



## Francesca Santoro L'hoir, *Unfriendly Persuasion: Seduction and Magic in Tacitus' Annales*

Throughout the *Annales*, Tacitus is preoccupied with women's aggressive and inappropriate pursuit of power. To portray this phenomenon he couples the adjective *muliebris* with the noun *impotentia*, which connotes a power that has careened out of control.<sup>1</sup> The expression links Livia thematically with the younger Agrippina. Moreover, it exemplifies women's transgression of the boundaries of propriety, as Tacitus indicates in a pivotal polemic in book three, modeled on Livy's debate over the repeal of the *Lex Oppia*, a law passed during the Second Punic War, which curbed both female extravagance and mobility.<sup>2</sup> Both Livy and Tacitus raise the horrific vision of women's intrusion into the business of the forum and the army. Livy, through the *persona* of Cato the Elder, cites women's *impotentes naturae* (34.2.13), which will cause them to intrude into the business of the forum. Tacitus, through the character of A. Severus Caecina, raises the specter of women's *impotentes iussus*, should they be allowed to accompany their husbands to the provinces (*Ann.* 3.33).<sup>3</sup> Both Livy and Tacitus insinuate that a woman, who has abandoned the female precincts of the *domus* and has intruded into the male preserves of the forum and army--usurping male authority in the process, will also appropriate the powers of eloquence and persuasion, the traditionally masculine rhetorical arts.<sup>4</sup>

The historical portrayals of intrusive females imply their ability to manipulate language--a talent that always portends disaster. Dangerous female speech is a *topos* of long standing that is expressed in various genres, including epic and tragedy. Homer, for instance, implies the baneful effects of female speech in his portrayals of the enchantresses, Calypso and Circe, both of whom are attributed with beautiful singing voices as they move to and fro at their looms (5.61-62; 10.254). Their voices--like their golden shuttles--are part of their arsenal of enchantment, and Homer makes it evident that Circe's powers of human speech are especially to be feared ( $\delta\epsilon\iota\nu\eta\ \theta\epsilon\delta\zeta\ \alpha\upsilon\delta\eta\epsilon\sigma\sigma\alpha$  [136]). A woman's ability to use language effectively--and therefore dangerously--is also fundamental to Aeschylus' *Oresteia*, a drama of *logos*, which explores the "transgressive power" of speech and "manipulative persuasion," with which Clytemnestra brings about Agamemnon's death.<sup>5</sup>

As Tacitus does in the *Annales*, Aeschylus identifies female eloquence with a

transgression of boundaries: πιθανός άγαν ό θήλυς όρος έπινέμεται ταχύπορος (Ag. 485). The playwright, moreover, associates Clytemnestra's appropriation of power and public discourse with κράτος, a word connoting legitimate male authority,<sup>6</sup> just as Tacitus links the similar appropriation of his arrogant women with imperium and auctoritas.<sup>7</sup> Like the *Oresteia*, Tacitus' *Annales* is a drama of logos in which female usurpers--not only Roman but also foreign--manipulate language with various degrees of success.

Before considering the Julio-Claudian women, let us scrutinize Tacitus' portrayal of Boudicca, Queen of the Iceni tribe, who demonstrates all the qualities of impotentia, and serves as a horrible exemplum of the attribute, even though Tacitus never overtly applies the term to her. By contrast with the idealized Roman virtues of female restraint, one can deduce that the unleashing of female power is a foreign attribute. Boudicca's portrayal therefore serves thematic purposes so that the reader might make the appropriate comparisons with Tacitus' overweening female Julio-Claudians. Boudicca is clearly a woman who has transgressed both the confining boundaries of her domus and those of female propriety. Moreover, she has overstepped the gender barrier by appropriating the arts of male eloquence, as evocations of Livy's tribunician rhetoric in Tacitus' portrayal demonstrate.

Boudicca's portrayal is grounded both in historiographical as well as forensic tradition, since it draws mimetically not only upon the vocabulary of Livy but also upon the political invective of Cicero. Setting forth familiar themes in her diatribe, Tacitus equates female usurpation of power with loss of liberty. The expressions "Libertatem amissam..." "pudicitiam ulcisci," "virginitatem impollutam" and "iustae vindictae" are thematically apt, since they pertain to the rhetoric of political rape; they echo Livy 3.45.11, in which the tribune Icilius, avenger of Verginia's violated pudicitia vows: "me vindicantem sponsam in libertatem vita citius deseret quam fides."<sup>8</sup>

The Queen's diatribe, in which she presents herself as the ultrix of her daughters' violated pudicitia, illustrates her transgression of gender roles. Vengeance on behalf of a female was traditionally a male obligation, as Icilius' words indicate. Furthermore, the tribunician rhetoric of her speech, in which she specifically identifies herself not as a queen but as una e vulgo, citing lost libertas, categorizes her exhortations as utter demagoguery.<sup>9</sup> In Cicero's day, Boudicca's words would be termed popularis, a negatively charged political term, which the orator hurled at unfriendly tribunes in order to link their promises with meretricious deceit.<sup>10</sup> Tacitus' portrayal of Boudicca presents her transgression of gender roles as a violation of military, forensic, and political boundaries, a theme that Tacitus has already emphasized in his pivotal senatorial debate in book three. Moreover, the tribunician rhetoric in which Boudicca's usurpation of male prerogatives is portrayed indicates that her promises to her tribesmen are as demagogic as they are deceitful.

The British Queen's rhetorical skills, which demonstrate her awareness of the "relationship between language and power," are a weapon, which the Julio-Claudian emperors wield to impose slavery on their subjects.<sup>11</sup> Her mastery of sententiae illustrates this proposition. Tacitus, furthermore, emphasizes the enormity of

Boudicca's words, by crediting her with an epigrammatic utterance, the chiasmus of which illustrates her transgression of social, moral, and even rhetorical limits. Her exhortation, *id mulieri destinatum: viverent viri et servirent*, depicts her crossover of the lines of gender, her point being "follow me, a mere woman, or as brave warriors submit to the Roman yoke and live in servitude!"<sup>12</sup> The reversal of images, in which a woman leads and warriors follow, further reveals Boudicca's promises to be empty demagogy; her tribesmen's true servitude derives from their toleration of a female usurper of male power. Moreover, her sententious pronouncement seems to represent a concrete illustration of Tiberius' words, "*o homines ad servitatem paratos!*" -- "sententious rhetoric," which allows the emperor to "deprive others of their freedom."<sup>13</sup> Where the mastery of rhetoric is sinister enough in Tiberius, who, like an oracle, utters *obscura verba* (1.11.2),<sup>14</sup> when it is exhibited in women such as Boudicca or the younger Agrippina, whose words are perfectly clear in connotation, it is deadly.

Tacitus seems to measure the respective failure and success in the aspirations of the two Agrippinas by their ability to manipulate speech. The mother, *semper atrox* and *pervicax irae*, who--Sinclair notes--is incapable of "defending herself with political tact,"<sup>15</sup> can only utter passionate recriminations.<sup>16</sup> The daughter, however, who may be *atrox odii* (11.22.1), fierce hatred being a characteristic inherited from her mother,<sup>17</sup> nevertheless has learned to control her passions, as Tacitus' words, *nihil domi impudicum, nisi dominationem expediret* (12.7.3), illustrate.<sup>18</sup> As long as her self-discipline lasts, she maintains her masculine power, but as soon as that power begins to decline, she shrieks wildly, "like a woman."<sup>19</sup> Her frenetic outbursts demonstrate her to be her mother's daughter.

