

WERE THE LATER BOOKS OF TACITUS' *ANNALS* REVISED?

It was suggested by E. Koestermann, who was attempting to explain the apparent stylistic change occurring in *Annals* 11-16, that Tacitus may not fully have revised the later books.¹⁾ R. Syme has more recently argued this view in some detail, on the grounds partly of certain stylistic weaknesses which he detects, and partly of signs of incompleteness observable in the contents of the books.²⁾ It is now possible to see that the supposed stylistic 'normalisation' of the later books is an illusion;³⁾ and moreover even if it could be proved to have taken place, it would scarcely have been caused by lack of revision, unless Tacitus was in the habit of composing his work in a 'normal' style and then in a revision substituting *recherché* words for the commonplace.⁴⁾ Nevertheless, the question whether the later books received the final touches deserves to be considered in its own right, involving as it does the circumstances of composition of the work. It is the purpose of this paper to examine the incidence of verbal and other repetitions in the *Annals*.

It will first be useful to mention the main types of artistic, or deliberately inartistic, repetition likely to be found in an historian, for it is necessary to be wary of ascribing to carelessness that which may be deliberate. In the first place, it was acceptable to employ a highly repetitive style, perhaps in imitation of the early annalists, in presenting the annalistic material at the beginning and end of a year's events. Livy, who admittedly is never as careful as Tacitus,⁵⁾ is undoubtedly at his most repetitive in annalistic chapters. So Tacitus in an annalistic chapter at *Ann.* 14. 48 repeats the expression *eo anno* in a way which can be parallel-

1) *Gnomon* XI (1935), p. 322.

2) *Tacitus* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 740ff.

3) See F. R. D. Goodyear, 'Development of language and style in the *Annals* of Tacitus', *JRS* LVIII (1968), pp. 22 ff.; cf. my article 'The language of the later books of Tacitus' *Annals' CQ* N.S. XVII (1972), pp. 350ff.

4) Goodyear, *o.c.*, p. 28.

5) On repetitions in Livy, see O. Pettersson, *Commentationes Livianae* (Uppsala, 1930), pp. 101 ff.

ed in Livian annalistic material.⁶⁾ Secondly, various types of repetition were sanctioned as artistic by the rhetorical handbooks: e.g. anaphora, antistrophe, polyptoton, *complexio*.⁷⁾ Those of these devices which Tacitus admits in the *Annals* are found particularly often in speeches. Again, it was not unusual for a writer to repeat a word in the two halves of antitheses or contrasts. This is another usage which Tacitus (in the *Annals*, but not in the early books of the *Histories*) considered more appropriate in speeches than narrative. Finally, repetition is often required for the sake of clarity, especially when the terms involved are technical and do not have obvious synonyms. It is not surprising, for instance, to find numerous examples of *stipendium*, *missio*, *miles* and *exercitus* in the description of the mutinies in *Annals* 1, or of *coniuratio* and *coniuratus* in the description of the Pisonian conspiracy in *Annals* 15. If the repetition of a word is intentional, its second occurrence within a brief space will frequently be accompanied by a demonstrative adjective (see, e.g. *Ann.* 6. 5. 2, 6. 1).

The frequency of inartistic repetition naturally varies according to the tastes of the writer. We expect to find it constantly in colloquial writings;⁸⁾ but it is also surprisingly common in Virgil⁹⁾ and, in particular, Lucan,¹⁰⁾ among others.¹¹⁾ Nevertheless, the sensitivity of certain other authors (notably Horace and Tacitus) seems to have exceeded our own. Tacitus casts around almost obsessively for variations of phraseology, even to the point of using over 20 different words and expressions denoting death and killing in the first 10 chapters of *Annals* 1.¹²⁾ Nor are his variations necessarily confined to restricted contexts; even after a chapter or even longer he will often seek a word or phrase different from that originally employed. Compare, for instance, *Ann.* 14. 20. 2 *mansuram theatri sedem posuisset* with 14. 21. 2 *perpetua sedes theatro locata sit*; the attribute with *sedes*, the case of *theatrum*,

6) Cf. Liv. 33. 42. 1, 2, 5, 6, 8; 34. 53. 3, 7; 41. 13. 1, 4; 42. 10. 1, 6.

7) *Rhet. Her.* 4. 19f.

