ETNOGRAPHIC CHARACTERIZATION
IN LUCAN’S BELLUM CIVILE

DISSERTATION

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Lucan’s Bellum Civile is a commentary upon and criticism of the Neronian principate and the deteriorated Roman character of the first century. The poet’s success would be marked initially by imperial censorship, followed by his avowed involvement in the Pisonian conspiracy, the inevitable result of which was Lucan’s death sentence in 65 A.D. In his epic Lucan laments the state of Roman citizenship that has precipitated the fall of the Republic. The true Roman, the hero that would sacrifice all for the state, is absent from the poem. Instead the promotion of the individual, effected by military and political successes among foreign peoples at and beyond the edges of empire, has dismantled simultaneously the ethnic construct of the Roman. To underscore this loss of native Roman identity Lucan employs various non-Roman ethnic models when developing the characters of Caesar, Pompey, and Cato. The stereotypical traits of the European Gaul, the Asiatic despot, and the North African nomad, as generated by such sources as Polybius and Cato the Elder, structure the character of Lucan’s protagonists. They have divested themselves of their Roman aspects and assumed rather those of the peoples among whom they produced their public strength. No longer can this be seen as a legitimate civil war fought between Romans for Rome. Instead these leaders have become as foreigners, each posing a distinct threat to the state. These three men,
representative of the poet’s tripartite world view, enact the promised destruction that will leave the empty city of Rome to be rushed and occupied by the foreign enemies that had so long been held at bay.

Lucan’s ethnographic characterizations of his heroes are illustrative of his disaffection with a Rome that has been abandoned by its protectors. Even the poet, upon recounting Caesar’s desecration of the temple to Saturn, is unable to return in thought or narrative to the city. Instead he, his audience, his poem, and his characters are condemned to wander far from the security and strength that was once the bounty of Republican Rome.
Dedicated to my family
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INTRODUCTION

Lucan’s epic poem, *Bellum Civile*, has enjoyed a certain renaissance upon the publication of Ahl’s work dedicated thereto in 1973.\(^1\) While still attributed, largely due to the chronology of Latin literature, to the Silver Age in terms of literary style, the epic and its author both have borne the burden of comparison with their golden Virgilian antecedents.\(^2\) The following work intends not to contribute to this type of intra-literary criticism, but rather aims at evaluating Lucan’s poem on its own merits with a special eye to the underlying aspects of ethnography. The monstrous characteristics of the foreigner will come to bear upon the Roman, threatening his very existence. In this epic, which is in part a threnodic lament of the phantasmic Republic, Lucan suggests that the civil war means more than the dismantlement of traditional Roman political institutions. In fact, this conflict serves as the death knell for an increasingly abstract Roman ethnic identity. With Rome, her institutions, and her champions, all having been relegated to a quasi-mythic history, a time that knew not the civic bloodshed of Marius and Sulla, the Roman character has been dismantled. This is is the ironic patrimony to be forseen for a people born of outlaws, fugitives and criminals who established through social contract and grew


through rape and conquest a small town on the banks of the Tiber. As was the case in the 8th century B.C., in the age of Nero it is not known what it means to be Roman. The state is left, bereft of the true citizen, a city now replete with foreigners:

\[
\text{vincto fossore coluntur} \\
\text{Hesperiae segetes, stat tectis putris avitis} \\
in nulos ruitura domus, nulloque frequentem \\
cive suo Romam sed mundi faece repletam \\
cladis eo dedimus,...
\]

The Hesperian fields are to be worked by a chain gang, upon the heads of none will the roofs, hewn of old by our forefathers, of homes still standing fall. We concede Rome not to bustle with her own Roman citizens but rather, through this disaster, to be full with the dregs of the world.

(7.402-405)

Rome is to become the place where the abject peoples of the world are to be deposited. Its destruction generates a vacuum that is filled by the centripetal rush of foreigners from Europe, Asia and Africa. Lucan’s apostrophic lamentation cited above identifies the civil war itself as both the effect of Roman discord and the cause of Roman subordination. Fugitives from the city, traitors to the fertile fields of the Italian peninsula, Romans have disavowed the nationalistic title of global regent. In these lines Lucan offers an exposition on the conspicuously absent Roman citizen. Incommensurate with the altruistic aims of the Republic that would have the true citizen aspire only to realize libertas and ius within the state through public practice, the various agendas of the three heroes, Cato, Pompey, and Caesar, all reveal that identity, something tied closely to geography, ought to be questioned. In the character of these three men, their Roman ethnus can be seen no longer as the qualifier of potency but rather as an aspect that bespeaks cultural subordinacy. The qualifier ‘Roman’ is no longer a synonym for powerful. In fact the meaning of the word ‘Roman’ is no longer fixed and certain. The
decline of the Republic coincides with an eclipsing of traditional habits by those of a
foreign nature. Imperial colonialism thus generates a confusion of the citizen’s identity,
mistaking the native for the foreign, the strong for the weak, the empowered for the
subaltern. Lucan will employ this notion of cultural identification when developing his
heroes. In order to succeed in their respective campaigns, these men adopt foreign
aspects. As such, each general will manifest the ethnic characteristics of the European
Gauls, the Asiatic Parthians, or the African Psylli, thereby suggesting a process of
cultural mimesis that is the price of martial and imperial expansionism.

Lucan struggles with the issue of identity. As Livy composed, and thus created
fictionally, an urbs Romana that served as a complement to the literal Roma wherein he
lived, Lucan has to look beyond these seven hills on the Tiber in an effort capture the
increasingly elusive animal that is the Roman. While Vulteius (4.465ff.) and Scaeva
(6.180ff) both offer gruesome examples of the heroic hyperbole that is to be championed
in the Caesarian ranks, Domitius Ahenobarbus serves as their Pompeian complement
underscoring the destructive isolation suffered by both the leader and his men. Alone
Domitius does what Pompey himself cannot; he confronts Caesar directly (2.479ff.;
7.597ff.). For this he earns a hero’s death on the battlefield while Magnus can boast little
more than a secreted assassination followed by an uncelebrated funeral with a diminutive
pyre to be lit only by stolen fire. In each case these dying characters in Lucan’s epic
literally are outside the physical boundaries of the city. The spatial distancing that
separates the soldiers, and by extension their leaders, from the ethno-political centre of
Rome suggests a similar ideological distancing of these men, and the agenda that they are
pursuing, from the mythic ideals of a Lucanian republic. Like Cato who, wandering

through the desert, tracks doggedly the ghost of libertas, Lucan has come to realize that philosophical fortitude can offer little relief from the pains threatened by imperial rule. Finally, it will be Lucan’s Caesar who, in visiting ignorantly the dilapidated city of Troy, will point to the prophesied fulfillment of Rome’s fate: magna se ruunt. Rome promises to suffer the same fate as this city with ruin besetting not the buildings per se but rather the ethnic construct of the Roman citizen.

This civil war, Lucan suggests, is the event by which the world, the orbis terrarum, that had once been commensurate with terra Romana, collapses. A symptom of this ruin is the denunciation of ‘Roman’ in favour of the ‘Other’, something that manifests itself initially in the personage of each particular general, but that will later become understandable in terms of cultural attributes. Hegemony will fall to the foreign, the inimical. Lucan develops this idea in his poetic generations of Caesar, Pompey and Cato, associating each man, not with Rome itself, but with those lands in which they strive to win their respective glories. Thus these men are appropriated by the foreign peoples and places that will contribute to their politico-military efforts.

Lucan’s command of popular, contemporary ethnography is used in this poem to emphasize the relative deficiencies exhibited by each of his primary characters in their demeanor and actions during the civil war. By nature the act of practicing ethnography is fundamentally a task of coming to terms with one’s own inborn identity. The product is largely one of deductive analysis whereby a given socio-political set can find cohesion and ideological connectedness based on self-distinction from all other groups. By defining ethnic boundaries and differences one establishes reflective aspects of character.

Ethnicity at Rome was a problem thematic to the city’s mythic stories of foundation and

\(^4\)Edwards (1996), pp. 64-6
an issue that persisted throughout the Republican and Imperial periods. The societal cast offs that met on the shores of the Tiber were political and cultural exiles. Aeneas was a fugitive, Romulus was a fratricide, and the first families of Rome were the product of the Sabine rape. Violence, directed both outwardly and inwardly, is part of the Roman fabric. This struggle, a drive towards racial self-determination based entirely on the pretense of political ideology, manifests itself as a tragic Roman flaw in Lucan’s epic.

Approaches to the study of the civil war vary in their foci. The fatalistic historical approach tends to suggest the nature of the Roman state in the decades leading up to the conflict initiated in 49 B.C.. Syme interprets the preliminary events as the inevitable product of oligarchy that promoted two men, Pompey and Caesar, both of whom were jealous of the potestas that they could wrest from the state. While thematically this recurs throughout the poem, this teleological view may only account for the inertia of the plot that drives Lucan’s epic. Scholarship too has described the poem as a macabre celebration of the spectacle that is civil war. This would have Lucan’s audience be voyeurs of events and acts that Republican sympathizers, such as Calpurnius Piso and the poet’s own uncle, living under the increasingly corrupt rule of Nero would view and through which contemporary criticism of the principate might be articulated with varying degrees of subtlety. Lucanian apologists, often interpreting Quintilian’s inclination to categorize Lucan among the orators as positive, have looked to the poet’s verses, poetic scheme, and overall manipulation of the epic genre as a progressive and successful evolutionary phase that is the product of poetic precedent and Lucan’s contemporary

Syme (1939), pp. 28-60.
Consider the ironic encomium of Nero that is the climax of the poem’s proem (1.45-57).
environment. Bartsch has explored the complicity forced by Lucan upon the reader. The very act of reading Lucan’s text necessitates a certain poetic practice, and thus perpetuation, of the horror that is this civil war. In the end Bartsch concludes that Lucan’s project was none other than “to reestablish criteria for that sense of self which that other side of the Civil War shows to be so insidiously under siege”. While this is explored spatially via the metaphorical transgression of boundaries, it will, by extension, be worthwhile to consider this struggle in terms of the effect that it has upon the structure that is the ethnic character of the ‘Roman’. This brief catalogue of the various readings of the epic manifests the poet’s own manipulation of the genre.

Lucan constructs his characters and the narrative space within which they act with a keen eye to the global structure recognized by the state of Rome. The tripartite division of the orbis terrarum, something that is manifest in the poet’s reference to the global division into Europa, Asia, and Libya (6.817), will serve as a characterizing trope. Roman power, in the last years of the Republic, has come to be coterminous with and indistinguishable from the particular military spheres within which generals, including Caesar and Pompey, are the agents of Roman foreign policy. The danger of such a system is none other than that of the confusion that attends upon activity in a liminal region. It falls to the military leader to develop and implement on site a foreign policy whereby Roman interests are advanced. As such, the general is then an embodiment of Roman power, a symbol to Roman soldiers and foreign enemies alike of the state. This produces a symptomatic confusion of political priority. On the part of the soldier,

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9 Bartsch (1997)
allegiance evolves so as to be directed to the successful general rather than the abstracted state. This contributes to the disintegration of social identity: soldiers are wrent from the state as they are no longer the men of Rome but rather of Caesar.

What then is to serve as the structuring principle of one’s ethnic character? In the military environment of an army on campaign this practice is none other than military action in and of itself. The Roman soldier’s identity is actualized through his physical participation in traditional Roman military strategy. The parameters of his ethnic character are those prescribed by military action, something that is itself the product of a general’s agenda. Caesar manifests this structuring effect, albeit spatially, in the opening lines of his commentary on the Gallic war; *Gallia est omnis divisa in partis tris*...(1.1). The articulation of this geographical division is tantamount to the realization thereof.¹¹ Not Gaul *per se*, but *Gallia Caesariana* has this form. *Natura* does not divide and structure the world, but rather this is the power and role of Rome itself and the generals that function as the real practitioners of her abstract power.

Lucan, in the role of *vates*, assumes a poetic form of this same power making the actions and effects of Caesar’s civil war correspondent to those the poet is invoking when he wills his work to live on, never to be condemned to forgetfulness. Like Caesar himself, Lucan ploughs ahead, not happy with idle idyllic description, sated only by verses that are glutted with the language of blood, horror, and destruction.¹² This is a poem wherein both *Roma* and the *orbis terrarum*, with which we are to imagine the state’s power is coextensive, are set to collapse. The traditional delineations of those who

¹¹Caesar’s commentaries are themselves not so much the report of the events that occurred on campaign as they are the journal of one man’s subtle realization of his politico-military character, one that is not to be representative of the strength that is Rome but rather to establish Caesar as a powerful political monster that is bigger than the state itself.

¹²9.980-86.
are powerful and those who are subjugated will be blurred and, attendant upon this, will be the obfuscation of one’s ethnic identity. This will generate the symptomatic problem of civil war; the ability to distinguish the true enemy is compromised. Political power at Rome is secured by Caesar, Pompey and Cato the younger by means of the storied successes that they won on foreign battlefields.

The institution of Roman triumphs served as theatrical reproductions of foreign wonders, both militaristic and ethnic, within the city of Rome. These scenes, and the captives represented therein, were a testament to the subordination of the peoples bested by Rome. Little did Romans know that this type of performance was symptomatic of an increasing economic, military and artistic dependency on foreigners. Their public identity thus is the consequence of a history that they have produced of and for themselves. The difficulty to which Lucan’s work alludes is that the artifice that becomes one’s public, that it to say spectacular, persona, privileges foreign aspects over those that are endemic.

Conservative Republicans may look to Mucius Scaevola as an exemplary Roman citizen. His was a sacrifice of the people and for the people and, as such, this prototypical hero finds no place within the thematic parameters of Lucan’s poem.13 Citizens of Rome conceded the powers afforded to them under the Republic in order that these legendary men might neutralize any outside threat that undermined the security and power of Rome. At the close of the Republican period, with the confusion of personal and public agendas that served as tentative footings for an increasingly complex imperial framework, individuals now decide that they might come to the fore, assuming the public primacy once believed to be the public power of the state. A complication that attends upon this shift is that the denomination of ‘Roman’ communicates a certain hollowness.

13The absence of any reference to heroes such as Scaevola and Horatius Cocles suggests such men have no place within Lucan’s epic and an-heroic world.
In its place comes partisanship. This finds the soldiers, politicians, and the public alike describing themselves first of all not as Romans but rather as Caesarians or Pompeians. In the case of Cato, it shall be seen, the Stoic’s philosophical habit results only in his ability to practice his brand of idealistic citizenship in solitudine. The freedom to which he aspires can affect only his ineffective isolation.

Aware of his Caesar, Lucan imposes upon his wretched poetic world a similar tripartite traditional structure having Europa, Asia, and Libya as its constituent parts. Lucan, as it were through this geographical division, is structuring his world view on the model of Caesar’s Gaul. The conflict in this book is not that of Roma alone, but is one upon which the future of the world attends. In the characters of Caesar, Pompey and Cato, the regions and peoples of Europa, Asia, and Libya are brought to war with one another. These generals themselves thus become ethnic emblems, in terms of power and character, of these three regions. The intra-citizen, or internal, conflicts of these three Romans are figured via three external places and their respective peoples. The result of this style of characterization is that each an-heroic man, in terms of the men that they lead, the places where they celebrate deficient ἀριστείας, and the actions that they themselves undertake, reveals that he is a representative product of one of the three regions into which Lucan has divided the world and, by extension, imperium Romanum. Thus Caesar becomes the marauding European, Pompey the ineffectual eastern tyrant, and Cato the rugged African. Lucan’s story is that of Roman against Roman, the Rome of Rome struggling against itself and, in so doing, mirroring the threatening ἀταξία of the world.

The story told in Lucan’s poem would never be confused with the travel epics

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14See above, pp. 6-7.
recounting the heroic journeys of Odysseus and Jason. Nor would this work be grouped necessarily with the marvelous περίπλοι of Hanno and Pytheas. Travel literature, given its programmatic characterization of foreign places and peoples, nonetheless is employed by Lucan in an effort to generate a reductive portrait of the abstract that is the Roman έθνος. While neither a geographer nor an ethnographer by convention, Lucan participates in the practice of both genres through his description of various regions and the populations thereof. Throughout Lucan’s work the connections between geography and literary narrative are copious. Consideration of the poet’s use of foreigners and the lands they inhabit reveals that, while Roman influence in various regions has atrophied, so too has the emblematic aspect of the Roman character become nebulous. Boundaries separating the lands held by Roman imperium have blurred. Attendant upon this is the symptom that the character of the Roman general has become confused with that of the marauding Gaul, the effete Asiatic regent, and the anonymous Libyan nomad. The lines delineating the image of the prototypical Roman are no longer distinct.

In the events associated with Caesar, Pompey and Cato, Lucan explores the nature of different types of militaristic journeys and develops a characteristic narrative that is associated with each. In the case of Caesar, Lucan emphasizes that this general, unlike Pompey and Cato, moves both toward and away from Rome. Spatially Caesar can establish a proximity to the city that suggests the coincidence of Rome’s interests with his own political agenda. Once the third book of the poem comes to a close the action is not to return to Roma. Instead space is put between the action of these men and the city for which they are fighting. At this point Lucan begins to employ a rhetoric of distance.\footnote{Certeau (1986), pp. 69-73, develops this idea with reference to Montaigne’s work regarding the}

\footnote{Romm (1992), pp. 5, 172-214, explains the structuring effect of the relationship between Roman geography and the literary narrative that communicate a certain global view.}
While the campaigns of Pompey and Cato are those of flight, that of Caesar has as one of its culminations his arrival at Rome as *princeps*.

Rome itself served as the scene of bloodshed in the civil war precipitated by Marius and Sulla, Lucan relates (2.68-232). On the other hand the conflict between Caesar and Pompey will be spatially widespread, taking place well beyond the walls of the city. These two men will not meet within the walls of Rome. In fact, Pompey and Caesar will not engage one another successfully even upon the tip of the Italian peninsula at Brundisium. The events of strategic importance, in terms of the plots both of the war and the epic, will occur in Spain, at Massilia, at Pharsalus, on an abandoned seashore and, were the epic to have been completed, it might be imagined that Utica would have also furnished such a scene. This abbreviated list of locational settings suggests that the poet is taking his literary audience on an itinerant journey. The situational shift from location to location draws the reader along on what amounts to being a literary itinerary. Like Caesar who is incapable of recognizing the testament to a once great power at Troy (9.964-979), Lucan must be a literary guide who points out the decrepitude that is now the power of the Roman republic. In an effort to substantiate his postulate that this war is one that will have global consequences, the poet paints a tableau of the Mediterranean basin in which the peoples and places of the surrounding areas pose a constant and savage threat, one that had been checked only by the promise of Roman military might. Prior to the events of 49 B.C. Rome and its Republican *imperium* had served as the *foedera mundi* (1.80). Now that Rome’s integrity is compromised, ceding political and military power to one man alone, nothing remains to check the natural dissolution of the world. This is brought about by the effect that Rome, with its yielding of the *cultus* savagery of cannibals.

17Similarly his readership may be going on a poetic campaign with Lucan as its vatic *dux*.
imperii, can no longer check the conflicting peoples of the world. Caesar’s daughter, Julia, had alone been this agent when alive. Now Rome itself thus serves as an imperial Julia who, with the threat of force, was able once to hold such naturally inimical people as the Parthians at bay.\(^{18}\) Holding a geographical and imperial central position in its thalassocentric empire, Rome, were it to collapse, would create a vacuum into which peripheral powers would rush. Lucan recognizes retrospectively these forces and so develops them thematically so as to inform both the plot of his work and the character of his heroes. Already this is being realized in the characters of Caesar, Pompey, and Cato who are becoming ethnic and geographical representatives of these regions.

Of the three primary characters in Lucan’s epic, Caesar is the most difficult to evaluate in terms of the structuring associations that he has to foreign lands and to foreign peoples. This is not due to the fact that such informing aspects are absent from Caesar’s \textit{persona} in the epic, but, conversely, it arises because such occurrences are so widespread and diverse. Unlike Cato and Pompey, Caesar’s foreign associations in this poem are not restricted to one particular region or race. Initially Caesar, representing the conquering hoardes of a Lucanian \textit{Europa}, will appear in the form of the marauding Gaul, marching into Rome and looting the treasury. As the poem progresses Caesar will emerge in the character of the Hellenistic despot deriving his strength from successes in Greece and realizing his campaign of conquest in Asia Minor and in Egypt. Caesar’s aspirations of autocracy would have him assume the power and strength of those over whom he had won victory as general. He is a political and military leviathan that is shaped by the space in which he exercises power. Unlike his adversaries, Caesar can cross thresholds, like the Rubicon, and penetrate regions that should otherwise be considered untouchable.

\(^{18}\)cf. 1.115-7.
This ability is indicative of the power afforded Caesar.\textsuperscript{19} As the epic comes to a close, the audience will be left with the image of Caesar as a man who would march deep into Africa in order to find the source of the Nile. This plan is initiated within the court of Cleopatra and thus, given the latent eroticism of this setting, suggests the need felt by Caesar to make a display of his potency. Nonetheless, he can succeed in this only through the agency of Acoreus’s lengthy description, a rhetorical move that accentuates the unattainable nature of this region and its people. Acoreus, here functioning as the doublet of the poet Lucan, makes a demonstration of the associative empowerment that war and poetry derive from one another. The lasting effect of Lucan’s characterization of Caesar is that the general’s personal agenda will not be confused with the political program of Rome. Caesar’s quest is endless, as he will settle for nothing less than conquest, appropriation and the potent assimilation of the orbis terrarum. While Masters has evaluated Caesar’s actions with an eye to understanding Lucan’s adeptness as poet, here I wish to examine Caesar in order to understand the desperate view that the poet has of the world. Caesar will be read as a powerful and paradoxical ethnic emblem that simultaneously reminds Lucan of Rome’s bloody founding under Romulus and that points to the state’s promised grisly end.\textsuperscript{20}

Pompey epitomizes inefficacy. This man will not, can not, stay at Rome. He must flee from Hesperia, leaving blockaded Brundisium under cover of darkness.

Missing his opportunity to entrap Caesar at Dyrrachium, Pompey will later be forced to

\textsuperscript{19}Fredrick (2002), pp. 236-264, explores the use of sexualized ‘penetration’ in the economic, political, and social activities in Rome during the later Republic and the early Empire. Penetration demands the presence of two abstracts, these ranging from spatial to physical bodies, one of which will be compromised, rendered to submit, while the other will realize strength in the practice of its invasion. This idea is helpful when evaluating the relationship that Caesar has to the regions to which he takes the conflict.

\textsuperscript{20}cf. 7.404-6.
flee the battlefield at Pharsalus, to abandon the cause of Republican Rome and to seek the refuge of his wife’s embrace on Lesbos. The events of the civil war will force Pompey, now cut off from his western forces to seek refuge in the east. In his last instance of military and public despair Pompey dares to invoke the support of the Parthian kingdom. Figuratively, at this moment, his Asiatic flight has produced in him the character of the fugitive oriental despot reminiscent of Xerxes and Darius. Again Lucan develops the character of Pompey by emphasizing the men and kingdoms on the backs of whom he was able to win for himself popular political and military praise at Rome. As is seen from his introduction to the epic, Pompey is a man who has generated for himself the imaginary stage upon which his *fama* can be sung. Removed from the city of Rome, he becomes aware painfully of the fact that he owes both his reputation and power to those whom he subsumed in his Republican campaigns of conquest. Now, having abandoned *Roma*, he can no longer take advantage of the paradigm of power afforded by the *fides* he could once demand from his *clientelae*. The the time that Pompey is away from Rome and the the distance he wanders therefrom will realize together in the general a metamorphosis. The celebrated strengths that made him in the 60s the darling of the Republic, his *vires moresque Romani*, evanesce. Separated from the place and ideals of Rome, Pompey abandons himself to the character and customs of the antipodal Parthians. Lucan shades his portrait of Pompey using ethnographic material that his Roman audience would understand as popular stereotype used to describe and deride Persian rulers. This associative characterization through which Pompey is coloured by Asiatic aspects contributes to Lucan’s own sense of despair for himself and for the Roman Republic.  

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21Lucan, in his description of Caesar’s besiegement and capture of Massilia, makes it clear that the support offered once to Pompey by clients in the west has now been compromised.  

14
Throughout the epic the integrity of Pompey’s dedication to Rome and to the principles of the Republic is undermined. Like Caesar, Pompey too aims jealously to guard the power that has been afforded him by military campaigns. Pompey quickly quits first Rome and then Hesperia entirely, seeking instead power and security from the Greeks and then from other distant eastern peoples. Rome is Pompey’s megalomaniacal fantasy, a space for spectacular theatricality where the general commands the gaze of all. The city has been the stage for his returns in triumph, and his theatre will be his imagined arena of success in this war. In Pompey’s theatre Lucan will increase steadily the literal distance that separates Pompey from the Roman state in crisis. A gap is driven between Pompey as general and his soldiers. Geographical space, and Pompey’s motion through it, maps his literal and figurative separation from his identity as ‘Roman’. The final effect of this will be the utter effacement and denial of any public attachment to Rome. Leaving him a headless corpse buried in an unmarked grave, Lucan emphasizes Magnus’ exile to a land that is the antithesis of the Roman Republic. Pompey’s destruction is propelled by his association with and adoption of foreign aspects. The Greeks, the Cilicians, the antipodal Parthians, these are the people from whom Pompey is to derive his military, political, and social potency. Destruction for the general will come by the agency of the stereotypically effete and impotent Egyptian regent, Ptolemy, an immature king who owes his throne to Pompey. Ptolemy is so cowardly that his legates are sent to commit Caesar’s necessary murder. Pompey seeks refuge, strength, and the acknowledgement of his character in these foreign places, and among these strange people, in an effort to substantiate irrationally his power and claim to primacy at Rome. Not like the idolized heroes of the Republic, such as Horatius Cocles and Cincinnatus, both of whom are epitomized by their hyperbolic devotion to the *terra Romana*, Pompey
instead must distance himself from the city and the whole of the Italian peninsula, a
separation that only obfuscates his ideological and ethnic identities.

Finally, Lucan’s Cato is the promisingly tragic hero who illustrates most clearly
the incommensurability of ideological Republican conservatism, clothed in the garish
trappings of Stoicism, with the pragmatics of Roman government. Cato’s Roman
citizenship as practise is questionable because the impetus driving it and its teleological
effects illustrates the common symptom of inefficacy. In the privacy of his Roman home
and in the public arena of the Libyan desert Cato struggles with his need to display
himself as inviolately Roman, being forced to blend unbridled public exhibition with the
conservative aspect of inhibition demanded by his declared Stoic character. Johnson
reads Cato to be the caricature of the Stoic trumpeted by critics of the prinicipate in the
first century A.D. Lucan emphasizes the isolation with which Cato afflicts himself
both in Rome and in Africa by suggesting an ethnic disconnect with the Roman state and
its citizens. Cato, guided by the tenets of philosophical doctrine, aspires to transcend the
immediacy of the political crisis of 49/8 B.C. as he holds that *libertas*, a standard adopted
improperly by pale supporters of the moribund Republic, is to be practiced properly by
the philosophical members of the Stoic comsopolis alone. Cato jealously treasures the
solitude that is a product of his exaggerated public practice of Stoicism.

22Barton (2002), pp. 216-222 and 227, develops and analyzes the Roman sensitivity to and
manipulation of the public and private gaze. Cato succeeds in mitigating the paradox of exhibition and
inhibition, realizing that being Roman requires that he be witnessed. Lucan sensitively develops this
notion by attending upon the confusedly public march through the deserted expanse of the Libyan desert
and, alternately, by invading the private space of Cato’s funereal wedding-chamber. The irony in these
depictions of Cato is that situationally they deny the general the public opportunity to display his Roman
altruism to those anonymous citizens who most need to see it. He too is not the hero that the Republic
needs as his professed Stoicism would have Cato aspire to common political citizenship
(συνπολιτεύεσθαι) with true *sapientes*.


