be made frightened, thereby reinforcing the relationship based on fear which existed between ruler and ruled.¹⁵

Moreover, Tacitus clearly describes the complicity of the Roman upper classes in Nero's rule of terror. His acts of violence are endured and his lies condoned by many people who ought to know better.¹⁶ For instance, the emperor's incredible and unsubstantiated explanation for the killing of Agrippina - that she was guilty of treason and deserved to die (14.11,2) - is received with a show of flattery by all the senators with the exception of Thrasea Paetus, and people report many prodigies in support of Nero's story (14.12). Thrasea emerges as the one coherent voice of reason against Nero. However, at 14.49,1, the contrast is made between Thrasea and men of *pavida ingenia*, in this instance typified by the future emperor Aulus Vitellius. Thrasea is the only example of such outspoken fearlessness. However, by way of explanation for the majority acceptance of Nero's behaviour, we must look elsewhere in the Neronian books. At 15.11,2, Tacitus describes how people (in this case the soldiers stationed in Armenia) who are held in the grip of fear lose their sense of reason and too readily believe bad news (inflated reports of King Vologeses' bravery). He writes, 'cuncta metu extollentes, facili credulitate eorum, qui eadem pavebant'. At 15.36,4, a similar diagnosis

¹⁵Bartsch (1994.9) writes that 'the sources for [the Neronian] period identify the theater and Nero's performances there ... not merely as the physical site of an emperor's act of oppression against his subjects but as the medium for those acts'.

¹⁶Such people even involve themselves in Nero's extra-curricular interests, pastimes which, according to Tacitus, only served to degrade them further. For example, impoverished descendants of noble families take to the stage (14.14,3; cf. also 15.32,1); upper class women even become prostitutes at Nero's banquets (15.37,3; cf. also 14.15,2).

is made about the behaviour of the senators and other leading Roman citizens when Tacitus writes, 'quae natura magnis timoribus, deterius credebant quod evenerat'.¹⁷ From this comment it would appear that fear was instrumental in inhibiting many people who, by virtue of their social and political status could have regulated Nero's actions.

* * * * *

Severity breedeth fear but roughness breedeth hate.

Francis Bacon

There is, then, an atmosphere of fear under Nero's rule. However, not everyone in the state is *permanently* overwhelmed by fear. I have already noted the outstanding example of Thrasea Paetus, who spoke his mind, although he later paid the penalty with his life (16.35,1). Yet even others who are afraid of the emperor do not always find themselves in a permanent state of inaction. The most notable instance of this concerns the participants of the Pisonian plot, the narrative of which dominates *Ann.* 15 and to some extent accounts for the relatively high number of fear words in the book. Initially there is a connection between fear and the origins of the conspiracy. For the final sentence of *Ann.* 14, in which Tacitus sets up the major theme of the following book, reads,

'unde Pisoni *timor*, et orta insidiarum in Neronem magna moles et *improspera*' (14.65,2).

¹⁷cf. also Vitellius' behaviour at *Hist.* 3.84,4 (Chapter 5) where in extreme panic the emperor acts in an indecisive and irrational way.

Fear amongst the people of Rome, as we have seen elsewhere in Tacitus, can result in a lack of action and reason.¹⁸ However, here an additional factor is added to the equation. At the start of his actual account of the conspiracy, Tacitus writes that the plot arose out of hatred of Nero and support for Piso:

'Ineunt deinde consulatum Silius Nerva et Atticus Vestinus, coepta simul et aucta coniuratione, in quam certatim nomina dederant senatores eques miles, feminae etiam, *cum odio Neronis, tum favore in C. Pisonem*' (15.48,1).

Here Tacitus clearly states that hatred of Nero, and support for Piso encouraged support for the plot. However, a little later, at 15.49,1, Tacitus points out that it was not Piso's personal ambition (*cupido*) that sparked off the conspiracy. This reinforces the idea that discontent with Nero rather than a fervent following for Piso was the unifying factor amongst the plotters. Finally, to support this even further, Tacitus at 15.49,3, again reminds his audience of the hatred felt towards Nero, when he describes the motives of Lucan and Lateranus which led them to become involved in the conspiracy: 'Lucanus Annaeus Plautiusque Lateranus ... *viuida odia* intulere'.

Perhaps the most explicit illustration of the hatred felt by the plotters is given much later in the text. Tacitus describes the interrogation scene between Nero and Subrius Flavus, once the plans have been discovered. Flavus had already shown himself to be one of the most eager plotters at 15.50,4, when he expressed a desire to make an

¹⁸However, Seneca (*Clem.* 1.12,4) notes that when fear becomes extreme, a sense of desperation takes over and moves men to action: 'Temperatus enim *timor* cohibet animos, adsiduus vero et acer et extrema admovens in audaciam iacentes excitat et omnia experiri suadet'.

example of Nero and to cause him the maximum distress by attacking him on stage or after his palace had been set alight and he was running about in panic. The question of why they had conspired against Nero provokes an outburst of hatred against the emperor where the repetition in 'oderam' and 'odisse' reinforces the strength of Sabinus' feelings:

' "oderam te" inquit "nec quisquam tibi fidelior militum fuit, dum amari meruisti: *odisse coepi*, postquam parricida matris et uxoris, auriga et histrio et incendarius extitisti" ' (15.67,2).

Nero, due to his tyrannical actions, no longer deserves to be loved but instead merits hatred. There are different reasons given as to why the individual conspirators come to hate Nero. Broadly, they fit into two categories: self-interest and love of the state. Personal grievances were held by Lucan and Quintianus. Lucan was upset by Nero's reaction to his poetry. Due to professional jealousy, the emperor had banned his verses from being published (15.49,3). Quintianus had been personally slighted in satire composed by the emperor and wanted revenge for this reason (15.49,4). On the other hand, Flavus (15.67,2) condemns Nero for his corrupt and tyrannical actions - crimes against the state - and tells the emperor that he no longer deserves the love and respect of the people. Similarly, Lateranus, Tacitus writes, was acting out of love for the state ('amor rei publicae', 15.49,3).¹⁹ Moreover, those conspiring against Nero in *Ann.* 15 do not lose their fear entirely once they begin to hate Nero. Indeed, before they take action at 15.51,1, they hesitate between hope and

¹⁹Contrast 15.36,2, where Nero claims love for his country as the (false) reason for postponing his trip abroad. There the phrase used is 'amore patriae'. *Patria* does not have the same connotations as *res publica*. Tacitus leaves the significance of *res publica* at 15.49,3 unexplained. It could imply a desire on Lateranus' part for a return to the old order of government to which Tacitus himself would be sympathetic.

fear until the remarkable Epicharis tries to mobilise the officers of the fleet at Misenum into action. Once they have started, though, fear of disclosure actually spurs them on to further action ('metu proditiōnis', 15.52,1). Therefore, fear initiated their conspiracy and now it is compelling them to see it through.

Fear and hatred are emotions that are also closely linked together elsewhere in ancient writing. Statius describes fear as the parent of hatred ('parens odii metus', *Theb.* 1.127). In a comment perhaps even more pertinent to the situation of the Tacitean conspirators, Ovid, in his advice to the slave Bagoas (*Am.* 2.2,9), defines hatred as being the desire to see destroyed the person whom one fears:

'Si sapis, o custos, odium, mihi crede, mereri
desine; quem metuit quisque, periisse cupit'.

Cicero (*Off.* 2.23) cites a passage of Ennius where a similar idea is expressed, writing that it can be dangerous to inspire fear in people as this subsequently turns into hatred and a desire for the destruction of the hated object, 'quem metuunt oderunt; quem quisque odit periisse expetit'.²⁰ Livy also considers the relationship between fear and hatred, specifically in the context of ruler and ruled. In the case of the Athenian people against Philip, he notes that as long as the hatred felt is moderated

²⁰cf. Ennius *Trag.* v.379 Ribb. This is a concern which also lies behind Machiavelli's 16th century exhortation to princes that they should take every precaution to see that whilst they are feared, they are not hated by their subjects. For example, a good prince should 'make himself both loved and feared by his subjects' ('farsi amare e temere da'populi') and should 'be severe and yet loved' ('essere severo e grato') (*Il principe* VII, (1960.39) Trans. Penguin).

by fear, action is limited (31.44,2). Then he also gives a contrasting example of how fear of a king can be overcome by hatred:

'exsecrationesque in agminibus profiscentium in regem, vincente odio metum, exaudiebantur' (40.3,5).

Cicero elsewhere records how *metus* and *odium* were felt by the people of Lampsacum against their governor Verres (*Verr.* 2.1,81). Once they had been pushed to the limit of their endurance, their hatred of his lewdness became greater than their fear of his power as governor.²¹ It is observation of similar situations that caused Aristotle to comment that fear leads to sedition (*Pol.* 1302b.2ff).²² Aristotle also notes, with particular reference to tyrannies, that 'hate and contempt are the two most frequent causes of attack' (1312b.20ff).²³

Tacitus also illustrates the same point. For at *Agr.* 32,2, he expresses how dangerous rule by fear can be for the government concerned:

'metus ac terror sunt infirma vincla caritatis; quae ubi removeris, qui timere desierint, odisse incipient'.

²¹At 2.5,163, the minds of Cicero's audience are said to be opposed to Verres for the same reasons, ('dolore et *odio* et communis periculi *metu*'). Against Catiline, Cicero says (§17) 'si te parentes *timerent* atque *odissent* ... nunc te patria ... *odit* ac *metuit*.'

²²cf. 1311a25ff 'Unjust oppression, fear and contempt are often the reasons why subjects rebel against their monarchs' ('διά τε γὰρ ἀδικίαν καὶ διὰ φόβον καὶ διὰ καταφρόνησιν ἐπιτίθενται πολλοὶ τῶν ἀρχομένων ταῖς μοναρχίαις'). cf. also 1311b35ff.

²³Seneca *Ep.Mor.* 105,1 describes how *metus* and *odium* are two causes of men bringing about disaster on other men, 'considera quae sint quae hominem in perniciem hominis instigent: invenies spem, invidiam, *odium*, *metum*, contemptum'.

At *Hist.* 2.31,1, Tacitus describes the people's reaction to the murder of Galba when they felt both fear and hatred for Otho: 'addiderat huic terrorem atque odium caedes Galbae'. There are also other examples of fear and hatred provoking people to direct and violent action. For example, the fear and hatred which Vitellius is said to have felt for Dolabella, the man who had married his ex-wife, provoked him to take the man's life.²⁴ Similarly, the death of Agrippa Postumus was said to have been brought about by a combination of the *metus* of Tiberius and the *odia* of Livia (1.6,2), although here, for rhetorical reasons (joining Tiberius and Livia equally in responsibility for the crime), Tacitus separates the two emotions.²⁵

Therefore, in his account of the Pisonian Plot, Tacitus illustrates how fear engendered in a people by the tyrannical nature of their ruler can, with the added impetus of hatred, cause them to take direct action

²⁴2.64,1, 'igitur Vitellius metu et odio quod Petroniam uxorem eius mox Dolabella in matrimonium accepisset, vocatum per epistulas vitata Flaminiae viae celebritate devertere Interamnium atque ibi interfeci iussit'.