8) See J.B. Hofmann-A. Szantyr, *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik* (Munich, 1965), p. 820.

9) See J. Marouzeau, 'Répétitions et hantises verbales chez Virgile', *REL* IX (1931), pp. 237ff. and especially 249ff.

10) See W.E. Heitland in C.E. Haskins, *M. Annaei Lucani Pharsalia* (London, 1887), pp. lxxxi ff.

11) See Hofmann-Szantyr, o.c., pp. 820f.

12) On variation in Tacitus, see in general G. Sörbom, *Variatio sermonis Tacitei aliaeque apud eundem quaestiones selectae* (Uppsala, 1935).

the position of *theatrum* and the verb have all been varied in different chapters.

But no writer, even the most painstaking, can avoid occasional inadvertent repetitions, and Tacitus is no exception, either in the minor¹³⁾ or historical works.¹⁴⁾ Sometimes he repeats a word almost immediately, or it may turn up more than once in a larger context (and perhaps rarely or indeed never in the rest of his work).¹⁵⁾

But there is one class of repetitions which deserves closer attention. In various passages of differing length there are found not merely the usual sporadic and unremarkable repetitions, but accumulations of repeated words, phrases and constructions which are quite unusual in their density. It is with the distribution of these within the *Annals* that I am concerned here.

In the later books there are four notable accumulations of this type, each of which will be dealt with separately.

(a) 15. 48 ff. (the account of the Pisonian conspiracy). In 59 there are three series of examples of *dum* in anaphora, of which two are in successive sentences (3 twice; cf. 1). In the same chapter prepositional *adversus(-m)* also occur three times (2, 4, 5). It is found in another cluster at 62. 2 and 63. 1, and overall in 48–68 is used eleven times (cf. 48. 3, 52. 3, 58. 3, 64. 3, 66. 2, 68. 3), though *erga* and *in* could frequently have been employed instead. *Ventito* is found at 52. 1 and again at 53. 1; in the former passage it is superfluous (*crebro ventitabat*). The commonplace construction *ad* + gerundive, for which Tacitus usually has the dative of the gerundive, is used twice in 66 (1, 2), a short chapter, and also at 53. 3, 56. 2 and 58. 3. *Interrogo an* occurs twice in 61 (2, 3), *caedes* in

13) See P. Persson, *Kritisch-exegetische Bemerkungen zu den kleinen Schriften des Tacitus* (Uppsala, 1927), p. 23.

14) See K. Nipperdey – G. Andresen, *Cornelius Tacitus, ab excessu divi Augusti*, I¹¹ (Berlin, 1915), on 1. 81; J. Müller, *Beiträge zur Kritik und Erklärung des Cornelius Tacitus* (Innsbruck, 1875), pp. 11 ff., and especially 15 f. Müller's collection of examples could be greatly extended.

15) This latter phenomenon is common to many writers. It often seems to happen because a word which is peripheral to a writer's vocabulary lingers on in his subconscious after it is first used. On Livy, see K. Gries, *CP XLVI* (1951), pp. 36f. See also the remarks of Marouzeau, o. c., p. 255. For good examples from Tacitus, see Syme, o. c., p. 741 (*se ostendere*); and P. Spitta, *De Taciti in componendis enuntiatis ratione* (Göttingen, 1866), p. 120 n. (*ergo*). Note also, for example, that after *versor in*, an expression almost alien to the vocabulary of the historical works, had suggested itself in a speech at *Ann.* 14. 55. 3, Tacitus could not refrain from using it again in the next chapter (56. 2).