Lucan uses Libya, a geographically antipodean region to Rome, as the backdrop before which Cato is depicted as a general whose ideology has produced in him the philosophical nomad. This characterization is communicated by the deliberate use made of the Psylli in book 9. With his soldiers Cato pretends to function as their philosophical saviour and exemplar. The travails suffered in the desert serve, however, as a physical attack literally upon the bodies of these men: thirst that can be slaked only by foul water, and all manner of bites and poisons threatened by the long list of martial snakes. The Psylli alone can guarantee physical protection from the threats mythically endemic to the desert. Not a Lucanian atheistic machination employed to save the Catonian force, the Psylli instead serve as an ethnic analogue emblematized by the Roman soldier, statesman, and philosopher in Cato. The sands of Libya are the geographical and social antithesis to the public city of Rome. Shifting and desolate, they mirror the perambulant nature of the Psylli, a tribe that is the product of this peripheral region of the orbis terrarum, a place whose inhabitants threaten a rush to the geo-political centre that is Rome. The Psylli are an apt auxiliary force to Cato’s men as these Africans offer a manifest example of the true Stoic doctrine of resolute coincidence. Their duritia is recognizable in their ability to adapt themselves culturally to the circumstances forced upon them by natura in this harsh climate.

Cato’s foreign character is the product of his philosophical disconnect produced by his fanatical need to cast himself as the prototypical Roman Stoic. His is a character relegated to the imagined worlds of Roman history, philosophy, and mythology. As such he has no point of contact with the social, cultural, and political world that is Rome in 49 B.C. His effective and affective distance from men and gods alike thus makes Cato the abject man, something produced by his efforts to champion selfishly his vision of libertas.
as a proper citizen as being commensurate with the sense of personal freedom that inspires personal ambition.

The study of Lucan has benefited greatly from theoretical approaches that allow for the poet’s interpretation as a social clinician. This evaluation has been forwarded largely by the view that together the language and poetry of Lucan manifest the epicist’s nihilism.\textsuperscript{25} Henderson undertakes this line of argument when he evaluates the words employed by the poet. The artistic effect of Lucan’s linguistic usage and syntax is that of compromising meaning. Sklenár then develops this view so as to suggest that Lucan’s indulgent use of language, scene, history, and philosophy is intended entirely to nullify meaning lent to the genre of epic poetry by such predecessors as Lucretius, Virgil, and Ovid. Lucan’s innovation and success lie in his ability to compromise the medium of epic through his inclination to the macabre both situationally and linguistically. What remains in Lucan’s poetic world is not, however, mere chaos. Order and meaning both have not been denied utterly. Instead the hierarchical system of order has been subverted, rendering this apparent chaos a cosmos. The resulting c(ha)osmic Lucanian world is one in which the Gauls, through the leadership and agency of Caesar, will once again march on Rome, this time in the trappings of a Roman army. It is a world in which Pompey can deign to call upon the Asiatic power of Parthia to counter Caesar’s European potency. Finally, it is a world in which Cato, relegated to a region that is a geographical and social antithesis to Rome, can only realize his heroism imperfectly when leading his men in a perverse ἀριστεία against the Libyan army of snakes, who are to be overcome through the most irrational of means; Psyllian magic. Nihilism thus characterizes not only Lucan’s use of the genre and language of heroic epic, his subversion of meaning is

fundamental to the geography and ethnicity of the universe described in the poem. The result is a c(ha)osmic world in which the foreigner threatens to replace and to become Roman.

Throughout the poem, particularly in the foreign characterizations of his protagonists, Lucan turns Rome into an abandoned city where the ethnic “Other” is to assume potency and to assume its position both ethnically and poetically. Caesar, Cato, Pompey, Domitius Ahenobarbus, the senate, they all leave Rome as they flee outwards to the liminal periphery of Roman dominion and power. This civil war is not an Hesperian war but it is rather a global conflict, one that will mark the end of the Roman Republican world. The post-apocalyptic view suggested by Lucan sees the devaluation and destruction of Roman *libertas, virtus*, and identity, all of which are to be replaced with Egyptian tyranny, Parthian treachery, and Gallic brutishness. Lucan can then be read as an ethnic nihilist diagnosing the symptoms suffered by an infertile and haggard *Roma* and the poet’s clinical prognosis is that this city will have to cede to the threatening potency of the ‘Other’.
CHAPTER 1

CAESAR THE FOREIGNER

Lucan’s Caesar is an enigmatic character. While Pompey may be characterized most easily through the structuring association he has with the Parthians, Caesar’s *persona* is not informed similarly. Cato resembles of the distanced and isolated Psylli who themselves serve as emblems of the African sands they inhabit. The difficulty associated with a comparable reading of Caesar in Lucan’s epic is that he undergoes multiple metamorphoses. Caesar reflects the stereotypical character of those regions within which he wins continued victories throughout the civil war. He is at once the Gaul, the Hellenistic tyrant, and promises finally to be the Asiatic regent. Lucan thus undermines the native threat that Caesar poses to Rome as the general divests himself of his Roman identity. This being the case, the nature of the conflict that Caesar’s crossing of the Rubicon initiates becomes ambiguous. No longer is he a Roman marching upon Rome, but rather now a foreign enemy aspiring to global power. Caesar’s character throughout the epic is never fully Roman. Like the lands through the conquering of which he established himself, both militarily and politically, Caesar is a liminal character. His strengths are those of the peoples and lands that are at and beyond the periphery of Roman control. Thus Caesar himself is a man beyond the dominion of the Republic.

An evaluation of Caesar’s character, and the many foreign aspects that it betrays,

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26See below, pp. 210ff.
requires an assessment of Roman views of the enemy. The ethnic trappings of the
foreigner are not enough to render Caesar a legitimate threat to the power of Rome. He
must distill the various aspects of all hostes that threaten the symbolically powerful
thresholds of Roman power. Rather than being a war of Romans for Rome, this discord,
this conflict is that of the world for the world. Rather than being the benefactor of
Romans, Caesar will be described as the promoter of Gauls as his return to the Hesperian
peninsula will mark the restoration of libertas to regions that he has abandoned. Theirs is
freedom that is not a political end in itself but rather the product of the general’s
departure; freedom from Caesar is what the Gauls can celebrate. His advance upon
Rome brings with it the converse flight of liberty as it can share no space with Caesar.
Later upon winning the battle at Pharsalus Caesar is free to embark upon an Alexandran
eastward campaign, only to be ignorant of the significance of such a success. Finally
Lucan will leave Caesar in the court of Ptolemy considering that most imperial of
projects; tracing the source of the Nile. Caesar, given his representative associations with
Europa, Asia, and Africa, aspires to assume control and power of the three continents of
the Roman world.

1.1 Caesar’s Ethereal Introduction.

At the moment of his introduction to the epic Caesar, in terms of his leadership
and fame, already is other-worldly. Rather than being described in terms of Roman

\footnote{The first occasion upon which the word Caesar is used in the poem is with titular reference to
Nero (1.41) in the cataloguing of disastrous events that precipitated the institution of the principate and his
assuming of this position. Julius is thus grouped by title together with Nero making it clear that Nero’s
position, and his attendant poor command thereof, can be considered as Julius Caesar’s patrimony. Holmes
(1999) offers a reading of Nero’s encomium that underscores the coincidence between the apostrophic
praise of Julius Caesar and the emperor. The product of his analysis is that Holmes does not require that}
strength, virtus, it is shame and maddening rage, pudor iraque, that propels this man to embark upon a ruinous course of action.\textsuperscript{28}

\begin{quote}
\begin{align*}
sed non in Caesare tantum \\
nomen erat nec fama ducis, sed nescia virtus \\
stare loco, solusque pudor non vincere bello. \\
acer et indomitus, quo spes quoque ira vocasset, \\
ferre manum et numquam temerando par cere ferro, \\
successus urguere suos, instare favori \\
numinis, impellens quidquid sibi summa petenti \\
obstaret gaudensque viam fecisse ruina,...
\end{align*}
\end{quote}

To Caesar there belonged no name so great nor such a reputation for leadership. Rather his was a virtue that knew not to stand in one place, his lone shame was not to conquer by means of battle. Harsh and unbeatable, whithersoever hope or anger may call, he carried his force and, once the disgraceful sword was drawn, he was sparing to none. He piled successes upon successes, pressing hard upon even a favourable divinity, pushing aside whatsoever should oppose him as he sought for himself the greatest things. He was happy to have made his way by destruction.

(1.143-150)

In contrast to Pompey, who longs to sit in the plastic confines of his static theatre in order to control passively the gaze of his audience, Caesar works abroad indefatigably to generate \textit{fama} and \textit{nomen} back at Rome. He is driven on his journey by the paradoxically hopeful rage that spares no one, wandering as a Fury granted no respite from destruction. Progress will be measured by Caesar on the basis of the extent of ruin.

Lucan’s audience be co-opted, being forced uncomfortably into adopting a hostile view of the principate and its history. Rather it would suggest that there is a coincidence of meaning where Nero may be himself admired but that, insofar as he is emperor, he must be dismissed. Nevertheless, given the persistent depiction of Caesar’s characteristic destruction and bloodlust Lucan sees ruin as a structuring aspect of the emperors from the moment of their political inception.

\textsuperscript{28}Ahl (1974), p. 314, suggests that Caesar is a perverted lover who wishes to seek arousal through fear rather than through intimate affection. This will offer another aspect in which Caesar stands in opposition to Cato and Pompey both, the first of whom is philosophically beyond intimacy while Magnus is driven by his love of Cornelia.
that he is able to effect.\textsuperscript{29} The path (via) that Caesar makes for himself is the converse of Pompey’s constructed theatre. Caesar’s route, leading him to the city of Rome, is his affirmation of political power although it bears witness to the havoc that he wreaks. Roads, ways and routes, traditional viae, are semiotic products that demonstrate political ordering and the structuring of a given region. They signify control and facilitate trade, commerce and military movement offering a lasting testimonial to the endurance of Roman engineering. The via that Caesar effects thus compromises the traditional benefits offered by these routes as desertion alone is the product of his passage. The greatness (summa) to which he aspires is to supplant Roman command with his own imperialist agenda, aiming at control not only of Rome but of the entire world.\textsuperscript{30}

\[\text{duc age per Scythiae populos, per inhospita Syrtis litora, per calidas Libyae sitientis harenas: haec manus, ut victum post terga relinqueret orbem, Oceani tumultas remo compescuit undas fregit, et Arctoo spumantem vertice Rhenum: iussa sequi tam posse mihi quam velle necesse est.}\]

Come now, lead us beyond the Scythian tribe, beyond the inhospitable shores of the Syrtes, over and beyond the burning sands of ever-thirsty Libya. These hands, so as to leave behind a vanquished world, have tamed with the oar the swelling waves of Ocean, they have broken the Rhine swirling with its Arctic eddies. It is necessary only for me to be able rather than to be willing to fulfil your commands.

\textsuperscript{(1.367-372)}

This reads as a forecast of the campaigns that promise to come, although they will not be developed by Lucan in his incomplete work.

\textsuperscript{29} cf. 7.786-824.

\textsuperscript{30} This intention is made clear by Laelius when he offers an inspiring epilogue to the Caesarian troops upon their tepid response to his address delivered after the capture of Ariminum:
1.2 Caesar the Gaul.

Gaul holds a position of particular importance since it serves as the basis upon which Caesar begins to build the strength necessary to actualize his *ira*. Just as Pompey is often characterized in terms of his associations with and dependency upon the East, Caesar, in the opening books of the epic, is distinguished by the fact that he is informed by the European North and its people. The Greek view of the Gallic and Celtic northerners, brought to the Roman mind by Polybius and Strabo, saw them as being people of reckless abandon. Polybius describes the Germans as being uncivilized, knowing nothing other than the survival skills of small-scale agriculture and combat. Ferocious, cruel, treacherous, swift to anger, and ever-driven by a desire to plunder; these are the attributes that inform the Gallo-Germanic northerner in the literary and cultural tradition at Rome. The ethnographic tradition endeavoured to cast the Gauls as a savage people who knew not the sophistication nor the benefits of Roman culture. These Gauls, and the land that they inhabit, serve as a geographical endpoint that is set in opposition to Rome.

The persistent and primary Roman enemy was the Gaul. The Gauls themselves had ancillary treatment by the Greek ethnographic tradition denoting those Western and Northern European tribes as the *Κέλτοι* and *Γάλαται*. Already in the fourth century

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31 Gaul also serves as the region wherein Caesar’s paradigmatic soldier, and Lucan’s icon of heroic hyperbole (6.118-262), Scaeva attains his rank as centurion.


33 2.17, 9-10.


35 The image can be manipulated differently as is the case in pastoral poetry where these people become the idyllic ‘noble’ savages living upon milk and cheese in a region not tainted by the structures of money and society. Caesar will blend both of these images in his literary creation of his Gallic foe.

24
B.C. this ethnic category was being characterized largely in terms of its bellicosity thus granting these tribes a disposition and role similar to that of the Asiatic Scythian. The primary works treating the Gauls of Northern Italy were written by Polybius and Cato the Elder in the age of the Roman Republic. The latter author, in his *Origines*, offers a catalogue of tribes located beyond the Po river. The intention of Cato’s investigation of the people and lands to the north was not that of developing an accurate ethnographic portrait, in the Greek tradition, that might serve as an articulation of the Romans’ ascendancy over the barbarians. Instead the observations made by Cato of these lands and their peoples were the by-product of Roman conquest and experience in the field.36 Advances in Roman ethnography and geography attended upon military campaigns, driven by the imperialist need for constructing the symbolic and social boundaries that were needed to fuel a foreign policy of ‘defensive’ expansionism. Unlike the Carthaginians, the Gauls posed a threat that had not been fully exterminated by the Romans. In part this was due to the geographical expanse over which they live, something that was the product of their nomadic culture. This locational diffusion lent a vagueness and mystique to the Gallic character. This aspect was highlighted by the fact that, between Gauls and the Romans, the Alps loomed as a desolate and barren land that could serve both as a boundary separating Romans and Gauls and as a wall protecting, albeit most poorly, the former from the latter.

Polybius offers an account of the Italian north that is somewhat different from that of the patriotic Cato. Williams notes that Polybius was a self-conscious writer who was sensitive to the geographical works of his predecessors including Eratosthenes, Pytheas,

36Williams (2001), pp. 54-55.
and Dicaearchus. While Polybius would make certain errors concerning cartographic arrangement and measurement, he did make acute ethnographic observations of the Gauls. In books 2 and 34 ethnography and geography come together in his rendering of the Κέλτοι. Polybius digresses on the Gauls and their long conflict with Rome when discussing the people upon whom Hannibal would have to rely heavily in the course of the Second Punic war. Initially it appears that Polybius’ interest in the north of Italy is largely geographical, as he wished to understand how the geography may have structured the history of Hannibal’s invasion. Coincidentally he offers a history of the Galli in which he would attest to their number, stature, savage beauty and their military boldness. His Gauls are noble savages.

The Gauls, as understood by Cato and Polybius, had come to be a threatening force already south of the Alps in the third century, establishing themselves in this territory upon their successful and mythic sacking of Rome circa 390 B.C. Cato’s interest in the Gauls was due in part to his desire to trace the historico-ethnic origins, as evidenced by the title of his work, of towns and districts in northern Italy. His observations may be condensed into his generic observation that the Gauls committed themselves most diligently to two things; military affairs and the art of speaking craftily. In this regard Cato may be read as paying his Gauls the unintentioned

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38.2.17-2.36.
39 Polybius (14.15.7): τὸ γε μὴν πλήθος τῶν ἄνδρῶν, καὶ τὸ μέγεθος καὶ κάλλος τῶν σωμάτων, ἔτι δὲ τὴν ἐν τοῖς πολέμοις, τόλμαν, ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν πράξεων σαφῶς ἦσσται καταμαθεῖν.
40 On the varied versions treating the events that precipitated the Gallic invasion see Williams (2001), pp. 102-109.
41 Cato Orig. 2.3.
compliment of attributing to them two pursuits held in high esteem by the proper Roman; the military practice and oratory. Polybius offers a very different version of Gallic culture.42

Like Cato, Polybius prefaces his synoptic ethnographic treatment of the Gauls with an overview of the areas that they had settled in the north. From the moment of their first mention in this passage Polybius emphasizes their jealous and covetous nature. Living near the Etruscans, the Gauls looked greedily upon their prosperous lands. As quickly as the Gauls are mentioned in this narrative, they are then stereotypically set to attack their neighbours;

οἳς ἐπιμιγγόμενοι κατὰ τὴν παράθεσιν Κελτοὶ καὶ περὶ κάλλος τῆς χώρας ὑθαλμίσαντες, ἐκ μικρὰς προφάσεως μεγάλῃ στρατιᾷ παραδόξως ἐπελθόντες έξεβαλον ἐκ τῆς περὶ τοῦ Πάδου χώρας Τυρρηνοῦς καὶ κατέσχον ἀυτοὶ τὰ πεδία.

The Celts [leg. Gauls] came to be acquainted with [the Etruscans], their neighbours. The Celts looked greedily upon the fertile lands, and, with the slightest excuse, contrary to expectation, with a great army, they set upon the Etruscans driving them out of the plains around the Po river, thereafter occupying these very lands themselves.

(2.17.3)

What underscores the audacity of Polybius’ Gauls all the more is that these same Etruscans are said to have been the oldest inhabitants of this region. In this introduction the Gauls are depicted fundamentally as being a threat to societal stability and civic security. As he proceeds through his initial evaluation of these people Polybius describes them as transient, forsaking wilfully the security of walled villages. Rather than having furniture, which served only as an anchoring burden, the Gauls chose to consolidate their wealth in gold and cattle. Polybius casts these people as uncultured brutes who sleep on

42Polybius (2.17).
beds of leaves, eating simple flesh, and pursuing military affairs at the expense of all other knowledge and practiced skill. Nonetheless it is beauty (κάλλος) that incites their action against the Etruscans and by this it is suggested that theirs is an aesthetic of proper utility as opposed to that of indulgent uselessness attributed in satire to Romans under the emperors. The primary virtue to be practiced by these Gauls was audacity (τόλμα) and an individual’s position of power was in direct proportion to the degree to which he was feared. Polybius’ denunciation of the Gauls as cultural, societal, and political primitives is intended to accentuate the threat that they posed to Rome and the Roman way of life. Chaos and discord are the legacy with which the Gauls continued to threaten Rome from the moment of her initial sacking.

Lucan shares the ethnographic view of Gauls as being rough, strong, brutal men from a geographically distant place that stands in contraposition to Rome. Caesar himself will describe this ethnic group as the *populi Gallorum feroces*. Ferocity serves as a characteristic attribute of things Gallic; *Gallica per gelidas rabies effunditur Alpes*. It is telling then that Caesar himself becomes an emblem for the *furor* of his soldiers. Caesar’s maddening rage is at once his epic aspect, flashing forth in the place of divine lightning with all of its destructive might, and at the same time it serves as a poetic force driving the movement of the poem. His madness places Caesar at odds with all things Roman, fighting for himself both as general and as a wilful autocrat. While Pompey and Cato maintain the pretense of pro-republican involvement, Caesar meanwhile wishes only to inspire in his soldiers that fury required to embark upon his destructive course.

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41.309.

44.2.429

The ideal soldier that Caesar would have in his ranks is one who accepts the wicked and savage rewards for his ignorant actions on the battlefield: *vult omnia certe / a se saeva peti, vult praemia Martis amari.* The general would thus have himself as the source of reward for the razing and conquest of Rome, an event for which the Gauls, as the traditional and continued polemical ethnic Roman complement, are traditionally well suited.

Lucan limits his use of Caesar’s Gallic model to the first three books. This is due largely to the action narrated therein. In this portion of the epic Caesar is described crossing plains south of the Alps, fording the river Rubicon, marching, while in the vestments of the Roman *civis*, into the city, and plundering the treasury. Caesar will be last seen in book three as he desecrates the sacred Druidic grove at Massilia and then proceeds west to Spain in order to cut off Pompey’s supporters. The Gallic image is useful to the poet in these first three books because it communicates the nature of Caesar’s threat. What Lucan finds most disturbing about this civil war, differentiating it from the heinous conflict between Sulla and Marius, is that it will not precipitate only the dreadful crime of Roman fratricide, but rather that this threatens to be apocalyptic, promising the genocide of the Republican Roman and all of his socio-political accessories. The only people who will welcome Caesar and who benefit from his Italian march are the Gallic tribes themselves who are bestowed ironically the gift of *libertas* through Caesar’s departure.

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463. 507-508
The moment of crisis for Caesar takes place upon the banks of the Rubicon. Rather than proceeding with typical Caesarian alacrity upon the march, the poet and general both hesitate on the banks of the river offering a moment of epic hesitancy delaying what is the inevitable declaration of civil war. The geographical setting and description of the river’s location emphasizes its liminal quality:

Fonte cadit modico parvisque impellitur undis puniceus Rubicon, cum fervida canduit aestas, perque imas serpit vallis et Gallica certus limes ab Ausoniis disterminat arva colonis.

The mud-red Rubicon falls from a moderate spring, flowing down in tiny waves when the scorching summer glows hot. It winds its way through the deep valleys, serving as an unmistakable boundary separating the lands of the Gauls from Italian colonies.

This description follows the ethopoetic appearance of Patria, who challenges Caesar to choose citizenship or perverse enmity, threatening the political effect of matricide as he bears the signa against this image of Rome. Although he has sounded the war trumpet, gathered his forces and his coincidental ira, there is a moment of narrative delay as Lucan describes the flow of this river. As a limes this river serves as a symbolic boundary that

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47 Wiseman (1998), pp. 60-62, evaluates the dramatic intonation afforded this scene by Caesar himself in his commentarii, Plutarch, Pollio, and Suetonius. It is the purpose of Roman historiography, employing such tropes as marvellous apparitions, to offer epic consequence to a particular moment or action. This may mean the use of divine apparitions, the portentous flights of birds, or other supernatural phenomena.


49 cf. Suet. Div. Iul. (32). Here the apparition that confronts Caesar is that of a flute playing giant who all but enchants the troops of Caesar. The general alone puts an end to this scene by sounding the war horn himself.

50 The Rubicon is distinguished from its counterpart in book 10, the Nile, in that the Roman audience is intended to be familiar with the source of the Italian tributary.
informs Caesar’s character, serving as a means of defining his own identity. In describing the river as *puniceus* Lucan plays upon the anticipation of his audience anticipating the Carthaginian coloration of the word *Punicus*. The unmet expectation has the reader consider already that Caesar, in this place, has assumed the guise of the foreign, even Hanniballic, enemy. The choice that Caesar makes upon crossing the river is not simply that of following the vagaries of fortune. Caesar himself will say that he casts aside both peace and denigrated Roman laws upon the banks of the Rubicon: ‘hic’, *ait ‘hic pacem temperataque iura relinquo*. More than giving up the costume of peaceful Roman citizen in exchange for that of a treasonous general, Caesar is divesting himself of the constitutional underpinnings of the Roman state justifying his action by suggesting that legal writ has already been compromised. Just as the Rubicon divides Roman Italy from Gaul, symbolically it requires that Caesar make the choice of denying his Roman identity in favour of that of the inimical Gaul. Upon crossing the Rubicon Caesar chooses to be an enemy over being a citizen, a traitor over being a hero, a marauder over being a patriot, a Gaul over being a Roman.

It is at Ariminum in 49 B.C. that Caesar will accept the final missives from the Senate and Pompey respectively aiming at ending the civil war early. In a moment Caesar is sweeping down upon this liminal town that sits on the boundary of the *ager*

51cf. Dupont (1995) pp. 192-193 discusses the use of rivers and mountains as fixed boundaries insofar as they structure the ethnographic character of the people defined by the land that they inhabit.

521.225.

53Scullard (1982), p. 122, states plainly that Caesar had historically been forced into this position by the vote of an Optimate clique of 22 senators that would not concede on the issue of disarmament. This would leave Caesar in the position either of returning to Rome as a *civis*, something that would mean his public ruin, or his assuming the role of traitor. Here it is not intended that the historicity of the events precipitating Caesar’s choice be addressed so much as the poetic rendering of the scene and events by Lucan.
Gallicus. His expeditious actions reinforce the Gallic aspect of his assumed identity.\textsuperscript{54}

The town is caught unaware, as the dawn’s new light, as though reluctant to shine upon this, the first act of civil war, meekly lights the cloudy sky. Caesar’s advance breaks both the peace and the quiet of this town.\textsuperscript{55} The battle for Ariminum is over before it has even begun. Already the Caesarian standards have been erected in the forum, gleaming, like lightning, in the light. The citizens of the town had come to expect no foreign attack as long as Caesar had been checking the Gallic threat. On this account they had allowed the coverings of their shields to peel, their sheathed swords to rust, and their spears, with tips bent back, to become useless through apathetic neglect. Now, however, the northern threat, in the spectacular form of Gallic Caesar astride his mount has returned, inspiring pavor among the men, women and children of Ariminum. The only sounds that Lucan has his audience hear at Ariminum are those issued by the military heralds of Caesar.

The citizens, before, during, and after the advance are left to whisper amongst themselves being incapable of showing the least sign of outward fear. Their lament is silent.

\textsuperscript{54}cf. Ahl (1973), pp. 107-108, where this scene is read strictly with an eye to associating Caesar with Hannibal. While this is an important comparison to be made it may proceed from his initial evaluation as the prototypical Gaul. This development is illustrative of Caesar’s evolving character that metamorphizes over the course of the ten books allowing for his complementary depiction as both a Gaul and the formidable Carthaginian general, thus embodying in his character Rome’s two formidable enemies.

\textsuperscript{55}Polybius 2.29, 4-8; Livy 5.37.5; It is characteristic in Roman ethnography to comment upon the noisiness of the Gauls who enter into battle with innumerable horn-blowers, trumpeters and with their entire fighting force putting up shouts. Lucan may be playing upon this idiosyncrasy in his introduction to the scene at Ariminum:

\begin{verbatim}
Constituit ut capto iussus deponere miles
signa foro, stridor lituum clangorque tubarum
non pia concinuit cum rauco classica cornu.
rupta quies populi,...
\end{verbatim}

And so it was, when the public square had already been seized, that the soldier had been ordered to give the battlesign. The shrill call of curved-trumpets and the din of battle-horns, and it was with a harsh alarm, rather than the traditional Roman sounding, that it sounded out. And so was the quiet of the people destroyed...

(1.236-240)
The fateful fault of Ariminum is its location. This town, Caesar states, is ill-fated because it lies on the Gallic border: ‘o male vicinis haec moenia condita Gallis, / o tristi damnata loco!’ Caesar here calls to mind the long frontier history of this town that had been able to resist so well the attacks of Gauls and Carthaginians alike. Now, like the rest of Lucan’s version of late Republican Rome, Ariminum has become weak, relying upon useless arms that are sought only after it is too late. In this place Caesar makes manifest that he is assuming the traditional inimical role of the Gaul. He begins his campaign in Lucan’s epic at Ariminum, a town that is coterminous with the *limes Gallicus*, coincident with the historical narratives of Gallic invasion and resistance, and that serves as a poetic stage upon which he may display his transformed persona. In this liminal setting, situated on the geographical threshold separating Gaul and Italy, Caesar divulges the Gallic character that he has assumed while on campaign. The ferocity, the racket, the location at which he makes the fateful decision to advance upon Rome, these things contribute to Lucan’s suggestion that, given his years in the field, Caesar effectively has gone native.

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56 The city of Ariminum, sitting hard by the river in the *ager Gallicus*, had been historically and geographically an important town. Settled by the Umbrians, it later fell into the hands of the Gauls, and finally, in 268 B.C. it became a Latin colony. Its location made it of particular strategic importance in that it was located on a narrow strip of land between the Appenine range and the Adriatic where the northern plains end. As such it was located on the most militarily accessible path along a march from Cisalpine Gaul to Rome. In 236 B.C. Ariminum withstood a Gallic attack. Later, in 219, in response to Hannibal and his large contingent of Gallic auxiliaries, the Senate sent Flaminius to Arretium and Servilius to Ariminum in an effort to blockade the most passable southerly overland routes and in order that they might force a confrontation. In 203 B.C. it was from this town that four legions marched to meet Mago in the plains of the Po river where the Carthaginian was wounded and forced to retreat. These historical events had informed the narrative that was attendant upon Lucan’s poetic use of this town. Lucan’s audience would be expected to realize that Ariminum, like the Rubicon, was a military flashpoint, located at the geographical, strategic, and ethnographic boundary separating Gaul from Italy.