²⁵McCulloch (1984.23f) discusses the way in which Tacitus constructs the narrative concerning Postumus' death in such a way as to reveal their guilt. He describes how the rumours of Tiberius' *metus* and Livia's *novercalia odia* are in turn dependent upon belief in the earlier rumour that Augustus really had gone to visit Agrippa Postumus in exile. The rumours receive such a high status in Tacitus because the historian disregards the possibility of Augustus having ordered the execution himself. cf. also *Ann.* 12.64,2 and Agrippina's fear that Claudius is about to take action against her which leads to her decision to poison him before he can do her some harm.

against the ruler in the form of a conspiracy.²⁶ Consequently, the approach to government based upon the policy of creating fear in a people can in practice fail to provide security for the ruler himself. The phenomenon of the tyrannical ruler feeling fear himself due to the threat of conspiracy or uprising among the people was a familiar motif in ancient literature. For instance, Plato notes that it is such a fear that leads to the establishment of a personal bodyguard for tyrants (*Rep.* VIII 566b).²⁷ Carter (1975.26) writing on *Val.Max.* IX.3.ext.2-4, notes the 'elaborate precautions against death taken by foreign tyrants' which the author mentions in his text. Tacitus' Nero displays real fear himself on many occasions. Indeed, his propensity towards fear soon becomes an innate part of his personality as described by the historian. In two outstanding passages he is described as 'never free from fear' ('numquam timore vacuus', 15.36,2) and 'always fearful' ('semper pavidum', 16.15,1). These two passages in full also express the two main directions for Nero's fear. I shall consider them in reverse order.

The most sustained focus for Nero's alarm in *Ann.* 13-16 is the threat of conspiracy and this is symptomatic of his role as tyrant. We have seen how the tyrant who rules by fear is not free from fear himself

²⁶Aristotle (*Rhet.* 2.4,30ff, 1382a) writes that whilst anger is always directed at individuals, hate is also directed at types. Here the conspirators feel hatred of Nero's position as emperor and his abuse of that power.

²⁷He later concludes that tyrants rank among the most unhappy of men and that the greater their power, the greater their misery too (*Rep.* IX 576b-c).

as he is constantly on the look-out for trouble from his people.²⁸

Therefore, of Nero Tacitus writes (16.15,1):

'causa festinandi ex eo oriebatur, quod Ostorius multa militari fama et civicam coronam apud Britanniam meritis, ingenti corpore armorumque scientia metum Neroni fecerat, ne invaderet pavidum semper et reperta nuper coniuratione magis exterritum'.

Nero, then, is described as 'always fearful' ('pavidum semper') but this fear is related specifically to his concern about his personal safety as Tacitus adds that, having found out about the conspiracy, he was 'terrified' ('exterritum').²⁹ His fear of conspiracy is not just related to the Pisonian plot of A.D.65. As early in his reign as A.D. 58, Nero was allowing himself to become alarmed by suspicions that Sulla was being disloyal to him (13.47,1). Then he is further disturbed ('permotus') by the omens and popular rumours citing Rubellius Plautus as the future emperor (14.22,3). At 14.57,1, Tigellinus plays on his fears of a plot. However, once the Pisonian conspiracy is revealed and the plotters are reluctant to name names, Nero becomes ever more frantic ('magis magis pavidus Nerone' 15.58,1) and expands his bodyguard. He even grows nervous of the veterans who have always been supportive of him in the past (15.59,4). This all gradually builds up to 16.15,1 when he is terrified by Ostorius. Therefore, the paranoia about conspiracies, present from the very beginning of his reign, becomes more intense as his crimes earn him enemies.

²⁸It is not just Nero who feels threatened in this way for Agrippina too is constantly on the look out for attempts on her life (14.3,2) and takes the appropriate antidotes to poison.

²⁹For further discussion on this passage and the increase in the intensity of fear from 'metum' / 'pavidum semper' to 'exterritum', see above, Chapter 1.

In addition, there is a second aspect to his fear. The psychological state of the emperor, as described by Tacitus, is such that he dreads discovery and even retribution for the crimes which he seems unable to resist committing. After the murder of Britannicus, Nero was keen, so the rumour went ('alii ... credebant'), to receive pardon (*venia*) from leading citizens and so attempted to bribe them. Later, Nero embarks upon a bizarre mugging spree around the streets of Rome. One night he is recognised and this causes him alarm ('metuentior' 13.25,3).³⁰ However, the most outstanding illustration of the emperor's fear comes after the murder of Agrippina. Agrippina had wielded a great deal of influence over the upbringing of her son and his rise to power, having (allegedly) murdered Claudius and engineered the dynastic marriage between Nero and his half-sister, Octavia. Indeed, the absence of his father and the excessive influence of his mother would have been highly significant in his development as a tyrant. For Latey (1969.57) writes:

'A psycho-analysis of the tyrant might often show a classic picture of revolt against the father (or absence or ineffectuality of the father) and predominant influence of the mother'.

It is alarm at Agrippina's excessive influence that prompts Nero to plan her death. However, before, during and after the murder, Nero is constantly plagued by a particularly intense fear. First he worries ('metuebat' 14.3,2) in case the assassin chosen for the job should refuse. Then, once Agrippina has survived the first attempt upon her life, Nero is again described as fearful, although this time it is Agrippina who describes him as such. She sends her freedman Agermus to Nero to

³⁰This one word in itself, 'metuentior', implies that he must have been fearful to start with in order to become 'more fearful' once he has been recognised. Therefore, this passage adds to the characterisation of Nero being innately afraid.

inform him of her 'happy' escape from the 'shipwreck'. In a clever double bluff, for the purposes of the messages she assumes that her son must be absolutely terrified ('exterritus') with worry about his mother's safety, although privately she fears that her son wishes her dead (14.6,2).³¹ In fact, once Nero receives this message from Agermus³², he is alarmed - but for the opposite reason:

'tum *pavore exanimis* et iam iamque adfore obtestans vindictae properam, sive servitia armaret vel militum accenderet, sive ad senatum et populum pervaderet, naufragium et vulnus et interfectos amicos obiciendo: quod contra subsidium sibi, nisi quod Burrus et Seneca?' (14.7,1).

³¹It is ironic that Tacitus describes Nero as 'exterritus' after his first plan has failed. For he uses the same adjective for Agrippina ('exterrita') when she fears her plot to poison Claudius is going to be revealed before he is dead and Nero safely ruling (12.67,2). There is also another parallel description of fear for Agrippina and Nero in similarly frightening circumstances: 'magis ac magis anxia Agrippina' (14.8,3) when she waits in vain for greetings from her son, having escaped from the ship and 'magis magisque pavido Nerone' (15.58,1) when he realises that a conspiracy has been formed against him.

Indeed, in the case of three main imperial murders of the second half of the *Annals*, those of Claudius, Britannicus and Agrippina, the first attempt is unsuccessful. Claudius and Britannicus both survive the first dose of poison (12.67,1 and 13.15,4 respectively). Agrippina escaped from the collapsed ship with barely a scratch on her, probably sensed foul play from the speed with which it sank and had her suspicions confirmed when she witnessed her maid Acerronia claiming her mistress' identity to save herself and being stabbed to death as a result (14.5,3).

³²Agermus is the name given in the Teubner text but note that in the Oxford Classical Text (ed. Fisher, 1906) he is called Agerinus.

When Nero hears that his mother has escaped, he is scared to death ('pavore exanimis'). The reason for this is precisely because his mother is *not* dead, although later, once she is actually dead, Agrippina is also described as *exanimis* ('matrem exanimem', 14.9,1).³³

A little later in the narrative, Tacitus again examines Nero's reaction to his mother's killing. In an ironic parallel at 14.10,1, Tacitus describes the emperor in a phrase similar to the one used of him at 14.7,1:

'Sed a Caesare perfecto demum scelere magnitudo eius intellecta est. reliquo noctis modo per silentium defixus, saepius *pavore exurgens* et mentis inops lucem opperiebatur tamquam exitium adlaturam'.

Tacitus now portrays Nero as a haunted insomniac, obsessed and terrified by the possibility of punishment for the crime. Nero is said to be 'mentis inops', 'out of his mind (with fear)' and this again brings us back to the other definitions of fear as the moving of the mind.³⁴ The phrase also reinforces the intensity of his fear, whereby even the countryside serves as a reminder of his crime.³⁵ It is only the flatterers among his entourage who convince him that he can return to Rome without fear ('intrepidus' 14.13,1).

³³Baldwin (1979.380) considers the theatrical possibilities of this scene when Nero views his mother's corpse. Also, at 14.12,2 in the account of various prodigies occurring after Agrippina's death, a woman killed by a thunderbolt is described as 'exanimata'.

³⁴Cic. *Tusc.* 4.19 and Varro *D.L.L.* 6.48. I have discussed these passages in Chapter 1.

³⁵cf. 14.10,3, 'quia tamen non, ut hominum vultus, ita locorum facies mutantur, obsersabaturque maris illius et litorum gravis adspectus ... Neapolim concessit'. cf. Suet. *Nero* 46,1, 'terrebatur ad hoc evidentibus portentis somniorum et auspicio- rum et ominum, cum veteribus tum novis'.

Nero's predicament is explicitly described in the second passage to which I referred at the start of this section. Nero pays a visit to the temple of Vesta, just prior to a planned trip to the Eastern provinces:

Nec multo post omissa in praesens Achaia (causae in incerto fuere) urbem revisit, provincias Orientis, maxime Aegyptum, secretis imaginationibus agitans. dehinc <e>dicto testificatus non longam sui absentiam et cuncta in re publica perinde immota ac prospera fore, super ea profectioe adiit Capitolium. illic veneratus deos, cum Vestae quoque templum inisset, repente cunctos per artus tremens, seu *numine exterrente*, seu *facinorum recordatione numquam timore vacuus*, deseruit inceptum, cunctas sibi curas amore patriae leviores dictitans.

Soon after, giving up Achaia for the present (his reasons were not known for sure), he revisited the city, considering in his secret thoughts the Eastern provinces, especially Egypt. Then, having declared in an edict that his absence would not be a long one and that everything in the state would remain unchanged and prosperous, he visited the Capitol in connection with his journey. There he worshipped the gods but when he entered the temple of Vesta, he suddenly began trembling throughout his whole body, either because the deity terrified him or because through the memory of his crimes he was never free from fear. He abandoned his plan, repeatedly saying that his own worries were less pressing to him than love for his country.

