

A CONJECTURE ON OVID, *METAMORPHOSES* 4.243*

Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 4.243–4:

nec tu iam poteras enectum pondere terrae
tollere, nympha, caput, corpusque exsanguie iacebas.

Here the poet sympathetically apostrophizes Leucothoe, who has been buried alive by her father Orchamus for being raped by the Sun (!); the Sun has tried to disinter her with his rays, but it is too late—she is dead.

The word *enectum* seems problematic from two angles, those of sense in context and linguistic register. In terms of sense, *caput* with *enectum* ought to be the common poetic *pars pro toto*, whereby *caput* refers to the whole person (*TLL* 3.404.3ff.) rather than to the head in particular; but *tollere* makes it clear that a literal raising of the head is envisaged, making this usage difficult here and the sense of *enectum* odd (can one kill a head?). In the narrative context, *enectum* also reveals too much in advance: surely the fact of Leucothoe's death is more effectively conveyed in the climactic explanation of *corpusque exsanguie iacebas*—‘you were not able to raise your head, nymph—you were already dead’. In terms of register, as F. Bömer points out in his commentary (*P. Ovidius Naso Metamorphosen Buch IV–V* [Heidelberg, 1976], p. 91), the prosaic *eneco* is extremely rare in high poetry: this is the only example in Ovid, and before Ovid (apart from comedy) there are only Varro, *Men.* 289 and Horace, *Ep.* 1.7.88, neither a ‘high’ poetic text. Bömer himself explains the unusual language by the unusual emotional state of the Sun, presumably regarding this as a piece of character-focalization within the tale of the Sun, Leucothoe, and Clytie (told by the Minyeis Leuconoe): ‘the unusual pain of the god finds its expression, surely deliberately, in unusual usages also in what follows’ (loc. cit.). This seems unconvincing.

Earlier readers too plainly had difficulties with *enectum*, and resorted to conjecture to restore sense: W. S. Anderson's apparatus (Stuttgart and Leipzig,⁵ 1993) records *depressum* from a medieval manuscript, and, according to Burman's edition (Amsterdam, 1727, II.259), others have read *deiectum*, *evexum*, *evectum*, *innectum*, and *attritum*, all similarly providing an epithet for *caput*; none of these holds much attraction, except perhaps *attritum*, which is the furthest from the transmitted text. But emendation seems the right approach, despite the fact that *enectum* is attested in this passage by Priscian in late antiquity (*Inst.* 9.36): many corruptions in Latin poetic texts were plainly already there at an early stage. Another route is to find a participle to agree with *pondere*: I propose *iniecto*. The phrase *terram inicere*, reflecting the symbolic sprinkling of the corpse with a little earth in Roman funerary ritual (Jocelyn on Ennius *Trag.* 138, Paul.exc.Fest. 250.13–14 Lindsay, Varro *L.L.* 5.23), is a standard poetic expression for burial: Ennius, *Trag.* 138 *J. neque terram inicere nec cruenta convestire corpora*, Catullus 64.153 *neque iniacta tumulabor mortua terra* (where *iniacta*, read by all MSS and modern editors, is a unique form and should probably be replaced with *iniecta*), Vergil, *Aeneid* 6.365–6 *aut tu mihi terram / inice*, *Ciris* 442 *iniecta Tellus tumulabit harena*. *iniecto pondere terrae* would be an ablative absolute with causal effect: ‘and you could no longer raise your head, nymph, because of the weight of earth that had been thrown over you’. *Pondere*, added to a traditional

* This note was stimulated by a class on Ovid *Metamorphoses* 4 led by Denis Feeney and Stephen Heyworth in Oxford in Hilary Term 1997. I am grateful to them for the opportunity to think about this passage.

burial-formula, appropriately stresses the unnatural behaviour of Orchamus in burying his daughter with a destructive mass of earth while still alive, rather than sprinkling a dutiful handful of earth over her body when dead.

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AN ALLUSION TO THE KAISEREID IN TACITUS *ANNALS* 1. 42?*

Tacitus gives lavish treatment to the mutiny of the German legions in the aftermath of Augustus' death in A.D. 14 and provides an excellent centrepiece in a speech (given in *oratio recta*) by Germanicus to the troops of the Lower German army at Ara Ubiorum (Cologne).¹ After the harsh treatment of a delegation from Rome, Germanicus responded to requests that he send Agrippina and Caligula to safety. As the family was leaving the camp the troops surrounded Germanicus, who moved them to repentance by his speech. Previous writers have already discussed particular debts to Livy and to Virgil,² but none has, I think, pointed to the most likely source for Germanicus' opening remarks: 'Non mihi uxor aut filius patre et re publica cariores sunt . . .'. Goodyear dismisses the sentiment as a variety of the 'common-place' that the state was more important than the individual and refers the reader to Béranger.³ However, none of these passages is as close or as pointed as the examples I consider below.

Tacitus' Germanicus is echoing a key phrase from the *Kaisereid*, an oath of loyalty sworn to the emperor and imperial family. Two documents from the Latin-speaking West prove this. First, an inscription from Aritium in Lusitania from May A.D. 37, less than two months after the accession of Caligula, preserves the oath administered to the Aritienses by the provincial legate C. Ummidius Durmius Quadratus:⁴

Ex mei animi sententia, ut ego iis inimicus
ero, quos C. Caesaris Germanico inimicos esse
cognovero, et si quis periculum ei salutis(ue) eius
in[fer]t in[fer]e[re]tque, armis bello internecivo
terra mariq(ue) persequi non desinam, quoad
poenas ei persolverit, neq(ue) me <neque> liberos meos
eius salute cariores habebo, eosque qui in
eum hostili animo fuerint, mihi hostes esse
ducam.

Second, there is a more fragmentary oath from the town of Conobaria in the

* The comments of Mrs M. T. Griffin, Miss B. M. Levick, and the anonymous reader removed numerous infelicities and errors; those that remain are the author's.

¹ *Ann.* 1.31–52, with the speech comprising chapters 42 and 43.

² E.g. H. Furneaux, *The Annals of Tacitus*² (Oxford, 1896), p. 235; F. R. D. Goodyear, *The Annals of Tacitus Volume I (Annals 1.1–54)* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 288–96; most recently C. B. R. Pelling 'Tacitus and Germanicus', in *Tacitus and the Tacitean Tradition* [edd. T. J. Luce and A. J. Woodman] (Princeton, 1993), p. 74. While we can agree that Tacitus intends to present Germanicus as *pius*, any pointed parallel between Germanicus and Aeneas is far from secure; the appearance of such generic terms as *filius* and *coniunx* can only with difficulty bring to the reader's mind a literary parallel rather than the *Kaisereid* (pace R. T. S. Baxter, 'Virgil's Influence on Tacitus', *CP* 67 [1972], 249–50). Nothing in the Virgil passages quoted by Baxter suggests any allusion by the poet to the *Kaisereid* formula.

³ *Op. cit.*, p. 288; J. Béranger, *Recherches sur l'aspect idéologique du principat* (Basle, 1953), pp. 169f. Cf. E. Koestermann, *Cornelius Tacitus: Annalen Band I* (Heidelberg, 1963).

⁴ *CIL* 2.172. Text as in P. Herrmann, *Der römische Kaisereid: Untersuchungen zu seiner Herkunft und Entwicklung* (Göttingen, 1968), p. 122.