The desperate quiet of the citizens of Ariminum is made the more notable by the contrast that Lucan develops to the contemporaneous action taking place in the senate and city of Rome. The tribunes have already been expelled from the city driven on by both fata and fortuna. Having already set his course for war, Caesar is now paradoxically being justified by the circumstantial events being forced by fortune which now aims to manufacture natural causes for the coming conflict; iustos Fortuna laborat / esse ducis motus et causas invenit armis. Already the city has begun to empty. By the beginning of the second book the senate will have taken flight, partisans will have taken camp, and the city will be left to women, children and the destitute. Curio’s speech, intended to steel the leader for the Roman advance, may be read with disdain. The tribune functions as a Lucanian character that propels the ambitious intentions of Caesar who will chase libertas from the city. Curio may also be understood as a token of Roman corruption that has undermined already the integrity of the Republic and its institutions both to the degree that the state has already been forsaken ideologically. Freedom and the people of Rome, that had Curio as their ironic vox, are both betrayed by the tribune to the Gallic Caesar who, having now been persuaded by the highly rhetorical speech, sets headlong for Rome.

Upon addressing his troops as to the necessity of his advance upon Rome, Caesar must rely reluctantly upon the ability of the centurion Laelius to persuade the army to continue upon this new campaign, one that would have them journey to the ends of the earth itself. The primary difficulty facing Caesar is that of convincing his troops, who

581.273-291.
59Curio assumes also the role of the legate, though corrupt and unprincipled, who meets with a hostile general and steadies his wavering resolve to declare war upon Rome.
601.299-351; 1.359-385.
are now disenfranchised citizens, that no choice is left but to march upon Rome if they hope, in fact, to earn for themselves a homeland.61 This line of reasoning suggests that Caesar himself now views his soldiery as not being Roman per se but rather as being a product of his campaigns, the lands in which his battles were waged, and the people, namely the Gauls, over whom his victories were won.62 Like the Gauls, this is a displaced now nomadic group that aims to settle itself. Laelius is attuned to the scepticism and reluctance of the troops and, establishing himself as the example, he makes it clear that his fortunes rely now entirely upon the success Caesar has in wresting the power of Rome from its republican keepers. The centurion thus intones that Caesar be viewed as a foundation hero who promises, like Cadmus or even Aeneas, to secure land for the settlement of these displaced troops. Lineage, heredity, family, Laelius would have the troops renounce all of these things in favour of Caesar himself:63

\[
\text{nec civis meus est, in quem tua classica, Caesar, audiero. per signa decem felicia castris perque tuos iuro quocumque ex hoste triumphos, pectore si fratri gladium iguloque parentis condere me iubeas plenaque in viscera partu coniugis, invita peragam tamen omnia dextra;...}
\]

nor do I count him a fellow citizen, Caesar, he against whom I have heard your battle-horn sound. By your banners, fortunate through ten campaigns, and by your triumphs over whichever enemy you so choose I

61Leigh (1997), pp. 204-206, observes that Laelius is the characteristic political ἐραστής who is able to communicate the degree of loyalty that he can afford Caesar through his use of geographical referents. The willingness of the soldier to endure any geography and the attendant hardships is an articulation of devotion.

62What is being negotiated in this speech is the distinction between a civis and a hostis. Laelius is sensitive to only denominate those who would not march with Caesar as non-citizens thereby undermining the assertion that this is in fact a civil war being waged between fellow citizens. Cicero, contrariwise, states that anyone bearing arms against the state can in no way be considered a citizen; (Cat., 4.10; qui autem rei publicae sit hostis eum civem esse nullo modo posse).

63Ahl (1973), pp. 201.
do this swear. If you should order me to plunge my sword into my brother’s chest, if you should order me to stab it into the throat of my own parent, even if you should order me to drive it into the uterus of my wife, willingly would I do all these things with this very right hand.

(1.374-379.)

The force of Laelius’ argument is derived from his denunciation initially of the intimate ties of family that might be a cause for reluctance of the part of these men. The battlehorn itself inspires in him and his fellow soldiers a sense of unity, one that affords security to these soldiers within this nomadic martial state. Their paradox is that only as the milites of Caesar are they able to win for themselves the affected denomination of cives. Where traditionally the family is the primary social unit that contributes to the strength of the city, and by extension functions as the principle cornerstone of the state, here Laelius recants this typical view. In the place of family, city, and state together Lealius puts Caesar and his army. Once this primary institution of family is undermined the centurion replaces it with the image of Caesar omnia ferens. The family has been replaced rhetorically by the pretense of Caesar.

Lucan then has Laelius compound the nefas in which he trespasses against the family by having him state that he would commit acts of impiety against the gods of Rome and their temples, even to raze the city itself:

si spoliare deos ignemque immittere templis,
numina miscebit castrensis flamma monetae;
castra super Tusci si ponere Thybridis undas,
Hesperios audax veniam metator in agros.
tu quoscumque voles in planum effundere muros,
his aries actus disperget saxa lacertis,...

Should you wish that I despoil the gods and that I set fire to the temples, then fire will mix with the gods of the mint controlled by the soldiers. Should you so order that camp be set over the waves of the Etruscan
Tiber, then I will come as a daring surveyor into Italian fields. Whichever walls whatsoever you wish to be scattered along the ground, driven by these very arms will the battering-ram knock down the stones. (1.379-384)

Beyond being another translation of the sacrifice that Laelius would have both himself and his fellow soldiers make to Caesar, Lucan is offering in these six verses a synopsis of the Gallic sack of Rome in 387 B.C.64 In 49 B.C., however, there is no hero cut from the same cloth as Camillus who will inspire his fellow citizens to withstand and repel this new threat. Caesar in book 3 will act in a way reminiscent of these early Gauls, dismissing the pathetic stance made by Metellus, looting the treasury, and withdrawing to the field to continue his meandering campaign.

The narrative of the Gallic sack of Rome, told by Livy, assumed an epic quality that would lend these enemies of Rome a certain hostile grandeur. This episode becomes a τόπσος in Roman literature that affords authors, including Lucan, the opportunity to allude intertextually to not only the scene itself but also to the ethnic character of the Gallic antagonists.65 By having Laelius describe his promised actions situationally and linguistically in a manner that recalls the Gallic invasion is to characterize not only the soldier, but Caesar the general, and his agenda, as hostile. Laelius is not calling to mind the great examples of Roman war heroes on the field. These he has abandoned replacing them instead with the example of the marauding Gaul whose aim is plunder. Unlike the speech of Caesar, Laelius’ words speak to the minds and the purses of the soldiers who respond in unison to these inspired words first by promising to bear their arms wheresoever war should require. This symbolic pledge is sealed by their raising a cry

64 cf. Livy AUC 5.40ff.
65 On the role of τόπσος in the practice of intertextual allusion see Hinds (1998), pp. 34-47.
that echoes to the heavens, likened by Lucan to the strength of the Thracian Boreal wind that bends trees, snapping them back up again. The actions of Caesar’s troops are to be described using metaphors of the European north drawing to mind the people indigenous thereto. Now Caesar has been assured initially of the covenant that he requires in order to advance upon Rome. The Gallic general now leads a Gallic host.

Upon his composition of the respective suasoriae of Caesar and Laelius, Lucan employs the epic trope of cataloguing the troops of Caesar who are spread throughout the Transalpine and Cisalpine Gaul. This catalogue does more than delay the author’s narrative movement toward Caesar’s capture of Rome. This literary map offers a geographical survey of the successes that Caesar had won in the field during his tenure of Gallic generalship. In this way it functions as his poetic res gestae. Lucan begins the Caesarian catalogue using his knowledge of Gallic geography, coupled with his command of the local tribes, to the effect that he enumerates the number of successes

\[\text{66 Getty (1940), pp. xxxvii-xliv, evaluates the accuracy of Lucan’s extensive treatment of geography. In the case of his geographical description of Gaul it is supposed that Lucan depended primarily upon the Stoic Posidonius who had himself travelled throughout the region.}\]

\[\text{67 That mora plays a narrative role in the catalogue, communicating Lucan’s trepidation in recounting the necessary events, is suggested by his use of the verb moretur in reference to Caesar; \ldots ne quo languore moretur / fortunam (1.393-394). It is Caesar who, in his famous introduction, is likened to lightening, swift as the wind. It is only apt now that he should be obliged to act in all haste lest it appear that he is suffering from any uncharacteristic listlessness. The proem to the Gallic catalogue (1.392-395) is the last explicit mention of Caesar and his preparations to march upon Rome for the remainder of book 1 and for the first portion of book 2. It will not be until line 439 of the second book that Caesar and his troops are described finally as being on the march. Poetically Lucan is battling with the Caesarian advance, doing his best to stave off the inevitable sack of Rome and battle at Pharsalus.}\]

\[\text{68 Batinski (1992), pp. 19-24, analyzes Lucan’s unorthodox use of the typical epic catalogue whereby the soldiers under Caesar’s command are characterized by the Gallic regions that they are leaving. Batinski’s conclusion, however, is that Caesar is thus cast by the poet not as the emblematic Gallic invader but rather as a poetic reincarnation of Hannibal.}\]

\[\text{69 As Nicolet (1991), pp. 16ff., notes regarding the res gestae divi Augusti, a catalogue of this sort, listing the areas overcome, the tribes over whom Caesar had been successful, their deities and their social castes, functions as a narrative of power that describes and thereby demonstrates the appropriation of a given geographic and social area.}\]
won by the general over so many people in so vast an area. What Lucan is communicating to the reader is that these troops are coming from all regions of the country; ...Romam motis petit undique signis. Abandoning their garrisons throughout Gaul all of these soldiers are moving, bearing down upon Rome. It is as though the entire strength of this land is being raised actually under the command of Caesar.71 The passage lists no fewer than 17 different tribes in 39 consecutive verses.72 In order to communicate the spatial expanse over which the listed vanquished tribes lived Lucan offers geographical landmarks such as rivers and coastlines.73 This correspondence between the Gallic people and the regions that they inhabit sets in greater relief the severity of the situation in which the troops following Caesar now find themselves. The Gauls have land, established homes, lives that are near pastoral with this evacuation of the soldiers, whereas the men following Caesar are without either garrisons or Italian homes. Freedom and peace are the patrimony of these Gauls granted by their new representative in Caesar.

The Gauls, differentiated by regional group, are characterized generally by their typically foreign aspect, one that is fundamentally martial and aggressive.74 The warring

701.395

71Pompey will have a complementary catalogue in which he will raise, in word only, the armies of the entire world (2.642-644). In fact Pompey’s will be a levy of the weak and disenfranchised client states of the East that are waiting to gather under Parthian leadership.

72The frequency with which these tribal names occur would be the more notable in this passage if the excursus on the tides (1.412-419) were suppressed. When this is considered these 17 tribal names are catalogued in 32 verses.

73This is required as Lucan can not be sure that his audience is aware of the regions within which each group belongs. He is thus establishing a map, cartographically situating these people throughout the landscape. The poet thus generates coincidentally both a map and a complementary ethnic catalogue.

74One group that does not necessarily fit this categorization is the Arverni; Arvernique ausi Latio se fingere frates / sanguine ab Iliaco populi (1.427-428.) The presumption of this tribe is that of pretending to share a common heritage with the Romans. Ethnographically this claim is dangerous as it
Lingonas bear embossed arms (arma picta), the swift Bitruces fight with long spears (arma longa), the Leuci and the Remi both are known for their throwing arms (lacerti excussi), while the Sequani and the Belgians are famous for their horsemanship and charioteering respectively. The Nervii are excessively rebellious, and are blamed by Lucan for the death of Cotta. Together the Sarmatian people, namely the Vangiones and the Batavi, are noted for wearing loose trousers (bracae laxae) and for being quick to respond when the battle horn sounds. The men of Trèves, the Ligurians, are described now by their shorn hair where they had once been the prototypical long-haired Gauls. At this point Lucan stops listing the Gauls by tribe. A review of the catalogue makes manifest that the trait the poet is emphasizing in each case is that of combativeness. As terrible and threatening as the groups listed by Lucan are, the audience is left to imagine that Caesar and his men, who have checked militarily these people for so long, must be far more bellicose.

undermines the simple method of distinguishing that which is Roman from that which is foreign and Gallic.

75 The type of vehicle driven by the Belgians, Lucan reports, is the covinnus. This is the traditional Celtic war chariot that had scythes on its wheels. It is to the Gallic tribes what the esseda is, in Caesar’s commentarii, to the British.


77 Compare these people with the Belgians who will later be described as typically crinigeros.

78 There are two exceptions including the Arverni, mentioned above, and the mysteriously anonymous gens that inhabits the snow-covered Cevennes:

qua Cinga pererrat
gurgite, qua Rhodanus raptum velocibus undis
in mare fert Ararim, qua montibus ardua summis
gens habitat cana pendentes rupe Cebennas.

(1.432-435)
At this point in his list Lucan begins to talk about the Gauls in terms of their religious and social institutions. First he offers a brief record of the three primary gods whom the Ligurians, and by extension all other Gauls, worship:\textsuperscript{79}

et quibus immitis placatur sanguine diro  
Teutates horrensque feris altaribus Esus  
et Taranis Scythicae non mitior ara Dianae.

...and pitiless Teutates will only be appeased by [the Ligurians] through the spilling of accursed blood, and then there is terrible Esus with his beastly altars, and lastly Taranis not less vicious than the altar of Scythian Diana.

(1.444-446)

As is the case in the enumeration of the tribal list, the details communicated by the inclusion of these three divinities, and the suggestively brutal nature of their worship, functions to underscore the barbarity of things Gallic.\textsuperscript{80} Lest the audience dismiss these gods and the practice of their worship as being but an hyperbolic example of the Gauls’ savagery, Lucan proximates these deities to the Romans through the employment of the translational reference to Scythian Diana. Where, at first, the gods are cast as brutal divinities of a rude people, Lucan's closing comparison to the cult of Scythian Diana suggests that the Romans bear a strong resemblance in religious and political custom to the Gauls. The worship of Scythian Diana would require that the Romans practice ritual sacrifice whereby the priest of this cult would have to be killed by his successor. Religious succession could only be guaranteed by this necessary murder.\textsuperscript{81} By invoking


\textsuperscript{80} On the traditionality of this grouping of deities see Getty (1940), pp. 144-147.

\textsuperscript{81} cf. Green (1994).
the cult of Scythian Diana Lucan effaces the distinction separating the Roman from the Gaul, the principal from the Other. The idea of succession through sacrifice, intoned deliberately by reference to the cult, resonates with the circumstances that will see Caesar best Pompey as required in order to attain the political position of leadership. Again Lucan emphasizes that where the Gauls would initially be programmatically foreign they exhibit and practice religious culture in a way that resembles that of the Romans given the circumstances of this civil war.

Lucan continues his digression from the list of Gallic tribes by then proceeding to mention the Bards and Druids. He will apostrophize when addressing the bards, Gallic poets, begging the audience to equate the cross-cultural nature of the poetic practice. These foreign singers are the guardians of the past, those men responsible for praising courageous men who died in the war, but, nevertheless, will have their songs sung for generations to come. It is revealing that these Gallic poets are described as securi...Galli. Persecution is not something that concerns these foreign singers, who are protected and preserved by their combative fellow-citizens. Their description as securi also suggests that they share in the courageous character of their people, being viewed as similarly fearless. Given the circumstances that befall Lucan as he loses the favour of Nero through his composition and singing of this poem, the poet at Rome can not be

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82 The grove in which is situated the altar to Scythian Diana functions as a liminal place after the crossing of which Caesar is first able to see Rome in the poem (3.86). In this instance the image is spatially medial, together with the references to the Pomptine marshes, dividing the region immediately surrounding Rome from the hostile places and people outside.

83 Traditionally Strabo, following Posidonius, lists three social groups among the Gauls, namely the βάρδοι, the Δρυίδαι and the Οὐάτεις (4.4.) The suppression of this final class may be accounted for by Lucan’s pleonastic use of the term vates as a predicate for Bardi.

84 O’Higgins (1988), develops the importance of tension between inspiration and articulation. In the case of the Gallic bards the opportunity to generate carmina has been denied due to the present threat of Caesar. Contrarily it will be Caesar’s march upon Rome that will occasion Lucan’s destructive and denunciatory epic condemnation of these events and their consequences.
described in the same way. Contrariwise the Gallic poets will be free to sing songs celebrating their native heroes, songs that both offer praise and that are in themselves praiseworthy. Lucan’s epic, given its theme and characters, is left to mourn the passing of the Roman republican.

The Druids serve as a religious complement to the Gallic bards in terms of their societal situation and practice. Upon mentioning the Druids, Lucan uses this occasion to demonstrate his understanding of the philosophical system that underlies their religious practices:

> et vos barbaricos ritus moremque sinistrum sacrorum, Dryadae, positis repetitis ab armis. solis nosse deos et caeli numina vobis aut solis nescire datum; nemora alta remotis incolitis lucis; vobis auctoribus umbrae non tacitas Erebi sedes Ditisque profundi pallia regna petunt: regit idem spiritus artus orbe alio; longae, canitis si cognita, vitae mors media est.

And you, o Druids, upon laying aside your weapons you resumed once again your barbaric rites and that abominable custom. It has been granted to you alone to know, or perhaps to remain ignorant of, the gods and the divinities in the sky. You live in deep groves where light cannot penetrate. According to your teaching shades do not venture to the quiet seats of Erebus and the shadowy realm of deep Dis. Instead the spirit itself rules our limbs in some other world. If you are singing of things in fact known, death is but the middle of a long life.

(1.450-458)

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85 Given the Tacitean suggestion that Lucan informed on members of his own family, including his mother, the pretense to his own professional characterization as securus produces a certain irony.

86 On the employment of this term by Caesar in his Gallic ethnography see Bell (1995), pp. 755-756.

87 cf. Caes. *BG* 6.14 where the Druids are typified by their practice of blood sacrifice and by their apparent non-involvement in military affairs.
The description of this caste is stereotypical in that it opens with reference to the traditional religious customs, although they are not enunciated explicitly, that had been mentioned earlier with the translational reference to Scythian Diana. Lucan suggests here that the Druids had been involved in the Gallic struggle against the advances of Caesar, although now, given the levying of Caesar’s troops and his imminent march upon Rome, the priests are granted the freedom to return to their proper places of worship and to practice their rites once again. It is poignant that Lucan makes reference explicitly to the *alta...nemora*, as a similar Druidic grove will be desecrated by Caesar in book three in an episode that manifests the hyperbolic barbarity and hubristic irreverence of the megalomaniac. In this passage, however, the reference to the dale is made only to characterize the resumption of religious practice afforded by the absence of the Roman threat. The audience can imagine the return to this sacred space and the attendant practice of Druidic rites. Lucan will only offer conjecture as to the philosophical beliefs of the Druids once he has narratologically situated them back within their sacred space. This being done, the poet waxes philosophical, describing the Druidic idea of the transmigration of the body and soul. In a rhetorical flourish Lucan concludes his description of the Druids and their attendant beliefs with a sententious finale, crafted to mirror the tenet itself; *...longae, canitis si cognita, vitae / mors media est* (1.457-458).

88 An association between Caesar and these Druids may be recognized as Caesar had held the position of *pontifex maximus* in 63 B.C. Thus while Caesar may be representative of the Gallic castes of Druids and knights, Lucan completes the ethnic equation with his self-association with the Bards. Only in conjunction can Lucan and Caesar together manifest rightly the severity of this Gallic threat. As the bards and Druids complement one another societally among the Gauls, so too does Lucan develop his Caesar within the poetic context of the epic. By committing his literary power to Caesar, Lucan is able to assist in the attack on the imagined imperial Rome that is the denunciatory ambition of his work.

89 Lucan, in referencing the placeless *nemora* here, is maintaining the proximate importance that the imagery of trees, whether in the case of the dead Pompeian oak or in the case of the desecration of the religious grove in book 3, has in amplifying Caesar’s massive destructive power.

90 1.453-454.
By separating *longae* and *vitae* the idea of continuity is communicated poetically, something that is compounded by the enjambed conclusion to the phrase. Lucan illustrates verbally the simple interruption that death may be to such an ‘ongoing’ life. Ideologically this view of death, although not consonant with that of Stoicism, is not dismissed as simple by Lucan who, while not suggesting his subscription thereto, does pay due respect to it through his finely crafted articulation of this Druidic tenet. The things known (*cognita*) to Lucan are that poetry, in contrast to life, may endure suffering no such mortal interruption. Through poetry Lucan, like the *Pharsalia* that he promises to share with Caesar, will guarantee both a poetic afterlife. Together the bards and the Druids are now able to resume their rightful pursuits given Caesar’s shifted focus. Societally, among the Gauls, only the religious and artistic classes are described by Lucan because these constitute the groups that are able to flourish in times of peace, something afforded now by the Roman withdrawal.

Lucan concludes this long Gallic catalogue by referencing the remaining northernmost tribes, the ferocity of whom can now be understood in terms of the Druidic view of death as being inconsequential. They have no great fear of death (*maximus haud ... leti metus*) which accounts for the liberties they are willing to take with life, pushing these men to charge headlong into battle and the swords of their enemies. In the last three lines of this section Lucan will make a final address, this time to the Roman troops who are abandoning their post on the Rhine:

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91 The philosophical underpinnings of the Gauls, primarily the view of death as inconsequential, is used by Lucan to account for the destruction, the effective suicide, that these people are willing to bring upon themselves on the battlefield. This image of self-slaughter resonates with the tenor established in the poem’s proem that would describe this civil war as being a corresponding occasion of rash suicide.
et vos, crinigeros Belgis arcere Caycos oppositi, petitis Romam Rhenique feroces deseritis ripas et apertum gentibus orbem.

And you [Roman soldiers], situated strategically to check the advance of the long haired Gauls and the Chauci, you now are marching upon Rome and you have abandoned the ferocious shores of the Rhine leaving the world open to barbarian nations.

(1.463-465)

By appealing to the troops with the apostrophe vos Lucan has suggestively associated them with the bards and Druids both, generic social castes that are themselves symbolic for all Gauls, emphasizing a coincidence of character between these soldiers and the people they were once commanded to keep at bay. On the other two occasions upon which Lucan makes a similar poetic intrusion, both linguistically and poetically, in the course of this catalogue it is directed to the stereotypical Gallic classes of the bards and Druids.

Absent from Lucan’s account of the Gauls are the equites we find in Caesar’s own description.92 In his ethnographic treatment of these Gallic classes Caesar, in his commentarii, emphasizes first that the equites are dedicated to the practice of war and, secondly, that a given eques Gallus attains social and military power (potentia) on the basis of number of their followers.93 Lucan may intend that his audience recall this peculiar and particular ethnographic section of Caesar’s work. The effect would be that of recognizing the poet’s suppression of the equites. Instead he has favoured, in the place of these equites, the mentioning of the vatic Bardi. The apparent omission, however,

92Caes. BG 6.15.
93Burns (2003), p. 131-132, observes that, with the exception of one other tangential reference, this is the only occasion within Caesar’s work that these classes are mentioned.
may be somewhat more ominous. The Roman troops at the end, personally addressed
only as vos, have been grouped together with the Gallic classes mentioned only 13 verses
earlier. This association has the effect of suggesting that these Romans are now
functioning in the place of the Gallic retainers of the assumed *eques* Caesar.

This view of Caesar as the new Gaul is reinforced by the narrative emphasis and
shift marked by the primary position of *Caesar* in line 466, the verse following
immediately upon this associative ethnographic characterization and the close of the
entire catalogue. In the lines that follow Lucan describes the effect of Caesar’s
convocation of forces both on the general and upon the Italian landscape:

Caesar, ut immensae collecto robore vires
audendi maiora fidem fecere, per omnem
spargitur Italiam vicinaque moenia complet.
vana quoque ad veros accessit fama timores
irrupitque animos populi clademque futuram
intulit et velox properantis nuntia belli
innumeratas solvit falsa inpraeconia linguas.\(^9^4\)

Caesar, since the boundless troops, with their collective strength, gave him
the confidence to dare even bolder things, he spread his men throughout
Italy and filled the nearby towns. Idle rumor attacks, setting ablaze, true
fears, and it breaks in upon the minds of the people, bringing forth the idea
of impending destruction. Swift messenger of hastening war reduced
innumerable tongues to false proclamations.

\((1.466-472)\)

The language of this passage is that of military advance and occupation. Caesar’s filling
of towns, his occupation of these walls with his men, is a reference to his Italian march;
it refers to the increasing area over which he is able to exert control and from which he is
able to derive support. Lucan communicates effectively the critical nature of the Roman

\(^9^4\)The last three lines of this selection are omitted in Paris manuscript P.
character at this stage by choosing to name neither the towns that are being besieged by Caesarian rumour nor the citizens who are surrendering to it. This stands in contrast to the heavily categorized preceding catalogue of Gaul and its people. It would be as though Italy and its inhabitants are now unknown, the nameless and faceless enemy of Caesar. In effect the Hesperian peninsula has become terra incognita.

The general need not besiege literally the cities that lie upon his southerly route as his fama, or that of his march, is enough to elicit fear from the inhabitants of the countryside. It is fama that, using the military language of attack, approaches in hostility (accessit) and sets upon (irrupitque) the minds of the people. Caesar’s name and renown are effective while those of Pompey and Cato both are inefficacious. It is the idea, the vision, the fama, of Caesar that promises impending war and compels people to give false report. This anticipatory consequence is produced by Caesar, as Lucan mentions in the initial portrait, because he puts his faith in action rather than words. The citizens equate that the general’s imminent arrival with their promised defeat as there is no disconnect between fama, nomen, and opera of Caesar. Both his name and his reputation are the product of the commentarii, the literary opera that recount his military feats, composed and delivered in such a way as to produce the general’s perceived public character at Rome. His Gallic reputation thus rightly precedes him. The last verse in the selection above is noteworthy as Caesar has yet to do anything, save crossing the Rubicon, that is worthy of public report and panic. The emphasis is thus upon the specter of Caesar and his reputation that together appear to be enough to cow and defeat psychologically all of his opponents. In emphasis of this point Lucan offers an ecphrastic portrait of the general:

\[ \text{48} \]

\[ ^{95} \text{See above, pp. 21-22.} \]
nec qualem meminere vident: maiorque ferusque
mentibus occurit victoque immanior hoste.
tunc inter Rhenum populos Albimque iacentes
finibus Arctois patriaque a sede revulsos
pone sequi, iussamque feris a gentibus urbem
Romano spectante rapi.

Nor did they see such a man as they remembered. He hastened upon
them, all the more wild and ferocious, in mind, more ominous than ever
upon vanquishing the enemy. Then the people lying between the Rhine
and the Elbe, having been uprooted from their northern borders and their
native land, they fall in, following the lead of Caesar. While he looked on,
the city of Rome he had ordered to be violated by savage foreigners.

The Germans and Gauls together form the collective strength of Caesar’s fighting
force. In the ethnographic tradition these two groups are often viewed as complements
to one another and, as a result, are together cast by Lucan as the aggregate native power
of non-Roman Europe. The endemic Gallic strength, hostility, and stereotypical tragedy
Lucan imparts to the common image, the \textit{fama}, of Caesar that orders another Gallo-
Germanic sack of the city. The ferocity of Caesar, his famous appearance, is the
product of the troops rallying around him. He has come to mirror in aspect the fabled
horror and strength of these northern people who have imparted their force to the general
through his victory over them. The idea of Caesar leading this poly-ethnic hoard is
enough to inspire fear and to win for the general the psychological preemptive battle.