Nero's panic in the temple is represented as being either because the *numen* of the goddess terrified him ('seu numine exterrente') or because he was always afraid due to his guilty conscience ('seu facinorum recordatione numquam timore vacuus'). Nero's worry about retribution for his crimes is implied by the first as well as the second statement. That Nero felt himself to be in danger in some way is clear from a comparison with Suetonius' version of events (*Nero* 19,1):

'peregrinationes duas omnino suscepit, Alexandrinam et Achaicam: sed Alexandrina ipso profectiois die destitit, turbatus religione simul ac periculo. nam cum circumitis templis in aede

Vestae resedisset, consurgenti ei primum lacinia obhaesit, deinde tanta oborta caligo est, ut dispicere non posset'.

*'Nero planned two foreign tours, to Alexandria and Achaia; but he abandoned the trip to Alexandria on the very day of departure having been disturbed by a portent of danger. For, when going round the temples he had sat down in the aedes of Vesta, at first the hem of his clothing stuck as he was getting up, then such a darkness came over him that he could not see.'*³⁶

Although both writers appear to be using a common source to the extent that they both allege that something happened in the shrine to make Nero change his mind about his planned trip, there are marked differences in their interpretation of the information. Suetonius records the incident in the shrine simply as a portent of danger ('*religione simul ac periculo*'). Tacitus, however, places much more emphasis upon the origin of Nero's alarm. He specifically connects Nero's panic with the goddess herself when he suggests that the emperor may have been terrified by the actual *numen* of Vesta, not merely by some vague portent. In addition, the emotion expressed by *terror* is intense. Why should Tacitus wish to imply that Vesta worried Nero so much? The goddess was closely related to the *penates* and her protection was seen as vital to the survival of the city and its inhabitants. Indeed, she was perceived as the mother goddess of Rome.³⁷ We have seen how Nero, having murdered his mother, enjoyed no peace of mind. How appropriate, then, that it should be in the shrine of the *mother* goddess where Nero is suddenly overcome

³⁶The temple would have been small and dark, cf. coinage struck between A.D.14-37 by Tiberius (Museo Nazionale Romano), in Bondinelli (1970.352, plate 427).

³⁷cf. 'Vesta mater' Cic. *Dom.* 144 (also *Har. Resp.* 12).

by fear as a result of his crimes.³⁸ Clearly Tacitus uses this incident not only to expand his characterisation of the emperor by illustrating how he was never free from fear. In addition, he uses this episode to re-emphasise the gravity of Nero's crimes.³⁹

* * * * *

A further consideration regarding the fear felt by Nero in *Ann.* 13-16 concerns the fact that he seems to attract particular individuals who 'play the tyrant' over him. He is not peculiar among the emperors in having influential advisers. For we need only recall Tiberius and

³⁸Although there is no explicit reference to Vesta's maternal or protective role in this passage, Tacitus' audience would be well aware of her significance. Also Vesta was the protectress of the city, so this scene in her temple could be taken as a sign of her anger at the crimes committed by Nero against Rome.

³⁹Tacitus elsewhere in the Neronian narrative uses references to the gods and omens for literary effect (see Plass 1988.75-6). For example, the storm following Britannicus' murder is interpreted by the *vulgus* as the gods' registering their disapproval (13.17,1). Also, at 14.5,1, Tacitus describes the setting for the 'shipwreck' attempt on Agrippina's life and observes ironically that the night was so bright and the sea so calm, as though the gods wanted to expose the crime ('noctem sideribus inlustrem et placido mari quietam quasi convincendum ad scelus dii praebuere'). This is not to say that Tacitus personally sympathised with this view. Lucas (1974.144) comments on this latter passage, thus: 'Tacite désirait obscurément introduire dans les événements une colère céleste et une punition *mais en même temps il savait l'inanité d'un pareil souhait*'.

Sejanus.⁴⁰ However, in the case of Nero, the emphasis upon the emperor's fears is much more acute. Early on in his reign, his freedman

⁴⁰Indeed it is Sejanus and not Tiberius who appears to possess 'real' *imperium* in Tacitus' account. In the early chapters of *Annals* 4, Tacitus presents Sejanus as the true ruler who displays certain characteristics of the rhetorical tyrant. Drusus, in the opinions attributed to him at 4.7 outlines his opposition to Sejanus. Drusus hates Sejanus but if he feared him, this is not indicated in the text, 'et ultor [Drusus] metuebatur non occultus odii' (4.7,1). Rather it is Sejanus who feels the fear. Sejanus has met his match, albeit temporarily, in Drusus. At 4.2,1 Sejanus was threatening to instill *metus* in the citizens through the powerful military force at his disposal. But, ironically, by the end of chapter 3, it is Sejanus himself who is experiencing *metus* - at the first prospect of murdering Drusus. This emotion is again referred to at 4.7,1, at which point the account of the death of Drusus is about to be introduced.

The crowning glory to Sejanus' influence is his standing with the emperor himself. Understandably, he would not have achieved the position he had with the Praetorian Guard without the support and acceptance of Tiberius, but Tacitus extends this even further, presenting Tiberius and Sejanus in the roles of ruler and servant - but in Tacitus' world turned upside down the positions are reversed. Tacitus first introduced Sejanus during his account of the mutiny in Pannonia, when he accompanied Drusus whom Tiberius had sent to visit the troubled camps. At this stage Sejanus was joint commander-in-chief of the guard along with his father, but already Tacitus describes him as 'magna apud Tiberium auctoritate' (*Ann.* 1.24,2). *Auctoritas* was not a quality solely displayed by emperors or rulers but also applied to the standing of members of the *ordo senatorius* as well as describing the military discipline of a commander over his troops. Yet it does still convey a strong sense of the power of an individual or group over other(s). Hellegouarc'h (1963.296) writes, 'Au sens strict du terme, l'*auctoritas* est l'action de celui qui *auget*'. By showing that Sejanus held *auctoritas* over Tiberius, he indicates that he was the commander of the emperor. The influence



Graptus plays upon Nero's suspicions concerning Sulla and exploits what Tacitus describes as an 'empty panic' ('inanem metum') among the royal attendants to make the emperor think that his life is in danger (13.47,1-2). Tigellinus, too, alarms the emperor with hints of a conspiracy involving Plautus and Sulla in an attempt to make his own power and influence more secure (14.57).⁴¹

Nero's second wife, Poppaea, also exercises great power over him for some time, although her role in the text is not extensive. She makes an impressive entry to the *Annals* at 13.45,1, thus:

'Non minus insignis eo anno impudicitia magnorum rei publicae malorum initium fecit'.

that Sejanus possessed is again picked up in Tiberius' obituary (*Ann.* 6.51) where the different stages of Tiberius' reign are largely identified by the different personalities who influenced his behaviour. His *libidines* were hidden while he loved or feared Sejanus ('dum Seianum dilexit timuitve'). Here is another play upon the idea of fear and the control of a powerful ruler over his subjects.

⁴¹cf. also the freedman Polyclitus in Britain. He is 'terribilis' for the soldiers of Britain, although he is a laughing stock to the enemy (14.39,2). It would appear to be a feature of tyranny that social order is reversed and individuals of a lower class background can achieve great influence over the ruler. For instance, Samir al-Khalil (1989.68) writes of the torture policy in Iraq: 'Under torture, the high and mighty are quite literally exposed as being made of the same stuff as everyone else. The phenomenon of the poor rural migrant making good in the secret police (say, Nadhim Kzar) and then confronting a former prime minister over his bench and instruments (say 'Abd al-Rahman al-Bazzaz) is a very powerful symbol of the precariousness of privilege, influence, and power in this world of fear'.

Tacitus then sums her up by saying that she had everything but an honest mind, 'huic mulieri cuncta alia fuere praeter honestum animum' (13.45,2). She is soon presented as scheming and attempting to manipulate Nero in order to increase her influence (13.46,2) and it is she who for the same reason goads Nero into murdering Agrippina by playing upon his fears. Her persuasive arguments are reconstructed at the beginning of book 14.

'cur enim differri nuptias suas? formam scilicet displicere et triumphales avos, an fecunditatem et verum animum? *timeri* ne uxor saltem iniurias patrum, iram populi adversus superbiam avaritiamque matris aperiat.' (14.1,2).⁴²

At 14.61,2, Tacitus writes of Poppaea that she was fierce in her hatred and even in fear, 'quae semper odio, tum et metu atrox'. The two words *odium* and *metus* are also juxtaposed at 1.6,2 (although they describe two different people), where Tacitus describes the involvement of Livia and Tiberius in the death of Agrippa Postumus. There it is Tiberius' fear and Livia's hatred that provide the motivation for the crime. Whilst this is not stated explicitly in the text, the couple's fear and hatred for Agrippa Postumus results in direct action as did the fear and hatred experienced by the Neronian conspirators. Also here, Poppaea is like the people, who become so oppressed by the tyrant that their fear turns to anger and hatred. She is fierce towards Nero the tyrant. However, she is also like a tyrant, who embarks upon a greater rule of terror once he is threatened. It is not the people of Rome whom she terrorises but Nero. Indeed in the following section, through her remonstrations, once again she causes the emperor to be scared: 'Varius sermo et ad metum atque iram adcommodatus terruit simul audientem et accendit' (14.62,1). Nero is

⁴²Later his marriage to Poppaea is delayed due to false alarms of conspiracy, cf. 14.59,2.

ruled by terror himself.⁴³ Therefore, in an ironic reversal, he is now behaving like the subject.⁴⁴

So far we have seen how tyrants rule by fear and yet this regime is such that the hatred engendered in people can mean that the tyrant himself becomes afraid also. The balance of fear and hatred as expressed in the tyrant's philosophy 'oderint dum metuant' has been upset. Once the tyrant begins to feel his own position threatened, he embarks upon a period of even greater repression in order (so he hopes) to re-establish his authority. Bramstedt (1945.51) noted the same phenomenon among the Italian Fascists of the Second World War: 'Full of fear themselves, they knew how to turn it into violence, thus causing fear in others'. Latey (1969.257) notes the consequences of sedition against a tyrant, 'the tyrant ... if the attempt failed, himself became more oppressive out of fear'. This is exactly what happens under Nero in the latter part of *Ann.* 15 and through 16. Once the Pisonian conspiracy is revealed, Nero's fear becomes more intense.⁴⁵ This fear leads to even greater repression. At 15.58,2, Tacitus notes that Rome was put under custody,

'quin et urbem per manipulos occupatis moenibus, incesso etiam mari et amne, velut in custodiam dedit'.

⁴³Latey (1969.255) writes of Nero: 'He was too paralysed by fear to raise any resistance and his final panic-flight and suicide make a tyrant's cautionary tale'. Walker (1952.31) comments, 'Fear is so dominant in Nero's character that it suppresses all other traits until they appear in response to external suggestion'.

⁴⁴cf. Plato (*Rep.* VIII 562d) on rulers behaving like subjects and subjects behaving like rulers.

⁴⁵cf. 16.15,1.