successive sentences at 52. 1, and *domus* in successive sentences at 54. 1. There are three negative final clauses (introduced by *ne*) in 63 (1, 2, 3), another at the beginning of the next chapter (64. 1), and two in successive sentences in 52 (2, 3). At 54. 4 in adjoining sentences there are two examples of a kind of hyperbaton which is rare in Tacitus (*consilium adsumpserat, muliebre ac deterius; multos astitisse libertos ac servos*). Relative clauses in which the relative pronoun stands in agreement with a word in its own clause (e.g. 50. 3 *quem vita famaque laudatum*) are found at 59. 4 and 59. 5, in successive sentences, and also at 56. 2, 58. 2 and 66. 1. At 74. 1 there are three successive relative clauses in the same sentence, though generally in the historical works (but not in the *Dialogus*, which is more periodic in style) Tacitus is reluctant to allow more than one relative clause to the sentence. The expression *vocare senatum*, for which in the *Annals* Tacitus often substitutes *vocare patres* (6 times), occurs at 72. 1 and again at 73. 1, and there is another example of *voco* at 73. 3. In the same passage *habeo* is found twice in ablative absolutes in which it follows its substantive and is separated from it by an intervening word or words (72. 1 *contione ... habita*; 73. 1 *oratione ... habita*). At 51. 2 *orior* is used twice in the same sentence, and in the next chapter (3) it occurs again in the same form (*oreretur*) as the second instance at 51. 2. Also in 51 there are two instances of *inritus* (2, 4), *quonam modo* (1, 3), the second of which is closely followed by *modo, scelus* (2, 3), which is also used at 50. 1 and 52. 2, though its synonyms do not appear at all in 50–52, *do* (at 2 and 3, within a brief space) and *plures* (at 2 and 3, within the space of three sentences). *Ut ... tradidere* appears at 53. 2 and 54. 3, and *trado* is also employed again at 53. 4. Metaphorical *traho* occurs at 67. 1 and then twice in a few lines in the next chapter (2, 3). At both 60. 3 and 61. 1 *missum* stands at the start of an *acc. c. infin.* construction, followed by its subject accusative (with ellipse of *esse*). Also in the same chapters *salus* is twice juxtaposed with *incolumitas* (60. 4, 61. 1). At 50. 2 there are two phrases in *ex* in immediate succession. *Coepi* with abstract subject is used at 48. 1, 54. 1, 55. 1 and 68. 3, *viso* at 60. 3, 61. 1 and 63. 3, in the latter two places in the form *visendo, conqueror*, which is uncommon in Tacitus, at 60. 3 and 61. 1, in both places in close proximity to *viso, creber (crebro)* at 50. 4, 51. 2, 52. 1, 60. 3 and 73. 1, *gnarus* with similar genitives (*coniurationis, conspirationis*) at 54. 3 and 56. 2, *fama* at 49. 3, 49. 4 and 50. 3, *retineo* at 50. 2 and 50. 4, *ex* in the sense ‘in accordance with’ at 70. 2 and 72. 1, *quasi (tamquam)* followed by an adjective or participle at

50. 3, 52. 2, 58. 2, 59. 4 and 74. 3, *spes* at 51. 1 and 51. 2, and also at 50. 2, *animus* at 50. 3 and 50. 4, *metus* at 50. 3, 51. 1 and 52. 1, the expression *in partes* in juxtaposition with a verb at 50. 4 and 51. 3, *praemia* twice at 54. 4, *accio* at 55. 1 and 56. 1, *adicio* at 55. 4 and 56. 2 (in the same form), *indo* (an infrequent word) at 56. 1 and 57. 2, *consciis* at 59. 1 and 59. 3, *iubeo* at 60. 4 and 61. 2 (in the form *iubetur*), and again at 67. 4 and 68. 1, *mors* twice in three sentences at 61. 2, *dolor* at 63. 1 and 63. 3, *addo* at 64. 2 and 64. 4, and *decerno* at 74. 1 and 74. 3. In the space of a few chapters *conitor* (51. 1, 57. 2, 66. 2) and *denego* (57. 1, 62. 1) are both used more often than in the whole of the rest of the historical works. *Sermo* is found at 54. 1 and a few lines later at 54. 2, as well as in six other places in 48–62 (48. 3, 50. 4, 56. 1, 58. 3, 60. 3, 62. 2). *Edo* is used at 56. 3 and 58. 1 (in the same sense, = ‘betray’), and also at 60. 4, 63. 3 and 69. 2. The unusual passive use of *gnarus* and *ignarus* is found in consecutive chapters at 61. 1 and 62. 2. One-third of the examples of the rare *manifestus* + gen. in Tacitus occur in chapters 44–66 (54. 2, 60. 2, 66. 2). *Paro* is employed three times in successive chapters at 54. 3, 55. 1 and 56. 2, and also at 58. 3, 61. 2 and 74. 1. Finally, there is a succession of instances of *promo*, *promptus* and *prompte* at 49. 2, 50. 4, 52. 2, 53. 1 and 54. 1, and again at 60. 3, 61. 1, 64. 2, 64. 3 and 67. 3 (cf. 74. 1).