The younger Agrippina's apparent mastery of rhetoric is a manifestation of her power. She has perpetuated the "Caesarian" tradition, by penning voluminous commentaries (4.53.2), analyzing both her life and the fortunes of her family. Even when her own fortunes are rapidly waning though, Tacitus depicts her as rising to the occasion with an oration in her own defense, which displays rhetorical flourishes of balance, antithesis and paradox as well as emotional appeal. Agrippina's speech has been faulted for the feminine nature of its subject.<sup>20</sup> The very female qualities of her discourse, however, render her words so perilous: Agrippina's articulate persuasion turns the tables on Burrus and his henchmen, who have come to arrest her. Tacitus, in fact, remarks that she moved her listeners to such an extent that she not only eluded the trap set for her, but also brought retribution down on the heads of her *delatores* (13.21). Even when Agrippina's star is setting, her eloquence--evident in her final tragic utterance when confronted by her murderers<sup>21</sup> --demonstrates the baneful possibilities of language in the female usurper.

Throughout the *Annales*, Tacitus concerns himself with female persuasion, which he depicts in terms of baneful seductive magic. Consideration of the connotative range of group of words, employed recurrently, demonstrates the historian's ongoing preoccupation with the theme. Used repeatedly of usurpers, both female and, by way of gender reversal, male, this thematic vocabulary includes the verbs *devincire*<sup>22</sup> and *vincire*, "to fetter" or "bind"; *pellicere*, "to seduce" or "entice"; the nouns *doli* and *artes*, "traps" and "contrivances"; and *blandimenta* and *blanditiae*, "blandishments",

or "cajoling words".<sup>23</sup> All are related thematically.

Tacitus' usage can be compared to that of Cicero, who seems to employ many of them analogously. The orator, furthermore, seems to have borrowed the device from the poetics of tragedy.<sup>24</sup> This combination of words pertains to the vocabulary of binding, or δέσις,<sup>25</sup> which, in the *Poetics*, Aristotle associates with tragic complications of plot (18.1). In a tragic frame of reference, "language, when used rightly, can have a direct and binding effect."<sup>26</sup> The proposition is evident in the *Annales*, the plot of which is built largely on the convoluted and tragic machinations of its principal female characters. Although *devincire*, *doli*, and *artes* have been recognized to be weapons used by Tacitus' female protagonists to control their men emotionally,<sup>27</sup> the connotations of the words are far more sinister. A study of this vocabulary, both within the *Annales* and within the works of other Roman authors is revealing. It demonstrates that Tacitus has constructed his language to depict the undue influence exerted over the Julio-Claudian emperors by their women,<sup>28</sup> not only in terms of "feminine wiles,"<sup>29</sup> but also in words connoting baneful persuasion, seduction, magic and murder. By using the language of magic,<sup>30</sup> Tacitus portrays an especially insidious form of *dominatio*, insinuating that within the *domus Caesarum*, the Julio-Claudian emperors were held fast under a female control that was as unnatural and inevitable as it was inextricable.

The words *vincire* and *blandimenta* play a central role in Tacitus' narrative. *Vincire* ranges in connotation from a literal binding, as in the ligature of an animal, to that of the imposition of emotional bonds.<sup>31</sup> *Devincire* holds similar nuances, plus an aspect of utter subjugation, as will be demonstrated. Ciceronian usage is instructive, for the orator employs *devincire* to characterize unequal obligations, whether between patron and client or gods and men.<sup>32</sup> For instance, in referring to nations not yet bound to Rome by *firma pace*, Cicero uses the participle *devincta* to signify an enforced covenant (*Prov. Cons.* 19). Although Ciceronian usage is not gender-specific, it nevertheless illustrates the connotations of enforced servitude in *devincire*, which Tacitus employs in his portrayals of female usurpers, whose ability to control the language represents a secret weapon in their appropriation of male power.

In the *Annales*, Tacitus uses *devincire* in a manner similar to Cicero. On the surface, the connotations of the word, as Tacitus applies them to Numa's legal arrangements, are ambiguous. Closer inspection, however, demonstrates them to be pejorative. For instance, in a digression on primitive man, untouched by crime or punishment, Tacitus remarks that Numa bound the people with religion and divine law (*dein Numa religionibus et divino iure populum devinxit* [3.26.4]).<sup>33</sup> The juxtaposition of *devinxit* with *divino iure* and *religionibus* suggests a subtle means of control that transcends mere legal constraints. As Tacitus employs it, *devincire* implies that Numa's hold over the people is accomplished by extraordinary means, which are not immediately discernible.

Tacitus implies that this initial act of binding did not benefit the Roman people, informing his readers that Numa initiated a process by which Rome became progressively immoral despite its abundance of laws (*et corruptissima re publica*

plurimae leges [3.27.3]).<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, the king's original act of binding culminates in Augustus' moral legislation, an act that Tacitus' vocabulary depicts as oppressive in terms of enchainment (3.28.3):<sup>35</sup> Acriora ex eo vincla, inditi custodes et lege Papia Poppaea praemiis inducti ut, si a privilegiis parentum cessaretur, velut parens omnium populus vacantia teneret. Tacitus' representation of the law in a metaphor of shackles and constraints is said to demonstrate a rhetorical subversion of official Augustan ideology.<sup>36</sup>

Tacitus' employment of the word parens in this passage is significant, not merely because it is "cynical" (which it is),<sup>37</sup> but because an analogy can be drawn between the chains imposed by the parent-state, and the family ties used by Augustus as a means to consolidate his control over the people (subsidia dominationi [1.3.1]). Just as the relationship between parent and child is founded on invisible emotional bonds, so is that between ruler and ruled. As Tacitus' narrative indicates, Augustus' family ties represent an escalating source of oppression, which eventually destroys both household and State.

Tacitus elaborates on the metaphor of legal shackles, when, granting Tiberius unaccustomed credit, he remarks that the emperor allowed the Senate to loosen its tangle of legal knots (3.28.4):

Et terror omnibus intentabatur, ni Tiberius statuendo remedio quinque consularium, quinque e praetoribus, totidem e cetero senatu sorte duxisset, apud quos exsoluti plerique legis nexus modicum in praesens levamentum fuere.

And consternation kept increasing for everyone, except that Tiberius, deciding on a solution, selected five ex-consuls, five ex-praetors, and the same numbers from the rest of the Senate by lot, among whom there was immediate mitigation, after many knots of the law had been untied.

The sustained use of vocabulary and imagery of binding and enchainment complements Tacitus' use of devincire with its nuances of "behind-the-scenes" control.<sup>38</sup> Cicero implies a similar subtle control, clustering devincire with delenire, as well as specie, regnare and servitium in a vituperative passage which insinuates that Caesar has abused his power by binding the people to him emotionally by means of specious largesse (*Phil.* 2.116):

multos annos regnare meditatus magno labore, magnis periculis, quod cogitaret, effecerat; muneribus, monimentis, congiariis, epulis, multitudinem imperitam delenierat; suos praemiis, adversarios clementiae specie devinxerat. quid multa? attulerat iam liberae civitati partim metu, partim patientia consuetudinem serviendi.