There follow immediately many deaths, including Piso (15.59,4) and Lateranus (15.60,1), as Nero seeks to purge his environment of threats to his power. He even takes the opportunity to effect Seneca's death (15.60ff). Seneca had not been involved in the plot but Nero had wanted to eliminate him for some time.⁴⁶ The deaths continue throughout *Ann.* 16: Cassius and Silanus (16.7,1-2), Lucius Vetus, Sextia and Pollutia (16.10,1). When Nero's fears of an attack focus upon the governor of Britain, Ostorius, he is forced to commit suicide (16.15,2).⁴⁷ So sustained is the bloodshed, that Tacitus feels moved to comment upon it personally (16.16,1):

'at nunc patientia servilis tantumque sanguinis domi perditum fatigant animum et maestitia restringunt'.

Yet more deaths follow: Annaeus Mela, Cerialis Anicius, Rufus Crispinus and Petronius (16.17,1). Indeed the final main episode that survives in the *Annals* concerns the death of Thræsea, who had been Nero's most outspoken critic. At 16.24,2, we learn that Nero was scared ('extimuit') of Thræsea because he in turn was not afraid ('exterritum') of Nero. Thræsea opens his veins at 16.35,1. However, the most striking consequence of the tyrant's fear is his greater reliance upon soldiers to enforce his policy of repression. At 16.29,1, an unprecedented step is taken when he

⁴⁶Seneca serves as a contrast with Nero even in death. For unlike the emperor, who was ever fearful, he meets death without showing his fear: 'tum tribunus *nulla pavoris signa, nihil triste in verbis eius aut vultu deprensus* confirmavit'. cf. also Vestinus whom Nero sought to destroy out of *metus* and *odium* (15.68,3) but who actually faced his death bravely: 'nihil metuens an dissimulando metu' (15.69,2).

⁴⁷This episode is specifically linked with conspiracy, 'reperta nuper coniuratione' (16.15,1).

surrounds the senate house with troops. Tacitus records this new departure as a 'novus et altior pavor'.⁴⁸

So there develops in the Neronian narrative a cycle of fear. The Roman people fear Nero - they conspire against him - he is alarmed - and so attempts to cause even more fear.⁴⁹ This general atmosphere of terror under tyrannical rule is something that Plato recognised centuries earlier (*Rep.* IX 578a) but in Tacitus it is never-ending and out of control. In this perverse world, even good men have cause to fear, 'etiam bonos metu sequi' (16.26,2).⁵⁰ The Tacitean description of Nero brings into relief the immensely unstable relationship between the monarchic ruler and his subjects as well as the extent to which it was built upon mutual fear. By presenting Nero in this way, Tacitus is offering his most fundamental criticism of imperial rule.

⁴⁸Cum per haec atque talia Marcellus, ut erat torvus ac minax, voce vultu oculis ardesceret, non illa nota et crebritate periculorum sueta iam senatus maestitia, sed *novus et altior pavor* manus et tela militum cernentibus'.

⁴⁹Tacitus sums up the domination of tyrants and how their fear comes back to haunt them in his pithy description of Otho at *Hist.* 1.81,1, 'cum timeret Otho, timebatur'. cf. Seneca *Ep.Mor.* 105.7, 'adice nunc quod qui timetur timet. nemo potuit terribilis esse secure'.

⁵⁰cf. also Piso's final speech in which he expresses much the same sentiment, declaring 'etiam fortes viros subitis terreri' (*Ann.* 15.59,2).

Chapter 5

Tacitus on the Death of Vitellius, *Hist* 3.84,4 - 3.86.

'In panic he began to run too, aimlessly, he knew not whither. He ran up against things, he fell over things and into things, he darted under things and dodged round things. At last he took refuge in the deep dark hollow of an old beech tree ... And as he lay there panting and trembling, and listened to the whistlings and the patterings outside, he knew it at last, in all its fullness ... the Terror of the Wild Wood!'

Wind in the Willows, Kenneth Graham

At the end of *Histories* 3, Tacitus describes the capture and death of the emperor Vitellius, now with his power severely undermined after the defeat of his forces at Bedriacum. The historian's attempt to reconstruct Vitellius' emotions in the final moments of his life results in an account that is both vivid and gripping. The passage is of particular interest because Tacitus emphasises the extent of the emperor's panic through a description that contains a variety of synonyms of fear. He describes the desperate state to which Vitellius is reduced. Events at Rome are now out of his control. His only hope for revival, or indeed survival, is to flee to his brother and cohorts in Tarracina. The plan is that he should lie low at his wife's house until nightfall before departing, and he is taken out via the back entrance of the palace for this purpose. However, he changes his mind and returns to the imperial palace, which he finds deserted and where his pathetic attempts to conceal himself are unsuccessful. Ultimately, they contribute to his downfall and death.

Hist. 3.84,4-5 illustrates the way in which the historian studies the psychology of fear. His description of the emperor's feelings is

detached and almost clinical at times but nonetheless offers a clear picture of his subject. As usual there is more to Tacitus' writing than at first meets the eye and the author seems to have had a number of messages to communicate through the narrative. These consist of lessons on the political climate of his day which he believed were vital for his contemporary Roman audience. As Courbaud observes (1918.159), 'il veut que du drame sorte une impression morale.'

The account of Vitellius' last movements is as follows:

- 84,4 Vitellius capta urbe per aversam Palatii partem Aventinum in domum uxoris sellula defertur, ut, si diem latebra vitavisset, Tarracinam ad cohortes fratremque perfugeret. *dein mobilitate ingenii, et, quae natura pavoris est, cum omnia metuenti praesentia maxime displicerent*, in Palatium regreditur vastum desertumque, dilapsis etiam infimis servitiorum aut occursum eius declinantibus. *terret solitudo et tacentes loci; temptat clausa, inhorrescit vacuis*; fessusque misero errore et pudenda latebra semet occultans ab Iulio Placido
5. tribuno cohortis protrahitur. *vinctae pone tergum manus; laniata veste, foedum spectaculum, ducebatur, multis increpantibus, nullo inlacrimante; deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat.* obvius e Germanicis militibus Vitellium infesto ictu per iram, vel quo maturius ludibrio eximeret, an tribunum adpetierit, in incerto fuit: aurem tribuni amputavit ac statim confossus est.
- 85 Vitellium infestis mucronibus coactum modo erigere os et offere contumeliis, nunc cadentes statuas suas, plerumque rostra aut Galbae occisi locum contueri, postremo ad Gemonias, ubi corpus Flavii Sabini iacuerat, propulere. una vox non degeneris animi excepta, cum tribuno insultanti se tamen imperatorem eius fuisse respondit; ac deinde ingestis volneribus concidit. et

volgus eadem pravitate insectabatur interfectum, qua foverat viventem.

After the capture of the city, Vitellius was taken in a chair through a back way in the Palace to his wife's house on the Aventine, so that, if he were to remain hidden during the day, he could flee to his brother and cohorts at Tarracina. But then, due to his characteristic fickleness, - and this is the nature of fear, when the fearful person despises every course of action open to them - he returned to the palace which was empty and deserted, where even the lowliest servants had slipped away or were avoiding him. The loneliness and silent places terrified him; he tried locked doors, shuddered at empty rooms; and (finally) exhausted by his wretched wandering, he was dragged out by Julius Placidus, a cohort tribune, from the shameful hole where he was hiding himself. His hands were tied behind his back. Presenting a disgusting spectacle with his clothes all torn, he was led out with many people cursing him but none bewailing his fate. The revolting appearance of his death robbed it of all pathos. One of the German soldiers met him. It is not certain whether he was aiming a blow at Vitellius (either in anger or to save him further insult) or at the tribune. At any rate, he cut off the tribune's ear and was immediately cut down.

At swordpoint Vitellius was forced now to lift up his face and expose himself to the insults, now to look at his statues falling over and furthermore at the place where Galba was killed. Finally they pushed him along to the Gemonian steps, where the body of Flavius Sabinus has lain. In a voice revealing a not inconsiderable spirit he replied to the tribune's insults, declaring that he was still his emperor; and then, as blow upon blow struck into him, he fell down dead. The crowd jeered him when he was dead in the same depraved manner in which they favoured him when he was alive.

Therefore, Vitellius abandons his first plan, which was to remain hidden at his wife's house until he could travel safely to Tarracina, and instead he returns to the palace. This hesitation and indecision is the mark of an irresolute character and Tacitus writes,

'dein mobilitate ingenii et, quae natura pavoris est, cum omnia metuenti praesentia displicerent, in Palatium regreditur'.

Vitellius' desire to return to a familiar place to hide from the terrors of the present overcomes all reason. There are two causes of this change of heart, according to Tacitus. One stems from Vitellius' own character (*mobilitas ingenii*); the other is a feature of Vitellius' current predicament (*pavor*).

Fickleness is attributed to Vitellius elsewhere in Tacitus. For at *Hist.* 2.57,2 the historian describes Vitellius' indecision about conferring the title of knight upon his freedman Asiaticus, an act which the emperor had previously considered to be degrading flattery ('*inhonestam adulationem*'). Tacitus' description of Vitellius is as follows:

'dein *mobilitate ingenii*, quod palam abnuerat, inter secreta convivii largitur, honoravitque Asiaticum anulis, foedum mancipium et malis artibus ambitiosum'.

Furthermore, as Courbaud (1918.137f) argues, Vitellius' indecision at *Hist.* 3.67-8, when he attempts to abdicate, ties in well with the impression of his inconstant character which we are given later in the account of the end of his life. For, despite the fact that Vitellius has made it clear in a moving speech to a public meeting that he intends to abdicate out of pity and concern for his family, the consul refuses to

accept the imperial dagger and the crowd begin to protest. They stand in his way, prevent him from reaching a private house and he is left with no option but to return by the *Via Sacra* to the palace. Tacitus describes Vitellius' situation in familiar terms. He is completely at a loss as to what course of action to take ('consilii inops', *Hist.* 3.68,3).¹ At *Hist.* 3.84,4, the effect of fear (*pavor/metus*) upon Vitellius appears to exaggerate this characteristic fickleness.

Cicero (*Tusc.* 4.13) defines fear (*metus*) as being an action undertaken without recourse to reason, unlike caution (*cautio*).

'ut bona natura appetimus, sic a malis natura declinamus, quae declinatio cum ratione fiet, cautio apelletur eoque intelligatur in sole esse sapiente; quae autem sine ratione et cum exanimatione humili atque fracta, nominetur metus'.

This observation causes him to comment, 'est igitur metus a ratione cautio'. Unlike the unreasoning reaction of fear, *cautio* is an acceptable motive for behaviour. Indeed Tacitus draws the distinction between the two modes of behaviour when he praises his father in law, Agricola, because he never shrank back out of fear and yet behaved at once anxious and eager ('nihil ob *formidinem* recusare, simulque et *anxius* et intentus agere', *Agr* 5,1). Tacitus' account here differs considerably from that of Suetonius who claims that Vitellius, having gone to his father's house on the Aventine, was encouraged back to the palace by a false rumour of peace.