(b) 14. 1 ff. (the account of the murder of Agrippina). *Deprehendo* is used twice in the same sentence at 7. 6 with the same meaning and for no deliberate purpose. *Donec* is repeated in adjoining sentences at 8. 1 and 8. 2, both times introducing a clause which concludes its sentence. *Excipio* is used at 4. 2 and 4. 4 of Nero's welcome to Agrippina. The historiographical expression *facinus patrare*, which is elsewhere found only twice in Tacitus, is used at 7. 1 and again in the next chapter (8. 4).¹⁶ *Venio* occurs twice with the same subject in 8 (2, 4), and *fungor* + abl. twice within a few lines in 12 (3, 4). *Evado* is found at 6. 2 and then a few lines later at 7. 1 (both times in the form *evasisse* in an *acc. c. infin.* construction in which there is ellipse of the subject accusative, and both times in reference to Agrippina's escape from the first attempt on her life) and again at 10. 2. *Placuit* is used absolutely at 3. 2 and 4. 1, in both places at the head of a principal clause and followed by its subject, and in both places

16) The repeated use of words such as *facinus* and *scelus* in a passage of this kind is only to be expected. But the repetition within a short space of a rare and striking phrase is more noteworthy.

expressing decisions taken by Nero concerning the method to be adopted in disposing of Agrippina. *Conficio* (= *interficio*) occurs at 5. 3 (describing the death of Acerronia, who is mistaken for Agrippina), and at 8. 5 (describing the death of Agrippina herself), but only twice elsewhere in the whole of Tacitus. *Hactenus* (1, 3), an infrequent word in Tacitus, *promptus* (-e) (3, 5), *properus* (-e) (2, 5) and *auctor* (1, 5) are all used twice in 7. At 3. 2 there are two examples of postponed conjunctions (*sed inter epulas principis si daretur; ferrum et caedes quonam modo occultaretur*), though generally in Tacitus this usage is very sporadic (cf. also *dum* at 5. 3). At 4. 3 and twice in two sentences at 7. 3 auxiliary verbs are separated from their verbal nucleus, a device which is very rare in the historical works. *Ignarus* is used at 3. 3 and 5. 2, *grator*, a rare word (= *gratulor*), at 8. 1 and 10. 2, *summa* (subst.) at 7. 5 and 10. 3, *accio* at 6. 1 and 7. 2, *exstruo*, for which Tacitus often uses *struo*, at 12. 4, 13. 2 and also 15. 2, *exanimor*, which is rare in Tacitus, at 5. 1 and 12. 2, *infensus*, a synonym of *infestus*, at 10. 2 and 11. 1, *exterreo* at 6. 2 and 8. 2, *respicio* at 7. 3 and 8. 4, *lumen* at 8. 1 and 8. 3, *viso* at 6. 2 and 8. 4 and also 13. 2, *exitium* at 3. 2, 7. 6, 9. 2 and 10. 1, *opporior* at 7. 1 and 10. 1, both times with Nero as subject, *immanitas*, a word found only once elsewhere in the *Annals*, at 2. 2 and 11. 3, *invenio*, which is allowed comparatively rarely by Tacitus for the more recherché *reperio*,¹⁷⁾ at 11. 2 and 13. 2, *dissuadeo* at 7. 3 and 11. 1, *promitto*, another term for which there is a more artificial substitute (*polliceor*),¹⁸⁾ at 13. 2 and 14. 4, *exsolvo* at 12. 4 and 13. 2, *incertum an* at 7. 2 and 9. 2 and *exanimis* at 7. 2 and 9. 1.

(c) 11. 9–15. *Concedo* occurs at 9. 3 and again a few lines later at 10. 1. In 9, a chapter of only moderate length, the ablative absolute construction is employed excessively. At 10. 3 *inter* is used twice in the same sentence, along with *intra*, and it also appears in the next sentence (10. 4), and again a little later at 11. 2. *Edo* occurs twice in three sentences at 11. 1. *Narro*, a verb of infrequent occurrence in Tacitus, particularly in application to historical narration, is also used twice in the short chapter 11 (1, 3),¹⁹⁾ once in a reference to Tacitean narrative. Similarly *adsumo* occurs at both 11. 1 and 11. 3. *Regredior* is found at 9. 4 and 10. 3,

17) See E. Löfstedt, *Philologischer Kommentar zur Peregrinatio Aetheriae* (Uppsala, 1911), pp. 233 ff.