After Caesar had thought about reigning for many years, with hard work and great dangers, he finally achieved his aims. With gifts, public buildings, handouts and banquets, he had softened up the crowd, which was unused to such things. He had bound his enemies to him with rewards and a show of compassion. What else? He had already brought

the propensity for slavery to a free society, partly through fear, and partly through perseverance.

Cicero's account of Caesar's settlement after the Civil Wars is remarkably akin to Tacitus' description of Augustus' arrangement after the Battle of Actium (*Ann.* 1.2.1-2):

... posito triumviri nomine, consulem se ferens et ad tuendam plebem tribunicio iure contentum, ubi militem donis, populum annona, cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit, insurgere paulatim, munia senatus, magistratum, legum in se trahere, nullo adversante cum ferocissimi per acies aut proscriptione cecidissent, ceteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promptior, opibus et honoribus extollerentur ac novis rebus aucti, tuta et praesentia quam vetera et periculosa mallent.

When his title of triumvir had been set aside, declaring himself consul, Augustus maintained that he was satisfied with the tribunician power for the purpose of protecting the plebs. At which point, he seduced the army with gifts, the people with cheap grain, and all of them with the enticement of a tranquil existence. Gradually he ascended in power, and drew the obligations of the Senate, of the magistrates, of the laws to himself, with no objection, since the most courageous had been cut down either in battle or in proscription. The rest of the *nobiles*--how eager each of them was for enslavement--were elevated to wealth and high office, and where they had profited in insurrection, they now preferred immediate security to old risks.

The vocabulary of the two passages may be different--Tacitus, for instance, substitutes *pellexit* for Cicero's *devinxerat*--but their conceptual basis is the same. *Delenire*, *devincire* and *pellicere* belong to the same category of words that connote both a subtle and even magical control. In addition, the results of this dominion are the same, as far as the people are concerned: as Caesar's seductive gifts accustom them to slavery, so Augustus' beguiling largess acclimatizes them to a similar servitude. Moreover, Cicero's vocabulary--*regnare*, *delenierat*, *specie*, *devinxerat*, and *serviendi*--is also Tacitus' vocabulary, even though the historian employs it in a manner that is anything but Ciceronian. Tacitus, nevertheless, uses each of these words thematically throughout the *Annales*.<sup>39</sup> In elucidating Augustus' post-war settlement on Senate and people, Tacitus seems to be emulating Cicero's unflattering portrayal of Caesar's similar arrangements.

In echoing Cicero's words, Tacitus portrays deceitful and artful persuasion, resulting in *regnum* and servitude, as a Julian family characteristic. Goodyear notes that *cunctos dulcedine otii pellexit* (1.2.1) connotes "a deceptive and beguiling attraction."<sup>40</sup> Similarly *in se trahere* insinuates a paranormal magnetism. Tacitus implies that like a conjurer, Augustus has performed his seductive magic not only on the people but also on the Senate who, in consequence, became especially eager to be bound to him in servitude (*servitio promptior* [1.2.1]).

This proposition becomes evident by chapter three of book one, in which Augustus, now an old man, has had his seductive weapons of persuasion turned against him by

his own wife (*senem Augustum devinxerat* [1.3.4]). Tacitus employs *devinxerat* and *servitium* (the results of implied *regnum*), as he introduces Livia and the *domus Caesarum* to his reading public (1.3; 1.4). This entire vocabulary is recurrent in relation to the female members of the imperial family. Once again Tacitus seems to reflect tragic tradition, which portrays language as the salient means of female appropriation of power.<sup>41</sup>

The passage also reflects the rhetorical tradition of Cicero, who similarly employs *devincire* with *dominatio*, in context with kingly authority (*regum dominatione devinctis* [*Brut.* 12.45]). Tacitus utilizes virtually the same vocabulary, as he introduces *devincire* in connection with the ruling *domus* (1.3.3), which he presents as a bastion of *dominatio* (1.3.1). The connotations of *devincire*, furthermore, are especially ominous when Tacitus employs the verb in near combination with *dolus* and *artes* in relation to Livia, Augustus, and the imperial succession, as it suggests control by beguiling persuasion.

Incantation as a means of binding was a metaphor of Greek tragedy. The Erinyes, it will be recalled, try to bind Orestes with a spell of song and words in Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (307-376), and in *Agamemnon*, the poet expresses Clytemnestra's power to bind her victims not only literally but also figuratively with nets of persuasive words.<sup>42</sup> Tacitus' introduction of Livia as a murderous schemer and guardian of the *domus* seems to be an intentional evocation of the tragedy, *Agamemnon*. As surely as Clytemnestra bound and incapacitated Agamemnon with literal nets, so Livia figuratively enmeshes Augustus--already incapacitated by old age--with baneful persuasion, just as she has smothered her step-family in invisible webs of intrigue.<sup>43</sup> By implying that Livia's influence over her sons and husband was paranormal, Tacitus has conducted his readers into the realm of dark magic, a theme that will be replayed throughout the narrative.

Livia's *persona* as poisoner of her husband--never stated, but insinuated--is embodied in the term, *noverca*--a word connoting poisoning and magic.<sup>44</sup> The wicked stepmother, who introduces new children into the family to the detriment of the legitimate heirs, was a familiar figure in both Greek and Roman rhetoric and tragedy.<sup>45</sup> She represents a Senecan fixation in his tragedies, in which *noverca* is employed 40 times.<sup>46</sup> Although Watson maintains that stepmother-poisoners in declamation were not accused of magic,<sup>47</sup> Roman law indicates that such specific accusations would have been unnecessary. According to Sulla's *Lex Cornelia de sicariis et veneficis*, which was still on the books in Justinian's day, poisoning was linked directly with *susurri*, or whispered magical spells (Just. *Inst.* 4.118.5).<sup>48</sup> *Devincire*, juxtaposed with *noverca*, *doli*, and *artes*, connotes similar ideas.

Moreover, a first-century passage from the *Minor Declamations* attributed to Quintilian sets *devincire* into the lexicon of both sorcery and poisoning. It is especially relevant to Tacitus, as it concerns a murderous stepmother, who resorts to enchantment as a preliminary to poisoning. Alluding to the *devincta mens* (the beguiled mind) of the victim of a *noverca*-witch-poisoner, "*devincta*" insinuates that the woman used a binding spell before administering her lethal potion (246.11).<sup>49</sup> The concepts of poisoning, magic, and evil female persuasion overlap.<sup>50</sup> Therefore,

Tacitus' readers, who were familiar with rhetorical tradition, would have taken his point easily. The baneful power-hungry wife of Rome's legitimate but ineffectual ruler very likely perpetrated his demise (and those of the other male rivals to her son) not only by poisoning him but also by first subverting his will with magic.