¹cf. *Hist.* 3.54,1 and Vitellius' ill-judged action ('stulta dissimulatione') in trying to keep quiet news of the defeat at Cremona which only made matters worse, 'cum e contrario laeta omnia fingeret, falsis ingravescebat'. Later, at *Hist.* 3.55,1, he is described as acting like someone who has just woken up, 'Vitellius ut e somno excitus'.

'mox levi rumore et incerto, tamquam pax impetrata esset, referri in Palatium passus est' (*Vit.* 16).

Although Suetonius acknowledges that this rumour was *levis* and *incertus*, still he attributes more logical reason to the emperor's decision than Tacitus does in his version of events. Tacitus appears to have been eager to emphasise in his account the extent to which Vitellius' fear possessed him. Consequently, his decision to return to the palace is presented as being formed not out of political necessity but rather out of an insecure emotional craving for the reassurance of his home and former power base. By presenting Vitellius' actions in this way, the historian perceptively observes the behaviour of someone suffering from fear and therefore by definition acting contrary to reason.

Moreover, in order to give a greater understanding of how the psychological phenomenon of fear may have been understood by Tacitus himself, it is interesting to note how the emotion was analysed by other Roman authors. Varro when defining the expressions of fear *metus*, *formido* and *pavor*, considers them all in terms of a movement of the mind; hence *metus* comes from the idea of the *mens* which is moved somehow ('mota'). Therefore, 'metuisti' for him becomes synonymous with '<te> amovisti' (*D.L.L.* 6.45).² Moreover, 'metuere' comes from a certain *motus* of the spirit where the *mens* shrinks back from the misfortune which it thinks will fall upon it (6.48). When the strength of emotion is greater ('vehementius in movendo'), the movement is greater and it is caused to be borne forth ('foras'). From this explanation *formido* is derived. On the other hand, when the emotion is not so strong, the

²However, the 'te' depends upon a textual emendation.

mind does not move so far ('cum <parum movetur>')³ and *pavor* is the result. Cicero (*Tusc.Disp.* 4.6,19) differs slightly from Varro in his definition of *pavor* and *formido*, believing *pavor* to be the greater, but he does nonetheless describe *pavor* in terms of its ability to 'move' the mind ('metum mentem loco moventem').⁴ If, therefore, fear was commonly conceived in Latin as being related to the 'movement' of a mind or spirit, surely then its connection with *mobilitas ingenii* is significant. Perhaps Tacitus is implying that a man who was characteristically fickle, as his Vitellius was, was particularly susceptible to fear and was innately weaker in the face of danger.

Elsewhere there is another connection between *mobilitas ingenii* and fear. At *Hist* 1.7,2, Tacitus ascribes *mobilitas ingenii* as motivation to Galba, although this description occurs in a reported allegation that the historian merely cites and does not explicitly support. Allegedly, Galba gave tacit approval to the execution of Fonteius Capito, 'mobilitate ingenii, an ne altius scrutarentur' (*Hist.* 1.7,2).⁵ In this passage *mobilitas ingenii* is again symptomatic of the insecure position of the emperor. For Galba, so the allegation goes, does not have the strength of conviction (or courage) to oppose the legionaries' action of trying and condemning Capito themselves. Furthermore, there is a hint of fear implied in the *ne* of 'an ne altius

³Again this assumes the accuracy of a textual emendation.

⁴Cicero also quotes from Ennius to support his point, 'tum pavor sapientiam omnem mi exanimato expectorat'.

⁵Chilver notes that this quality is not attributed to Galba elsewhere, unless it is identical to *segnitia*. He also agrees that Tacitus does not necessarily support it here.

scrutaretur'.⁶ However, the difference between this passage and 3.84,4 is that at 1.7,2 fear is an alternative to *mobilitas ingenii* whereas in the case of Vitellius, Tacitus claims that his *mobilitas ingenii* and his fear (*pavor*) are active simultaneously. Indeed the latter appears to interact with the former. Nevertheless, the earlier passage serves to reinforce a connection between the two phenomena.

Courbaud (1918.269) notes that 'ce qui interesse Tacite, c'est de rentrer dans l'observation générale de l'humanité'. Tacitus observes that Vitellius acts as one would expect of someone suffering *pavor*, that is to say that he is unable to stick to his plan of action and instead flees to a familiar place for comfort, however unsafe that place may be. After all, the palace is the first place that the enemy would come to look for him. At any rate, the historian distances himself from his main character and thus appears to be analysing the emperor's approach to his predicament. This is a technique which Tacitus employs on other occasions. For instance, at *Ann.* 15.36,4, Tacitus observes that, when greatly afraid, people always believe the worst to be true, 'quae natura magnis timoribus, deterius credebant quod evenerat'.⁷ Moreover, at *Hist.* 3.58,3, Vitellius is the subject of a two comments, all the more potent for their close proximity, which are very similar to that at 3.84,4 when Tacitus writes,

⁶cf. Develin's (1983.66) comparison between this passage and *Sall. Cat.* 49, 'periculi magnitudine seu animi mobilitate impulsus' and *Iug.* 88, 'mobilitate ingenii pacem atque bellum mutare solitus'. He points out the comparison with Galba here but notes the textual possibility of 'nobilitate'.

⁷Wellesley (1972) on this passage cites also *Hist.* 3.73,1, 'quod in perditis rebus accidit' as well as 3.58,3.

'nec deerat ipse vultu voce lacrimis misericordiam elicere, largus promissis, et *quae natura trepidantium est*, immodicus. quin et Caesarem se dici voluit, aspernatus antea, sed tunc superstitione nominis, et quia *in metu consilia prudentium et vulgi rumor iuxta audiuntur.*'

When 3.84,4 is considered along with this passage, it appears that Tacitus was building up a picture of a man not only experiencing *mobilitas ingenii* but also prone to fear.

This clinical analysis of the emperor's character at times of great pressure and use of the phrase '*quae natura ... est*' gives authority to the diagnosis of him as naturally 'fearful' or 'frightful'.⁸ It is true that Dio too saw him, when facing the end of his life, in these terms (*φοβηθεϊς*)⁹ but he does not dwell on this in the way that Tacitus does. This portrait of a man prone to fear is further supported by a number of other episodes in Tacitus' account where his courage appears to fail him. At *Hist.* 2.68,4, Tacitus describes how Vitellius was fearful of conspiracy, '*ad omnis suspiciones pavidus*'.¹⁰ Moreover, the instances of Vitellius' fear occur with greater frequency as the end of his life approaches. At *Hist.* 3.56,2, Tacitus includes a telling description of Vitellius in his camp. The historian notes a number of bad omens but adds that the main portent of doom was the character

⁸I am grateful to Dr. D.S. Levene for allowing me to read the final draft of his paper, 'Pity, Fear, and the Historical Audience: Tacitus on the Fall of Vitellius', due for publication in 1997. He writes that this phrase 'suggests a rather clinical, external view of Vitellius' fear'.

⁹Dio 64.20. Suetonius makes no mention of his fear.

¹⁰There is a certain similarity here to Nero at *Ann.* 15.15,1, who is described as '*semper pavidum*'.

of Vitellius himself. A picture is presented of a man who lacked experience and, therefore, could not take decisions independently of others. More to the point, he is visibly alarmed by *any* news, 'ad omnis nuntios vultu quoque et incessu trepidus'.¹¹ As if to reinforce the image of Vitellius as a frightened man, Tacitus then goes on to describe the emperor's state of mind once he has gone back to Rome. Again we see Vitellius in a blind panic, unable to focus upon the reality of his situation, 'recentissimum quodque vulnus pavens, summi discriminis incuriosus'. In the short term Vitellius' fear appears remarkably to work in his favour. For he is able to arouse some support by appealing to the pity of his men, 'nec deerat ipse vultu voce lacrimis misericordiam elicere, largus promissis et quae natura trepidantium est, immodicus' (*Hist.* 3.58,3). However, his return to Rome is once more associated with fear and this causes a shift in public opinion towards the Flavian side, 'ita haud dubium erga Flavianas partis studium tam pavidus Vitellii discessus addidit' (*Hist.* 3.59,1).¹²

* * * * *

When Vitellius turns back to the palace, he finds a place that is strange to behold. Deserted and empty ('vastum desertumque'), even the lowliest of the household slaves have abandoned it or at least avoid a meeting with their erstwhile master ('dilapsis etiam infimis servitorum aut occursum eius declinantibus'). The loneliness is

¹¹And he drank too much!

¹²cf. *Hist.* 3.70,4, when Vitellius is said to be fearful ('trepidus') at the words of Sabinus who reproached him for his attempted abdication.

terrifying in itself ('terret solitudo et tacentes loci') and, as Vitellius tries each door, he shudders to find the empty rooms behind them ('temptat clausa, inhorrescit vacuis').

At points in Tacitus' work, Virgilian influences can be detected. Miller (1986.87-106) has studied widely passages in the *Histories* which testify to this. Moreover, Baxter (1971.93-107), concentrating specifically upon book 3 of the *Histories*, argues on behalf of a 'structural design' ... [and] ... coherency in Tacitus' use of Virgilian reminiscences' (93). He claims that the allusions to Virgil gain their validity and potency from the fact that not only the historian but also his audience were familiar with Virgil's works. They could 'be aware of and ... recall specific Virgilian passages he assimilated into his works' (94). Baxter notes as outstanding in *Histories* 3 the number of correspondences¹³ and their concentration around three main episodes in the book (the sack of Cremona, the burning of the Capitol and the death of Vitellius). In addition, the narrative to which the historian alludes is that of *Aeneid* 2, the book dominated by Aeneas' account of the fall of Troy (95).

The climax of Tacitus' account is the death of Vitellius and the *color Vergilianus* is maintained at 3.84,4. Generally, the phrase 'terret solitudo et tacentes loci' has been taken to allude to the 'loca ...

¹³1971.94-5: 'There are forty-six phrases in book 3 that various commentators have called Vergilian reminiscences. Twenty-one can definitely be discarded. I have discovered six more probable correspondences. This leaves thirty-one possible Vergilian echoes.'

tacentia' of *Aen* 6.265.¹⁴ However, Baxter argues that two other passages in *Aen.* 2 appear to have been in the historian's mind at the time of composition. Their context seems to make them a more appropriate choice for comparison.

In lines 726f. Aeneas with his family leaves Troy, and as he walks through the city even the breezes frighten him, "me ... nunc omnes terrent aerae." Even closer to Tacitus' phrase in chapter 84 is line 755 in which Aeneas returns to Troy, "horror ubique animo simul ipsa silentia terrent'" (1971.106).