\footnote{The denomination of the tribe referenced in line 1.481 is based upon the reading of \textit{Albimque}. This, together with the undisputed mention of the Rhine, would mean that Lucan is referencing generically the Germans who are most often described in terms of the land they inhabit. This region is itself differentiated and characterized by the rivers Elbe and the Rhine. Housman, in commenting on this line, suggests that if the alternative reading of \textit{Alpesque} is taken in favour of \textit{Albimque} then the people to whom Lucan is referring must be the more specific Helvetii.}

\footnote{Lucan’s use of the verb \textit{rapi}, in its passive form, suggests that the violation of \textit{Roma} may be symbolically sexual. This is reinforced by the poet’s ethopoetic portrayal of the city as a haggard, old woman who now promises to be victimized by the forces marshalled by Caesar.}
Caesar need not even march through the Hesperian countryside as his *fama*, promising bloody and swift destruction by foreigners, is enough to defeat the spirit of any anonymous people who might oppose him.

As Lucan develops this passage further it becomes clear that this type of bedlam is not limited to the countryside, but that Caesar’s *fama* has already reached the city of Rome and taken it:

\[
\text{nec solum vulgus inani percussum terrore pavet, sed curia et ipsi sedibus exiluere patres, invisaque belli consulibus fugiens mandat decreta senatus. tum, quae tuta petant et quae metuenda relinquant incerti, quo quemque fugae tuit impetus urguent praecipitem populum, serieque haerentia longa agmina prorumpunt.}
\]

Nor did this terrify the common crowd alone, agitated by idle terror, but even the Curia and the state fathers themselves abandoned their rightful places, and the senate in common flight mandated that the consuls take up the dreadful cause of war. Then, uncertain as to which things they should seek as safe and which things, worthy of fear, were to be avoided, withersoever the drive to flight pushed him the uncertain hoard drove the people headlong. They burst out in a steady stream held fast together as though a battle-line.

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(1.486-493)
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The city itself, including the plebs and the senatorial classes are rushing in flight.

Lucan’s employment of metonymy in referring to the senators through the use of *curia*, *patres*, and *senatus* in three consecutive verses draws emphasis to their conspicuous flight from the city. Like their absent champion Pompey, they too are cast as *fugaces*.

The fear that is inspiring this response within the city is termed aptly *inanis* because it is the product of Caesar’s fabulous spectre, the insubstantial thought of his foreign aspect, his imagined invading character. Abandonment of the city by commoners and patricians
alike is not inspired by their desire to stand united against Caesar but rather it is the product of their ignorance and cowardice. The city of Rome can no longer afford its citizens a knowledge of things secure, no longer can they feel safe (securi), as the ability to distinguish between things sure (tuta) and things worthy of fear (metuenda) has been compromised. It is only by chance that these people, in their flight from the city, are drawn up in a makeshift battle column. Already betrayed by their flight, these men, in their poorly ordered rush, appear as an army defeated. Disorder is the military product of, and often the cause for tactical defeat. Both literally and figuratively Rome, and its attendant Republican institutions, are here being deserted by commoner and patrician alike. No one has faith in the power that is Rome to stand fast and be victorious over the Caesarian threat. The only hope left to the people in these dire circumstances, they feel, is escape from the city lest they be left to perish therewith: ..., velut unica rebus / spes foret afflictis patrios excedere muros (1.496-497). Little do these people know that they are running not to safety but rather into the battle itself.

This scene marks the close of the Caesarian episode in book one. Lucan goes on to develop his long list of unnatural phenomena through which the poet establishes cosmic continuity in that the heavens mirror the unnatural disorder of the civic Roman world. While Caesar is a catalyst to the closing action of the second book in that he drives Pompey from Italy at Brundisium, it will not be until book three that Caesar again manifests the overtly Gallic nature of his character. The two scenes in which he

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98 It is this weakness that draws Caesar’s traditional contempt for the failing Republic and its institutions: nihil esse rem publicam, appellationem modo sine corpore ac specie (Suet. Iul. 77). Like Pompey, Rome too is but an empty name.

99 Caesar has made it clear to them that their securitas is, in fact, the product of carelessness and is thus an unsubstantiated form of safety.

100 1.503-504.
exemplifies his barbaric savagery include his sack of the treasury at Rome (3.112-168) and the desecration of the sacred Druidic grove (3.399-455). In the first of these two episodes Caesar shows himself to be the cliché Gallic marauder, mocking the political institution of the senate and violating the sanctity of the treasury. In the second episode Lucan manifests hyperbolically Caesar’s brutal nature in that he exceeds the savagery and impiety of his Gauls. Again Lucan develops here the theme of civil war where the assumed Gauls, namely Caesar and his men, attack the ethnic Gauls. Caesar has become the machine of civil strife.

Book three opens with Pompey’s inglorious exit from Italy. Being unable, and unwilling at this point, to pursue him Caesar decides instead that it would be best to secure his position in Italy. Additionally, he makes strategic arrangements regarding both Sicily and Sardinia in an effort to develop the required logistical support to supply his campaigning army. This decision denies Pompey the power of his supporters in the west. Caesar wishes to solidify his wholesale command of the Lucanian region of Europa, something the general will have accomplished by the end of the fourth book.

Only in the third book does Lucan embark upon his narrative of Caesar’s march to and occupation of Rome. The plot of the poet’s epic will not allow him to delay any longer, but rather he is drawn along in Caesar’s destructive train. Caesar’s advance upon Rome crystallizes his Gallic aspect. Caesar is not to be characterized by furor and ira as he is deliberate in his action. This is demonstrated by his hesitancy on the banks of

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101 See below, pp. 126-128.

102 Rutz (1950), p. 64, characterizes this as the typical Sekundärzen, scenes which, in themselves, do not contribute to the traditional scenes of battlefield conflict and their attendant empathetic reflections by the poet thereupon. The intention of this episode is partially that of developing Caesar’s character through the agency of loosely rendered historical events. Thus the product is that of compositional integrity through which the Gallic, that is to say European, character of Caesar is set.
the Rubicon. Book three opens with the pathetic scene of Pompey standing alone (solus) looking back upon the shores of Italy. His is a journey that will result not in conquest but rather in his inevitable death as his actions have raised even the dead, namely Julia, against him. Lucan then shifts his focus to Caesar who, similarly, is described as standing alone (solus) watching the retreat of Pompey. Caesar has been left to do what he will with an Italy that has been deserted by Roman institutions and their leaders. The country is left a wild and uncultivated place that Lucan portrays as being populated by the characteristically weak and cowardly.

Caesar then undertakes his paradoxically triumphal upland march from Brundisium through the countryside to Rome. Caesar is well aware of his appearance should he march headlong into the city of Rome claiming only as his prize victory over the Gauls and tribes to the north. He has primed the Roman public by ensuring, through his securing of Sardinian and Sicilian grain supplies, that the remaining people in the city would be fed. This is intended to distract attention from the hostile appearance that his advance to Rome will have. The very fact that he marches upon the city with a large contingent of men from Gallic tribes as soldiers in his ranks renders the general not only a political enemy of the state but also a ethno-cultural enemy:

\[
\text{haec ubi sunt provisa duci, tunc agmina victor}
\text{non armata trahens sed pacis habentia vultum}
\text{pecta petit patriae. pro, si remeasset in urbem}
\text{Gallorum tantum populis Arctoque subacta,}
\text{quam seriem rerum longa praemittere pompa,}
\text{quas potuit belli facies! ut vincula Rheno}
\]

104 3.4.
105 3.47.
Oceanoque daret, celsos et Gallia currus
nobilis ut flavis sequeretur mixta Britannis.
perdidit o qualem vincendo plura triumphum!

When he had seen to these affairs the victor, marshalling soldiers not
armed but rather maintaining the outward appearance of peace, he sought
the households of his homeland. If only he were to have returned to the
city of Rome having vanquished the countless Gauls and other
Northerners, what a long and extravagant parade he his accomplishments
may he have been able to have, what scenes of war. Then he would
display rightly his conquest of the Rhine and river Ocean, then would
notorious Gaul together with flaxen haired Britons follow. What a
spectacular triumph Caesar lost by endeavouring to conquer even more.

(3.71-79)

Appearances are important to Caesar as here he must don the guise of peace while
undertaking the hostile action that is his push to Rome. Even with arms laid aside the
very appearance of the soldiers rallied in his legions belies the threat that he poses.
Without having yet entered the city limits Caesar can already be rightly termed victor by
Lucan and is thus offered in these verses a makeshift procession.107 The Gauls and Celts
who might have been marched in a show of Roman supremacy are now marching to
Rome in an action that demonstrates Rome’s weakness. In this selection Lucan
emphasizes the geographical constituency that serves as Caesar’s power basis. Yet
another, albeit abbreviated, list of regions and peoples overcome and subjugated by
Caesar is offered in these verses whereby Caesar’s hostile foreign aspect is underscored.
Rather than subduing the North in the name of Rome, Caesar has assumed the strength of
this region and its people bringing his foreign Gallic threat to the city.

107Hunink (1992), pp. 67-69, comments upon the triumphal nature of these lines. The use of the
words victor and remeare both intone Caesar’s success which is promised to be realized at last on the fields
of Pharsalus. Lucan’s acknowledgment of Caesar’s achievements, which is the effect of the poet’s
cataloguing briefly again the people and areas over whom Caesar had won victories, is more than an
occasion of the poet’s divulging a perverse admiration for the general. In offering this list Lucan is giving
Caesar again what the city cannot; a triumph.
In making the choice to move upon Rome Caesar is conceding his Roman identity and he is relinquishing any claim he may have had to patriotic celebration. His upland march, proceeding rapidly in the poetic narrative, manifests Caesarian alacrity.\textsuperscript{108} Through the fields of Latium, along roads by the Pomptine marshes, past the grove sacred to Scythian Diana, up the Arician crag, finally Caesar sees Rome.\textsuperscript{109} The walls before which Caesar stands, hesitating to take the city, would be the dilapidated remains of the Servian wall which had been built in the 370s B.C. as a defensive measure implemented in an effort to prepare for another Gallic invasion. The feared offensive has only now come in the person of Caesar and his foreign host. In his address to the \textit{moenia Romae} Caesar rebukes Pompey and his senatorial supporters who have fled the city. In a moment of touching irony Caesar comments upon the fortune of Rome that a polyethnic eastern force is not using this occasion to attack the city. Only Caesar does not realize that his is an invasion of the city by European Boreal peoples. The citizens are terrified that Caesar will behave in the fabulous manner of the Gauls during their storied sack of the city. A literary precedent that informs this scene is that of Livy’s description of the Gallic siege.\textsuperscript{110} In action and appearance both Caesar is viewed by the Roman citizens as the Gaul who would, by nature, set ablaze the city with black pitch and who would sacrilegiously desecrate the temples.

Meeting little resistance Caesar is afforded the semblance of power at Rome; \textit{omnia Caesar erat}.\textsuperscript{111} Having called the cowardly senators from their shadowy hiding places Caesar assumes all positions of political control in the city. He now serves as

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textsuperscript{108}3.84-87.
\item \textsuperscript{109}On the characterizing force of the reference to Scythian Diana see above pp. 40-41.
\item \textsuperscript{110}Livy \textit{AUC} 5.39-45.
\item \textsuperscript{111}3.108.
\end{enumerate}
consul, praetor, fulfilling all of the vacant magistracies that are the product of Pompeian flight. While the battle remains to be fought at Pharsalus, already upon his assumption of power within the city in book three has he earned his political victory, bringing about the autocratic institution that would be formalized in the Principate. In fact Caesar’s actions in the senate house are symbolically more devastating to the state than if he were to have set fire to the buildings of Rome. Like the land of Italy itself, the Roman character has become weak, unkempt, atrophied.

Alone libertas, through the agency of Metellus, confronts Caesar in a final effort to stay his pillaging of the treasury. While Caesar had not set the city ablaze, he is not beyond looting the temple of Saturn and thus realizing the fear held that he would depredate; sparsurusque deos. The apparent defiance of Mettelus’ address before the blockaded doors of the temple is undercut by the poet before it has even begun as the tribune’s motives are denigrated rhetorically by being little more than another example of amor auri. Even in this man, the sole Roman willing to defy Caesar, have the Republican principles of libertas and leges become subsidiary to the love for wealth. Colored by this damning preface the speech of Metellus demonstrates the hypocrisy and cowardice that have become the hallmarks of this abandoned Rome. In his speech Metellus characterizes Caesar as the common robber (raptor) who will commit the wicked acts (sclerum) of looting Rome’s treasures, testaments to her martial history.

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112 Hunink (1992), pp. 82, 84, notes that Metellus’s character shares certain situational and linguistic elements with that of Domitius Ahenobarbus (2.479ff; 7.219ff.) Both men are granted the laudatory epithet pugnax as both men dare to stand alone in an individual confrontation with Caesar. In the case of each Caesar denies them the opportunity to win an heroic death, thus demonstrating the politicized and perverted nature of the general’s clementia. The resistance that Metellus shows here will be developed effectively later in book 3 as the Massilians resist the Caesarian siege.

113 3.100

114 3.118-121.
through the agency of a villainous soldier (*sceleratus...miles*). The only effect of this speech is the threatening arousal of Caesar’s characteristic *ira*. Already the victor, Caesar is careful not to concede to his anger as this would suggest engagement with Metellus, a man who must not be deemed worthy in person or in cause. Nonetheless, the hostile nature of Caesar is never harnessed fully as is demonstrated by his near resort to violence while wearing the togated costume of peace; … *saevos circumspicit enses / oblitus simulare togam*.\(^\text{115}\) In an invented close to the interview Lucan introduces the character of Cotta who offers a pusillanimous argument for political and ethical torpidity.\(^\text{116}\) It is but the ghost of liberty, already referenced in book two by Cato, that any undertaken resistance might ineffectively champion. All that remains for the people of Rome to do, Cotta argues, is to anticipate a quick close to this war. With these words Metellus is brushed aside, the gates of the temple are forced open, and Caesar undertakes the principal economic act of sacking the city.

Worse than taking the money, Caesar robs Rome of its national treasures won by campaign. The items taken are the tokens, the physical signs, of Roman power. In the catalogue that follows the exchange Lucan offers ecphrastically the triumphal parade of the riches taken from the treasury.\(^\text{117}\) Rather than offering a tally of the sum stolen, the poet instead uses this occasion to offer a retrospective of Rome’s rise to power throughout the Mediterranean basin, territories that will be conceded symbolically and, as his civil campaign continues, literally to Caesar. The general literally empties the city of

\(^{115}\) 3. 142-143.

\(^{116}\) cf. Ahl (1976), p. 34, who sees the words of concession as being a keen observation of the manner in which a person, living under the power of a tyrant, must exercise *libertas*, suggests that the poet may have survived a little longer had he himself observed this advice.

\(^{117}\) 3.155-168.
its triumphal past. Like the citizens of Rome, Lucan’s audience is the spectatrix scelerum as we sit forcibly quiet, abiding the plunder of riches earned through the Punic wars, the Macedonian campaigns against Perseus, the subjugation of Crete and through the Eastern successes of Pompey himself. Additionally the treasure left by the Gauls is mentioned in this list. In the person of Caesar will the Gallic prize of the fabled 1000 talents, offered as payment to end their storied siege of the city, be carried off thus realizing, some 300 years later, the symbolic Gallic sacking of the city. Caesar impoverishes Rome not only by taking these riches but he also robs the city of the symbols of its power. The history of conquest and imperial expansion is assumed, through the control of these economic tokens, by Caesar who now is established as the European autocrat.

Although Caesar will continue to be associated with the ethnic Gaul throughout the remainder of the poem, this will feature less prominently as he assumes increasingly the role of tyrannical potentate. As the region over which he exercises power extends, Caesar’s character changes. No longer will it suffice to have the general be associated simply with the European theatre from which he launched this conflict. Instead he aims at assuming a global character that has as its prototype Alexander the Great.

1.3 Caesar at Troy and beyond.

While Caesar receives symbolically, both through his assumption of the treasury and his mockery of the senate, the power of Rome, it will not be until the head of his treacherously bested rival, Pompey, is delivered to him that Caesar might pretend to

118 The use of Gallus in line 3.159 is favoured by Housman. Hunink (1992), p. 100, suggests that Pyrrhus, an alternate reading, may have been the product of an interlinear gloss. Nonetheless the reference to Gaul would be appropriate given the characterizing associations that this region and its people has upon the poetic person of Caesar.
eastern domination. In books nine and ten both Caesar will begin to show a character that betrays eastern affects, a symptom most similar to that displayed by Alexander as he undertook his Asiatic campaigns. In book nine Caesar will once again demonstrate, as he blunders through the material remains of Troy, that he is incapable of recognizing the mistakes of his mythic forebearers. The function of this scene is that of rendering satirically Caesar as the tragic hero, the man who is incapable of recognizing his Aristotelian ἀμαρτία which is none other than the outrage that he has committed against Rome. Book ten emphasizes the narcissistic character of the aspiring tyrant as he is associated with Alexander. Lucan deploys the loaded narrative of the Romanized Alexander myth with the effect of further denunciating both the immediate actions of Caesar and their eventual effect; the Principate.

Alexander would serve as a complicated model for Roman power through the end of the republic. Alexander, in his campaigns, effected a program of cultural imperialism, like that implemented by the Romans through inclusive expansionism. Western culture, through the agency of these military machines, spread to Asia and Europe respectively. Roman colonial development and the increased power that it exerted in Greece and the East meant that the cultural image of Alexander would have to be confronted and co-opted if Rome were to confirm its interests in these regions. The traditional aversion that Romans of the late republic had to kings made the adoption of the Alexander narrative difficult, although his power was characterized by military endeavour and victory. Through the various biographical accounts treating his life, Alexander had assumed a ‘mythic’ quality that could be situated in an historical past. Moreover, the portrait of Alexander as rex is limited given his youthful death in 323 B.C.

at Babylon. The tradition preserves a portrait of the Macedonian king as the youthful tyrant who is still involved in the military establishment of his rule. The biographical treatment of Caesar by Suetonius places an emphasis upon this by having the Roman general pity ironically his own limited successes that pale by comparison to those of Alexander. In both cases the goal was to extend power over the orbis terrarum. On the occasion of civil war this requires that Caesar overcome his opponents, Pompey and Cato, who are associated symbolically with the regions to which he must venture, namely the East and Africa. In pursuing these men Caesar is realizing effectively his Alexandrian global conquest.

Lucan is sensitive to this Romanized version of the Alexander narrative as he develops the tyrannical character of his Caesar. Alexander had been used as a conventional object of denunciation by Roman declaimers, Stoic philosophers, and certain historians. The poet has command enough of this locus to use the character of Alexander to develop structural and thematic cohesion in the closing books of his unfinished epic. Moreover, Alexander is used as a touchstone by which the destructive, ambitious, and hubristic character of Caesar might be tested. With the defeat of Pompey’s army at Pharsalus, Caesar has taken the first step toward replacing the invention of Roman libertas, championed ineffectually by Cato and Metellus, with regnum. Morford has catalogued the elements of Lucan’s diatribe, categorizing the

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121 Suet. Div. Jul. (7.1): Quaestori ulterior Hispania obvenit; ubi cum mandatu praetoris iure dicando conventus circumiret Gadisque venisset, animadversa apud Herculis templum Magni Alexandri imagine ingemuit et quasi pertaesus ignaviam suam, quod nihil dum a se memorabile actum esset in aetate qua iam Alexander orbem terrarum subegisset, missionem continuo efflagitavit ad captandas quam primum maiorum rerum occasiones in urbe. See Plutarch (Caes. 11.3) and Dio (37.52.2) for other versions of this same episode.

characteristic tropes of the fulmination against Alexander which include madness, pride, tyranny, and arrogance.\textsuperscript{123} These themes are drawn largely from an analysis of the \textit{suasoriae} of Seneca that argue whether Alexander should have sailed upon \textit{Oceanus} and whether he should have marched upon Babylon. The primary analysis of Alexander’s character in these Senecan pieces is that the Macedonian king thinks that his power and renown are larger than the world itself. Even the boundaries of the earth, set by Ocean, do not contain the aim of his hyperbolic ambition. These traits will be developed by Lucan later in his address with which he begins the tenth book, underscoring the developed nature of Caesar’s aspiring autocracy.

Leaving Cato and his troops emerging from the trials of the Libyan desert, en route to Leptis and his promised Stoic end at Utica, Lucan turns his attention once again to Caesar (9.950ff.). The general’s narrative return is emphasized by the poetic position of his name in the first colon of the line and, lest the audience has forgotten, he is present only now that he has sated his destructive appetite. As was the case at the end of the second book, the aim of Roman domination continues to elude him. Caesar must hunt Pompey as he was once the emblem of Roman power and rule. Geography itself impedes the success of Caesar’s pursuit as the Thracian straits, forever separating Europe from Asia, distance the two men.\textsuperscript{124} In these verses, leading to the assassination of Pompey, the poet again makes metaphorical reference to these two characters representing the power and natural antipathy of Europe and the East. Nonetheless Caesar insists upon pursuing furiously his enemy, being convinced only by his disposition to be an admirer of renown, \textit{famae mirator}, to make a trip to the city of Troy. Here Lucan emphasizes,

\textsuperscript{123}Morford (1967), pp. 17-19.

\textsuperscript{124}9.952-960.
through the general’s topographical ignorance, that he is incapable of comprehending the historical significance of conflict. Rather than recognizing that, through the Aenean foundation story, Caesar himself may bear witness to the realization of a newly founded Rome, the poet accentuates the leader’s narcissistic ignorance. Having no sense of past, Caesar is here depicted as being devoid of any future hope as he lives only for the realization of his power, through *ira* and *furor*, in the present.\textsuperscript{125}

The city of Troy that Caesar visits deliberately in this episode serves as a symbol of Rome, mankind, and poetry. There are epic similarities and parallels that are to be drawn between the martial narratives of the Trojan war and this civil war suffered by Rome. The irony is that, in the bloodshed of the Pharsalian plain, Caesar has effected the final destruction of the foundational Trojan contingent that aligned itself with the Pompeian force.\textsuperscript{126} Caesar’s propagandized employment of his genealogical association with the mythic Trojan hero Aeneas becomes the more tenuous by his inability to recognize and grasp the storied power, decaying though it is, of this once great city and its heroes. The degree of Caesar’s treachery in this civil war becomes the more apparent when his military attack upon the city and state of Rome becomes couched in the language of familial perfidy. He could be expected to treat Pompey, his politically orchestrated son-in-law, no better should he dispense so readily of the loyalty deserved by his storied *maiores*.

\textsuperscript{125}The anger and rage characteristic of Caesar are the effective and ironic producers of *mors* that has been described by Lucan as but an intervening point in the long Druidic life (1.456-458). As Caesar is the harbinger of destruction he may rightly be associated with intermediary and immediate death. This reading affords Lucan and his audience both hope as Caesar’s ruin of the republic may be fleeting, an historical intermission that promises to realize the resurrection of Rome.

\textsuperscript{126}Ahl (1976), pp. 218-221.
That Troy ought to serve as an example to Rome is articulated clearly by Lucan. The narrative history of Rome itself is one of conflict, not only between forms of government and the social classes, but between the rustic mythic beginnings of a town that aspired to the ideals of the Republic and the metropolis of the poet’s own day that had been gutted of integrity by the blade of ambition. The thematic importance of destruction in this episode is evidenced by Lucan’s exaggerated descriptions of the Trojan ruins themselves: \textit{etiam periere ruinae.} Rather than being a gratuitous scene of comic relief in which Lucan illustrates Caesar’s ignorant autocratic pretense, the visit to Troy invites the audience to juxtapose the literal and epic products of the attendant wars. The \textit{fama} granted by Homer to the men who fell at Troy is of a different sort than that which Lucan is generating. His Caesar is but a manifestation of the eroded Roman character. This resonates with the image of Rome that has been developed in the poem. As Caesar wishes only to make progress paradoxically through ruin, Troy, with its collapsing buildings, serves as a monument to his fantastic legacy. Rome, later dubbed the ‘eternal city’, offers an example of the destruction brought about via mismanaged cultural expansionism and time.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[127] Martindale (1993), p.51, develops an ‘ideology of ruins’ that would argue for the endurance of Rome, a strength produced by associative connection with geographic space and mythic time. While Virgil’s views of heroic characters and scenes complement the endurance of the Augustan ‘new’ state, Lucan offers contrariwise an image of dissolution. Ruin, dilapidation, abandonment, these are the emblematic images of Lucan’s view of the Hesperian past, present, and future.
\item[128] 9.969.
\item[130] Hinds (1998), p. 86, comments that Caesar’s heroic character is deficient to the degree that he is incapable of recognizing the sacred places of Troy. Given the general’s behaviour at Rome upon his looting of the treasury, however, there is nothing to suggest that his characteristic hubris may not produce some similarly inappropriate reaction at Troy.
\end{enumerate}
affords the poet a *locus*, one that is both spatial and narrative, in which to articulate his intention to produce a monument that will be able to withstand the ruin that has beset Troy and Rome both. Inspiration has abandoned, as have the gods of the epic, both the artist and his product leaving Lucan only to call upon *labor* to insure that his cautionary poetic edifice may endure:

O sacer et magnus vatum labor! omnia fato eripis et populis donas mortalibus aevum. invidia sacrae, Caesar, ne tangere famae; nam, si quid Latiis fas est promittere Musis, quantum Zmyrnaei durabunt vatis honores, venturi me teque legent; Pharsalia nostra vivet, et a nullo tenebris damnabimur aevō.

O vaunted and grand travail of the poets. You snatch all things from fate and you give timelessness to mortal peoples. Caesar, may a jealousy of sacred fame not touch you. For, if it be granted that the Latin Muses may gift something, be it that coming generations will read of you and me together, as long as the honours of the poet Homer endure. Let our Pharsalia live, and may we not be condemned to the shadows by any generation.

(9.980-986)

Timelessness, the intended effect of Lucan’s poetry, is to be the reward of Caesar’s destruction. The poet’s epic is his effort to build a monument that, unlike ruined Troy and Rome both, will be an everlasting warning to generations of the hollowness that was victory in this civil war.¹³² The future promised by Caesar’s campaign surrounds him at Troy where he calls upon the fruitless local deities to bring fortune to his coming conflicts. Lucan situates Caesar’s articulation of his desire that Rome be as a Troy

¹³²Bartsch (1997), pp. 131-135 explores the meaning that Lucan glosses through his interpretation of chaotic and fragmentary remains. Troy, like Rome, is little more than a *nomen*. This may be developed further to draw in the character of Pompey is the *magni nominis umbra*. Pompey thus symbolizes the decrepitude of his contemporary Rome, one that is but the chaotic shambles of the storied city of Camillus and Horatius Cocles.
resurrected in an abandoned landscape of desolation and dilapidation. Here Lucan will try to isolate Caesar, in a place that can be harmed no more by the general’s *ira* and *furor*, far off from the city of Rome and the ghostly republic whose substantive resurrection is being avowed by Cato in Africa.

As he closes his prayer to the Trojan gods Caesar states plainly that he longs to found, in a manner worthy of his Aeneas’ ancestors, a new city for the *penates* and his people both. This paradigm of the foundation hero serves as the model by which Caesar wishes to have his actions in the civil war evaluated:

\[
date\ felices\ in\ cetera\ cursus, \\
restituum\ populos;\ grata\ vice\ moenia\ reddent \\
Ausonidae\ Phrygibus,\ Romanaque\ Pergama\ surgent. \\
\]

Grant that I follow a prosperous course in coming affairs, as I will restore the people. May once again the Ausonian walls, grateful to the Phrygians, be erected. May the Roman Pergamum be founded.

(9.997-999)

Caesar would have his civil war thus be read as a translation of Aeneas’s foundation story. Rome was the product of the destruction of Troy. Livy’s history of Rome, which tells of the founding and refounding of the city, parallels the razing of Troy by the Greeks and that of Rome by the Gauls. The foundation of a city is tied intricately to building programs which allow the chief political figures to develop their public character as that of a founding figure. Caesar’s occupation of Rome earlier in the epic has been shown to have intended references, both situational and ethnographic, to the invasion by the Gauls described in the fifth book of Livy’s history. On the political appropriation by Augustus of Livy’s developed version of the Gallic invasion see Edwards (1996), pp. 51-52.