Tacitus implies similar evil female persuasion in his portrayal of the younger Agrippina, who seduces Claudius with alluring charms (*pellicit ... inlecebris*) (12.3.1). Like Livia, Agrippina applies *doli* before poisoning her uncle-consort, who, like Augustus, is portrayed as being in his dotage (12.66-67). The verb, *pellicere*, related to *paelex* and derived from *perlacio*, connotes deceptive enticement, cajoling words, seduction, and therefore sexual magic.<sup>51</sup> Similarly, the noun, *inlecebra*,<sup>52</sup> in addition to its meaning of enticement and bait, connotes magic through incantation.<sup>53</sup> The connective thread between persuasive words, seduction, magic and binding was appreciated fully by Dio Cassius, who portrays Agrippina's seduction as follows (62.11.3):

ὥσπερ γὰρ οὐχ ἱκανὸν ὄν ἐς μυθολογίαν ὅτι  
θείου τὸν Κλαύδιον ἐς ἔρωτα αὐτῆς ταῖς τε  
γοητεῖαις ταῖς τε ἀκολασίαις καὶ τῶν  
βλεμμάτων καὶ τῶν φιλημάτων ὑπηγάγετο,  
ἐπεχείρησε καὶ τὸν Νέρωνα ὁμοίως  
καταδουλώσασθαι

As if it were not sufficient as far as her reputation was concerned that she brought her uncle Claudius under her love spell with bewitching glances and titillating nibbles, she even endeavored to enslave the mind of Nero in a similar manner.

Tacitus' words similarly imply that Agrippina has bound her gullible and aged uncle fast under her spell with an insidious persuasion and sexual magic, which seduce him into committing what would normally be unthinkable: an incestuous marriage to his brother's daughter. The implications are even more sinister as applied to Nero, for Agrippina's tactics insinuate an even more abominable incestuous relationship with her son.

Again, Ciceronian examples are instructive. The orator portrays deception with words as a salient quality of *pellicere*, particularly when the victims of the seduction are perceived to be impressionable, as are young boys and women. For example, Cicero, in a passage that relies on allusions to tragic poetry, employs both *pellexit* and *deleniri* to portray Sassia's unnatural seduction of her son-in-law, Melinus (who later is murdered) in terms of beguiling words. The orator, furthermore, plants the idea of magical incantations and witchcraft--themes that he subsequently develops for the benefit of his jurors: *Animum adulescentis, nondum consilio ac ratione firmatum, pellexit iis omnibus rebus, quibus illa aetas capi ac deleniri potest* (*Clu.* 13). In *Pro Flacco*, Cicero implies a similar unnatural seduction, using *pellexit* in relation to the prosecutor, Decianus, who uses persuasive words to bind the loyalty of his mother-in-law. Since the woman displays little judgment, according to the orator, she will therefore have no will to resist the insidious prosecutor's powers of



suggestive persuasion (*Mulierem imbecilli consilii pellexit ad se* [Flacc. 30]).<sup>54</sup> *Pellexit* furthermore insinuates that if Decianus has used specious persuasion on his mother-in-law, he will not hesitate to use it on the jury.

In Greek tragedy, a woman's ability to manipulate language is equated with her capacity to transgress the boundaries of accepted female comportment.<sup>55</sup> In the *Annales* Tacitus implies as much of Livia and Agrippina, whose literal binding of their households (*domum ... saepserat Livia* [1.5.4]; *cunctos aditus ... clauserat [Agrippina]* [12.68.3]) is mirrored thematically by the figurative binding of their husbands with seductive persuasion (*devinxerat/pellicit*), which they employ in their uncompromising bids for power. Moreover, Tacitus' juxtaposition of *doli* and *artes* is consistent with his portrayal of *duces feminae*, women whom he has depicted as meddling in military affairs.<sup>56</sup>

Both *doli* and *artes* hold military connotations and imply trickery as well as verbal deceit.<sup>57</sup> In using them, Tacitus insinuates that Livia and Agrippina have planned and executed their campaigns to advance their sons in the imperial succession by employing the stratagems of generals. Tacitus substantiates this suggestion in his portrayal of their militaristic enclosure of the household after the murders of their husbands; therefore, their baneful persuasion and seductively binding spells, embodied respectively in *devincire* and *pellicere*, have been applied with the cold premeditation of female generals. Both women, whose portrayals imply a crossing the threshold of the *domus*--and the prescribed boundaries of female comportment--deploy deadly magic as their chosen stratagems of *dominatio*.

*Dominatio* is essentially the ultimate form of binding magic. Tacitus uses the word repeatedly to portray the control exercised by the Julio-Claudian emperors or by persons close to them, who aspire to power, such as their women or advisers. For instance, Tacitus employs *dominatio*, *devincire*, *pellicere*, and *vincire*--in the context of the *domus Caesarum*--to portray Sejanus' hold over Tiberius as an extra-normal phenomenon. In using vocabulary that he has previously employed of Livia, Tacitus is endowing the interloping minister, who has transgressed the boundary of the *domus* in reverse, with the female characteristics that are befitting a denizen of the sinister Julio-Claudian household.

Like Livia, Sejanus is a master of *doli* (4.3.1) and *artes* (including poisoning) with a goal of *dominatio* (4.1.1), and like Livia, he exerts an evil influence over yet another old man. Once again Tacitus juxtaposes *devincire* with *artes* at 4.1.2, in an episode in which Sejanus has "bound Tiberius fast" with artful stratagems--*variis artibus devinxit*.<sup>58</sup> Unlike Livia, however, Sejanus is eventually caught in his own snares: *isdem artibus victus est*.<sup>59</sup>

Tacitus portrays Sejanus' sinister hold over Livilla similarly with innuendo of adultery, poisoning, and their attendant implications of sorcery (*Ann.* 4.3.3). For instance, Tacitus suggests a magical transformation of Livilla's appearance, by juxtaposing imagery of seduction (*adulterio pellexit*) with vocabulary of change (*convertere*) when Sejanus turns to Livilla for help in his murderous scheme. Even though Tacitus' uses *convertere* intransitively, as in "to enlist the aid of,"<sup>60</sup> the word nevertheless holds connotations of "turning around" or "reversing the natural

direction of something or the inclination of someone."<sup>61</sup> Tacitus' words might suggest that the evil counselor has bound Livilla to him by means of a mesmeric fascination (*Ann.* 4.3.3).

Tacitus portrays Sejanus' sinister hold over Livilla similarly with innuendo of adultery, poisoning, and their attendant implications of sorcery (*Ann.* 4.3.3). For instance, Tacitus suggests a magical transformation of Livilla's appearance, by juxtaposing vocabulary of change (*convertere*) with imagery of seduction (*adulterio pellexit*). Similarly, "*promptissimum visum ... Liviam convertere*," with which Tacitus describes Sejanus' influence over her, implies that the evil counselor has bound Livilla to him by means of a mesmeric fascination (*Ann.* 4.3.3):<sup>62</sup>

*... igitur cuncta temptanti promptissimum visum ad uxorem eius Liviam convertere, quae soror Germanici, formae initio aetatis indecorae, mox pulchritudine praecebat. hanc ut amore incensus adulterio pellexit, et postquam primi flagitii potitus est (neque femina amissa pudicitia alia abnuerit), ad coniugii spem, consortium regni et necem mariti impulit.*

Therefore, all things considered, it seemed most expedient to turn to Drusus' wife, Livilla, Germanicus' sister, who as a girl had been an ugly duckling, but lately had become a swan. As if he were inflamed with love, he seduced her into adultery. After he had mastered the first iniquity--for a well-born lady, when her purity has been abandoned, will not decline other things--he egged her on with the hope of marriage and a joint venture in monarchy, to the murder of her husband.