The implication, then, is that Vitellius is almost an Aeneas figure in the sense that it is futile for him to remain at Rome, just as it had been for Aeneas to remain in Troy. However, unlike Aeneas, Vitellius stands by his decision to stay in Rome and consequently perishes there, as Aeneas would have done had he not left his home. Through this correspondence the audience can elicit a foreshadowing of Vitellius' imminent death. However, a further and more sinister implication comes through this passage. For by associating Rome and Troy in this way, Tacitus seems to suggest that, just as Troy was a city doomed to destruction by the gods, so the future for Rome is equally bleak. Indeed this air of pessimism is reinforced later in the final chapter of the book.¹⁵

¹⁴Baxter 1971.106, who cites Schmaus, p22. Wellesley cites both 2.755, 'horror ubique animo, simul ipsa silentia terrent' and 6.265 without stating his preference. Heubner appears to give emphasis to 6.265.

¹⁵See below on *Hist.* 3.86,3.

If Tacitus is seeking to depict Rome in terms reminiscent of Virgil's description of the fall of Troy, then this would be compatible with his presentation of the city as an *urbs capta*, both at 3.84 in a literal sense and elsewhere metaphorically. Keitel has shown that in his accounts of the reigns of Tiberius and Nero Tacitus has presented the emperor as 'waging a kind of war in peacetime against his own people'.¹⁶ She writes,

'I should like to suggest ... that the *urbs capta* symbolises the continuing unrest and potential for civil unrest on the part of both ruler and ruled that prevailed in the late Republic and which the principate did not stop and indeed fostered.'

With the advent of the civil strife that followed the death of Nero, this potential became a reality. Now Rome was literally an *urbs capta*.¹⁷ The transformation that has been signposted elsewhere in Tacitus' work has finally taken place.

Livy (5.41) describes the entry of the Gauls into Rome in 390 B.C. On entry into the city, they find the place totally deserted, much as Vitellius had found the palace. Furthermore, there are a number of phrases that bear some similarity to Tacitus' account at *Hist.* 3.84,4 and which might suggest that he was influenced in some way by Livy's earlier description.

'inde modico relicto praesidio ne quis in dissipatos ex arce aut Capitolio impetus fieret, *dilapsi ad praedam vacuis*

¹⁶1984.306, Keitel traces the origins of this motif back to the rhetoric of the Republic. cf. also Woodman (1988.186f) on the metahistory of Tiberius' campaign against Rome.

¹⁷*Hist.* 3.84,4, 'Vitellius *capta urbe per aversam Palatii partem Aventinum in domum uxoris sellula defertur*'.

occurso hominum viis pars in proxima quaeque tectorum agmine ruunt, pars ultima, velut ea demum intacta et referta praeda, petunt. inde rursus ipsa *solitudine absterriti*, ne qua fraus hostilis vagos exciperet, in forum ac propinqua foro loca conglobati redibant; ubi eos, plebis aedificiis obseratis, patentibus atriis principum, maior prope cunctatio tenebat aperta quam *clausa* invadendi; adeo haud secus quam venerabundi intuebantur in aedium vestibulis sedentes viros praeter ornatum habitumque humano augustiorum maiestate etiam quam voltus gravitasque oris prae se ferebat simillimos dis.'

In this passage, the Gauls seem to have a very similar experience to Vitellius at 3.84. The italicised phrases above are those whose vocabulary or meaning appear to correspond most closely to Tacitus' account. They disperse in search of booty just as Vitellius' servants slipped away from the palace ('*dilapsi*'/ '*dilapsis*'). The streets of Rome were deserted to the Gauls where no one was there to meet them, just as none of his servants were there to meet Vitellius in the palace ('*vacuis occurso hominum viis*'/ '*occursum eius declinantibus*'). But, most strikingly, the Gauls are also terrified by silence¹⁸ ('*solitudine absterriti*'/ '*terret solitudo et tacentes loci*'). Vitellius seeks to return to his palace out of a desire for reassurance and security. Instead all that faces him is a strange and deserted place, quite alien to him. Like the experience of Livy's Gauls, rather than soothing his anxiety, what he finds there only serves to heighten it. His *pavor/metus* become specifically focussed upon the silence and emptiness of the palace and are expressed in terms of *terror* and *horror* ('*terret*'/ '*inhorrescit*'). Indeed, the palace is no longer his

¹⁸Although they have a focus to their fear as they are concerned in case there is an ambush waiting for them.

home. The members of his household have deserted him and the enemy are approaching. Therefore, perhaps Tacitus intended *Hist* 3.84,4 to be reminiscent of Livy's account of the sack of Rome by the Gauls in 390 B.C. Only now, the irony is that the invading forces are Roman, not barbarian. If so, he appears to be not only heightening the sense of the danger that Rome is now in but also presenting Vitellius as the agent responsible for bringing this on the city, and as such, almost tantamount to a foreign invader.

* * * * *

Meanwhile, Vitellius in his fear at the deserted palace, has hidden himself away. Both Suetonius and Dio are more explicit than Tacitus in their description of his hiding place. Suetonius records that he concealed himself in the doorkeeper's lodge with a dog standing guard outside (*Vit.* 16). Dio says that the emperor found himself in the dog's kennel (64.20). However, Tacitus merely refers to the location as 'pudenda latebra'. By 'pudenda', he conveys the sense of Vitellius' shame and Courbaud (1918.58) considers this phrase to express the degree of abasement to which the emperor has fallen, 'des faits matériels il a dégagé le trait moral'. Levene (forthcoming) calls *pudenda latebra* 'moralistic'. However, this is not the end to the emperor's degradation. He is dragged out of his hiding place by the tribune¹⁹ and with his clothes torn and his hands tied behind his

¹⁹The semi-anonymous Julius Placidus, otherwise unknown, according to Heubner. Dio and Suetonius differ from each other at this point. Suetonius claims that people did not recognise Vitellius in his hiding place whereas Dio reckons that he was easily recognisable.

back.²⁰ The extent of his degradation makes his death beyond pity, 'deformitas exitus misericordiam abstulerat'.²¹ Then he is subjected to further humiliation by the people who gather as he is led through Rome, past the place where Galba was killed, and to the Gemonian steps, where the body of Flavius Sabinus had once lain. The reference to their deaths serves to foreshadow Vitellius' own approaching demise.

From 3.84,4 until his eventual death at the end of chapter 85, Vitellius is the focus of the spectacle. Tacitus describes his appearance as 'foedum spectaculum'²² and he attracts the attention of the people of Rome, who were earlier described as 'spectator populus' for their role as the audience sadistically revelling in the fighting taking place around the city (*Hist.* 3.83,1). The phrase *foedum spectaculum* is a repetition from the earlier episode at *Hist.* 2.70,1 when Tacitus describes as a 'foedum atque atrox spectaculum' the scene of the battle of Bedriacum which Vitellius visits. Keitel (1992.350) has observed that the account at *Hist.* 3.83-5 recalls the episode at Bedriacum and that Tacitus' use of the *spectaculum* motif serves to highlight (among other things) Vitellius' degradation of the troops. Moreover, Tacitus is seeking to make a wider comment about the state of Roman society.

The *spectaculum* motif is but one of the means by which the historian paints a distasteful picture of a whole society only too ready to be enslaved' (1992.351).

²⁰cf, Suet *Vit* 17, 'donec religatis post terga manibus'.

²¹According to Heubner, the phrases *deformitas exitus* and *misericordiam abstulerat* do not occur before Tacitus.

²²Neither Suetonius nor Dio describe Vitellius in this way.

Similarly, at *Hist.* 3.84, the degradation of Vitellius himself is symbolic of the condition of the city, ravaged by civil strife.

* * * * *

One further episode of chapter 84 deserves comment. After Vitellius has been pulled out of his hiding place, an incident takes place involving a soldier who has (presumably) accompanied the tribune to the palace. This soldier amputates the tribune's ear but Tacitus is not clear on the reason for this act of violence. He may have been aiming for Vitellius, either in anger or to save him further suffering. Or he may have hit his intended target. Dio (64.21) records this episode and states that the soldier's intention was to put Vitellius out of his misery. Perhaps Tacitus means to imply that the soldier's action was indiscriminate. If so, this could explain why this soldier is named as a German.²³ There had been Germans in the Praetorian Guard since Augustus' time.²⁴ Also they were certainly present still by the time of Nero, as a coin inscription shows.²⁵ However, when we consider Tacitus' representation of barbarians (noble they may be but safer kept at a distance) and their propensity for violence, the way that he presents the German at this stage is significant. By the historian's implication that the reason for this violent act was unclear, the German comes across as an unpredictable character. Consequently, this adds to the presentation of the army, which allows soldiers of foreign, even barbarian, origin into Rome, as a threat to the

²³Dio's account at this stage describes the soldier as 'τοῦτος Κελτός'.

²⁴These were the *Germani corporis custodes* who had been drawn from the tribes of the Rhineland. (Keppie 1984,153).

²⁵cf. Keppie 1984.231, plate17d.

Roman people. After all, it is armies that have reduced Rome to a battleground. A.D. 69 can be seen as a time when fears about the role of the army in government come to a head, at least in Tacitus' mind. Indeed the final image of *Histories* 3 is that of the menace that the army still holds for Rome due to imperial reliance on its support under future emperors such as Domitian.²⁶

* * * * *

There then follows an obituary for Vitellius which takes up the majority of 3.86. Tacitus writes both critically and sympathetically.

'studia exercitus raro cuiquam bonis artibus quaesita perinde adfuere quam huic per ignaviam'.

Although he praises Vitellius for his *simplicitas* and his *liberalitas*, he adds a note of caution that these qualities, if exaggerated, can lead to disaster. Moreover Tacitus observes that, due to a misplaced conception that friendship can be bought with gifts, the emperor did not receive the companionship he deserved. Rome was better for his loss but Tacitus is still quick to point out that those who betrayed him to Vespasian cannot claim the moral highground after they had been proved false to Galba.

²⁶cf. below on *Hist.* 3.86,3.

Then, in conclusion, the historian briefly returns to the narrative for the last few lines of *Histories* 3 to end his account of the events of that day.

86,3 Praecipit<i> in occasum die ob *pavorem* magistratum senatorumque, qui *dilapsi* ex urbe aut per domos clientium *semet occultabant* vocari senatus non potuit. Domitianum, postquam nihil hostile metuebatur, ad duces partium progressum et Caesarum consalutatam miles frequens utque erat in armis in paternos penates deduxit.

The day soon ended and on account of the fear ('pavorem') of the magistrates and senators, who had slipped away ('dilapsi') from the city or who were hiding themselves away ('semet occultabant') in clients' homes, the senate could not be called. Once there was nothing hostile to fear ('metuebatur'), Domitian had gone to the Flavian leaders and had been hailed as Caesar. Then soldiers in great numbers, just as they were - still armed, led him to his father's house.