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133 Johnson (1987), pp. 120-121.

134 On the political appropriation by Augustus of Livy’s developed version of the Gallic invasion see Edwards (1996), pp. 51-52.
Caesar must bear witness to the metaphorical destruction that he has wrought upon the product of Aeneas’ flight from a ruined Troy. Caesar, while he would fashion himself the hero of *Roma recondita* is rather than the foreign Gallic destroyer that has occupied and devastated the city.

Hurriedly Lucan closes this scene, hastening Caesar on his way skirting the Asiatic shore heading instead to Egypt. His brief stop at Troy has functioned as Caesar’s affected appropriation of the Pompeian power of the East. What remains is for the general to establish himself in the last of the three geographical regions; Lucan’s Africa. Before even landing on the shore Caesar is greeted by the delegates of Ptolemy who are too anxious to grant Caesar the title to which he aspires. Immediately he is addressed as *terrarum dominator* and as the *Romanae maxime gentis*. Although Cato still poses a republican threat to Caesar’s tyrannical agenda these Egyptians have thought to resolve this civil war through their treacherous slaughter of Pompey. What was seen by the poet and his audience in the architectural ruins of Troy is presented in the corporal dismemberment of Pompey. While Caesar was ignorant of the symbolic importance of the former, the meaning of the presentation of Pompey’s head is made explicit by the Egyptian emissaries who state plainly that it will be perceived that now Caesar has assumed the position of *princeps*. Just as the decapitation of Priam had marked the epic end to Troy, the presentation of Pompey’s head marks the disappearance of the evanescing Roman republic. Remarkable is Caesar’s initial reaction to seeing the head. Rather than turning away immediately in disgust he must inspect the visage, withered and

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135 Ahl (1976), p. 221, notes that this is the only passage in which the name of Aeneas is mentioned in the entirety of Lucan’s epic. The association between Caesar and Aeneas suggests that the civil war at Pharsalus destroyed effectively the Italian Troy founded by the fugitive Aeneas.

rotting, in an effort to be sure that it is in fact that of Pompey. It is only once he is assured of this fact, granted fidem sceleris, that Caesar, again aware of his immediate audience, bursts into tears.

What had been suggested earlier by Lucan in his vatic observations on foreigners and their role in this war is articulated by the Egyptians before their outrageous presentation. It has fallen to foreign peoples to undertake and bring an end to what began as a Roman civil war: absenti bellum civile peractum est. This has become now a conflict of the world for the world, one that has been all but conquered by Caesar. What Caesar does become aware of at this point is the precariousness of his empowered position. While before he had been able to establish himself the rules of engagement whereby he would be able to exercise his power over the vanquished, such as Metellus and Domitius, through his clementia, this has been questioned by the initiatives taken by Ptolemy: unica belli / praemia civilis, victis donare salutem, perdidimus.137 This power of perverted clemency is the one premium that he was able to enjoy when demonstrating his monarchic power over his countrymen and this has been compromised. At this moment Caesar recognizes that he can now exercise this same imperium over the kingdoms and peoples that now have come under his power with the victory at Pharsalus and the murder of Pompey. In a demonstration of this Caesar affords venia, yet another example of his self-serving clementia, to Ptolemy who is to atone for the murder by generating a monument in which to bury Pompey.138 Even in death Caesar will thus

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137 9.1066-1068.

138 Roller (2001), pp. 207-8, describes the negotiation by which Caesar may find himself unexpectedly indebted, a situation that compromises, when exposed publicly, his pretense to power. Lucan is careful to have Caesar resolutely turn the tables by undermining the value of the gift offered by Ptolemy. By denying the head the status of gift Caesar retains his position of relative primacy. As such no exchange will be required on the part of Caesar but rather he may ask for yet further concessions, including the construction of Pompey’s sepulchre. See also Spencer (2003). pp. 170-175.
attempt to relegate the exiled Pompey to foreign shores using this sepulchre as a monument to his autarchic ascension in a manner worthy and reminiscent of Alexander the Great.

1.4 Caesar and Alexander

As he opens the final book of his epic Lucan emphasizes the instability of a world that now is by nature volatile. Pompey is literally the promised *umbra* who is effective moreso in death than in life as he is credited by the poet as being the sole agent who saved Caesar and who, thereby, saved Roman subordination to Egyptian rule. Nonetheless, the disposition of the local citizens is such that they oppose vociferously and threateningly the promise of local Roman rule. The *furor* that has been characteristic of Caesar and his cause has now manifested itself in the Egyptian crowd that meets him. This infected madness is a symptom of the spreading contagion that is Roman civil war.\(^{139}\) Immediately upon his arrival among this mob of frenzied people Caesar, still in the role of the itinerant tourist adopted at Troy, goes first to visit the monumental testaments to Alexander’s power. Not taken with the outward signs of social, political, and economic prosperity including the gilt temples of gods and the high-standing walls, Caesar is drawn instead to the tomb of Alexander. While Lucan develops the character of his Caesar using the mythic and literary language of his ancestors in book nine, here Caesar will be developed again using the political image of the Macedonian tyrant.\(^{140}\)

The visit by Caesar to Alexander’s tomb affords Lucan the opportunity to rail against monarchic aspirations and to draw associative parallels between the two leaders


that illustrate their similarly destructive agendas. Alexander is described in this diatribe using language, including the characterizing metaphor of *fulmen*, that establishes the correspondence between the complementarily destructive natures of the two men. When generating this comparison Lucan is employing the Romanized narrative of Alexander the Great. Before treating the passage in question it will be of benefit to review briefly the semiotic role attributed to Alexander by Romans through the late republic and early Principate. It is not that Lucan is deploying Alexander as a simple examplar for the destruction that might be the product of one man’s megalomaniacal ambition. Instead there is a subtle play on the Alexandran model that structures the audience’s reception of the Macedonian and, more importantly, Caesar.

The association made by Lucan between Alexander and Caesar, a tacit association throughout the epic, is made explicit by the latter’s visit to the Macedonian king’s tomb. In a scene that is reminiscent of Aeneas’ *κατάβασις*, here Caesar visits the underground sepulcher where the integrity of Alexander’s body and cultural narrative is preserved. In describing Caesar’s descent and his reverence of Alexander displayed below, Lucan affords himself a poetic locus for the traditional diatribe on the malignity that the Macedonian wrought. Lucan’s tirade is, in part, an evaluation of the products of tyranny, one of which is the institution of the Principate. This scene, like Virgil’s parade of forthcoming Roman heroes, offers a diagnostic glimpse, grim though it be, of the true product of civil war. In visiting this shrine Caesar is paying homage in part to the Alexandran tradition, but more importantly he is giving tribute to the man who crippled *libertas* leaving the citizens of the world as a mob incapable of resisting his advance.

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141 The emphasis upon the preservation of Alexander’s entire figure in this tomb is developed in order to contrast with the scattered and anonymous burial of Pompey described in detail at the close of both books eight and nine.
Lucan offers a synopsis of Alexander’s military career, emphasizing not the campaigns per se but rather the lands through which his march took him:

Macetum fines latebrasque suorum
deseruit victasque patri despexit Athenas,
perque Asiae populos fatis urguentibus actus
humana cum strage ruit gladiumque per omnis
exegit gentes, ignotos miscuit amnes
Persarum Euphraten, Indorum sanguine Gangen,...

Abandon, he did, the boundaries of Macedon and his native haunts
spurning the Athens of his father. Driven forth by ever-urging Fate, with
human carnage he burst over the people of the East and he drove his sword
through all peoples. Unknown rivers he befouled mixing the blood of the
Persians in the Euphrates and that of Indians in the Ganges.

(10.28-34)

Alexander’s conquests originate from his native home, the land with which he has a cultural connection. This produces in his campaign its element of ethno-cultural colonialism.\footnote{Morford (1967), p. 18, categorizes the verses in question as a denunciation of \textit{furor}. This serves as a reflective condemnation of Caesar and his own ambitions.} He moves outward from the centre that is Macedonia, conquering increasingly distant lands as he ventures eastward from Greece, through Persia to India. This is in contrast to the initial movement of his Roman counterpart Caesar who, given the nature of this civil conflict, marches from Gaul, rallying an army of men drawn from the far reaches of the European north, with Rome as his primary goal.\footnote{Ahl (1976), p. 224.} Civil war requires that Caesar turn entropically his military power upon Rome before he may embark effectively upon his campaign for universal autocracy.

Lucan is sure to make the associative connection between the characters of Caesar and Alexander on the basis of their destructive bloodlust, fueled by their desire for
worldwide mastery, that could be checked by no boundaries. Using natural language Lucan implies that the power of Alexander is representative of the discord present in the cosmos:

\[
\text{terrarum fatale malum fulmenque quod omnis percuteret pariter populos et sidus iniquum gentibus.}
\]

A fatal ill of the world, a lightning bolt that struck all people alike, an ill-omened star.

(10.34-36)

Not only is he a plague, Alexander is as a lightning bolt and a destructive star. The use of the word *fulmen* recalls the introductory portrait of Caesar who strikes like a lightning bolt, a man wishing only to make his way by wreaking havoc and creating bloody carnage.\(^{144}\) Moreover this astronomical association reinforces the political and familial patrimony of Nero. He has been granted by Lucan in the proem a poetic and premature katasterism mimicking that proclaimed upon the death of Caesar. These heavenly and meteorological metaphors suggest that Alexander, and by association Caesar, affect a distinct part of man’s world. Disease affects inwardly the body. Lightning is a product of the natural world that can strike and destroy outwardly. Lastly the reference to an accursed star suggests that his is a threat that mirrors a cosmic contagion. The power of these hubristic tyrants is thus universally destructive.

The Nile serves as a key geographical feature in book ten. The need to know the source of this river characterizes Lucan’s Alexander and Caesar both as this knowledge

\(^{144}\)The reference to the ill-omened star may be an allusion to the storied katasterism of Caesar promulgated by Augustus. An alternate reading would have this mention of a *sidus iniquum* intended to recall the praise of Nero with which Lucan opens the dedicatory address of his epic (1.55.) In both cases the language describing the destruction that is Alexander is associated by Lucan with the institution of the principate and, more importantly, with the Julio-Claudian line. This association, and its Senecan ties, is explored by Spencer (2003), pp. 11-18.
becomes representative of hegemony over the farthest reaches of the world. Such understanding suggests that the maddened aspirant has overcome the restrictive force of *natura* itself.\textsuperscript{145} In addition to this initial reference to the river, it will serve as the primary subject of entertainment later as Cleopatra hosts Caesar where Acoreus will reiterate at length the Eudoxan account tracing the headwaters of the Nile to an antipodal continent.\textsuperscript{146} Taken together with the reference to the east, the west, the north, and the south, this mention of an antichthonous region, one beyond Ocean, would generate a circular, if not spherical, model of the world. His journeying to these peripheral places then becomes representative of the regent’s control over the entire globe. The embedded narrative of the Nile is representative of the associations that this river has with the cultivated image of imperial power shared by both Caesar and Alexander. The latter would undertake an investigation of the river’s source as knowledge of this mythic riddle would suggest intellectual mastery over *natura* itself. This was thwarted nonetheless by the harshness of the inland climate that impeded the advance of his scouting party. Lucan states plainly that, were he given the time, Alexander most surely would have drunk from the Nile’s source. There remains something inherently destructive about the effort to attain mastery over the Nile through knowledge of its mysterious flooding. Alexander, Sesostris, and Cambyses have all been destroyed prior to laying claim to the river and the regions associated therewith. Caesar, following the pattern of these predecessors, seeks too to be initiated into the natural mysteries of the Nile in an effort to establish himself as the truly epic conqueror. Finally, given the events of 44 BC, it will be seen that he fares no better than did his predecessors.

\textsuperscript{145}Lucan develops this in his account of the initiatives that Alexander would have undertaken were he not to have suffered an untimely death (10.36-45).

\textsuperscript{146}Romm (1992), p. 150.
Instead of undertaking a traditional exploratory expedition up the river, Caesar is granted insight through the long account given by Acoreus. Not merely a Lucanian digression, this 125 line description of the river becomes a poetic conquering thereof. Textually Lucan affords himself and his audience intellectual control over this iconic location of power. In Lucan’s words Caesar thus accomplishes something denied Alexander although he is disallowed the occasion of acting upon the revealed mystery. Representative of the ambition of both men the Nile remains beyond the literal reach of these narcissistic kings who would undertake a program of expansionism for the purpose of self-aggrandizement rather than public benefit.\(^{147}\)

Lucan brings his denunciation of Alexander to a close by pointing to the deficiencies in the exercise of Roman imperial power, initiated by Caesar, that is incapable of commanding the same fear and deference as its Macedonian model:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pro pudor, Eoi propius timuere sarisas} \\
\text{quam nunc pila timent populi. licet usque sub Arcton} \\
\text{regnemus Zephyrique domos terrasque premamus} \\
\text{flagrantis post terga Noti, cedemus in ortus} \\
\text{Arsacidum domino. Non felix Parthia Crassis} \\
\text{exiguae secura fuit provincia Pellae.}
\end{align*}
\]

It is shameful that the people of the East feared more the Macedonian lances than today they fear our javelins. While it is possible for us to reign over the houses ranging from the far North to the West, and though we hold sway over those lands having at their back the scorching South wind, nonetheless we must concede the East to the kingly successors of Arsaces. Parthia, so unfortunate to Crassus, was a secure province to trifling Pella. \(^{(10.47-52)}\)

What elicits Lucan’s rhetorical contempt is that, try as it might, the Roman Republic was unable to meet the imperial success won by Alexander. He alone was able to subdue the

\(^{147}\)Romm (1992), pp. 154-155.
places and people of the East while the consular armies of the Republic secured control of all points north, south, and west. Caesar, given his strong associations with Alexander, his informed Gallic character, and his Roman military patrimony, can aspire to dominion that encompasses all of these regions.

Alexander dies in Babylon at a young age and this precludes us from seeing what might have been. The success that he earns is that he is afforded fear by the Parthians where the Romans are viewed in this epic only with scorn. Occasioned by the poet’s death Lucan’s epic is brought to an abrupt close, leaving us with Caesar in a besieged Alexandria. We do not know what the poet would have happen. The narrative of Caesar, like the life of Alexander, breaks off before the full force of his actions may be realized both by others and himself. The poem leaves the audience with the promise of what will be although Lucan is spared having to pen the final ruin of the republic in the character of Cato. Caesar’s association with Alexander grants him a characterizing association with the East. What would remain is the realization of his control over Africa, something that would attend only upon his defeat of Cato at Utica.

1.5 Conclusion

Throughout the epic Caesar shows a greater change than do the Lucanian characters of Pompey and Cato. Caesar is maddened power incarnate, drawing upon the strength and character of those regions and people over whom he now has imperium. The distinction between Roman and foreigner has become confused in Caesar as he does not recognize boundaries distinguishing continental regions and peoples. This is, in part, the
product of the loosening nexus that threatens the integrity of the *foedera mundi.* Rather than informing Gaul, Greece, and now Egypt, with the principles of Rome, Caesar looks only to advance his own agenda. This he does by drafting the characteristic strength of each locale, undergoing an apparent ethnic metamorphosis that has him amplify even the most stereotypical traits of those whom he would emulate. When he takes it upon himself to fell the first tree at Massilia, thereby laying low and desecrating the local gods, his impious actions horrify even his Gallic audience. Caesar thus has evolved monstrously to the degree that he becomes a Roman parody of the popular Gaul.

Something similar is seen upon the occasion of Caesar’s victory at Pharsalus. Here the brazen and aspiring despot demonstrates his *furor* by not affording the corpses the clemency of a proper burial. Caesar is portrayed in this instance as being more hateful and pernicious than Hannibal himself at Cannae. Destruction is the legacy that Caesar wishes to realize. Here, as he feeds himself on breakfast, he feasts his eyes on the piles of bodies so deep that the Emathian plain is invisible. His immediate location, his place in the world, is representative of catastrophic universal ruin.

As he moves East Lucan accentuates the despotic nature of Caesar by associating him with Alexander. Upon leaving the Thessalian plain at Pharsalus in pursuit of Pompey, the poet renders Caesar metaphorically as Alexander setting out on his campaign. The coincidence of the Caesarian and Alexandran narratives is made clear at the opening of the tenth book upon Caesar’s visit to the tomb. Lucan’s invective denouncing the monarchic program of Alexander is a clear attack upon Caesar himself. Not simply employing the cultural myth of Alexander as a diagnostic lens through which

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149 7.786-824.
to understand the threat of Caesar, Lucan renders Caesar as Alexander resurrected. No longer the simple Gallic marauder aiming to sack Rome, Caesar is now invested with the Hellenized character of the autocrat. As he moves from region to region, conquering and cowing different ethnic groups, Caesar comes to reflect the stereotypical character of those people subsumed. His is a program of individual imperial colonialsim whereby he aims at assuming pangaiac dominion.
CHAPTER 2
POMPEY : THE SUN SETS IN THE EAST

The challenge faced by Pompey, like both Cato and Caesar, is that of recognizing his true persona. In his assessment of the edifying aims of Stoicism Edelstein summarized the educational aim of self recognition as follows: “Man is able to rise from the level of inauthentic existence to that of authentic existence, from fraudulent being to true being; and we do this when we understand who we are in reality and decide to be what we are.” Throughout the course of the epic, Pompey’s geographic movement away from Italy will correspond to the separation that he suffers from the ideal of abstracted Roman Republican identity. While it has been argued by George that Pompey’s journey is that of the Stoic proficiens, a course that would see his graduation in his stalwart acceptance of his execution, it is also the case that with his initial abandonment of Rome he has transgressed inadvertently an ethnic boundary. His movement away from the centre of Rome will result increasingly in an obscuring of Pompey’s Romanism.

The choice of the term persona is deliberate as Lucan blends poetically both the persona dramatis and the persona historica. It becomes the reader’s challenge when evaluating Pompey’s character to recognize the various aspects of coincidence and divergence that stem from the poetic compound that is Magnus. As the poem proceeds Pompey recognizes that he must create his persona historica, the quality of his character that is to be preserved for posterity, using semblance, his persona dramatis, in such a way as to manipulate the poetic audience’s ‘gaze’.

Edelstein (1966), 38.

George (1985), pp. 67-140.
The association between geographic location and ethnic characterization is developed in Pompey’s struggle to recall that this war is to be fought on the behalf of the Republic; it is a war waged by Romans for Rome. As the conflict is drawn out, however, Lucan makes it clear that this initial assessment is no longer valid as Pompey and Caesar both disguise their traditional Roman personae, privileging instead foreign habits, characteristics and strengths.\textsuperscript{153} This increasing suppression of Pompey’s habitus Romanus is manifest in the decreasing proximity and similarity he has to his troops as the epic progresses until he is finally left completely alone on the Egyptian skiff. As a fugax Pompey suffers a representative loss of identity that is symptomatic of his dissociation from the Roman community he was to lead.

Pompey demonstrates his increasing inefficacy in both speech and action. This will reach its peak in book 8 where Pompey will suggest that the Pompeian cause can be rescued only if he entrusts himself, his forces, and the future of the Roman Republic to the protection and support of the Parthian king. This chapter will track Pompey’s movement from Rome and the corresponding disintegration of his Roman character, something that will be rescued only at the moment of his assassination when he will give up finally his spectacular role of spectator for that of the actor of Roman virtue.

\textsuperscript{153}Masters (1992), p. 62, states that Pompey is programmatically associated with eastern lands. This is due to the eastern triumphs that proved fundamental to the development of Pompey’s political career. Masters thus suggests that this association with the east is intended to be historical alone. There is, however, both a poetic as well as an historical forshadowing effected by the employment of such a characterization. The East and its people will be the eventual cause of Pompey’s destruction, as the audience already knows, and this underscores the tragic course of action that Magnus takes throughout this poem as he makes his hypoheroic anostic journey.
2.1 Pompey’s Roman Introduction.

Lucan unveils his Pompey only upon discussing the causes of the civil war (1.67-182). Lucan would at first appear not to take issue with the problems surrounding the integrity of Pompey’s historical persona. Instead the poet intends to establish early the general’s poetic character that will persist throughout the epic. This will be done explicitly when Pompey is juxtaposed to Caesar in the well-known antinomical sketches of each (1.121-157). There are, however, prefatory remarks made by the poet that prepare for this comparison. These early and passing references to Pompey serve to cast the general not simply as Caesar’s antagonist, but even as a corresponding aspiring tyrant. The sole difference between the acts of treason committed by Pompey and Caesar is that the former has already undertaken such actions in his effort to establish himself as the undisputed princeps, while his father-in-law still looks to commit this offense against Rome.

Lucan opens his catalogue of the causae belli by offering a generalized listing of the principle factors that precipitated the conflict. The first proper name used in this causal account is that of Roma proper (nec se Roma ferens. [1.72]). This implosion of the Roman state is elaborated in the proceeding lines in which Lucan describes civic dissolution in language most appropriate to Stoic ἔκτιρμος. The image of conpages that will be dissolved (soluta) is drawn directly from Stoic cosmological contexts.

Within such a system these conpages are all that is keeping the various elements of the universe from collapsing upon one another. Were they to be compromised the resulting

154Johnson (1987), p. 73.
155Lapidge (1979), pp. 360-361.
collapse would cause the cosmos to be destroyed in fire.\textsuperscript{156} This image is then transferred to the triumvirate consisting of Pompey, Crassus and Caesar. Once Crassus, who corresponds to the Stoic δεσιμοί that preserve the foedera mundi, dies on campaign then the elemental characters that are Pompey and Caesar by necessity are freed from any restraint and thus are driven to clash with one another.\textsuperscript{157} The product of this inevitable conflict is none other than the dissolution of the political world of which they were a part; the Republic.

Before developing the contrasting portraits of Pompey and Caesar, Lucan states plainly the reasons behind the rivalry between the two. It is not that Pompey champions altruistically the principles of the mores maiorum, but rather that both men long for control over Rome.\textsuperscript{158} This antagonism is developed by Lucan in geographical terms. Lucan, in the role of poetic intermediary, addresses both leaders in an apostrophe that functions as a preamble to the developed comparison he will make between the two of them.\textsuperscript{159}

\textsuperscript{156}Lapidge (1979), pp. 362-363, states that Lucan’s loose employment of Stoic cosmological language suggests at least a familiarity with the intricacies of such theory. It may be worthwhile considering the question of Lucan’s philosophical employment of Stoicism in much the same way one can question his use of poetic license in his adaptation of historical details. The question then no longer aims at revealing the ways in which Lucan himself was or was not a doctrinaire Stoic, but rather why he chooses on particular occasions to manipulate cosmological imagery to suit his poetic needs of the moment.

\textsuperscript{157}His defeat by the Parthians preserves the legitimacy of the threat that this Oriental power has. Rome and Parthia, given the breadth of their expansion and ambitions, are fated to collide with one another. This promised conflict will underlie the development of the war between Caesar and Pompey.

\textsuperscript{158}Eldred (1997), p. 139.

\textsuperscript{159}Lucan’s assessment of the reasons underlying Pompey’s forced involvement in the war is a poetic translation of Caesar’s evaluation of the same (BC 4.4): ipse Pompeius ab inimicis Caesaris incitatus, et quod neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat, totum se ab eius amicitia averterat et cum communibus inimicis in gratiam redierat, quorum ipse maximam partem illo adfinitatis tempore inluxerat Caesari. The charge made by Caesar is that Pompey gave up legitimate amicitia for inimicitia inspired by an unwillingness to be viewed another man’s equal. This introductory evaluation of Pompey’s initial actions casts this antagonist as the aspiring monarch, thereby exonerating Caesar himself from any such charge.
tu, nova ne veteres obscurent acta triumphos
et victis cedat piratica laurea Gallis,
Magne, times. te iam series ususque laborum
erigit inpatiensque loci fortuna secundi.
nec quemquam iam ferre potest Caesarue priorem
Pompeiusue parem.

You, dear Magnus, fear lest new deeds overshadow victories of old and
lest your triumph over the pirates give way to victories over Gauls.
Continuous familiarity with exertion and your own good fortune make you
chafe at the thought of being second-best. In no way is Caesar able to
abide anyone who is better, nor can Pompey stomach anyone being his
equal.

(1.121-126)

While this contrast is developed from the respective military spheres in which each
general enjoyed success, there is an implicit resonance of the Stoic theme of worldly
destruction. Pompey emerged as the true Republican champion upon the successful
annihilation of piracy throughout the Mediterranean in 67 B.C. This maritime campaign
established Pompey as the man right for command in Lucullus’ Asiatic provinces and in
the Mithridatic war. In this passage Lucan associates Pompey’s greatest triumph with
the maritime victory over the Cilician pirates. Development of this association
establishes Pompey as representative of the strength he was able to display at sea.

Elementally thus Pompey may be equated with water proper. Contrariwise Caesar’s

160 The importance of the east to the characterization of Lucan’s Pompey will be discussed at
greater length below.

161 Syme (1939), P. 30, notes that Pompey’s successes earned for him the notable long and
ostentatious title of ‘the warden of land and sea.’ This is an example of Magnus’ cultivated image that
would have the countries and people of the East address him as a divine saviour.

162 This imagery is reinforced by the fact that Pompey will meet his tragic end while afloat on a
diminutive skiff. Thus does the sea become the medium for Pompey’s military and political ascendancy in
the 60s and his complementary destruction in 48 B.C.
victories were won on the continent. These were land-fought battles through which the young general was able not only to emerge as an absolutely effective leader but also whereby he could produce for himself a fighting force that would equate its well-being with its leader’s. In many ways this point in the evolution of Caesar’s character was a product of the land in which he was fighting. Gaul affords the general autonomy and strength. He, like the soldiers under him, embodies the ruggedness of the upper regions of the Mediterranean basin. Caesar is thus representative of the threatening power of this land. Lucan suggests that these two men have come into conflict not only because their respective agendas would force it, but because their essentially elemental natures require it. In this way these two men represent symbolically one effect of cosmic destruction: ...tellus extendere litora nolet / excutietque fretum,... (1.76-77). The boundaries separating land and sea are not fixed.

Lucan, having stylized the contrast between the characters of Pompey and Caesar in terms of elemental imagery, develops explicitly the comparison between the two men using the language of languor and vitality to capture their respective weakness and strength. The poet introduces these lines casting these men as ill-matched gladiatorial combatants: nec coiere pares (1.129). The challenge is over before it has begun. The image of Pompey as nothing more than an inert oaken stump, an ineffectual shade, is set in opposition to the supernatural vigour that is Caesar. In this comparative portrait of

163 See above pp. 21-46.

164 This kind of natural imagery is suggested earlier in this very section when Lucan likens Crassus to an isthmus that holds two separate bodies of water back from one another (1.100-103).

165 Getty (1940), pp. 26, 46; Feeney (1986), p. 239.

166 Bartsch (1997), pp. 55-6, argues that Lucan employs language in such a way as to make the concept of opposition hollow. The audience suffers complicity in the crime of civil war should a comparative evaluation of the two combatants, Caesar and Pompey, be even undertaken.
Pompey and Caesar the poet establishes the core-characterizations of these two anti-heroes.\footnote{Newmyer (1983), p. 227.} Consideration of the images used to delineate Pompey’s character at this early stage in the epic will show that Pompey is dedicated to living vicariously though past victories. This means that he wishes to import to Rome effectually the successes that he won in the harsh lands of the east, successes that once made Pompey the first man at Rome.

These three words, \textit{nec coiere pares}, function as the proem to the contrasting depictions of the two generals. They point additionally to the perverted \textit{munus} offered by Caesar and Pompey as they vie with one another in the early stages of the civil war. Paradoxically the gladiatorial show that is the figurative battle between Pompey and Caesar is an honorific celebration of an already dead Rome. Lucan, who sponsored during his quaestorship gladiatorial \textit{munera}, knew well the ritualistic and competitive circumstances of these games which retained an aspect of their original funerary character throughout their staging.\footnote{Ahl (1976), pp. 86-88.} The poet will pit these ill-matched competitors, Caesar and Pompey, against one another in a gladiatorial show that functions as a funerary offering to the spectre of \textit{libertas}.

