

VEDIUS AND LIVIA (TAC. ANN. 1. 10)

Nec domesticis abstinebatur: abducta Neroni uxor et consulti per ludibrium pontifices an concepto necdum edito partu rite nuberet; que tedii et Vedii Pollionis luxus; postremo Livia gravis in rem publicam mater, gravis domui Caesarum noverca.

If we admit with D. C. A. Shotter (*CP*, LXIII [1968], 289) that this crux, *que tedii et*, is irremediable, it would still seem desirable that any proposed solution establish some degree of parallelism between the three members of the period. Inconcinnity is the most notorious characteristic of Tacitus' style, to such an extent that many good readers may not be disturbed by the sequence, *abducta . . . uxor* (Livia) . . . *luxus . . . Livia*, but others might prefer some fairly intelligible connection between Livia and Vedius. I suggest that such a connection is supplied by Dio in his account of the relation of Vedius to the ruling family (54. 23):

Pollio . . . left to Augustus a good share of his estate together with Pausilypon, the place between Neapolis and Puteoli, with instructions that some public work of great beauty should be erected there. Augustus razed Pollio's house to the ground, on the pretext of preparing for the erection of the other structure, but really with the purpose that Pollio should have no monument in the city; and

he built on it a colonnade inscribing on it the name, not of Pollio, but of Livia [trans. E. Cary, LCL].

This is not necessarily the specific connection required to bring Livia and Vedius together. We might assume that Dio, himself, reflects some quasi-Tacitean malice, and that Vedius, who may be said to have acted with great style in his way, had made this or some other handsome present to the Empress. Without chasing fancy too far, might it be suggested that what Tacitus wrote was something like "*abducta uxor . . . quae* dotata Vedii Pollionis luxu . . ." or "*cui dos* (erat) Vedii Pollionis luxus"? It is perfectly true that Augustus "did that afterward," as Dio says. Vedius died 15 B.C., forty-three years before Livia, twenty-three after her marriage, so that a legacy to Augustus could not have been Livia's dowry, *en secondes nocés*, in any strict sense.

It is easy, of course, to insert some derivative of *dives* or *dare* and patch up the text somehow, and certainty is impossible; nonetheless, as nothing can be done with what we have, perhaps we might try to bring Vedius somehow into line with Livia.

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A NOTE ON PROPERTIUS 2. 16. 41-42

Caesaris haec virtus et gloria Caesaris haec est:
illa, qua vicit, condidit arma manu

[Prop. 2. 16. 41-42].

The compliment to Caesar contained in these lines loses much of its force if the distich is retained in its present position.¹ Not only is the introduction of Caesar's clemency irrelevant in the context of Prop. 2. 16. 35 ff., but

this irrelevance is emphasized by the lack of any connective words which might help smooth over the break in the elegy's pattern of thought.² One is ultimately led to agree with the judgment of Butler and Barber that "the opportunity of flattering Augustus has proved too much for the poet."³ The assumption is that the thought of Antony and Actium has

1. Prop. 2. 16. 35-43:

at pudeat certe, pudeat! —nisi forte, quod aiunt,
turpis amor surdis auribus esse solet.

cerne ducem, modo qui fremitu complevit inani

Actia damnatis aequora militibus:

hunc infamis amor versis dare terga carinis

iussit et extremo quaerere in orbe fugam.

Caesaris haec virtus et gloria Caesaris haec est:

illa, qua vicit, condidit arma manu.

sed quascumque tibi vestis, quoscumque smaragdos . . .

2. One may claim as Shackleton Bailey does, *Propertiana*

(Cambridge, 1956), p. 96, that the *sed* in 2. 16. 43 provides evidence for the distich being in its proper place, since *sed* "suggests return from digression." Enk, however, rightly points out in his edition (*Sex. Propertii Elegiarum liber secundus*, 2d part [Leyden, 1962], *ad loc.*) that *sed* need not refer to 2. 16. 41-42 because lines 36-40 already constitute a digression. But Enk ultimately agrees with Shackleton Bailey that the distich is in its proper place.

3. Butler and Barber, *The Elegies of Propertius* (Oxford, 1933), *ad loc.*