The first sentence of this final section of *Histories* 3 is particularly striking for in it Tacitus echoes the earlier narrative at 3.84,4 describing the death of Vitellius. Vitellius was said to have suffered *pavor* on his return to the palace ('*quae natura pavoris est*'). Here it is the emotion experienced by the senators and magistrates of Rome, men who had earlier served Vitellius but who are now thrown into confusion by the turn of events, '*ob pavorem magistratum senatorumque ... vocari senatus non potuit*'. The senate cannot be called for its officers are not to be found. Indeed, Wellesley (1972), commenting upon this passage, claims that in reality it was too late in the day for such a meeting to be called but that by including this detail Tacitus intends to emphasise the panic of the

magistrates and senators.²⁷ Tacitus gives two reasons for their absence from the senate. First some have slipped away from the city ('dilapsi'). This is another allusion to the earlier passage of Vitellius' death. For when he arrived at the palace he found it deserted as his servants had slipped away ('dilapsis etiam infimis servitiorum') or were avoiding him. So just as Vitellius' domestic servants had deserted him, now his (former) political servants have deserted Rome. The second reason is that other men avoided danger by hiding in the houses of *clientes*, 'per domos clientium semet occultabant'. Again the language of the earlier section is echoed in the words 'semet occultabant' and the senators appear to be imitating the degrading action of Vitellius when he concealed himself unsuccessfully in his palace, 'pudenda latebra semet occultans'.

Keitel (1992.346) has argued that the historian's comparison between Vitellius and his troops at Bedriacum 'underlies their degradation at his hands'. By these references to Vitellius' return to the palace in the description of the actions of these men after his death, Tacitus again intended to associate the degradation of the emperor with the magistrates and senators who hid themselves away in similar fashion. Perhaps then Tacitus is suggesting that the position of the senators will be equally overwhelmed by fear. But who is the focus for that fear now? The question appears to be answered by the first word of the next sentence, 'Domitianum'. Domitian now enters to be appointed acting ruler and the initial picture we are given of him is not too impressive. For he only dares

²⁷cf. also 3.55,3 'formidine'; 3.58,2, 'metu'. At 3.69,1, senators knights and others crowd round Flavius Sabinus' house thinking that Vitellius has already abdicated.

to show himself once he feels it is safe, 'postquam nihil hostile metuebatur'. Therefore, Tacitus implies in these words that Domitian too has been alarmed for some reason up until this point. Wellesley observes that the author is simply concerned with minimising the heroism of Domitian but I would contend that he intended to suggest more by these words.

The phrase 'nihil hostile' can be understood in two ways and these alternatives are not necessarily mutually exclusive. It may just refer to Vitellius and to the fact that since he is now dead, a rival to Domitian is removed. Alternatively, or additionally, Tacitus may mean to suggest that the events of the previous sentence help to calm Domitian's fear. For in the previous sentence the historian described how magistrates and senators were too frightened to attend a meeting in the senate house. Therefore, it is entirely possible that Tacitus is proposing the reason for Domitian's new found confidence to be that members of the senate are too afraid to come out of hiding.²⁸ The theme of a senate subject and subservient to its emperor is recurrent throughout Tacitus' writing. For instance, at *Ann.* 1.7,2, the historian writes, 'at Romae ruere in servitium consules patres eques'. Perhaps the most memorable example of all is Tiberius' outburst directed at the senators 'o homines ad servitutem paratos' (*Ann.* 3.65,3). Also the atmosphere at Rome after the Flavian victory is summed up by Tacitus at *Hist* 4.2,2, when he writes, 'civitas pavida et servitio parata'. However, here at 3.86,3, the subservience of the state officials is clearly identified with the ascendancy of Domitian. Furthermore, if this is

²⁸cf. Domitian's earlier fear at 3,59 that the guards set over him who promise to flee with him are treacherous, 'tamquam insidiantes timebantur'.

the situation at this early stage, then it does not bode at all well for the condition of *libertas* during his reign, which, after all, Tacitus witnessed and which appears to have been most influential in determining the historian's political and historical perspective.

The sense of foreboding encapsulated in the words 'postquam nihil hostile metuebatur' is followed by yet another sinister development before the end of the book. Domitian now goes to the Flavian leaders and is hailed as Caesar, a title held by the sons of the reigning emperor until Hadrian's time.²⁹ Then soldiers ('frequens miles') lead Domitian to his father's house. This act in itself is a sinister perversion of the Republican tradition whereby a successful candidate for office was taken home by a group of friends. As Godley (1890) notes in his commentary on this passage, 'the custom survives but citizen is superceded by soldier'. An additional element of alarm is created by the detail included by Tacitus that the soldiers were still fully armed ('utque erat in armis'). Whilst Wellesley notes that this phrase, 'is strange but suggests an impromptu and spontaneous movement', I would emphasise that this is indicative of Tacitus' world turned upside down by civil war and the abuse of *libertas*. Moreover, it is a striking foreshadowing of future abuses and particularly a subtle but clear allusion to the foundation for Domitian's reign.

I would not contend that Tacitus wishes to portray the death of Vitellius as the death of *libertas*. Yet, when he describes the behaviour of the magistrates and senators in the same terms as the

²⁹cf. Godley 1890 on 3.86,3.

former emperor and his doomed household, Tacitus clearly expresses just how ineffective their influence has become and how fettered in their fear they now are. By implication, this state of affairs will continue in the future under Domitian. Furthermore, through the disturbing final scene, the audience is left in no doubt as to the marriage of imperial rule (namely Domitian's) and the army. Indeed, this final image is reinforced by the first words of *Hist 4*, which begins, 'interfecto Vitellio bellum magis desierat quam pax coeperat'.³⁰

³⁰Also the description of the military presence and slaughter around the city, which follows immediately on from these words.

Conclusion

*It is always a significant question to ask about any philosopher:
what is he afraid of?*

Iris Murdoch, *On God and Good*.

In his historical works, Tacitus describes a culture that is built upon fear. Fear pervades every level of society. No class of Roman people seems to be exempt. Some fear is more reasonable and to be expected than others. For instance, it is not surprising that there should be a natural wariness of the enemy abroad amongst the citizens at Rome. However, as I have observed in Chapter 2, Tacitus portrays the Germans as a sinister and potentially more fearful race than their actions might always merit. As a result of this, facts such as Nero's reliance upon German troops in his personal bodyguard seem to reflect badly upon the emperor. Even the very defenders of the empire, the soldiers, are too often presented as being fearful of the enemy. In Chapter 1 of this thesis, I considered the relationship between fear and the army in *Annals* 1. There the soldiers come across as a rather irrational and emotionally volatile force, who fall prey to a whole series of feelings, including fear, when faced with the presence (real or imagined) of the enemy.¹ However, it is not just the soldiers of *Annals* 1 who are described in this way. At *Ann.* 15.15,2, the army are humiliated and left fearful ('pavido milite') of the Armenians. At *Hist.* 2.29,2, Valens' troops, at the end of their mutiny are described thus,

'torpere cuncti, circumspectare inter se attoniti et id ipsum quod nemo regeret paventes'.²

¹cf. *Ann.* 1.66 and also *Hist.* 4.38,1 ('falsos pavores').

²cf. also *Hist.* 3.25,1, and the alarm of certain of the Vitellian troops.

They too are alarmed by the prospect of the enemy. Moreover, their fear is inspired by their commander, Varus (*Hist.* 3.16,2):

'pavidus interim Varus turbae suorum miscetur intulitque formidinem. pulsi cum sauciis integri suomet ipsi metu et angustiis viarum conflictabantur'.

Then (*Hist.* 3.17,1) Antonius takes the role performed by Caecina at *Ann.* 1.66,2:

'nullum in illa trepidatione Antonius constantis ducis aut fortis militis officium omisit. occurrere paventibus, retinere cedentis, ubi plurimus labor, unde aliqua spes consilio manu voce insignis hosti, conspicuus suis'.³

The troops of *Annals* 1 were driven to rash action by their fear. Similarly, at *Hist.* 1.63,1, Tacitus writes, 'subitus pavor terruit' by way of an explanation for the soldiers' initial barbaric intention to ravage the peaceful city of Divodurum. In the end they are calmed down by their commanders but again we see another instance of a volatile reaction leading to extreme behaviour on the part of the militia. Tacitus comments that the reasons for such behaviour do not originate in the desire for plunder but rather in the kind of frenzy which is not easily analysed ('non ob praedam aut spoliandi cupidine, sed furore et rabie et causis incertis eoque difficilioribus remediis'). As I observed in Chapter 1, this vocabulary of madness is used also of the mutinous soldiers in Pannonia and Germany. This way of presenting soldiers is not unique to Tacitus' accounts of the mutinies in *Annals* 1 but elements of it are to be found elsewhere in his work, although with less intensity.

³cf. other instances of fearful commanders. For instance, *Hist.* 2.41,3 where the leaders of the troops supporting Otho are 'pavidi'. Their soldiers are said to be driven by either *audacia* or *formido*. Also, at *Hist.* 2.44,1, Vedius Aquila is described in this way, 'Vedium Aquilam ... inconsultus pavor obtulit'.

In turn, the Tacitean soldier provides a focus for people's fear. It is only right that they should terrify the enemy and there is some evidence for them doing so.⁴ Yet all too often it is the Roman people who receive fear instead of security from the Roman soldiers. Mostly, this impression is conveyed by the way in which the soldiers are described in terms of a large and volatile force, lacking any focussed approach to combatting the enemy. However, there are also instances where the fear felt by groups in Roman society is directly linked to the actions of Roman soldiers. For example, at *Hist.* 1.56,1, the governor, Hordeionius Flaccus, is intimidated by the troops of the Fourth and the Twenty-second Legions. More significantly, the Roman senators recognise a sinister change in government under Nero when they see soldiers armed at the senate-house and are duly alarmed ('novus et altior pavor manus et tela militum cernentibus', *Ann.* 16.29,1). Even the emperors, who became increasingly dependent upon the strength of the army to preserve their own 'right of succession', suffer the double fear of assassination and army disloyalty. Tacitus writes about Vespasian at *Hist.* 2.75,1 as follows:

'quid enim profuturas cohortis alasque, si unus alterve praesenti facinore paratum ex diverso praemium petat? sic Scribonianum

⁴There is an occasional mention of the use of *terror* as a battle tactic, for instance at *Ann.* 1.29,1 and *Hist.* 4.58,3. Also at *Ann.* 2.14,3, the Germans are described as 'pavidos' and at *Hist.* 1.68,1 the same adjective is used of the Helvetii ('pavidi'). At *Ann.* 2.25,2, Tacitus refers to certain German tribes who fled at the sight of Germanicus' men. However, Agricola's remark about runaway Britons in his speech at *Agr.* 34,1 should not be taken at face value in the light of Tacitus' account of Calgacus' bold resistance to the Roman attack.

sub Claudio interfectum, sic percussorem eius Volaginium e gregario ad summa militiae provectum: facilius universos impelli quam singulos vitari'.