*Vincire*, of which *devincire* is a compound, can connote a sexual binding; and Tacitus repeatedly uses it in terms of the usurpation of power. Sejanus thus captivates the eunuch, Lygdus, the sex-slave, whom he has enlisted with Livilla in the plot to poison Drusus: *spadonis animum stupro vinxisse* (4.10.2). "*Animum ... vinxisse*" implies a binding spell. *Vincire* holds similar overtones later, when, in an attempt to secure his own power, the counselor Macro induces his wife to use seduction and deception to bind the young Gaius Caesar to her sexually: *impuleratque ... uxorem suam Enniam imitando amorem iuvenem inlicere pactoque matrimonii vincire ... dum dominationis apisceretur* (6.45.3). Yet again Tacitus employs *pellicere*, *inlicere* and *vincire* with their connotative variations as the magical and seductive weapons of *dominatio*.

Each emperor is bound fast by a fatal attraction. Claudius, for instance, *uxori devinctum*,<sup>63</sup> is held in Messalina's thrall (11.28.2)--so much so that Narcissus worries that the mere sight of her will soften the emperor's heart (11.37.2). Similarly, Agrippina speculates that the entire Praetorian Guard may be still bound to the memory of the late Empress (*devinctos* [12.42.1])--an insinuation, perhaps, that their collective fascination with Messalina, portrayed as a nymphomaniac, may have been on a more than casual level.

Tacitus casts *devincire* in a similar light in book 13, in which the word is used twice in a passage that clusters imagery of sexual enchainment and enchantment: Poppaea,

the vinculum--or sexual link--between Nero and Otho, is bound--devinctam--to Otho, as Nero is bound--devinctum--to Acte. In the same passage, the beautiful Poppaea plies Nero with blandimenta and artes, here the stratagems of calculated seduction.<sup>64</sup> Similarly, Agrippina the Younger unleashes blandimenta and artes on her son, Nero, as she attempts to seduce him in a frantic attempt to bolster her waning power (13.13.2; 14.2.1).

Like the Greek θελκτήρια, blandimenta, or persuasive words, insinuate binding by means of sexual magic.<sup>65</sup> Beguiling words have had a long and undeviating place in epic poetry and tragedy. Calypso, for instance, used them; Circe would have, had she not been thwarted, to seduce and enchant Odysseus;<sup>66</sup> and in Euripides' Hippolytus, Phaedra uses the θελκτήρια of her words and sexuality as a φάρμακον.<sup>67</sup> As a female characteristic, blandishments represent a particularly insidious form of treachery, and θελκτήρια are a dangerous weapon of Aeschylus' Clytemnestra of which Electra and Orestes must beware.<sup>68</sup>

Similar concepts are evident in Roman thought. For instance, in Roman comedy, blandimenta represent the honeyed words of the meretrix, used on an impressionable boy (Plaut. *Ba.* 50). Intended to entice and entrap, they are likened to viscus merus, a gooey substance used to lure and to ensnare birds. As with the verb, pellicere, blandimenta seduce individuals or even an entire populace into unacceptable actions that they would normally shun. Such ideas are apparent in oratory, as when the word is featured in Cicero's invective against tribunes of the plebs (*Comm. Pet.* 41), who use blandishments to defraud the people with meretricious deceit (*Har. Resp.* 42; *Clu.* 79).<sup>69</sup>

Adolescents, like the populace, are especially prone to the primrose promises of blandimenta or blanditiae, according to Cicero (*Cael.* 41; *Clu.* 36). In the *Annales*, Tacitus insinuates similar notions. Again linking blandimenta with the verb, devincire, he observes that Nero's aunt, Domitia Lepida, whom he portrays as eminently dissolute, habitually bound the prince's adolescent mind with cajoling enticements accompanied by lavish presents: nam Lepida blandimentis ac largitionibus iuvenilem animum devinciebat (12.64.3).<sup>70</sup>

In Livian historiography, blandishments are portrayed as empty rhetoric, as when the Romans use blanditiae on the Sabine women to excuse and palliate gang rape, or when the Senate pacifies the plebs with blandimenta to allay their fears so they will not betray the city to Lars Porsenna (2.9.6). Furthermore, in *Ab Urbe Condita*, blandimenta and blanditiae are both womanish and foreign devices of deception. Livy employs the adjective, muliebribus, to modify both nouns (14.4.4; 27.15.11).<sup>71</sup> The wife of the barbarian king, Nabis, for instance, fleeces the local women of their gold blandiendo ... ac minando (32.40.11). Blandishments also signify bad female advice, as when Damarata, the tyrant Hiero's daughter, with interminable muliebribus blanditiis, persuades her nonagenarian, and it is implied, senile husband, Adranadorus, to resist the Romans at all costs (24.4.4).<sup>72</sup> In a similar manner, Livy credits the Tarantine commander of the guard's betrayal of his city to bad judgment due to the blanditiis muliebribus of his double-dealing muliercula (27.15.11).<sup>73</sup> As far as Livy is concerned, blanditiae are emblematic of a baneful

female persuasion that often signifies betrayal and always betokens disaster.

Tacitean historiography relies on similar notions of betrayal and insidious persuasion. In the *Annales*, furthermore, such attributes are a prelude to murder. For example, Tacitus combines *blandimenta* with imagery of binding, when he depicts Nero as using mellifluous words and kisses to lull his mother into a deceptive sense of security before murdering her (14.4.4):

*Ibi blandimentum sublevavit metum: comiter excepta superque ipsum collocata. Iam pluribus sermonibus, modo familiaritate iuvenili Nero et rursus adductus, quasi seria consociaret, tracto in longum convictu, prosequitur abeuntem, artius oculis et pectori haerens, sive explenda simulatione, seu periturae matris supremus aspectus quamvis ferum animum retinebat.*

Then a honeyed word alleviated her fear. She was received affably and placed on the couch above the emperor himself. And Nero dragged the party out for a long time with many conversations--at one moment with youthful intimacy, and at another frowning as if he were communicating something serious. As she was leaving, he followed her, holding her with his eyes and clasping her firmly to his breast, either to put the finishing touches on his hypocrisy--or else the final gaze on his mother, who was going to her death, checked even his cold-blooded heart.

Nero's *sermones* assuage his mother's fears. They also play into her feminine *credulitas* (*facili feminarum credulitate ad gaudia* [14.4.1]),<sup>74</sup> causing her to believe the best of her perfidious son, even though she knows that he has already booby-trapped her boat. As Betensky notes, Nero has mastered *blandimenta*, the female techniques of control, employed by his mother.<sup>75</sup> By insinuating that the emperor has performed seductive magic on Agrippina, Tacitus is portraying him as behaving not only tyrannically, but also in an effeminate, incestuous and therefore un-Roman manner.

Tacitus implies an analogously motivated deceit when, before springing his trap, Nero seduces Seneca into a sense of false confidence with deceptive embraces. In a metaphorical sense, the Emperor's embraces render his specious words into a binding spell (14.56.3): *His adicit complexum et oscula, factus natura et consuetudine exercitus velare odium fallacibus blanditiis.*<sup>76</sup> Nero's false *blanditiae* follow a set piece of empty rhetoric in which the Emperor matches eloquence with Seneca (14.53-54). Tacitus therefore implies that Nero has employed the delusive eloquence typified by the rhetorical tribune as well as the illusory promises exemplified by the rhetorical *meretrix*.