18) See I. G. Burnet, *BICS* XVI (1969), pp. 63 ff.

19) *Narro* also occurs twice within a brief space at *Ann.* 4. 69. 2–3.

do at 13. 1 and 13. 2 in successive sentences, *infero* within a short space at 13. 2 and 14. 1, and *reperio* at 14. 1 and 14. 2. The expression *litterarum formae* is used at 13. 2 and 14. 2, and *formae litteris* at 14. 3. Moreover *forma* appears again at 16. 1. The verb *oblitero* is employed with special point at 14. 3, in a *figura etymologica* after *litterae* (*tres litteras adiecit, quae <in> usu imperitante eo, post oblitteratae, adspiciuntur etiam nunc*); but it is also repeated in the next chapter (2) without point. Finally, *retineo* is used at 15. 1 and 15. 3, and *refero* at 15. 1 and 15. 2.

(d) 16. 17. In this chapter *grandis*, an apparently colloquial word admitted by Tacitus only a few times in the later *Annals*,²⁰) is found twice within a short space (4, 5). *Is* is excessively used.²¹) *Scribo* occurs in successive sentences (5, 6). *Interficio* is used in sections 2 and 4 and twice in 6 (in the last case deliberately). In 4 and 5 there are two examples in successive sentences of appended ablative absolutes taken up by relative clauses (4 *coniurationis scientia fingitur, adsimulatis Lucani litteris: quas inspectas Nero ferri ad eum iussit*; 5 *exsolvit venas, scriptis codicillis, quibus grandem pecuniam ... erogabat*). Finally, in 4 and 6 there are two instances of introductory relative pronouns standing in agreement with participles in their own clause (4 *quas inspectas*; 6 *quae composita*).

The conclusion which suggests itself is that the passages in question were written more rapidly than usual or revised less carefully. They undoubtedly do not present the normal painstaking variations which Tacitus elsewhere introduces in the *Annals*. It may be significant that in two cases (a, b) they form distinct units of narrative. Presumably Tacitus composed them separately, and in doing so worked at a different level of care and concentration from that shown in the surrounding contexts. Various plausible reasons for such lapses in care could be advanced, but they would necessarily be speculative. However, in the case of the account of the Pisonian conspiracy, it seems that Tacitus committed himself to writing only after especially careful research, to judge by the frequency with which he cites sources.²²) If his normal rate of progress were delayed in this way, he may have been tempted to compose less carefully than usual. It is a remarkable fact that in the short opening chapter of the section (15. 48) there are no less than three usages characteristic

20) See Löfstedt, *Syntactica* II (Lund, 1933), p. 286.

21) See Syme, o.c., p. 741.

22) See also Syme, o.c., p. 300.

not of his mature but of his earlier style.²³) One reason for such a reversion to discarded practices may have been a substantial break in composition caused by lengthy research.

If the matter ended here, we should have an indication that Tacitus did not satisfactorily revise parts at least of the later books. But in fact there are similar accumulations of repetitions scattered throughout the early books:

(a) 1. 26–34. At 25. 3 and 26. 1 *habeo* (passive) is used twice in three sentences, and at 26. 2 *venio* is used twice in a similar space, both times as the principal verb in a question. *Commoda* occurs in similar phrases at 26. 3 (*militis commoda*) and 27. 2 (*commodis legionum*), though various alternatives were available to Tacitus. *Credo* is used at 27. 1 and 28. 2, *labor* at 28. 1 and 28. 2, both times in reference to the hardships of soldiers, *pergo* at 27. 2 and 28. 1, and *offero* at 28. 3 and 28. 4, in the space of about three sentences. *Trado* is found in successive sentences at 29. 4 and 30. 1, and *opperior* in the same construction and in the same position in its clause at 29. 3. and 30. 4. *Traho* is used at 31. 1 and 31. 3, *seditio* at 31. 3 and 31. 5, *credo* at 32. 3 and 33. 2, *memoria* at 32. 2 and 33. 2, in both places denoting fame, and *redeo* twice within a short space at 30. 4 and 30. 5. Finally, *audio* occurs in successive sentences at 34. 1 and 34. 2, and again at 34. 3 and 34. 4.