In contrast to the autonomy that serves as Caesar’s strength in leadership, futile solitude is the affliction that accompanies Pompey’s aspirations of tyrannical ascendancy. He will die alone on the diminutive Egyptian skiff, just as here he is an isolated member of the audience in his own theatre. He does not participate in the activity of “watching” but rather imagines himself as the theatrical object of the mob’s attention and celebratory approval; he does not view this \textit{ludus} but rather is an actor therein:

\footnote{Ahl (1976), pp. 86-88.}
alter urgentibus annis
in senium longoque togae tranquillior usu
dedidicit iam pace ducem, famaeque petitor
multa dare in volgus, totus popularibus\textsuperscript{169} auris
inpelli plausuque sui gaudere theatri,
nec reparare novas vires, multumque priori
credere fortunae.

[Pompey] as he wore on in years was made all the more docile through both old-age and through his extended familiarity with the togate life. He abdicated the role of \textit{dux} during this time of peace. He came to strive after popular acclaim showering the rabble with tokens of his largesse. Altogether was he delighted by the breaths of the favour of public fortune. He paid no mind to inspiring new strengths, instead choosing for the most part to trust in his previous good fortune.

(1.129-135)

Pompey has literally constructed this environment that functions architecturally as an attestation to his bygone success. Lucan may even be suggesting that Pompey has given up his role as \textit{dux} choosing instead to assume the apparent role of an infamous \textit{scaenicus}.\textsuperscript{170} Pompey’s theatricity is a product of his actual ineffectiveness. Both in this metaphorical image, and throughout the rest of the epic, Magnus is cast as the \textit{spectator spectandus}. The ruin that is to befall the Republic entrusted to the protection of Pompey

\textsuperscript{169} OLD 3b documents the substantive use of \textit{popularis} by Cicero to denominate the separate seats in the theatre to be occupied by the common people. It may be that Lucan intends to have this usage resonate in his listener’s ear thereby reinforcing the theatricality of the situation.

\textsuperscript{170} Bartsch (1994), pp. 3-5, notes the correspondence between Nero’s imperial and theatrical personae. The emperor would embody, and thus signify physically, the strength and extent of Roman empire. This symbolic representation of power would only then be denigrated when Nero would take up the lyre or would choose to assume the costume, speech and demeanor of the meanest tragic herald. Lucan’s application of the word \textit{scaenicus} to suggest the disgust felt at such theatrics is suggested by Tacitus’ report that this was a common way for the memer of the Pisonian conspiracy to slander the emperor himself (\textit{Ann.} 15.59.2).
is demanded historically. This reality means that Pompey, while he might endeavour to rescue his own historico-literary character, is condemned, like the Lucanian audience, to watch hopelessly as the state collapses upon itself.\textsuperscript{171}

Pompey is here a blend of both the poetic spectacle and the medium of poetic description. Thus the spectator, both within and without this epic, is not afforded the luxury of participatory distancing that might otherwise afford “epistemological mastery.”\textsuperscript{172} The general, seated within the critically structuring confines of his own architectural testament, elicits the abjective gaze of both the literal and the poetic audience; Pompey longs to be viewed as the Other. He is not part of the Roman community in the theatre nor does he share the sympathetic view of Lucan’s readership. In his dreams he has isolated himself effectively. No longer a mere Republican, no longer a Roman, Pompey sees himself and his programme as wholly coincidental with Rome. The spectacular character of Pompey is one that is generated for the sake of displaying synthetically the codified ethical discourse of the Roman aristocracy.\textsuperscript{173} As the poem progresses Pompey struggles to realize these virtues among his troops and on the battle field. At the moment of his death only will he succeed in offering an appropriate display of these traits.

The theatrical setting of the above cited passage (1.129-135) can be investigated in yet another way. Lucan states plainly that Pompey, having grown soft from the many

\textsuperscript{171}Johnson (1987), p.69.

\textsuperscript{172}Metz (1982), p.92.

\textsuperscript{173}Roller (2001), pp. 20-29, offers a synoptic evaluation of the structuring role assumed by this abstract Latin vocabulary. It is upon the cornerstones of such ethical terms as nobilitas, dignitas, honor, virtus, and pietas, this last term being trumpeted in the celebrated national character of Horatius Cocles, that the Roman aristocratic identity was ideologically and artificially constructed. Thus these values, Roller goes on to say, describe the ethical boundaries of the Roman community. Within the parameters established by this discourse the Roman is able to recognize and negotiate both his position within and without Roman society.
intervening years of peace that he has enjoyed, has become limp. This shameless self-lover has lost his potency. He is both unwilling and unable to muster the resources that furnished his former strength, trusting his future instead to the vagaries of *fortuna*. No longer is Pompey even capable of playing the role of the true *vir Romanus*. This inability produces a damnable symptom; he is incapable of the practice of true *virtus*.\(^{174}\) By nature this term is derived from public action. Pliny the Elder offers a literary actualization of this when he composes a catalogue of Pompey’s many successes won for the adornment of Roman power: *ad decus imperii Romani*. The author includes the general’s exploits among those of Alexander the Great, Hercules and even Pater Liber.\(^{175}\) There may be a note of irony in this last association as Pater Liber enjoyed apparently no temple or celebratory space within the city limits of Rome. This is in stark contrast to Pompey’s self-aggrandizing theatre. Should Pompey hope to assume the legitimate role of the Republican in Lucan’s epic, the general’s struggle will not be simply with his own trepidation and the doggedly determined Caesar, but he must also endeavor to display publicly, and thereby actualize, Roman *virtus*.

Pompey’s incapacity as a leader is not a function of his age alone. At the outbreak of the civil war Pompey, at age 57, would have been at most six years older than Caesar.\(^{176}\) Nonetheless in these lines Lucan characterizes Pompey as a doddering old man choosing to garner *fama* rather than nurturing the very *fortuna* to which he owes his previous military triumphs and his current political situation. It is conspicuous that

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\(^{174}\) Cic. (*Tusc.* 2.43): *appellata est enim ex viro virtus*.

\(^{175}\) Pliny the Elder (*N.H.* 7.26.95): *verum ad decus imperii Romani, non solum ad viri unius pertinet, victoriarum Pompei Magni titulos omnes triumphosque hoc in loco nuncupari, aequato non modo Alexandri Magni rerum fulgore, sed etiam Herculis prope ac Liberi patris*.

\(^{176}\) Getty (1940), p. 46.
Pompey is not described as most comfortable in the Senate. This would be the native environment of any true defender of the Republic. Instead he garners popular acclaim not by putting on public displays alone, but by building the very structure within which they will be performed for years to come.\textsuperscript{177} Built on the Campus Martius in 55 B.C., Pompey’s theatre circumvented the law forbidding the erection of any such permanent structure. This was accomplished through Pompey’s claim that the edifice was essentially intended to be an elaborate staircase to the Temple of Venus Victorix.\textsuperscript{178} Lucan could expect his audience to be aware of the circumstances surrounding the construction of the theatre. This understanding would allow the poet to develop the irony underlying the architectural association between Pompey and Venus, in contrast to the proclaimed genealogical association between Caesar and Venus.\textsuperscript{179}

In many ways this theatre may be thought to be Pompey’s living memorial as it encourages in the aging general a sense of boastfulness that was fed by the cheers of the throngs sitting around him. This stage is the centre of the world that Pompey has constructed for himself. It is representative of \textit{Roma Pompeiana}. Throughout the rest of the epic he will be distanced farther from this place spatially and his character correspondingly will become increasingly dissociated therefrom.

\textsuperscript{177}In 154 B.C. the construction of a permanent theatre proposed by the censors at Rome was blocked by P. Cornelius Scipio Nasica. At this point the customary wooden construction of temporary theatres became a legislated necessity with the associative result that anyone who may sponsor either \textit{ludi} or \textit{munera} would enjoy the popular acclaim of the moment though there would be no lasting, plastic monument to their beneficence. The state was thus intended not to be eclipsed by the individual. Pompey’s military successes, particularly those garnered through his exercise of \textit{imperium} granted by the \textit{lex Gabianna}, could be viewed as coincidental with those of Rome itself. The man was thus shaping the state rather than ceding himself both politically and personally to the structuring effects of Rome.

\textsuperscript{178}Dodge (1999), pp. 216-217.

\textsuperscript{179}Lucan’s subtle employment of these figures is another example of the poet’s conscientious appropriation of Virgilian tropes. Lucan’s Pompey is introduced in this sketch as nothing more than the pretender to the line of Venus. He is instead the bastard son of the Republic, propped up by the popular support offered by the \textit{optimates}. 87
The isolation Pompey suffers within the Roman crowd is developed further in the famous simile likening Pompey to an old oak tree:\textsuperscript{180}

\begin{center}
stat magni nominis umbra, \\
qualis frugifer quercus sublimis in agro \\
exuvias veteris populi sacrataque gestans \\
dona ducum nec iam validis radicibus haerens \\
pondere fixa suo est,...
\end{center}

He [Pompey] is but the shade of a great name, just as an enormous oak in the middle of a fertile field bedecked with the spoils of ancient peoples and the august arms of leaders, an oak not fixed firmly by strong roots, but rather held fast by its own dead-weight.

(1.135-139)

This early description underscores the static character of Pompey which sets the hero in a light that is both tragic and pathetic.\textsuperscript{181} The dead tree that is Pompey stands leafless, rootless, lifeless, propped up with the support of trees growing up hard by it.\textsuperscript{182} Those trees offering support threaten to be crushed when the dead Pompeian oak topples on account of its own weight. Initially Pompey is ineffectual because of his reliance upon his past successes which he assumes to be sufficient in his winning the support of the Republicans and thereby realizing his own \textit{libido dominandi}.\textsuperscript{183} Later his inability to lead will effect his willingness to surrender his leadership to the Parthians.

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{180}George (1981), pp. 22-44.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{181}Johnson (1987), pp. 73-4.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{182}Rossi (2000), p.573-4, remarks that these lines echo Virgil’s description of Aeneas: \textit{ipsa haeret scopulis et quantum vertice ad auras / aetherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit} (Aen. 4.445-46.)
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{183}Aspirations to monarchical power were viewed publicly by the general’s detractors as fueling his tireless military initiatives. A statement made by Gaius Porcius Cato in 59 B.C., in which he refers to Pompey as a \textit{privatus dictator}, supports this popular image of Magnus.
\end{flushright}

88
This introductory section offers Lucan’s audience an imaginary view of Pompey and the relationship he would pretend to have with Rome and her citizens. The staged character of Magnus typifies how he would see himself vis à vis his fellow citizens. Situationally Pompey will find himself at Rome only in his dreams (7.7-12). Pompey’s place in the city is made conspicuous by the fact that each time Lucan pictures the general within the city walls the general is situated inside his own theatre. Never does the audience see Pompey functioning politically, whether it be officially within the Senate or unofficially in the forum, at Rome. From the beginning of the epic Pompey is geographically displaced from the city and its attendant institutions that are the purported symbolic standards of the Pompeian army. The general will be eclipsed throughout the remainder of book 1 by the character of Caesar. Similarly Cato will dominate the action through the first half of book 2. It would seem that poetically there is not even a place for Pompey at this point of the Lucanian epic. The general is already both a literal and a poetic fugax. Pompey’s geographical location, his movement away from Rome, undermines his assumed character. Only at Rome may Pompey stage convincingly himself in the role of the Roman. Away from his theatre and his audience, before the eyes of his soldiers, Pompey suffers an identity crisis. Without the architectural and political constructs of the city to support his imagined persona Pompey becomes hesitating and weak.

184 On the importance of this structural parallel see Frank (1970), p. 59.

185 Caesar makes referentially a similar observation as Pompey is made to look and act like a conspirator as he holds secret meetings in the evenings: (BC 1.3.1) missa ad vesperum senatu omnes, qui sunt eius ordinis, a Pompeio evocantur. laudat <promptos> Pompeius atque in posterum confirmat, seignores castigat atque incitat. Multi undique ex veteribus Pompei exercitibus spe praemiorum atque ordinum evocantur,... Pompey is here depicted as a general rallying his troops, inspiring hesitating soldiers to take up the arms of civil war, with victory promising both financial and public gain. This description of Pompey and his early dealings owes a great deal to Sallust’s introductory portrait of Catiline (Bellum Catilinae 14).
When Pompey reappears in the Lucanian narrative he is marching already away from Rome. Leading his anxious army he has made his way to Capua. Lucan employs his brand of hyperbole to describe the topographical situation of the Apennine mountain range. From Capua, a city located at the crossroads of the western coastal routes of Italy and those heading due east to Barium and Brundisium, will the fugitive march of the Pompeian force begin. Pompey’s place in the narrative of book 2 is one of increasing physical, as well as ideological, distance from Rome. The poet will compare and contrast the character of Pompey both with that of Cato and with that of Caesar using details of geographic location as points of demarcation. This essentially amounts to the contrast of Cato’s private urban affairs with those public military initiatives undertaken by Pompey in the field. The contraposition of Pompey and Caesar is developed by Lucan in terms of Italian geography. The land itself puts these men at odds both literally and poetically. Throughout the second book Pompey’s ethnic character is ambivalent. He does nothing to reinforce or express that he is a true Roman and that he has undertaken this war out of obligation to the state. His devotion is not directed publicly; instead he will suffer an ever-increasing *amor sui* that structures his self-serving brand of Republicanism.

The first half of Lucan’s second book is devoted to the events unfolding at Rome. The poet describes the public actions of anonymous men and women, preparing for the explicit depiction of Cato, with Brutus and Marcia, within the inner walls of his Roman home.\textsuperscript{186} As this intimate scene comes to a close Lucan shifts his focus from the inmost area of Rome proper to one of the camps to which the anonymous soldiers were fleeing at

\textsuperscript{186}See below pp. 188-208.
the opening of the book. At this point in the narrative the plot resumes its description of
the developing military situation. At last mention Caesar had already penetrated northern
Italy and was preparing for the strategic dispersion of his troops (1.392-468). This
offensive and effective military incursion is the complement to the movements made by
Pompey and his forces who can do nothing but recede, giving way to Caesar’s invasion.
Lucan emphasizes the causal relationship between Pompey’s flight from the city and the
despair felt by citizens at Rome:

O facilis dare summa deos eademque tueri
difficilis! urbem populis victisque frequentem
gentibus et generis, coeat si turba, capacet
humani facilem venturo Caesare praedem
ignavae liquere manus. cum pressus ab hoste
clauditur externis miles Romanus in oris,
effugit exigu nocturna pericula vallo,
et subitus rapti munimine caespitis agger
praebet securos intra tentoria somnos:
tu tantum audito bellorum nomine, Roma,
desereris; nox una tuis non credita muris.
danda tamen venia est tantorum, danda, pavorum:
Pompeio fugiente timent.

Oh how simply do the gods give great things, yet how difficult it is to keep
these things safe. The city of Rome, abandoned by cowardly hands,
instead crowded by her own citizens and the vanquished hordes of people,
was left the simple prize of an advancing Caesar. For when a Roman
soldier is pressed hard by the enemy on foreign shores, he escapes
nighttime dangers with a makeshift wall, made of hastily piled up turf,
provides him with sure sleep among his tents. You, Rome, were deserted
at the first rumblings of the word WAR! Not even one night was entrusted
to the security of your walls. Nonetheless, pardon must be given, it must,
for such great fear. They took fright at the flight of Pompey.

(1.510-522)
Pompey has thus realized his role as the Republican *fugax*. More than being but
Johnson’s causal blend of scapegoat and guilty leader, Lucan here presents Pompey
himself as a harbinger of the Republic’s destitution.187

As is the case in nature, political vacuums too are abhorred. The senate, fearing
Caesarian repercussions and following Pompey’s lead, has taken to flight. Already thus
has Rome, in the dying days of the Republic, suffered the figurative decapitation of its
political body. Rome is dead, and Pompey will soon follow. Rather than having the
imperial resolve to fight valiantly and to suffer the hardships of a terrifying nightwatch,
as does the unnamed soldier in the passage cited above, Pompey gives himself to flight
with Caesarian alacrity. The fear suggested by this rapid evacuation becomes
symptomatic of the people left within Rome.

The city in which Lucan finds himself, the polyglot, luxurious Neronian capitol,
sees the moment of its metamorphosis coincide with its abandonment by the would-be
champions of the Republic. No longer the cause for conquest and imperial expansionism,
Rome is now nothing more than an amorphic ethnic congregation of people from the
far-reaching lands once under her control. The foreigners who have sought refuge within
the city walls are broken and defeated people (*victis gentibus*) thus undermining Caesar’s
taking of Rome. He is not advancing on the city of old that would meet a Gallic threat
with characteristic resistance on the Capitoline. Caesar’s success will be over a weak and
abandoned agglomeration of people. This dissolution of the ethnological Roman
construct, which is manifest also in the public responsibilities undertaken by the

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187Johnson (1987), pp. 68-69, chooses to emphasize primarily the impotence so characteristic of
the Lucanian Pompey. Like Lucan’s historically isolated auditor, Pompey can do little more than suffer
dread at the destructive events that unfold throughout the course of the civil war.
anonymous Roman matrons at the beginning of the second book, is then mirrored by the universal confusion of the *mundus* foretold by Lucan’s catalogue of terrible portents.

This fear is only to be compounded by the ever silent Lucanian gods who now destroy any *spes futuri* with their ceaseless and menacing portents. While Pompey’s silent desertion of the city is an appropriate obituary for the already dead Republic, the absolute ruin of state and general is left to be proclaimed loudly and clearly by the perverted Roman Pythia at the close of book 1. Through his interpretation of the *signa* Lucan affords his audience privileged knowledge making his addressee the *spectator notus*.\(^{188}\) This is contrasted with the persistent ignorance from which Pompey suffers throughout much of the poem. He is little more than the *dux ignotus*. The makeshift prophetess embodies sexually the powerlessness that afflicts the poetic audience, isolated from these events chronologically and threatened by the subthematic promise of imperial ruin. As will be the case in the scenes that unfold at Rome at the beginning of the next book, it is a woman who is left to recognize and suffer the terror of destruction within the city of Rome itself. This is one aspect of Lucanian tragedy; the disenfranchised woman is forced to abide the promised ruin of state, family and self. This will be played out by Lucan in his careful casting of the scenes shared by the doublets of Pompey and Cornelia, and Cato and Marcia. Just as the ethopoetically cast city of *Roma*, these women can do little more than commit themselves to the promised destruction of the *patria*.

While articulating the place that Pompey will use as his makeshift encampment, Lucan composes verses that serve as a brief proem to the immediately proceeding geography of the Italian peninsula. This long geographical excursus (2. 394-438) effects the poetic separating of the generals. Both literally and poetically Pompey has already

\(^{188}\) In book 10 Acoreus, in relating the fabled source of the Nile to Caesar, intends to impart certain power to Caesar.
been able to put some distance between himself and his advancing adversary. This theme will be pursued subtly through the end of the second book at which time Pompey quits the Italian peninsula having thwarted Caesar’s efforts at blockading the Pompeians at Brundisium. His movement through the Italian countryside is likened to the fearful flight of a runaway slave. With each step Pompey takes on his way from the city of Rome, at which Lucan only places the general in his own illusory dreams, his faux-Republican character evanesces suggesting the phantasmic nature of Lucan’s own mythic Rome. As Pompey journeys first to mainland Greece, then to Lesbos, and finally to Egypt, he suffers a makeshift περίπλοος. These travels, serving as a geographical retrospective, will take Pompey through the lands in which his now waning fama was built. Sailing the eastern reaches of the Mediterranean, Pompey and the audience realize that he will enjoy no νόστος. He ventures to liminal Roman regions and, in so doing, divests himself of the political, social, and military trappings that previously adorned his public character which had become tattered while in the imperial centre that is Rome.\textsuperscript{189} His post-Pharsalian journey and its culmination, his disgraceful assassination, are the means through which Lucan’s audience is afforded certain wisdom. No longer can a citizen, even one pretending only to the ideals of the Republic as had Pompey, live in the urban Roman centre of this aspiring empire. No longer is the Roman to feel at home in Rome.

The function served by the geographical survey of Italy is that of offering the poetic audience one last glimpse of the idyllic Hesperian landscape that is ruined forever because of this civil war. This verbal map is not simply a Lucanian celebration of the

\textsuperscript{189}Hartog (2001), pp. 95-106, offers an analysis of the ektropic nature of Greek philosophical development. The edges of the earth were inhabited by Rousseau’s noble savage, men free from the caustic effects of various socio-political constructs.
poet’s adopted homeland, but rather serves a poetically prognostic role. What Pompey will only be able to look back upon from a distance at the close of book 2, Lucan and his audience have the power to survey closely. Poetically the audience and poet both are compelled nonetheless, given the topic of this poem, to suffer exile from the peninsula with Pompey. The Roman Republic, or Lucan’s satiric rendering thereof, is to be lost once book 2 comes to a close. The geographical description thus serves as the encomium of a now distant place, somewhere that will not be recovered either literally or poetically. The poem, with its characters and action, is itself a journey from the centre of the Roman world toward the outer limits at which the destruction of the Republican hero, including both Pompey and Cato, will be realized.

In addition to the poetic role that Lucan attributes to his geography of Italy, this passage serves the simple narrative function of distancing Pompey and Caesar from one another. The geographical exposition separates narratologically the two generals from one anther in a way that mimics Pompey’s flight and Caesar’s delayed pursuit. Consideration of the lines that frame this passage reveals Lucan’s effort to offer characterizations of both men consistent with their famous introductory comparison:

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190 Fantham (1992), pp. 153-154, notes that the entire Italian peninsula, a region only afforded the security of allegiance and the promise of citizenship, would soon become subordinate to Caesareaean benefaction. Caesar’s legislation in 49 BC would extend the right of Italian citizenship to citizens of Northern Italy thus forging a strong allegiance between his political programme and the people whom he has liberated.

191 Lucan develops the Italian conflict in book 2 in such a way as to suggest that this is, in fact, a battle, not that will promise either the preservation of the Republic or the evolution of the principate, but that pits two men, namely Caesar and Pompey against one another. The poet effects the antipathy of these two characters by summarily dismissing most other would-be Republican opponents. In true Caesareaean fashion L. Scribonius Libo, Faustus Sulla, Attius Varus, and Lentulus are summarily and quickly forced to concede (2.462-472).

192 1.129-157.
Interea trepido discedens agmine Magnus moenia Dardanii tenuit Campana coloni.

In the meantime Pompey marched off leading an anxiously alarmed force, and he then took as his camp the Campanian walls of the Trojan colony, Capua.

(2. 392-393)

and

Caesar in arma furens nullas nisi sanguine fuso gaudet habere vias,...

Caesar, raging headlong into arms, delighted to make no advance were it not through the spilling of blood,...

(2. 439-440)

What is Pompey’s characteristic *timor impotens*, captured in the simile likening him to an unsteady oak tree, has now spread to the troops that he is to lead. Caesar, whose production and advance is brought about by destruction, promises the swift defeat of Pompey upon open engagement. Pompey’s reluctance to engage actively Caesar and his choice to opt instead for a passive strategy through which he might release the peninsula from the bloody spectacle of another civil war undermines his Roman character both in the eyes of his military and those of his poetic audiences. That he does spare, however, the land and the people of Italy the sight of his own internecine slaughter will serve as the threnodic refrain with which Lucan will close the second book.

193 It has been noted by Fantham (1992), p. 157, that Pompey’s choice of Capua as a removed headquarters afforded him the advantage of rapid communication and the facility to draw upon the manpower of both locally settled veterans and those men training in the region’s many gladiatorial schools. This last observation made by Fantham is noteworthy as it supports the thematic language of gladiatorial combat between Pompey and Caesar. Moreover it underscores the spectacular nature of the promised showdown between these two generals and their forces. Given the horrors described earlier in book 2 by the survivors of the Civil War between Sulla and Marius, Rome need not be the arena for another such spectacular bloodletting.
While Pompey can only manufacture a place for himself within the city of Rome in his dreams, the nightmare that is the civil war will be raised before him as he retires from the shores of Italy. Pompey’s *patria* has now come to be his lost military *praeda*. Hesitancy and temerity beset Pompey upon realizing that he has no choice but to flee. This presages the reaction that he will have when he understands that something has gone horribly wrong at Pharsalus. Pompey’s anxiety communicates itself not only to the poetic audience but also to the general’s own military audience, consisting of the soldiers in his charge. In an effort to win the confidence of his troops, Pompey will attempt to equate literally the cause of the Republic with that forwarded by his own programme whereby he would aspire to the position of potentate. In the speech that he offers to his forces (2.531-595) he develops the theme that the *limites* of Roman power are coextensive with those that he has won for himself through his various campaigns. Thus the battle between Caesar and Pompey might better be read as one that does not have the interests of Rome alone at stake, but rather those of the entire world.

Johnson has viewed Pompey as being monstrously deficient.194 This reading is the product of Pompey’s continuous reference to the fabulous and illusory history that he has created for himself and through which he realizes his situation at Brundisium, Pharsalus, and beyond. In his poignant analysis of Lucan’s construction of Pompey’s paradoxical character, one that is both “complex and simplistic”, much of the evaluation is made upon the poet’s treatment of his general in books 8 and 9.195 In contrast to this denunciatory assessment of Pompey’s inefficacy Ahl offers a more sympathetic view.196


195Johnson (1987), p. 69. He does make the necessary reference to the famous juxtaposition of the two men, Pompey and Caesar, in book 1. Nonetheless he is most interested in interpreting the character’s end in an effort to reveal how illusory Pompey’s character in fact is throughout this epic.

196The most flattering analyses of Pompey’s character are those offered by George (1981), (1985),
Ahl begins his investigation of the poem’s three primary characters with Pompey. A fundamental element of Ahl’s Pompey is ἀμηχανία. Pompey lacks confidence in the present, living somniently in his dreams of past grandeur in a city that he has forsaken. The atrophy suffered by his public and private characters mirrors the deterioration that afflicts the bygone Republic. Again, much of the analysis is afforded by Ahl’s reading of books 7 and 8 wherein Pompey fails his men on the battlefield and his wife, Cornelia, at home. While Pompey does function as an intermediary character, disclosing mitigated forms of traits, such as megalomania and altruism, displayed hyperbolically in Caesar and Cato both, he does enjoy what Ahl recognizes as a “pathetic magnificence.” This conclusion is reached upon consideration of the speech offered to his troops as war breaks out (2.526-595) and that exhortation delivered when Pompey suggests that he and his troops should take flight to the east, seeking there the succour of the Parthians (8.262-327). In both of these speeches Pompey reveals that he has lost sight of the Republican ideal of libertas that was to be his Roman standard. He confuses the means through which he might win personal success with those that could be employed appropriately by the state. In order for this to be a true civil war Romans have to fight with Romans. This postulate, it will be discovered, is subverted by the poet himself as he costumes Caesar in the ethnic garb of the Gaul and Pompey in that of a vain and ineffective easterner.

and (1992) that further the view espoused earlier by Marti (1945). Here Pompey’s apologists read his character and actions as evolving stoically. The culmination of this development is his apotheosis at the beginning of book 9 (1-18) that serves as the celebration of his becoming the stoic sapiens at the moment of his execution. This, however, is nothing other than one of Johnson’s many illusions that might be ascribed to this a-heroic character.

197 This move is intended to reflect what Ahl (1976), p.150, sees as the narrative structure of the entire poem. While Pompey, Caesar, and Cato have all been present in the opening six books of the epic, it is not until book 7 that each, starting with Pompey, will become the focus in turn. Mirroring this succession Ahl organizes chapters 5-7.