Both episodes, accompanied by embraces and kisses, insinuate seductive magic. Since they are based upon deception, they are, moreover, theatrical, and Tacitus' use of *exercitus*--the participle of *exerceo*--suggests that Nero's reprehensible feigning has been rigorously rehearsed. Both passages, which illustrate the empty rhetoric that exemplifies the reign of Nero,<sup>77</sup> represent rhetoric used as baneful persuasion; and since Tacitus uses gender reversal in his portrayal of Nero,<sup>78</sup> that

persuasion may be regarded as essentially female, according to Roman thought.

There are notable semantic parallels in Roman literature. The combination of *blandimenta* or *blanditiae* with the verb *devincire* connotes persuasion through sorcery in such diverse genres as Augustan poetry, forensic oratory, and Roman tragedy. Thus Aeneas, bound by love (*devinctus amore* [Verg. *Aen.* 8.394]), is transfixed under Dido's spell (*blandis vocibus* [1.670]). Seneca's words, *ebrietate devinctus*--paralyzed by drunkenness--hold similar connotations (*Ep.* 83.16).

Seneca's usage is reflected in forensic oratory: the words, *blandimentis* ... *captus* and *devinctus*--captivated and bewitched by cajolery--are uttered by Apuleius in his own defense when he is on trial for magic (*Apol.* 98). Apuleius furthermore uses *devincire* in context of *veneficium*--the preparing of poisons or magical spells. Tacitus furnishes a similar context in his portrayals of Livia and Sejanus.

In Roman tragedy, submission of will is indicated when *devincire* signifies the capturing of wild beasts in Seneca's, *Hercules Oetaeus* (53). Tacitus' Julio-Claudians are similarly captivated. *Devincire*, furthermore, connotes the suppression of better instincts, as when Seneca's Clytemnestra, who rails about female treachery, a stepmother's poisons and Medea's passions in her prelude to murder, cries out that her shame (*pudor*) has been bound fast (*devinctus* [Ag. 137-38]). In Tacitus' portrayal, Livia's sense of moral compunctions seems to have been similarly constrained.

The connection between magical binding, poisonous drugs and baneful persuasion was thoroughly ingrained in the Roman mind, particularly through oratory. Such associations, however, have precedents in Greek rhetoric, as Segal has demonstrated in his study of Gorgias' *Encomium on Helen*. In this treatise, rhetoric itself is presented as a *φάρμακον* (the Greek equivalent of *venenum*), a potent drug that persistently relied on the language of magic (*θελκτήρια*, *γοητεία*, and *μαγεία*) to hold the listener spellbound. Segal, furthermore, demonstrates that magical arts and drugs were forms of baneful persuasion, which could be used for evil ends.<sup>79</sup>

Evil persuasion and magic pertain similarly to Greek tragedy, in which "honey-sweet speech" is applied with *πέιθω* in order to bewitch.<sup>80</sup> Magic, in fact, is regarded as the outcome of persuasion.<sup>81</sup> Aeschylus, in particular, is absorbed with the magic of language and speech.<sup>82</sup> His preoccupation is particularly evident in *Agamemnon*, a drama in which baneful Persuasion is personified as the inexorable offspring of Ruin,<sup>83</sup> a tragedy whose plot is dependent upon the evil employment of persuasive speech by a woman adept in *δόλοιοι*. Verbal magic is equally evident in the *Libation Bearers*, in which Electra uses the vocabulary of magic to characterize the menacing power of her mother's persuasive words (*θέλγεταί* [Cho. 420]). Tacitus' portrayals of Livia, Sejanus, Agrippina, and Nero, which employ diction related to magic and binding, seem to insinuate similar circumstances: *devincire*, as Tacitus uses it, is rhetorically analogous to the Greek, *θέλγειν*, to bind by enchantment; *doli*, to *δόλοιοι*; and *artes* to *μηχαναί* or *τέχναί*. Furthermore, as *venena* are comparable to *φάρμακα*, so *blandimenta* are

rhetorically allied to θελεκτήρια, the instruments of baneful persuasion and seduction. In both epic and tragedy, these are depicted as female weapons. In the former, they constitute the sexual magic of enchantresses, who persistently apply their persuasive pharmacopoeia towards the suppression of man's nobler instincts: patriotic and familial duty. In the latter, they are embodied in the malevolent persuasion of women, who cross the boundary of their thresholds, and whose command of speech is equally detrimental to οἶκος and πόλις. Such ideas are fundamental to the *Annales*, as Tacitus indicates in the first ten chapters of book one, in which he counterbalances *necessitudo rei publicae* and *pietas erga parentem* with his vocabulary of *dominatio*. Central to *dominatio* is evil female persuasion and the language of magic--concepts that are repeated throughout his historical narrative.

Magic, seduction, and baneful persuasion, as practiced among the Julio-Claudians, represent a particularly insidious abuse of power, since in most cases the victims are portrayed as aged (e.g., Augustus; Tiberius, Claudius), unsuspecting (Postumus), or caught in a tragic net from which there is no escape (e.g., Germanicus, both Agrippinas; Seneca). Although the nuances of enchantment might be lost on modern readers of the *Annales*, to Tacitus' lecturers, educated in Roman rhetoric and steeped in Greek literary tradition with their concepts of binding magic, they would, very likely, have been self-evident.

Tragic rhetoric personifies persuasion as twins, one good, and the other evil.<sup>84</sup> The good twin, associated with *nomos*, has a civilizing effect on the *polis*, whereas the evil twin, identified with *dolos*, brings about the State's subversion and ruin through the seductive magic of deceptive words.<sup>85</sup> As we have seen, Tacitus reflects the latter concept in his representations of the Julio-Claudian men and women as chronic purveyors of persuasive deceit, as well as practitioners of *doli* and dispensers of poison. In combining imagery suggestive of poison, magic and baneful persuasion with that of the tragic theatre--itself emblematic of pretense--Tacitus performs his own seductive magic on his readers. Using his subliminal thematic vocabulary, he persuades them of the inherent evil of the Julio-Claudian dynasty, whose downfall he considers tragic, necessary, and inevitable.

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<sup>1</sup> F.E. Santoro L'hoir, "Tacitus and Women's Usurpation of Power," *CW* 88 (1994) 5-25. All English renditions of Tacitus are by the author. My thanks to A.J. Woodman for his suggestions. I wish to dedicate this paper to Gene: a scholar, a gentleman, an inspiration! Gratias tibi ago, optime magister.

<sup>2</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Usurpation" (above, note 1) 12-17. See also, J. Ginsburg, "*In maiores certamina*: Past and Present in Tacitus' *Annales*," in T.J. Luce and A.J. Woodman (edd.), *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* (Princeton 1993) 86-103.

<sup>3</sup> *Vix foro se et contione abstineant?* (Livy, 34.3.7); *pervicacibus magis et impotentibus ... iussis* (*Ann.* 3.33.4).

<sup>4</sup> Euripides, for instance, seems to associate Medea's fearsome powers of persuasion with her exit from the house, within which she can only weep and wail in traditional

female fashion.

<sup>5</sup> S. Goldhill, *Reading Greek Tragedy* (Cambridge 1986) 4.