(b) 2. 32–38. At 32. 2 *dies* is used three times in two sentences, and at 33. 1 appears again. At 32. 1 *ordo* is inadvertently admitted twice in half a dozen words (*praeturae extra ordinem datae iis qui senatorii ordinis erant*). *Decerno* is used at 32. 2 and 33. 1, *facio* at 32. 3 and 33. 1, and *mores* at 33. 2 and 33. 4. At 33. 3 *parentur* twice stands as the verb in identical, but not deliberately parallel, constructions (*quaeque ad usum parentur; quae ad requiem animi aut salubritatem corporum parentur*). *Dedit* occurs at 33. 4 and 34. 2, *dico* at 34. 3 and 34. 4 and again at 35. 1 and 35. 2, and *abeo* twice within a few lines in 34. 1. In 34 there is a profusion of *acc. c. infin.* constructions which precede their governing verb. *Ago* is used at 35. 1 and 35. 2, *audio* at 34. 4 and 35. 2, *censeo* at 35. 1 and 36. 1, *differo* at 35. 2 and 36. 2, and *spatium* twice within a brief space at 36. 3. There are two examples of *habeo* at 37. 2, and an-

23) At 48. 3 *namque* is used before a consonant, a usage found 10 times in the *Histories*, 3 times in *Annals* 1–6, but nowhere else in 11–16. The correlative expression *cum . . . tum* (48. 1) is elsewhere employed by Tacitus only in the *Dialogus*. Finally, the use of *deinde* before a consonant (48. 1) is characteristic of the style of the *Histories* rather than of the *Annals* (see E. Wölfflin, *Philol.* XXV (1867), pp. 105 f.).

other at 37. 3. Finally, *accipio* is found at 37. 1 and 37. 3, *res* at 38. 1 and 38. 2, and *do* at 38. 3 (twice, but the repetition is deliberate) and 38. 4.

(c) 3. 1–18. *Compono* is used metaphorically at 1. 1 and 1. 3, *egredior* twice in three sentences at 1. 3 and 1. 4, and *classis* in successive sentences at 1. 3. *Quisque* occurs twice in the same sentence at 1. 2, and the construction of the second instance (*ut quique sub Germanico stipendia fecerant*) is repeated at 2. 3 (*ut cuique libitum*). At 1. 3 there is an example of *longissime*, and a little later at 1. 4 of *longo*. *Obvius* is used adjectivally and in the plural at 1. 4 and 2. 2, and *dolor* appears in the same places. *Compleo* occurs at 1. 3 and 2. 3 in descriptions of the crowds gathering to welcome Agrippina, and *fungor* at 2. 1 and 3. 2 in reference to the last respects paid to Germanicus. *Credo* is used twice within a short space at 3. 3 and 4. 1, and in successive sentences at 4. 1 and 4. 2 *nihil* stands as the subject of a verb. *Decora* is found at 5. 2 and 6. 1, and *amitto* in consecutive sentences at 6. 2 and 6. 3, both times in the past participial form and preceding the substantive with which it agrees. *Animus* is used at 6. 2 and 7. 1, *filius* in successive sentences at 8. 1 (once in a context in which the more general terms *progenies* or *suboles* would have been possible), the frequentative *ostento* at 8. 1 and 9. 1, *vito* at 8. 2 and 9. 2, *augeo* at 8. 1 and 9. 2, *reus* at 10. 2 and twice in the same sentence in the dative singular at 11. 2 (the proper name of the defendant, Piso, could have been used once in the latter passage), *peto* at 10. 1 and 11. 2, *laetor* in adjoining sentences at 12. 1 and 12. 2, and *tracto* at 12. 3 and 12. 7, in both places with metaphorical sense. Three times in a short space in 12 (5, 6, 7) there occur clauses introduced by *si quis*, and overall in the chapter there are six conditional clauses. At 12. 5 and 13. 1 there is found the phrase *crimina obicio*, for which Tacitus had various alternatives at his disposal, and again at 13. 2 the verb *obicio* is used. *Reus* is again employed twice in a brief space at 13. 1 and is taken up a third time in the chapter at 13. 2. Also in the same chapter *defendo* is used twice in three sentences (1). At 13. 2 and a few lines later at 14. 1 there are examples of the construction *quisque* + superlative. At 14. 1 the expression *ne .. quidem* is used twice in a few lines, and *videor* is found at both 14. 1 and 14. 2. *Defensio* is used at 15. 1 and 15. 3, *coepi* at 15. 1 and 15. 3, *invidia* at 16. 2 and 16. 3, and *filius* at 16. 3 and 16. 4. The expression *cuiicumque fortunae* at 15. 1 is followed at 16. 3 by the similar *qualicumque fortunae*. At 17. 4 and 18. 1 there are three instances of *concedo* in about nine lines, and at 18. 1