In Chapter 5, I examined the predicament of an emperor in a situation where military power was out of control and I observed how Tacitus manipulated the account of the events surrounding Vitellius' death in order to comment upon the military rule of terror that would continue under Domitian.

Chapter 4 was concerned with the complex and paradoxical state - both fearful and feared - of the tyrant in Tacitus which is typified by the emperor Nero. In Chapter 2 I also explored one aspect of the presentation of Tiberius and how this helped to depict a man whom the Romans should fear. Emperors, by virtue of their status, obviously can generate exceptional fear in those around them. Tacitus has a personal interest in the senatorial class and it is these who appear to endure the greatest strain under imperial rule. In Tacitus' account, this pressure became almost intolerable under Tiberius. After news arrives that the Frisian revolt has only been suppressed with serious loss to the Roman side, fear of the emperor is so great among the senators, that they can only find release in sycophancy. Therefore, they do not dare acknowledge the truth behind the news and instead rush to dedicate inappropriate memorials to the event:

neque senatus in eo cura, an imperii extrema dehonestarentur: pavor internus occupaverat animos, cui remedium adulatione quaerebatur. ita, quamquam diversis super rebus consulerentur, aram clementiae, aram amicitiae, effigiesque circum Caesaris ac Seiani censuere; crebris precibus efflagitabant visendi sui copiam facerent (*Ann.* 4.74,1-2).

Paradoxically, it is Tiberius, who in Tacitus' account most clearly diagnoses the extent of the senators' weakness, when he exclaims in frustration, 'o homines ad servitutem paratos!' (*Ann.* 3.65,3). The senate keeps silence when faced with the appalling behaviour of the emperor, whether it be his plotting against Agrippina the Elder and her eldest son Nero ('magno senatus pavore ac silentio', *Ann.* 5.3,2) or his cruelty towards Germanicus' second son, Drusus ('obturbabant quidem patres specie detestandi. sed penetrabat pavor et admiratio', *Ann.* 6.24,3). In the Neronian narrative also, there are many examples of alarm, although the action is not focussed so much around the senate-house. There are, however, a number of enforced suicides, including Atticus Vestinus, whose dinner guests are made to endure extreme terror when they are led to believe that the troops who have come to oversee Vestinus' death may also have orders to kill them (*Ann.* 15.69,2-3).⁵ Similarly, Junius Gallio is terror-stricken at the death of his brother Seneca ('pavidum' *Ann.* 15.73,3).⁶

The notion of a world turned upside down fits most closely with Tacitus' description of civil strife in the *Histories*. This picture of the increasing dependence upon the army and the personal insecurity of the emperors provides a bleak account of gloom and fear in Tacitus' history.⁷

⁵In contrast Vestinus meets his own death, seemingly without fear and without any hint of self-pity; 'nihil metuens an dissimulando metu' and 'nulla edita voce, qua semet miseraretur'.

⁶He is denounced by Salienus Clemens in a desperate attempt to flatter Nero.

⁷There are even alarming prodigies, for instance at *Hist.* 1.86,1-2, 'prodigia insuper terrebant diversis auctoribus vulgata' and 'sed praecipuus et cum praesenti exitio etiam futuri pavor subita inundatione Tiberis'.

Again, much of the suffering is viewed from the point of view of the upper classes. So the news that Otho is looking for magistrates and other leading politicians to accompany him on his campaign is greeted by immense alarm as people try to conceal their fear but, ironically, manage to create the opposite effect:

'igitur motae urbis curae; nullus ordo metu aut periculo vacuus. primores senatus aetate invalidi et longa pace desides, segnīs et oblita bellorum nobilitas, ignarus militiae eques, quanto magis occultare et abdere pavorem nitebantur, manifestius pavidi' (*Hist.* 1.88,2).⁸

Even once the immediate hostilities come to an end, still there is no peace for the senators who find themselves in an increasingly precarious position (*Hist.* 2.52,1-2). A large group, who had left Rome with the Othonian contingent, are mistrusted by the troops who do not believe the rumours of defeat. At the same time, the senators are worried in case they appear to be slow in welcoming the victory of the Vitellians. Tacitus describes their dilemma in this way, 'ita trepidi et utrimque anxii coeunt, nemo privatim expedito consilio, inter multos societate culpaetutior'.

The full impact of the terrifying nature of the emperors is shown by the way in which their actions appear unpredictable and frightening, even to members of the imperial household, who would be familiar with the more eccentric elements of palace life. The most striking example of this is the subject of Chapter 3, where I studied the Tacitean account of Agrippina's reaction to the murder of Britannicus. In this passage, other diners are similarly paralysed by fear. Also, Octavia's emotion is no less

⁸cf. also *Ann.* 4.70,2, where people are alarmed because they have shown their alarm, 'id ipsum paventes, quod timuissent'.

intense for the fact that she tries to conceal it. Indeed her fear endured to the very end of her life, where Tacitus records that, when her veins were opened, her terror caused the blood to congeal and her death had to be helped along by the steam of a hot bath ('et quia pressus pavore sanguis tardius labebatur, praefervidi balnei vapore enecatur', *Ann.* 14.64,2). Finally, as I have noted in the cases of Nero and Vitellius, the emperor himself displays many of the hallmarks of the tyrant, especially a propensity to fear.

In conclusion, then, these examples show that Tacitus has created a world built substantially upon fear. Fear encompasses the whole of society. Everyone is afraid and people of every class can be seen to alarm others as the perpetrators range from the emperor himself down to the most humble slaves.⁹ Even Tacitus' purpose in describing Roman society in this way is concerned with fear. He was aware that in the past writers had not written impartially, either out of fear of reprisal or else because they hated the emperors under whom they lived and about whom they were writing. This is shown by his words at the very beginning of the *Annals*:

'Tiberii Gaique et Claudii ac Neronis res florentibus ipsis ob metum falsae, postquam acciderant, recentibus odiis compositae sunt'
(*Ann.* 1.1,2).

Tacitus claimed that he would not be influenced in that way, although clearly he was. For a purpose in writing his accounts of earlier emperors was that his audience should be alarmed by what they read (*Ann.* 3.65,1):

⁹cf. the reaction among the upper classes to the murder of Pedanius Secundus by one of his slaves, *Ann.* 14.42f.

'exequi sententias haud institui nisi insignis per honestum aut notabili dedecore, quod praecipuum munus annalium reor ne virtutes sileantur utque pravis dictis factisque ex posteritate et infamia *metus* sit'.

Table of instances of fear words in the works of Tacitus.

	<i>Dial.</i>	<i>Germ.</i>	<i>Agr.</i>	<i>Hist.</i>	<i>Ann 1-6</i>	<i>11-12</i>	<i>13-16</i>	TOTAL
<i>ango</i>	-	-	-	5	2	-	1	8
<i>angor</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>anxietas</i>	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
<i>anxius</i>	1	-	2	16	11	1	4	35
<i>consternatio</i>	-	-	-	3	4	-	1	8
<i>consterno</i>	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
<i>formido, are</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>formido, inis</i>	-	4	7	29	14	2	2	58
<i>formidosus</i>	-	-	2	2	2	1	1	8
<i>reformido</i>	1	-	-	1	-	-	-	2
<i>horror</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>horreo</i>	-	2	-	4	-	-	-	6
<i>horridus</i>	1	2	-	3	5	-	-	11
<i>inhorreo</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>inhorresco</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>metuo</i>	-	-	-	17	19	7	11	54
<i>metus</i>	1	3	5	76	66	15	42	208
<i>paveo</i>	-	1	-	13	7	-	2	23
<i>pavesco</i>	-	-	1	3	3	-	1	8
<i>pavidus</i>	-	-	1	12	5	-	7	25
<i>pavor</i>	-	-	-	19	8	2	11	40
<i>expaveo</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>impavidus</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>terreo</i>	1	1	7	20	7	2	2	40
<i>terribilis</i>	-	-	-	1	-	1	1	3
<i>terror</i>	1	3	7	20	8	3	8	50
<i>conterritus</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>deterreo</i>	1	-	-	4	1	1	3	10
<i>exterreo</i>	-	-	1	6	12	5	13	37
<i>interritus</i>	-	-	-	1	1	1	2	5
<i>timeo</i>	4	1	5	20	3	3	5	41
<i>timidus</i>	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1
<i>timor</i>	-	-	1	2	-	1	7	11
<i>extimeo</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2
<i>extimesco</i>	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
<i>pertimeo</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>pertimesco</i>	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1
<i>trepidatio</i>	1	-	1	9	-	3	1	15
<i>trepido</i>	-	1	-	11	5	2	3	22
<i>trepidus</i>	1	-	1	22	6	-	5	35
<i>intrepidus</i>	-	-	1	3	3	-	1	8
<i>vereor</i>	4	-	2	3	2	-	-	11
TOTAL	19	44	18	331	200	53	135	800

SUMMARY OF FEAR WORDS THROUGHOUT THE ANNALS.

Book/word*	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16	Total
<i>anxius</i>	3	2	1	4	-	1	1	-	-	4	-	-	16
<i>consternatio</i>	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	5
<i>formido</i>	8	3	1	4	-	1	2	1	1	-	2	-	23
<i>horror</i>	1	1	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	6
<i>metus</i>	20	19	13	14	2	17	8	14	14	16	18	5	160
<i>pavor</i>	7	4	1	6	2	4	1	1	2	5	10	4	47
<i>terror</i>	12	3	3	5	1	5	4	9	11	7	9	3	72
<i>timeo</i>	1	-	1	1	-	1	3	3	-	3	5	4	22
<i>trepidatio</i>	3	1	1	3	1	2	2	3	4	2	3	-	25
<i>vereor</i>	1	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Total	60	33	21	39	6	33	22	31	33	37	47	16	378

RATIO OF FEAR WORDS TO PAGE OF TEXT IN THE ANNALS.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	11	12	13	14	15	16
<i>Annals</i>												
Chapters	81	88	76	75	10	51	38	69	58	65	74	35
Pages of Teubner text	46	45	40	43	5	30	22+	35+	35	37+	42	18
No. of fear words per book	60	33	21	39	6	33	22	31	33	37	47	16
Average no. of fear words per page of text.	1.30	0.73	0.53	0.91	1.2	1.1	0.98	0.87	0.94	0.99	1.12	0.89

*In this table I have grouped cognate words together so that, for instance, *anxius* covers the uses of *ango*, *angor*, *anxietas* and *anxius*.

Abbreviations.

Periodical abbreviations take the form used in *L'Année philologique*.
Other abbreviations I have used are:

- O.L.D. (1968-82) *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, ed. P.G.W. Glare, Oxford
- O.H.C.W. (1986) *The Oxford History of the Classical World*, ed. J. Boardman, J. Griffin and O. Murray, Oxford
- T.L.L. (1900-) *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, Leipzig

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