<sup>6</sup> L. McClure, *Spoken Like a Woman: Speech and Gender in Athenian Drama* (Princeton 1999) 73-74.

<sup>7</sup> Santoro L'hoir. "Usurpation," (above, note 1) 5-12.

<sup>8</sup> Rape for Livy is a violation of civil rights; repetitive clusters of related words depict the act: e.g., Icilius' epithet (*viro acri*, 3,44,3) as he demands Verginia's freedom (*libertatem ... vindicias* [3.44.5]; *vindicias ... libertatem* [3.44.12]), echoes Livy's previous portrayal of Brutus as avenger of Lucretia's violation at 2.1.8: *non acrior vindex libertatis fuerat*, and at 2.4.7: *tam acer ultor violatae pudicitiae*. In response to Jugurtha's rape of a Roman colony, Sallust's tribune Memmius, also *vir acer*, employs similar rhetoric, urging the people *ad vindicandum* (BJ 27.2). See Santoro L'hoir, "Heroic Epithets and Recurrent Themes in *Ab Urbe Condita*," *TAPA* 120 (1990) 221-24.

<sup>9</sup> Tacitus' opinions of the *vulgus* are invariably negative. In the *Annales*, the mob, often portrayed as a spectator at theatrical performances, is bloodthirsty and fickle, and can be easily bribed. See E. Keitel, "Foedum Spectaculum and Related Motifs in Tacitus *Historiae II-III*," *RhM* 135 (1992) 342-351, on Vitellius and his relations with the mob.

<sup>10</sup> On *popularis*: R. Seager, "Cicero and the Word *Popularis*," *CQ* n.s., 22 (1972) 328-38.

<sup>11</sup> P. Sinclair, *Tacitus the Sententious Historian: a Sociology of Rhetoric in Annales 1-6* (University Park 1995) 147-48.

<sup>12</sup> G. Webster, *Boudica: The British Revolt against Rome, A.D. 60* (London 1978) 13, considers Tacitus' words so epigrammatic that they are almost untranslatable. F.E. Santoro L'hoir, *The Rhetoric of Gender Terms: 'Man', 'Woman', and the Portrayal of Character in Latin Prose* (Leiden, 1992) 131-32, cites the unequal status between *mulier* and *vir* in this passage. J.N. Adams, "Latin Words for 'Woman' and 'Wife'" *Glotta* 50 (1972) 249, notes the proprietary relationship between a *vir* and his *mulier* when the words are used colloquially to signify husband and wife. S.G. Daitz, "Tacitus' Technique of Character Portrayal," *AJP* 81 (1960) 36, observes that Tacitus uses "verbal antithesis to achieve emphasis." McClure (above, note 6) 75, identifies the "shifting between gendered discourses" as a "type of code-switching" that permits women in tragedy to "gain the upper hand" over men.

<sup>13</sup> Sinclair (above, note 11) 149.

<sup>14</sup> Sinclair (above, note 11) 81-83. On Tiberius' opacity of thought and speech: W.M. Bloomer, *Latinity and Literary Society at Rome* (Philadelphia 1997) 154-195.

<sup>15</sup> (4.52.2; 4.53.1) Sinclair (above, note 11) 64.

<sup>16</sup> *Ann.* 4.53-54. On the masculine qualities of *atrox* as applied to Agrippina, see M. Kaplan, "Agrippina semper atrox," in *Studies in Latin Literature and Roman History, Coll. Latomus* 164 (1974) 412.

<sup>17</sup> R.H. Martin and A.J. Woodman, *Tacitus, Annals, Book IV* (Cambridge 1989) 216.

<sup>18</sup> L.W. Rutland, "Women as Makers of Kings in Tacitus' *Annals*," *CW* 72 (1978) 23.

<sup>19</sup> E. Paratore, "La figura di Agrippina minore in Tacito," *Maia* 5 (1952) 25.

<sup>20</sup> Paratore (above, note 19) 72-73.

<sup>21</sup> Her words, "*Ventrem feri!*" recall those of Seneca's Jocasta. J. Hind, "The Death of Agrippina and the Finale of the 'Oedipus' of Seneca", *Journal of the Australasian Universities' Modern Language Association* No. 8 (1972) 204-11.

<sup>22</sup> Martin and Woodman (above, note 17) 82, observe that Tacitus uses *devincire* only in the *Annales*, and always metaphorically.

<sup>23</sup> P.A. Watson, *Ancient Stepmothers, Myth, Misogyny and Reality* (Leiden 1995) 180, notes the skillful manipulation of his vocabulary--specifically *dolus novercae*, *obscurae* [...] *artes*, and *devincio* [1.3.3-4]--with which Tacitus evokes the "image of the sinister *noverca venefica*."

<sup>24</sup> Cicero employs allusions to Greek tragedy (Eur. *Hipp.* 417-18) in his invective against Sassia, the mother of Cluentius (*Clu.* 15) and Clodia (*Cael.* 60): F. Santoro L'hoir, "The Adulteress Poisoner in Cicero and Tacitus," in *Rome and her Monuments: Essays on the City and Literature of Rome in Honor of Katherine A. Geffcken*, ed. S.K. Dickison and J.P. Hallett (Wauconda 2000) 482-484. See R.G. Austin, ed., *Cicero Pro M. Caelio Rufo Oratio* (Oxford 1933; 3rd ed. 1960; repr. 1990) 121, n. 27.

<sup>25</sup> H. Furneaux, *P. Cornelii Taciti Annalium ab Excessu Divi Augusti Libri: The Annals of Tacitus*, (Oxford 1896) v. 1, 66, s.v. *Metaphors*.

<sup>26</sup> Goldhill (above, note 5) 4.

<sup>27</sup> Rutland (above, note 18) 17; see Watson (above, note 23) 180.

<sup>28</sup> And Sejanus and Nero, by way of role reversal.

<sup>29</sup> Rutland (above, note 18) 17.



<sup>30</sup> Such language is a preoccupation of tragedy. M. Heath, *The Poetics of Greek Tragedy* (Stanford 1987) 9-10.

<sup>31</sup> *OLD*, s.v. vincio.

<sup>32</sup> For various significations, *OLD*, s.v. divincio; also A. Forcellini, *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis* (Patavia 1940) s.v., devincio.

<sup>33</sup> A.J. Woodman and R.H. Martin, *The Annals of Tacitus, Book 3* (Cambridge 1996) 246, remark that devinxit connects assonantly with divino iure and etymologically with religionibus.

<sup>34</sup> Woodman and Martin (above, note 33) 253, note that the problem was the great number of laws.

<sup>35</sup> "From that point the chains were more uncompromising. Guards were posted and seduced by rewards from the Lex Papia Poppaea so that if someone was remiss in the obligations of parenting, the nation, as the parent of all, took up the slack."

<sup>36</sup> Woodman and Martin (above, note 33) 259.

<sup>37</sup> Woodman and Martin (above, note 33) 259.

<sup>38</sup> Woodman and Martin (above, note 33) 246, observe that the combination of devincire and religio is strictly Ciceronian.

<sup>39</sup> A. Gerber and A. Greef, *Lexicon Taciteum* (Hildesheim, 1962) s.v., regnare, delenierat, specie, devinxerat, and serviendi.