two instances of *eximo* in four lines. Finally, *censeo* is found at both 17. 4 and 18. 2.

(d) 4. 5-11. In successive sentences at 5. 1 there are cases of prepositional anastrophe (*Misenum apud et Ravennam; Rhenum iuxta*). At 5. 2 and 5. 4, and also at 6. 2 and 6. 3 the unusual construction of a genitive depending on a neuter plural adjective occurs; moreover the adjective at 5. 2 and 6. 3 is the same (*cetera*). *Mando* (in the imperfect tense, third person singular, referring to concessions made by the emperor) is found at 6. 2 and 6. 3, as too are *negotium* and *publicus*. At 5. 2, 6. 4 and 7. 2 there occur clauses introduced by *quantum*. *Do* is used twice within a few lines at 7. 2 and 8. 1, both times in the past participle. *Ingridior* is found at 7. 2 and 8. 2, *suscipio* at 8. 5 and 9. 1 within a short space, *peto* in successive sentences at 8. 3, *senatus* in successive sentences at 8. 2 and 8. 3 (*patres* is a common variant for *senatus* in Tacitus), *mala* (subst.) at 8. 3 and 8. 5, *dies* at 8. 2 and 8. 3, *fides* at 9. 1 and 10. 1, both times with the meaning 'credibility', *tempus* at 10. 1 and 10. 2, and *offero* at 10. 2 and 11. 1. Finally, *auctor* is used twice in a few lines at 11. 1.

(e) 4. 29-33. At 30. 1 and 30. 2 *vita* occurs three times in five lines; the first repetition is deliberate, but the second (*se ipse vita privavisset*) is obviously avoidable (Tacitus employs numerous terms for suicide). *Refero* is used at 29. 3 and 30. 1, and again at 31. 4 and twice (deliberately) a few lines later at 32. 1 (in two of the latter three places in the form *rettuli*). *Praemia* is found at 30. 2 and 30. 3, *laetitia* at 31. 1 and 31. 2, and *convinco* at 31. 1 and 31. 3, both times in the past participle. *Levia* is used twice in 32 (1, 2), and *similitudo* twice within a short space in 33 (3, 4).²⁴

We can now form a new and more realistic picture of the texture of the *Annals* and of the problems of composition faced by Tacitus, to replace the implausible view that the later books were simply unrevised. Tacitus emerges as a writer who was unable to maintain a uniform pitch of performance throughout the work, whether at its outset or in the later books. It is highly unlikely that any part of the *Annals* has survived in the form of a first draft, for even when verbally careless Tacitus shows dramatic and structural skills which no doubt cost much labour. His occasional lapses must therefore have arisen because he did not always bring the same intensity of care to the ironing out of verbal faults. In this he scarcely stands alone among authors of long

24) For further repetitions in this passage, see Müller, o.c., p. 13 n. 2.

works. There are many factors, most of them unassessable (e.g. state of mind, boredom, tiredness),²⁵) which can cause unevenness in a composition.

In conclusion it is worth pointing out that at the start of the *Histories* a high incidence of repetitions at least comparable with that in any of the above passages is found over a much larger section of the narrative. In the first 70 chapters of book 1 there occur constant repetitions which are both obtrusive and inartistic. Apparently Tacitus' sensitivity to the repeated word became greater as he proceeded.

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²⁵) Note that amid one of the above accumulations of repetitions (4. 29-33) Tacitus explicitly indicates his boredom with the subject matter with which he has to deal (4. 32).