199 Ahl (1976), p.159.
In his first speech addressing his troops (2.531-95) Pompey’s latent weakness as a leader is made manifest. Poetically these words and their situational introduction (2.526-30) follow immediately upon Lucan’s treatment of the treachery suffered by Domitius at Corfinum and the resulting humiliation that Domitius feels at the Caesarian *venia* that he is granted. Given the circumstances Pompey’s challenge in these lines is twofold. First he must convince his soldiery of the legitimacy of their cause. This he will do largely through his delineation of Caesar and his men who are, at best, treasonous enemies of the state and who are, at worst, utter foreigners. The second function of this speech is that of the programmatic peroration intended to inspire his troops. While he will fail in the second of these aims, Lucan uses this speech to enhance the Gallic flavour of Caesar’s character.

The narrative situation of the speech itself makes Pompey’s character and his military plan both all the more ambiguous. More than two thirds of this initial address to his troops serves as a catalogue of Pompey’s past military successes, all of which are won in lands far from the Italian peninsula. The emphasis that Pompey places on these historic and foreign victories, coupled with Lucan’s suppression of this scene’s locational setting, suggests that Pompey has already taken flight in his mind. Here he does not dream of being in his theatre (7.7-12), instead he falls into a reverie that takes him back in time to the victories that he won on the Roman frontiers. His speech affords the general the opportunity to indulge in his characteristic hesitation. Already having lost the faith of his soldiery, these words can only delay his inevitable flight to Brundisium and

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201 cf. Lausberg (1985), p. 1575, on the various points of structural and thematic coincidence that this speech has with that offered by Agamemnon in the second book of the *Iliad* (2.110-141.)
thence eastward. In the liminal regions of Spain and Parthia, celebrated in this address, Pompey constructed his military and political Roman character. The victory over the people in these regions informs, through the synthetic assimilation of their character via the immediate triumphal spectacles, his public character. These words serve as Pompey’s own res gestae surveying historically what was an extraordinary career. His own tentativeness, coupled with the mournful silence with which the soldiers greet these words, transposes the tone from one of martial inspiration to that of a threnodic oration acknowledging the death of an age.

The prologue to this speech opens with a programmatic description of Pompey. Not only will Pompey be defined by his pseudo-epithet fugax, Lucan now underscores his characteristic ignorance. Nescius holds the principal position in line 526 and is thus intended to contrast derisively Pompey’s title of Magnus that opens the proceeding line. Not only is Pompey ignorant of Domitius’ capture, but he is also naively unaware of the crippling effect that this will have upon the troops whom his proceeding hortatory address will fail. Reinforcements will not be arriving at Luceria. The treacherous behaviour of the citizens of Corfinum suggests that Pompey’s assumed military support has already begun to fall away. The Italian region that had afforded Pompey, and his father Strabo before him, a supply of support, both military and political, has abandoned this patron. With the absence of such reinforcements Pompey is militarily in a position to topple, like the oak tree, under his own weight.

Pompey’s initial address (2.531-595), pathetic in both tone and effect, makes it clear that the general is threatened by the desolation of his present troops.²⁰² This is the

²⁰²Caesar faces the same thing although his reaction is very different (5.237ff.). Rather than accepting the silence and threatening mutiny of his troops Caesar challenges them to kill him. He promises that he will continue on his own, not needing the paltry strength of these men, in his quest for legitimized power. Pompey on the other hand can only stand idly by hoping that inspiration may be drawn by his men
final progression in the movement toward casting Pompey as utterly abandoned and isolated, something eventually that will realize its climax in his assassination. The incommensurability between the intended result of the speech and the constructed position that Pompey has with respect to his troops is articulated in Lucan’s description of the impact that these words were intended to have:

iamque secuturo iussurus classica Phoebo
temptandasque ratus moturi militia iras
alloquitur tacitas veneranda voce cohortes:

Thereupon, intending to sound the call-to-arms at dawn of the next day, having it in mind to inspire the angry passions of the men ready to march, Pompey addressed, in a reverent tone, his silent soldiers.

(2.528-30)

Pompey speaks to these silent soldiers hoping to inspire *ira*. Instead, the silence that characterizes these troops at the beginning of the address will be made deafening when contrasted with this vain appeal. Moreover, his appeal to *ira* underscores Pompey’s weakness as a leader. Throughout the poem Lucan reserves the effective power of *ira* for Caesar.\(^{203}\) It is not appropriate for Pompey, a Lucanian pretender to Stoicism, to elicit rhetorically this emotive response from his troops. This error will only be compounded by the false modesty Pompey lends to the address by assuming a reverential tone (*veneranda voce*). The speech does not speak to the needs of Rome, the Republic, or these men. Instead it builds toward the geographical conclusion that functions as a mapping of the *mundus Pompeianus*.

Pompey’s intention throughout this speech is that of establishing his identity in contrast to Caesar. The overall structure of the address is one of complementary

\(^{203}\)Pierce (1994).
invocations and historical exempla. The effect that this two-fold rhetorical construction has is that of affording Pompey the opportunity to draw a deductive self-portrait. His soldiers are expected to understand the legitimacy of the Pompeian cause on the basis of the associations that the general makes between Caesar and such treacherous predecessors as Cethegus, Catiline, Lentulus, and Sertorius (2.541ff). The employment of these historical characters as precedents to Caesar is intended by Pompey to lead logically to the conclusion that, in contrast, he himself is the quintessential Roman Republican. The actions undertaken by the forementioned traitors placed these men at odds with the state. One way in which this would manifest itself is in their divestment of their ethnographic patrimony. Sertorius offers a fine example of the destruction, both personal and public, that attends upon one’s willful denunciation of Roman heritage. In choosing to abandon the ideals of the state, one also undertakes the effacement of the ethno-political heritage afforded by such an association. Romanness is thus dismantled and discarded in favour of foreign allegiances, strengths, and characteristics. In the case of Sertorius this becomes all the more important to Pompey’s rhetorical narrative because he was the Roman military representative that was able to match and overcome Sertorius’ innate resourcefulness. Thematically the Sertorius narrative is that of a Roman gone bad. He abandons the ideals of the Republic, jaded by the events of civil war to assume the guise of the foreign tyrant.\(^\text{204}\)

Lucan emphasizes the association between Pompey and Sertorius by the poetic position in which he makes reference to the ill-fortuned general and through the attribution of the same pathetic epithet used for Pompey throughout this episode: \textit{exul}. The irony in these lines lies in the fact that they are uttered by Pompey himself who fails

\(^{204}\) That Plutarch devotes three full chapters to acquitting Sertorius of the charge of despotism (\textit{Sert.} 22-4) illustrates that such aspersions were very much part of the Sertorian narrative.
to realize the striking parallels between his position with respect to Roman civil war and
the position held by Sertorius himself. In the broadest of narrative terms both Pompey
and Sertorius are the leaders of losing sides in their respective civil wars. Both Pompey
and Sertorius, the former going to the east and the latter going to west, continue their
fight against aspiring tyrants from abroad. Both commanders would derive much of their
military strength from foreign peoples to whom they would eventually liken themselves
in their monarchic conduct. Pompey and Sertorius both attempted to buttress their
political and military positions by building links with eastern powers; Sertorius made
overtures to Mithridates and to pirates, while Pompey aims to align himself with the
Cilicians and the anti-ethnic Parthians. Perhaps it is in death that these two men were
most similar. Made bitter by his abandonment by τυχή, as he had begun to lose forces to
the increasingly successful initiatives led by Metellus and Pompey himself, his
increasingly despotic behaviour was to result in Sertorius’ eventual assassination by
Perperna. Pompey suffers a similar reversal of fama that would, conversely, attend
upon his self-centered hubris at the beginning of Lucan’s epic. His dream of being the
spectacular focus of public attention (1.129-135; 7.7-15) suggests the presence of this
megalomania endemic to the tyrant. He also suffers the inability to recognize parallels
between his circumstance and that of his predecessors. While Caesar, upon visiting Troy,
demonstrated ignorance of heroic and epic action here Pompey shows a similar inability

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205 Plutarch economically suppresses much of Sertorius’ history in the years 88BC-82BC with the
exception of the fact that he opposed associative collaboration with Marius (Sert. 5.1-5), something that
establishes both him and his agenda as antithetical to the chaos at Rome that would attend upon Sulla’s
victory. Lucan is sensitive to these same programmatic issues as he explores them at length in the
recollections attributed to the old veteran earlier in book 2 (2.81-232.)

206 Scullard (1963), pp. 88-9, notes that this murder served little purpose as Pompey would soon
defeat and kill Perperna himself thus ending the war in 71 B.C. In effect the assassination of Sertorius
brought about already the end of the conflict and denied Pompey the opportunity to parade Sertorius in
triumph.
to synthesize the narrative of Sertorius. Precedents aside, Pompey thirsts to protect his position as the first man at Rome. The poetic result of this desire is none other than its utter denial, with Pompey being killed off the Egyptian shore and finally being buried in an anonymous grave.

That Lucan wishes to establish the narratives of Sertorius and Pompey as parallel is suggested by the select occasions upon which the poet employs the former as an historical model. Sertorius is mentioned three times in the epic, each time coinciding with a point of particular importance in the Pompeian narrative:

...sternere profecto
ut Catulo iacuit Lepidus, nostrasque securis
passus Sicanio tegitur qui Carbo sepulchro,
quique feros movit Sertorius exul Hiberos.

Indeed you will be brought down, just as Lepidus lay before Catulus; just as Carbo, having suffered our axe-blows, who is now laid to rest below a Sicanian tomb; and just as the exile Sertorius who moved to arms the fierce Iberians.

(2.546-49)

Secondly,

qualis erat populi facies clamorque faventis
olim, cum iuvenis primique aetate triumphi
post domitas gentes quas torrens ambit Hiberus
et quaecumque fugax Sertorius impulit arma,...

Such were the celebratory character and popular clamour of the revelling Roman populace, when, but a young man he celebrated his first triumph over those vanquished tribes, around whom the torrenetal Hiberus flows, that the fugitive Sertorius had called to arms.207

(7.13-16)

And lastly,

207Pompey himself runs the risk of a similar characterization by Lentulus at Syhedra when it is suggested that the Parthians be invoked as allies.
Sertorius serves as an example of the danger faced when a Roman leader attempts to abandon his country for the sake of personal advancement even though it may be couched in ideological altruism. As Pompey’s fortune wanes he too will be drawn by the allure of capitalizing upon the strengths afforded by a foreign allegiance, in his case, with the Parthians. Sertorius, Caesar, and Pompey all are structured by the people whom they conquered and thus come to demonstrate within this poem stereotypes associated respectively with each cultural group.

Structurally the speech offered in inspiration to his troops balances the exposition of the contemporary Pompeian programme, and invocations thereto, with historical examples of Roman treason and treachery. The entire piece builds towards the conclusion in which Pompey offers his troops an ekphrasis of the world that is unconvincingly under his control. The essential focus, thus, is Pompey’s concluding survey of the lands that have furnished him victories in the past, his static position power in the present, and, in the case of Egypt, lands that will destroy this man through their duplicity in the future.

As both a general and a politician Pompey understands and would have his soldiers believe that the extent of the known world, the ὥθλημα, is coterminous with those lands over which he once held sway. The orbis terrarum, with all of its various
gentes, Pompey suggests, contributes to the historia Pompeiana. The position of primacy that he feigns to have with respect to the entire world corresponds to the spectacular position of power that he dreams of enjoying, seated inside of his monumental theatre. Not to be localized at Rome, Pompey is to be the object of the global gaze, the man serving and advancing the imperial programme of Republican Rome. In so doing he would aspire to transcend this position of political subservience in his effort to achieve the primordial power of the cosmopolitan patron. The world itself and all of its people he imagines as his clientes:

pars muni mihi nulla vacat, sed tota tenetur
terra meis, quocumque iacet sub sole, tropaeis:
hinc me victorem gelidas ad Phasidos undas
Arctos habet, calida medius mihi cognitus axis
Aegypto atque umbras nusquam flectente Syene,
occasus mea iura timent Tethynque fugacem
qui ferit Hersperius post omnia flumina Baetis,
me domitus cognovit Arabs, me Marte feros
Heniochi notique erepto vellere Colchi,
Cappadoces mea signa timent et dedita sacris
incerti Iudaea dei mollisque Sophene,
Armenios Cilicasque feros Taurumque subegi:
quod socero bellum praeter civile reliqui?

No region of the world is free from me, but all lands, as many as the sun shines down upon, are dominated by my war trophies. Hence the Arctic North, all the way to the frigid Phasidian waves, holds me as its victor. Well-known to me is the central region of torrid Egypt and Syene where the shadows never slant. My laws strike fear into the Occident as does the western Baetis that beyond all others bear its waters to the fleeting Atlantic. The vanquished Arabs pay homage to me as do the Heniochi most savage in battle, and the Colchi known for the raped fleece. The Cappadocians fear my standards as do the people of Judaea who are given to the rites of an unknown god. I subjugated too the effete Sophene, the Armenian, the savage Cilicians down from the Taurus mountains. What war other than a civil one have I left to my father-in-law?

(2.583-5).
Wherever Pompey had once gone, trophies and triumphs used to follow hard upon his passage. The ubiquity of his *tropaea* and his *fama*, both of which he argues ironically make the vaquished become *fugaces*, serve as Pompey’s primary reasons that should inspire the sought after *fides* of his troops. Pompey’s failure as an orator is manifest in that this same claim to power might be made by Caesar himself, with the addition that he would play to the personal interests of his men with the enticements of financial wealth and reward. Pompey anachronistically can only promise past glory through which these men become subordinated as military props. Arabs, Egyptians, Cappadocians, and anonymous Northerners, all yield to Pompey. The general is thus suggesting in this speech that the foreign, characteristically Gallic, threat of Caesar and his men will capitulate too.

In this address both the narrative and the poetic audiences are confronted with the realization that Pompey threatens Rome and the Republican cause as much as does Caesar. Both men have aspirations to monarchical political power, the only difference being that those of Pompey are retrospective while those of Caesar are prospective. Pompey’s must draw upon past successes whereas Caesar is driven by his desire to establish a new Rome (9.999). Upon being confronted with this Pompeian self-portrait, shaped by the speaker’s own impotent will to power, those people listening are left with no response other than awkward silence. This compels Pompey to realize that his agenda will not be assumed at home on the Italian peninsula. The sole option left to him is that of becoming the *fugax*, fleeing his home, seeking out aid from those whom he has just

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208 This is in contrast to the future promise of wide-spread hegemonic success to be won by Caesar. Pompey employs the image of global success as a rhetorical trope unsuccessfully as his men are not inspired by these words. Caesar, contrariwise, will have not corner of the world closed to him thereby realizing the coincidence between *omnia* and himself.
denominated publicly as subordinates; most particularly the people of the East. This exhortation, with its pointed conclusion, is Pompey’s attempt to legitimize his position with respect to the Republic and Caesar both. He takes this opportunity to articulate the widespread fame that has been the product of his military career. Already, Pompey claims, has his \textit{fama}, his κλέος, reached the four corners of the earth. The irony lies in the fact that the poetic enunciation of this renown falls upon the deaf ears of his crucial, and spatially immediate, audience.\footnote{This speech is similar to Agamemnon’s with the crucial difference being that the departure considered is one that will effect the impossibility of a true homecoming. It is the realization that home, in this case Republican Rome, is forever lost. Moreover, in this speech the audience is made all the more conspicuous by its persistent silence. He will receive popular applause only in the theatre of his dreams (1.132-33; 7.9-12). One might imagine the appropriateness of Thersites’ caustic speech in which the notably ugly, middle-aged man rebukes his commander on the charges of greed and self-interest.}

The silence that greets this oration is in fact a testament to the menacing threat that is behind the \textit{fama Caesaris}:

\begin{quote}
Verba ducis nullo partes clamore secuntur
nec matura petunt promissae classica pugnae.
sensit et ipse Magnus, placuitque referri
signa nec in tantae discrimina mittere pugnae
iam victum fama non visi Caesaris agmen.
\end{quote}

The words of the general were in no way attended upon by great cheering, nor did the men long to hear the timely battle-horns of the coming fight. Even Magnus himself felt fear, and it seemed best to bear back the standards not sending the battle-lines into such a contest. For, in fact, the troops had already been defeated by the fame of a Caesar whom they had not yet even seen.

(2.596-600)

No longer is the spectacle dependent upon the subordinating relationship between the viewed subject and the viewing object. Caesar’s gaze is not required in order to negotiate this power play. Instead it is now Pompey’s fear that the \textit{fama Caesaris} is the
most threatening military resource that may confront his men.\textsuperscript{210} These lines preface the Virgilian simile, the Lucanian adaptation of which is deficient in its details, of two bulls contesting leadership.\textsuperscript{211} What will be seen is that Pompey himself suffers the same dispiritedness and damning hesitancy as do his soldiers.

In the following transitional lines Lucan employs the Virgilian trope of bulls in order to preface Pompey’s flight south to Brundisium and the ensuing journey that will end only in his death.\textsuperscript{212} This simile offers an apt commentary on the conflict between the two generals with the exception of the fact that Pompey’s role as \textit{exul} will not be recast:

\begin{quote}
pulsus ut armentis primo certamine taurus
silvarum secreta petit vacuosque per agros
exul in adversis explorat cornua truncis
nec redit in pastus nisi cervice recepta
excussi placuere tori, mox redita victor
quoslibet in saltus comitantibus agmina tauris
invito pastore trahit,...
\end{quote}

Just as when a bull, driven off in an initial conflict, seeks out the dark shadows of the wood and wanders lonely over empty fields. Then does the exile essays his horns on hostile stripped trunks. Nor does he return to the pasture until he has regained strength in his neck and when finally he

\textsuperscript{210}cf. (1.479-80): \textit{nec qualem meminere vident: maiorque ferusque / mentibus occurit victoque immanior hoste}.

\textsuperscript{211}Virgil, \textit{Georg.} 3.220-36.

\textsuperscript{212}Lucan’s use of this simile drawn from the third book of Virgil’s \textit{Georgics} also serves to underscore the innately erotic aspect of Pompey’s own character. Batstone (1997), pp. 138-39, argues that the didactic focus of the third book of the \textit{Georgics} is that of the “complex dynamic of \textit{eros}.” Virgil is explaining how the farmer might strike a balance between exciting and sating \textit{eros} for the sake of fattening the livestock and growing the herd. The power of \textit{eros} is twofold, with its promise of immediate amelioration always coupled with the threat of madness and physical destruction. Lucan is sensitive to a similar reading and thus draws upon the simile of the bulls when informing the character of the fleeing Pompey. As book three of the epic opens Pompey, in his dreams, will negotiate the erotic attachment that he has to the past, with Julia, and those he has to the present in the person of Cornelia. Lucan will have Pompey suffer from the deteriorative aspect of \textit{eros} as he will run from the battlefield seeking the arms of Cornelia on Lesbos, as she has become Pompey’s Roma.
is pleased when examining his muscles. Soon then, victorious, does he come back, leading whithersoever he wishes the herd, with the steers in attendance, against the will of the herdsman.

(2.601-7)

The position of victor will not be his as Pompey is not now the worthy opponent of Caesar nor shall he be so in the future. Lucan prepares his audience for this combative reading through his programmatic comparison of the two leaders in book 1 (1.129-157).\(^{213}\) These two gladiatorial combatants are not equally matched in terms of strength, ability, position, or character; nec coiere pares (1.129). The importance of this inequality to the poetic characterization of Pompey will be reinforced as the simile comes to a close; sic viribus impar (2.607). Driven from the community of the flock in this passage, Pompey is to be denied the public grandeur that his dramatic presence in the theatre affords him in his dreams.\(^{214}\) Pompey must wander, like the bull, as an exile who will find refuge in the cover granted by densely wooded forests or who will stand alone on empty, open fields. Similarly Magnus already is preparing to quit Italy. He must make a journey over the empty stretches of sea to the rough regions of the east. Only here, in death, will he be afforded the ultimate refuge from Caesar’s dogged pursuit; an unmarked tomb on the Egyptian shore. Pompey does not take the preparatory opportunity to try his metaphorical horns on the trunk of a tree while suffering his expulsion. Instead his flight is continuous. As his journey eastward progresses the geographical and ethnographical isolation from which Pompey suffers increase correspondingly.

Lucan’s employment of this Virgilian simile is complicated further by his use of the word truncus. Sparring with a tree trunk: this is to be the allegorical method of

\(^{213}\) See above p. 82.

\(^{214}\) 1.131-33; 7. 9-12.
Pompey’s training. He is to hone his skills of attack and defense by pitting himself against a static *truncus*. In this passage Lucan, once again, encourages his poetic audience to recall the initial sketches of Caesar and Pompey (1.129-157). Lucan’s transitional employment of the Virgilian simile of the fugitive bull collapses as Pompey can be read as both the established subject and object of the intended action. In Lucan’s initial description Pompey is described as a tree (*quercus*) that is made sure only by its own weight and the close-pressed support of those who would crowd around. Here Lucan develops the simile in such a way that the bull himself must test his mettle in preparation for his successful return to the herd by battling a tree. The Pompeian bull, as an initial reading would suggest, can only come to know his own strength through this preparational training. Lucan will later use the word *truncus* again when describing Pompey’s decapitated body and its rescue by Cordus on the Egyptian shore: ..., *cano sed discolor aequore truncus / conspicitur* (8.722-23). In the passage in question, however, the simile suggests that the exiled Pompey, predicated by the complementary image of the tree trunk, is to prepare himself for the celerity of Caesar by butting horns ironically with some such tree. Thus Pompey can be read in this simile as being manifest in the role of the exiled bull or in that of the tree against which the bull turns his horns. The apparent collapse of the simile presages the weakness that will make Pompey fail first his troops, second Cornelia, and finally himself. The result will be the rolling of his truncated corpse on the Egyptian beach.

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215 A third reading would allow both images to coincide thus having Pompey turn those bovine horns upon himself committing, essentially, suicide. This reading is enticing given the poem’s proem; ..., *populumque potentem / in sua victori conversum viscera acies...* (1.2-3). Here the images of the bull and tree both have as their possible referent Pompey. As these images coincide it may suggest a representative collapse that would have Magnus test his metaphorical horns on himself thereby effecting his own destruction.
In the closing lines of the simile Lucan states suggestively that Pompey's initial flight from Rome is tantamount to his abandonment of Italy itself. Rome and the Hesperian peninsula are the geographical repositories of the Republican identity.\textsuperscript{216} In choosing to leave this politicized space Pompey betrays early on that he is neither willing nor able to be the effective leader of a Republican army. Instead he will have to seek the support of his eastern clients, daring eventually to consider aligning himself with the Parthians. Upon taking his first hesitant step in this escape from Caesar, Pompey has effectively forsaken Rome itself and the pretense of an altruistic Republican agenda. His arrival at Brundisium and all but immediate flight therefrom manifest explicitly this spatial, political, and ideological abandonment.

Once he makes his way inside the walls of Brundisium Pompey effectively has reached the threshold separating Rome from the rest of the world. In this liminal location the former stability of Republican Rome is separated from the promised chaos that will be realized in Pharsalus, Philippi, and Actium; at these places the principate sees its evolutionary realization. The images of Brundisium as a haven separating peaceful security from maritime destruction are developed in the geographical description (2.610-627) that prefaces this final section of book 2. Just as the harbour of Brundisium affords safe anchorage to ships due to its natural situation mollifying the fury of the sea (2.615-621), so too does the city itself grant Pompey temporary reprieve from the rushing charge of Caesar. The role of haven that Lucan attributes to Brundisium is underscored when the poet says hyperbolically that it alone offers safety when the Adriatic sea rouses all of its might. As such Pompey finds himself either having to face the natural storm that threatens a late winter sea-voyage or the military assault that is building on land.

\textsuperscript{216}Compare Cato who is introduced by Lucan living still at home within the walls of Rome. He would have young Brutus believe that his public and private lives are coextensive.
Inside Brundisium Pompey’s acceptance that flight is necessary requires that he call upon his son Gnaeus to serve as his delegate whose duty it will be to undertake a levy of foreign troops. In this speech (6.632-48) Pompey commands his son to look to the subjugated enemies of Rome to function as Pompeian allies. The list of peoples whom Pompey will have Gnaeus approach reads as a diminutive res gestae recounting the military highlights of his fading career. The supposition that underlies Pompey’s request is that he still considers these foreign people his clientes. This relationship of subservience, by nature, is intended to afford the patron the fides of the client and all of their attendant potestas. Pompey assumes that such a relationship persists as the eastern states he mentions have, through their military defeat, been rendered clientes on the contractual basis of deditio. By sending Gnaeus to rouse these states Pompey is demanding that they fulfil their obligation as clientes to follow their military patron into battle thus affording him the appearance of power, importance, and character. The silence that greeted his speech to the Roman contingents has pushed Pompey to find force and support among foreigners. He is not afforded the necessary native fides that will be required to mount a legitimate offensive in a civil war: ..., ubi nulla fides rebus post terga relictis. (2.628). A dangerous consequence of this lack of Roman support is that, in the form of applicatio, Pompey must approach the people of the East, and eventually the Parthians in particular, for help. The appeal itself, in this form of

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217 Shackleton Bailey (1971), pp. 170-1; Pompey’s young son, Gnaeus, was prone to rashness and was characterized by Cicero as foolish. This would be made apparent when, upon Cicero’s arrival at Dyrrhacium and his articulation of the fact that he would not fight, Gnaeus drew his sword upon him only to be saved by Cato himself. Given his character, a delegate such as Gnaeus promises no more success among foreigners than Pompey himself was able to garner from his own Roman troops a very short time before.


219 Badian (1958), p.8
applicatio, renders Pompey, both in thought and action, the figurative client of those people over whom he would pretend power. These states, Pompey assumes, are not only beholden to him in fide but, more important militarily, they are his in potestate. What will be made clear is that his strength, used once to demand action of this sort, has atrophied and that these Eastern tribes are his only in fama. Thus the clientes, the diplomatic bondsmen, have come to hold power over their patron and that they now realize that Pompey is in a position of military, ethnic, and ideological subordination to the antipodal people of the east.

The speech itself with which Pompey sends off his son Gnaeus serves as an antistrophe to his earlier failed military address. When his soldiers cease to listen Pompey is left only with immediate family members, first Gnaeus and then Cornelia, as his audience. The forced change of addressee signifies, both poetically and narratologically, that Pompey has lost his imperium. Public power is no longer his as he is now upon a path that will lead to his effective isolation. This prefaces his ruin. His sphere of influence has decreased exponentially in proportion to his increasing distance from Rome. This diminuation threatens to continue the farther east Pompey journeys, promising the eventual dispossession of his Roman identity in favour of aligning and identifying himself with that which is most foreign to Rome; Parthia. His loss of power is signalled by the words with which he opens this address:

‘mundi iubeo temptare recessus:
Euphraten Nilumque move, quo nominis usque
nostri fama venit, quas est vulgata per urbes
post me Roma ducem.'
I implore you to make a trial of the far-reaches of the world. Go all the way to the Euphrates and the Nile, whither my renown has gone, through those very cities where the city of Rome has become well known upon my leadership.

(2.632-5)

While the renown of Caesar grows as he cuts his bloody path through Gaul, Hispania, Hesperia, and Greece, compromising the fading strength of Republican heroes such as Domitius, Pompey suffers the effacement of his reputation. He has lost Rome. His men are not inspired by his leadership. He has been separated from Cornelia. The marks of his character and success are escaping him. The *fama Pompeiana* has crossed the boundary separating Roman and Oriental, namely Parthian, space. Pompey implores his son, using metonymy, to call the Parthians and the Egyptians to arms. Lucan’s reader knows well what will happen when Pompey places his trust in the Egyptian king Ptolemy. However, the greater Roman threat lies in the possibility of his alliance with the Parthians, something that Lentulus will address explicitly after the defeat at Pharsalia. Pompey’s *fama* has sought exile in these same eastern seats just as has Lucanian *libertas*.

The Roma-centric model of the Republic is destabilized from the outset of the epic. The fugitive Senate holding session in Epirus, an exiled Pompey who must seek refuge among those people inhabiting the peripheral regions of Roman influence, these things contribute to the increasingly amorphic and unsettled atmosphere both in terms of character and in terms of narrative topography. Fidelity to Rome will be replaced by

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220 Lucan softens this plan to head eastward somewhat by suggesting in the proem to this address (2.629-30) that he is compelled by geography and the demands of strategy to prefer such a move to crossing the peninsula by land or to sail for Spain.