<sup>40</sup> F.R.D. Goodyear, *The Annals of Tacitus* (Cambridge 1971) 104; see P. Ceauçescu, "L'image d'Auguste chez Tacite," *Klio* 56 (1974) 191.

<sup>41</sup> Goldhill (above, note 5) 33-56.

<sup>42</sup> Goldhill (above, note 5) 4; 28.

<sup>43</sup> Livia nevertheless seems to be silenced effectively after Sallustius Crispus demands that she not reveal the secrets of the domus (1.6); from then on, her machinations seem to be confined within her household walls, behind the scenes, as it were.

<sup>44</sup> Watson (above, note 23) 177-80. On noverca, see I. Opelt, *Die lateinischen Schimpfwörter und verwandten sprachlichen Erscheinungen; eine Typologie* (Heidelberg 1965) 201.

<sup>45</sup> Watson (above, note 23) 92-101; 109-13, discusses the noverca respectively in declamation and tragedy. See L.A. Sussman, *The Declamations of Calpurnius*

*Flaccus* (Leiden 1994) 207. Opelt (above, note 44) 201; S.F. Bonner, *Roman Declamation in the Late Republic and Early Empire* (Liverpool 1949) 35.

<sup>46</sup> *Lucius Annaeus Seneca Tragoediae Index Verborum: Rélèves Lexicaux et Grammaticaux*, J. Denooz, ed. (Hildesheim 1980) s.v. noverca.

<sup>47</sup> Watson (above, note 23) 95.

<sup>48</sup> C. Pharr, "The Interdiction of Magic in Roman Law," *TAPA* 63 (1932) 269-95. On the connection between magic and poisoning, E. Massoneau, *La Magie dans l'Antiquité Romaine* (Paris 1934) 159-63.

<sup>49</sup> Watson (above, note 23) 95, who cites this controversia on p. 97, fails to see the implications of magic.

<sup>50</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Poisoner" (above, note 24) 467-507.

<sup>51</sup> *OLD*, s.v. pellicere, paelex, perlacio.

<sup>52</sup> Apuleius uses it in connection with interdictions on magic by the Twelve Tables (*Apol.* 47): Magia ista ... iam inde antiquitus duodecem tabulis propter incredundas frugum illecebras. Rutland (above, note 18) 16; 17, numbers muliebres inlecebrae among female "schemes and traps," along with blandimenta and artes.

<sup>53</sup> A. Forcellini, *Lexicon Totius Latinitatis* (Patavia 1940) s.v. illecebra.

<sup>54</sup> The word may also hint at an incestuous relationship, as between noverca and stepson.

<sup>55</sup> Goldhill (above, note 5) 128.

<sup>56</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Usurpation" (above, note 1) 5-25.

<sup>57</sup> E.L. Wheeler, *Stratagems and the Vocabulary of Military Trickery* (Leiden 1988) 58-59.

<sup>58</sup> D.C.A. Shotter, ed., *Tacitus Annals 4* (Westminster 1989) 45, translates mos Tiberium variis artibus devinxit as "with a great deal of cunning he insinuated himself into the favor of Tiberius."

<sup>59</sup> J. Jackson, tr., *Tacitus: The Annals IV-XII* (Cambridge Mass. 1972) 3, in the LCL, comes closer to the sense of magical binding with his translation: "by his multifarious arts, he bound Tiberius fast."

<sup>60</sup> Martin and Woodman (above, note 17) 92.

<sup>61</sup> *OLD*, s.v. convertio.

<sup>62</sup> Martin and Woodman (above, note 17) 92, immune to magic overtones, render convertere a very prosaic: "to resort to a specified source of help."

<sup>63</sup> Rutland (above, note 18) 17, notes that Tacitus uses devincire in relation to Claudius, and Nero, who is bound by Acte, and his aunt, Lepida.

<sup>64</sup> F.I. Zeitlin, 'Playing the Other: Theater, Theatricality, and the Feminine in Greek Drama' *Representations* 11 (1985) 76, notes that in tragedy, δόλοιοι and μηχανάιοι (the equivalent of doli and artes) are traditional women's weapons.

<sup>65</sup> B. Goff, *The Noose of Words* (Cambridge 1990) 50, equates λόγοι θελκτῆρια with "love-magic." See R.G.A. Buxton, *Persuasion in Greek Tragedy: a Study in Peitho* (Cambridge 1982) 51.

<sup>66</sup> αἰεὶ δὲ μαλακοῖσι καὶ αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισι θέλγει,  
ὅπως Ἰθάκης ἐπιλήσεται ... (Hom. *Od.* 1.56-57). ἀλλ' οὐδ' ὦς  
θέλξαι σε δυνήσεται (*Od.* 10.291).

<sup>67</sup> Goff (above, note 65) 49.

<sup>68</sup> Electra is aware of Clytemnestra's powers of persuasion: πάρεστι  
σαίνειν, τὰ δ' οὐτι θέλγεται (*Cho.* 420); and Clytemnestra invites  
the strangers into her δόμος to partake of warm baths and beds, the πόνων  
θελκτῆρια (*Cho.* 670). These are the enticements of the house.

<sup>69</sup> On blandishments as an attribute of populares tribunes, see Seager (above, note 10) 335-36. See also Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, note 12) 21.

<sup>70</sup> Rutland (above, note 18) 17.

<sup>71</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, note 12) 83.

<sup>72</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, note 12) 89.

<sup>73</sup> Santoro L'hoir, "Rhetoric" (above, note 12) 88.

<sup>74</sup> This seems to be another allusion to Aeschylus (*Ag.* 485-86): πιθανὸς ὁ  
θῆλυς ὄρος ἐπινέμεται ταχύπορος (Too easily persuaded, a  
woman's mind is a boundary that is quickly and easily encroached.).

<sup>75</sup> A. Betensky, "Neronian style, Tacitean Content: the Use of Ambiguous Confrontations in the Annals," *Latomus* 37 (1978) 428, n. 17.

<sup>76</sup> "To these words, he added an embrace and kisses, for Nero was designed by

nature and trained by habit to mask his hatred with deceptive charms." Betensky (above, note 75) 425, notes the ambiguity of the kiss.

<sup>77</sup> V. Rudich, *Dissidence and Literature under Nero: the Price of Rhetorization* (London 1997) 4-7.

<sup>78</sup> As Tacitus masculinizes his mother in her general's *chlamys* (12.56.3), so he effeminizes her son in his actor's garb in a spectacle that Tacitus characterizes as *haud virilis* (15.1.1).

<sup>79</sup> C.P. Segal, "Gorgias and the Psychology of the Logos," *HSCP* 66 (1966) 115-116; 125.

<sup>80</sup> Segal (above, note 79) 115-116; 125.

<sup>81</sup> Buxton (above, note 65) 108, cites *thelgein* as "the effect produced by *Peitho*."

<sup>82</sup> Buxton (above, note 65) 64; 74, cites the *Suppliants*, 448 ( γένοιτο μύθου μύθος αν θελκτήριος, and notes δόλοι to be especially a woman's weapon in tragedy.

<sup>83</sup> Goldhill (above, note 5) 16; Buxton (above, note 65) 105-6.

<sup>84</sup> Buxton (above, note 65) 67-114.

<sup>85</sup> Buxton (above, note 65) 65. See Segal (above, note 79) 115-16.