221 Fantham (1992), p. 204.

222 Rossi (2000), p. 578, notes that the location of Epirus resonates with the Virgilian antecedent that would have this locale be that in which Aeneas and his companions had first built a New Western Pergamum. While in the Aenean tradition the stop at this location marks a productive moment in the
hubristic and despotic self-glorification. Pompey himself will threaten, in a
Themistoclean power play, to mobilize the people of the east against the state which he
would already view as being synonymous with Caesar.

The body of his speech is bi-partite, linking structurally the supportive elements
of Pompey’s foreign clientelae with, in the character of the anonymous consuls, the
dislocated, fugitive, Republican senate. The first section (2.635-44) is a compressed
catalogue of the regions and peoples over whom Pompey has enjoyed military success.
These kingdoms, on the basis of deditio, might be expected to realize their fides by
employing their potestas in a coordinated initiative against the Caesarian threat.
Cilicians, Pharians, Bosporians under Pharnaces II, the Colchi, Albanians, and the Iberi,
these are all people who live in the east. More striking, however, is that, as the list
develops, the people included are identified ethnically with geographical regions that are
increasingly remote. The ultima Thule Pompeiana is to be found in the far east, in
regions of polar opposition to Rome in terms of both place and people. A symptom that
will attend upon Pompey’s effort at activating his authority as patron over these
foreigners will be the crippling of his potestas. In this sense he is now little more than
the promised umbra magni nominis.

The parameters of the relationship that would delineate typically the scope of
power afforded a general by the fides clientarum has been undermined ironically before
the speech has even begun:

migration to a promised homeland, in Lucan’s poem this place is an appropriately eccentric location the
nature of which, both physically and in terms of literary intonations, contributes to the increasing sense of
deterioration being suffered by the senate and Pompey himself.
Ergo, ubi nulla fides rebus post terga relictis
nec licet ad duros Martem convertere Hiberos,
cum mediae iaceant immensis tractibus Alpes,
tum subole e †tanta† natum cui firmior aetas
affatur:...

And so, as no allegiance remained among those upon whom he had turned
his back, and since it was not possible to entrust battle to the hardened
Spanish supporters, since the middle Alps lay between with their vast
height, then he addressed his son, hardier than he, born of hardy stock:...

(2.628-32)

The west is cut off from Pompey by Caesar’s whirlwind military movement therethrough
elaborated by Lucan only in his description of Massilia. By compulsion Pompey looks to
the lands and peoples who serve as Rome’s geographical, political, ideological, and
ethnic antitheses. Here, in the land of the Nile, Lucan and his audience already are
privileged to know that Pompey will discover tragically that fides is not to be found in the
East either. As patron, as general, as Roman, he has been renounced.

The initial order he gives Gnaeus to inspire these disavowed allies reaches a
rhetorical climax in his enunciation of his world wide fame:

... - quid plura moror? totos mea, nate, per ortus
bella feres totoque urbes agitabis in orbe
perdomitas; omnes redeant in castra triumphi.

Yet why do go on at such length? Bear the knowledge of mine own war
throughout all of the east and, as such, you will set in motion the
conquered cities throughout the entire world; let all triumphal processions
make their way into my camp.223

(2.642-44)

223 triumphus, -i: Lewis and Short offer as the second meaning of this word a formal and
magnificent parade in which the general marches into the city of Rome upon obtaining a key military
victory.
While his attention has been focused upon the task of offering his son a diplomatic eastern itinerary, Pompey has come to confuse the nature and object of this civil war. This conflict is not his alone (mea ... bella) but rather it is to be fought altruistically for the salvation of the Republic. The recurring topos of Pompeian global power has the pretense of oriental despotism. As such it naturally follows that he looks to the spatio-ethnic seat of such tyranny for support, modeling inadvertently himself upon the character of the same Mithridates whom he pursued and conquered in these very regions. This suggests a shedding of the vestments of Pompey’s Republican Roman guise, something that is a product of his ignorance. Not only does he not know how, in fact, the war is unfolding, he even lacks the requisite understanding of his own position and the demands required of his presumed Romanness. Rome and the bygone Republic are impediments to Pompey’s dreams of popular acclaim and primacy. Allegiance to Rome, Pompey would have his son and retainers believe, is to be replaced by allegiance to Magnus himself. The city holds no iconic power, but rather it is to be subsumed within the semiotics of power made manifest explicitly in the Pompeian camp. Rather than marching in triumph into the city, these foreign states, their armies and representatives, are supposed to march triumphantly into the very camp of Pompey. He himself, through the militarily symbolic extension of his camp, is to offer the stage upon which his strength can be displayed. The theatre of his dreams is to be the military scene of his camp. Those vanquished cities (urbes ... perdomitas) that are to gather round Pompey can offer the general little more than the means through which his political impotence might be italicized. What Pompey fails to recognize is that the tragic urbs

224 He may also be suggesting, in his reference to the entire world (totoque ... in orbe), that those regions over which he had also secured for himself formal triumphs in Africa and Spain would be inspired by the example offered by the coordinated support that these eastern allies are expected to offer.
perdomita that he ought to be invoking, in force and spirit, is none other than that from which he had run at the beginning of the epic; Rome. This city, already abandoned and militarily destitute in book 2, has all but fallen with its treasury to be stormed by Caesar in book 3.

The second component of this speech is an articulation of the powerlessness and the inefficacy of the senate that is produced by the rhetorical shift of address to the anonymous consuls. The consuls, representing the senate itself, are to raise troops in the familiar land of Greece. For the symbolic structure of the Republic to remain intact these men must retain their effectiveness and must continue to lead, at least in name, the politically and militarily fundamental senate. The pretense that is offered by Pompey for sending the consuls to Greece is that of raising the support of the Achaeans and the Macetes while winter affords a respite from the imminent hostilities of Caesar and his men. The words of this address play the political role of appearing as a call to arms through which Pompey may justify himself as a legitimate threat to Caesar. As Caesar, however, approaches Brundisium, both the historical and the poetic audience recognize that Pompey has placed himself in a position diplomatically that precludes the possibility of meaningful negotiation.\textsuperscript{225} The consuls will be granted the responsibility of raising the support of these Greeks simply. The consuls, and by extension the Republican senate, will find support, and eventual ruin, in the land of Greece while Pompey will look to the east for personal commitment to his private military agenda (\textit{mea ... bella}).

Book 2 comes to a climax with Caesar’s siege and blockade of Brundisium that results in Pompey’s forced flight. This episode marks a change in Pompey’s situation. No longer is he \textit{nescius}. He is now on edge, all too aware of Caesar’s severe threat.

\textsuperscript{225}Seager (1979), pp. 174-5.
Pompey knows that he must depart quietly, under the cover of darkness, lest he meet treachery and destruction as had Domitius at Corfinum.\textsuperscript{226} This eastward retreat serves as Pompey’s anti-triumph. Just as silence greeted his exhortation to his troops, silence alone can guarantee the successful Pompeian evacuation of Brundisium. The popular acclaim and fame of the Pompeian theatre have become a distant dream indeed. Pompey’s army, person, and \textit{fama} are all retreating at the approach of Caesar whose sought after victory will not be the destruction of Pompey simply but rather the utter suppression, in both body and symbol, of this adversary.\textsuperscript{227}

Upon boarding his ship Pompey has renounced figuratively Rome and its Republican cause, leaving both without a titular military head in Italy. The circle of Pompey’s influence inscribes now, in effect, only his wife and his children.\textsuperscript{228} His \textit{persona Romana} is confused and will be abandoned eventually on the course of his journey. He will only realize this denunciation at the moment of heroic clarity; death. As Pompey embarks upon his ship Caesar, having pirated the prize of Rome, has captured the imperial \textit{caput mundi} (2.655). Already thus has he received the prize of the Republic’s geographical head, something that will be developed explicitly upon Ptolemy’s betrayal and assassination of Pompey in book 8.

\footnotesize
\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{226}As was noted the clemency shown to Domitius can be viewed as more ruinous and destructive to the abstract cause of Republicanism as it is a manifestation of the power acquired by Caesar as the sovereign who can now exercise autocratically the right to discipline and punish.
  \item \textsuperscript{227}This is the reason that underlies Caesar’s distress at Ptolemy’s gift of Pompey’s head. The manner of execution, coupled with the Lucanian apostrophe, lends Pompey a symbolic endurance that will not be eclipsed and appropriated by Caesaraean conquest.
  \item \textsuperscript{228} cf. 2.728-730:
\end{itemize}
\begin{verbatim}
cum coniuge pulsus
et natis totosque trahens in bella penates
vadis adhuc ingens populis comitantibus exul.
\end{verbatim}

120
2.3 Xerxean Pompey

Pompey’s actions in books 3 through 7 suggest his increasingly eastern character and affectations. It is not that he is given to the effete affectations of the stereotypical Persian despot, but rather that he suffers that generic confusion that would make Pompey be the *princeps tyrannus* holding a position of primacy in relation to and over Rome itself. What might be noted is that, rather than simply modeling his Pompey upon the Virgilian antecedent of Aeneas, Lucan has other failed leaders in mind including Cyrus, Xerxes, and Agamemnon.

The twilight escape of Pompey is developed in the proem to book 3 (3.1-7). The scene serves as a narrative conjunction of the themes of separation and abandonment. In these lines Pompey is described as being in a transitional state physically, emotionally, and in terms of his military resolve. It takes the defiant words of ghostly Julia to compel Pompey to action. This Caesarian fury chases Pompey bodily and psychically from the shores of Italy suggesting that, more than having left his *patria* behind, this flight marks the evanescence of Pompey’s Roman character. This contributes to his proceeding military, political and erotic choices that illustrate Magnus’ struggle to save the appearances of a Republican agenda while, contrariwise, he is aligning himself actually with those eastern places to which he is running.

These opening lines emphasize the liminality of Pompey’s situation:

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Propulit ut classem velis cedentibus Auster
incumbens mediumque rates movere profundum,
omnis in Ionios spectabat navita fluctus:
solus ab Hesperia non flexit lumina terra
Magnus, dum patrios portus, dum litora numquam
ad visus reditura suos tectumque cacumen
nubibus et dubios cernit vanescere montis.
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As the South Wind blowing into the billowing sails drove off the boat, and escorted the vessel across the waters deep, every sailor looked forward out over the Ionian sea. Alone did Magnus not divert his eyes from the shores of Italy, seeing first the harbour disappear, then the shore that never would be seen by him again. Finally he saw, with uncertainty, the mountain range and peak itself, shrouded in clouds.

(3.1-7)

Italy is forsaken. Lucan introduces Pompey as a man who is fixated upon previous success. He is seduced by his history and the power that his military accomplishments had afforded him. This retrospective aspect persists in this selection as Pompey is incapable of wresting his gaze from the disappearing coastline. While his sailors are, by necessity, looking forward, Pompey can look only to what has passed thus separating and isolating himself utterly from those that are his attested companions. This is communicated poetically by Lucan’s use of *solus* and *Magnus* both in the primary metrical position of proceeding lines. The focus of his gaze confuses rather than aids the direction of his men and their ship.\(^{229}\) Were he to look forward he would be confronted by the tragedy that his audience knows lies in the lines and lands ahead. He is en route to Greece where he will suffer military dismantlement at Pharsalus. Here again he will be little more than an impotent observer, watching his men be cut down. Rather than acting as their saviour he behaves himself shamefully by running from the field. As the land itself fades, recedes before his very eyes, Pompey’s image of his historical, his Roman, *persona* vanishes. The suggestive death of his Roman character is accentuated by the hellish apparition of Julia.\(^{230}\) Her presence intimates that Pompey is voyaging from the

\(^{229}\) At 8.159ff. there is a similiar scene in the course of which Pompey’s gaze is employed in the helmsman’s navigational aid.

\(^{230}\) Cornelia herself will later attribute motive and causal force to the dead Julia asserting that she continues to pursue Pompey as a hellish *Erinyx* (7.87-105).
land of the living to the land of the dead. The Ionian sea, and the whole of the Mediterranean, is his Acheron, with the shores of Hades lying to the east.\textsuperscript{231}

Up from the depths of Hades, Julia’s appearance functions as a ghostly anabasis.\textsuperscript{232} The circumstances surrounding this nascent civil war have caused Julia herself to become a spiritual exile from the underworld.\textsuperscript{233} She has to abandon this blissful netherworld only to meet the threatening destruction of a world in conflict, a war that promises to have cataclysmic results. Her exile from Hades parallels Pompey’s forced flight from the security that he dreams is Rome.\textsuperscript{234}

Lucan interrupts the Pompeian narrative of book 3, as though to afford time for the levying of Asiatic Pompeian troops, with his description of Caesar choosing to remain in Italy and his fortification thereof (3.46-70). This descriptive passage is then followed by Caesar’s advance upon Rome itself, his confrontation with the Senate, and his eventual raping of the treasury located in the temple to Saturn (3.71-168). Lucan’s audience is granted the ability to see this horror that has receded from Pompey’s view. Upon looting these treasures Caesar not only commits the sacrilege of desecrating a temple, he has the presumption of assuming for himself the spoils of Roman, and most specifically, Pompeian victories:\textsuperscript{235}

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textsuperscript{231}]This association between Pompey and Acheron is made by Julia herself: \textit{praeperat innumeras puppis Acherontis adusti / portitor} (3.16-7). By describing Charon as being the head of an entire fleet Lucan is suggesting that Pompey is functioning as an escort to his own men on their deathward journey.
\item [\textsuperscript{232}]Hunink (1992), p. 39.
\item [\textsuperscript{233}]This episode may be a Lucanian treatment of the heroic κατάβασις. As the atheistic nature of this poem disallows that Pompey should undertake an heroic journey to the underworld, Lucan instead has the ghosts of the dead come to him.
\item [\textsuperscript{234}]This Rome of stability serves as the theme of Pompey’s second and corresponding dream at the opening of book 7 (7.7-44).
\item [\textsuperscript{235}]see above pp. 53ff.
\end{itemize}
tunc Orientis opes captorumque ultima regum quae Pompeianis praelata est gaza triumphis egeritur;...

Then the vast wealth of the East and the riches of furthest Persian belonging to captured kings, all of which had been born along in triumph by Pompey, were carried off.

(3.165-7.)

Already the very tokens of Pompey’s Eastern campaigns have been assumed literally by Caesar. This actual theft foreshadows the figurative stealing of Pompey’s Egyptian ally, Ptolemy, by Caesar. Using these emblems Lucan intones the pathetic futility of Pompey’s fugitive journey. The Pompeian spectacle is here summarized in this quasi-triumphal parade of symbolic defeat that effaces Magnus’ position at Rome. Just as he steals the artefacts themselves, Caesar may loot the \textit{fama} of Pompey, robbing the latter of even the mere shadow of his former greatness.

The proceeding catalogue of the troops raised by Pompey in the East has been prepared by his initial command to Gnaeus to effect this very levy (2.628-49) and in the immediately preceding scene of book 3 in which Caesar loots the Roman treasures procured by Pompeian victory. The function of the catalogue is twofold. In terms of its contribution to the narrative this catalogue suffers the audience to hesitate in its movement through the action of the epic. The second role assumed by this catalogue, both in terms of its narrative placement and in terms of the people themselves listed, is that of offering a diagnosis of Pompey’s weakening political and military character.

Structurally book 3 consists of four narrative blocks;

1-45: Pompey’s final departure and his interview with Julia.  
46-168: Caesar arrival at Rome and his robbery of the temple to Saturn  
169-297: Catalogue of Pompey’s allied forces  
298-762: Caesar’s siege of Massilia.
This division of book three illustrates that, narratively, Pompey and Caesar are cast explicitly as a doublet. Lucan chooses to shift his attention from one to the other in such a way as to illustrate, comparatively, their respective strengths and weaknesses. Pompey, on the boat at the beginning of the book, is isolated from his crew and he can watch only as his beloved Italy recedes, disappearing on the horizon. His motion from Italy and Rome is recessive. This is contrasted simply by Caesar’s advance upon the city and his willingness to cross the thresholds of the sacred temple to Saturn for the sake of acquiring access to the treasury. The inner reaches of this temple are sacred, private spaces at the heart, structurally, economically, and ideologically, of Rome.\textsuperscript{236} In contrast to Pompey, here Caesar moves into the symbolic centre of Rome trumping Metellus’ affected attachment to the Republic and \textit{libertas} with his characteristic \textit{ira}. The first two passages offer a contrast between Caesar and Pompey on the simple basis of their relative motion to and from Rome.

The second two sections of book 3 contrast the effectiveness of the two generals. As in the case of the first pair of passages Pompey is treated first. In this instance Lucan offers a contracted list of the forces that promise to rally around Pompey. In terms of sheer numbers, Pompey is said to best both Agamemnon and Xerxes. Forces from areas of Greece, the Near East, and the Far East are described as being committed to Pompey. What the catalogue deliberately does not describe is the physical rallying of the forces offered by these foreigners. These \textit{a}-Roman armies are localized, their relative

\textsuperscript{236}In his exchange with Metellus, Caesar makes it clear that he has won for himself the power and privilege of \textit{libertas} by virtue of the fact that he has chased the last vestige of this principle from the limits of the city. As such he can deny Metellus the \textit{honor mortis honestae}. The theme of forcing the retreat of \textit{libertas} is reiterated in the speech offered by the mysterious Cotta (Hunink[1992], pp. 92-3.) Only quasi-Stoic capitulation will afford Metellus the opportunity to preserve the \textit{umbra libertatis}, an image that is reminiscent of Cato’s commitment to and ironic eulogy for Roman freedom in book 2 (2.302-3.)
autonomy, disparate characters, and spatial remoteness are all suggested by the
descriptive strategy employed by Lucan in this catalogue. The list is organized in the
form of a geographical survey.\textsuperscript{237} Each \textit{θνος} is tied inextricably to its inhabited land
with the result being that Lucan denies Pompey the possibility of raising a legitimate,
ethnically synthetic fighting force. While his victories may have promised the extension
of Roman \textit{imperium} over the regions and peoples enumerated in this list, this is shown to
be nothing more than pretense as the \textit{fama Pompeiana} itself serves no longer as a
cohesive force. Ethnic autonomy has been preserved; \textit{fides}, the expected wont of the
foreign client, is absent thus denying the legitimacy of Pompey’s claim to their \textit{potestas}
and \textit{vires}. Conversely, in the corresponding Caesarian narrative block, Lucan suggests
that Caesar himself is a force effective enough to meet and overcome any obstacles in his
way. In his besieging of Massilia Caesar need only rely on his own strength and
genius.\textsuperscript{238} The lines describe absolute action and its attendant potency, both of which are
absent, thematically and literally, from the preceding Pompeian catalogue. The poet,
furthermore, suggests Caesar’s betterment of Pompey simply by dedicating more of book
3 to his treatment of the former. Pompey’s time and power are both waning, being forced
to give way to the dynamism that is Caesar. This is occurring not only in the theatre of
war but also in the poet’s epic verses.

The catalogue of Pompey’s Eastern allies is Lucan’s employment of a traditional
epic trope. Hence the poet is able to offer a geographical overview of the peoples who
are to follow in Pompey’s ironically triumphant train. In its presentation the catalogue
conveys the notion that Pompey is rousing \textit{omnis terra Orientis}. Here Lucan does not

\textsuperscript{237} Hunink (1992), pp. 102-5.

\textsuperscript{238} Haag (1978), pp. 141-5 evaluates the Pompeian catalogue in light of its Caesaraean antecedent (1.392-465).
intend to elicit a sense of patriotism that can be effected by this narrative technique. Homer’s composition of the Achaean catalogue establishes for his audience a point of contact, albeit geographico-mythical, through which his Greek audience might feel a proximity to the characters and events at Troy.\footnote{Homer, \textit{Il.} 2.494-815.} Virgil recognizes this precedent in his composition of the future greatness of Rome that functions as the poetic capstone to the hero’s \kata\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\nu.\footnote{Virgil, \textit{Aen.} 6.756-886} Lucan employs his catalogue to serve a very different function.\footnote{Hardie (1993), pp. 107-9 categorizes the Lucanian employment of poetic precedents as a perversion. Rather than paying due respect to the epic tradition to which Lucan might belong, which may be done through the paradigmatic use of something like a catalogue, instead he chokes the life and vitality out of both the subject and the medium realizing in his poetry death itself.} First it denies any patriotic proximity that could be afforded the audience to the tragic events that are about to unfold at Pharsalus. This is the result of the fact that Pompey’s Roman contingent is being overlooked and instead the poetic focus is upon the inherently foreign nature of this army. As such the requisite notion of citizen fighting citizen, Roman fighting Roman, as was promised in the opening lines of the epic, is undone via this emphasis upon the Hellenistic and Asiatic strength of the Pompeian army. The effect is that Lucan’s Roman, and one might assume sympathetically Republican, audience is thus distanced poetically from the impending destruction of the Roman ideal, condemned to be an impotent spectator. In this way the reader is invited to participate in Pompey’s characteristic ineffectiveness; we are able only to watch from a distance.\footnote{Leigh (1997), pp. 111-157.}

Lucan also manipulates his Virgilian antecedent by adapting the narrative circumstance and function of the catalogue. As Aeneas’ heroic trip to the underworld reaches its celebratory climax Virgil generates what Hardie describes as “an inversion of
the Roman aristocratic funeral procession of the heroic ancestors of the past.”

This is a catalogue of forthcoming Roman heroes who will commit themselves to the realization of Rome that is to reach its politico-cultural apex in the new Golden Age of Augustus. This display of future greatness is in itself to become the *causa belli* for Aeneas and his fellow Dardanian exiles. Their battle will be one that promises the establishment and imperial growth of Rome.

Lucan’s catalogue of the Eastern allies serves a contrary function. Rather than offering an optimistic view of a future replete with heroes who are to be exemplars of Roman *virtus*, Lucan’s list of Pompey’s allies serves as a reminder only of what once was. The mid-60s B.C. saw the Pompeian star rise, as his power swept over the eastern part of the Mediterranean basin by land and sea. The last triumph that he celebrated upon his return in 61 B.C. has by now grown stale, and this catalogue, that again reads as a compressed *res gestae*, can only be celebratory in retrospect. Pompey looks characteristically to the past when indulging in his dreams of success. Moreover, rather than offering a triumphant list of native Roman heroes, Pompey’s power is to be evaluated by a succession of foreign, albeit imperial, clients. This catalogue emphasizes the contrast seen between Caesar and Pompey. The former is at Rome, assuming for himself the wealth won by Republican imperialism, while the latter is fleeing, entrusting himself to the subordinated military and economic power of those people whom he once led in triumph. These lines might then be read as a legitimate funeral procession that marks the epic successes of Pompey’s past; *excivit populos et dignas funere Magni /


244 Nicolet (1991), pp.34-8, evaluates the symbolic importance of the triumph celebrated by Pompey in 61 BC. The whole of the *orbis terrarum*, the Roman οἰκουμένη, is coextensive with the breadth of Pompeian political and military power.
The catalogue is arranged in such a way that it begins by listing the various Greek allies, proceeding next to the people from Asia Minor and the East, ending finally with those who live at the very perimeter of the Roman world:

- 171-197: Greece
- 197-228: Asia Minor and Persia
- 229-283: Fabulous regions and people living at the outer-reaches.

As the list progresses the foreignness of those people included increases proportionately. As is the case in ethnography of the period, the farther one ranges from home the more bizarre the land and its people become. Groups such as the Cilicians, Thessalians,

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245 cf. Diod. Sic. 40.4; Pliny *NH*, 7.97-98.

246 The geographical remoteness of the lands and people that are described in the third section of the catalogue is exemplified by Lucan’s description of the three rivers Phasis, Halys, and Tanais:

Colchorum qua rura secat ditissima Phasis
qua Croeso fatalis Halys, qua vertice lapsus
Riphaeo Tanais diversa nomina mundi
imposuit ripis Asiaeque et terminus idem
Europae, mediae dirimens confinia terrae
nunc hunc nunc illum, qua flectitur,
ampliate orbem.

(3.271-276)

The Tanais river functions here as an ambivalent boundary that meanders now through Europe, now through Asia, thereby denying its function as a geographical boundary. The Tanais, like those people who live in the lands nearby, is ambiguous in that it occupies and describes a space that is outside of Roman control. Distinctly the centre of the earth, that can be equated with the centre of Roman power, is separated by this river from Asia. This river is the terminus that distinguishes antipodal regions and, by extension, antinomous peoples best typified by Lucan’s preceding mention of the Parthians and his proceeding description of the fabulous Arimaspi.

247 Romm (1992), pp. 36-8, explains that there is an epistemology of geography. The ὕλη is the whole of the inhabited world that is made coherent and knowable through the communicative exchange of people. Thus it might be thought that there is a physical landscape that lends itself to knowledge, the truly cohesive element joining different ἔθνη. In the traditional model of such a system the centre of knowledge corresponds to the geographical centre of political and military power. Just as all roads lead to Rome, it might better be said that all roads lead therefrom. Spatial movement towards the outermost edges of the ‘knowable world’ results in a corresponding alienation from that which can be ascertained with empirical certainty. The result is that those places and people of the outermost regions, αἱ ἐςχαταὶ τῆς ὕλης ὀἰκουμένης, are fabulous in that their character and habits establish a polarity with that practiced by those
Arabs, and the Armenians are all citizens of lands whose ill-fate attends upon that of Pompey. Lucan would have the forthcoming battle at Pharsalus dictate not only the future of Rome, but that of the entire world:

\[
\text{Interea totum Magni fortuna per orbem} \\
\text{secum casuras in proelia moverat urbes.}
\]

In the meantime the fortune of Magnus Pompey had spurred to action all those cities, spread over the entire world, that were doomed to fall with him.

(3.169-170.)

Lucan continues to employ language and imagery that invites his audience to recall the introductory description of Pompey the *quercus* (1.135-143). There the old oak stands, buttressed by the support of smaller trees crowding round its trunk. Nonetheless the oak still threatens to topple over at any instant:

\[
\text{et quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,} \\
\text{tot circum silvae firmo se robore tollant,} \\
\text{sola tamen colitur.}
\]

and although, about to fall at the first blow of the East wind, [the oak] wavers, all around trees steady it with their own vigour, and as such this tree alone is honoured.

(1.141-143)

Like the oak tree in the simile that threatens to topple (*casura*), the cities enumerated in this catalogue are doomed to do the same (*urbes casuras*). The cities, as clients, fulfil the metaphorical role of the earlier *silvae* that support the dead oak. As soon as their living at the geographical ‘centre’ of knowledge. This allows for the reflective evaluation of one’s own cultural system, the point of which, when practiced by colonial imperialist, is that of justifying the imposition of culture through the export of power.


\(^{249}\) Haag (1978, p. 145.)
strength, *robur*, is compromised the oaken Pompey will collapse. The rush of the East wind, the *Eurus*, that threatens the oak also may be understood to reference the various Easterners that are listed in book 3. These people and the lands that they inhabit serve as the foundation, though virtually eroded, of the Pompeian power base. In the end this foreign dependence will promise, through the agency of Ptolemy, to fell the general.

Pompey’s weakness in the face of Caesar is cast in this catalogue as the decrepitude to which the cities and peoples listed had been reduced upon their forced capitulation to Roman power. Among the Greeks, the feeble naval showing of the Athenians is most noteworthy as they are able only to furnish three ships (3.181-182). Among the forces raised in Asia minor those from Troy elicit the greatest empathy:

*Iliacae quoque signa manus perituraque castra
omnibus petiere suis, nec fabula Troiae
continuit Phrygique ferens se Caesar Iuli.*

And the bands from Ilium, with all their resources, sought out the standards and the soon-to-be-destroyed camp of Pompey. Neither could the mythic tradition of Troy check them, nor could Caesar boasting himself to be descended from Phrygian Iulus.

(3.211-213)

The tragedy that these Trojans are destined to suffer is that of another defeat, this time on Greek soil, that will result again in the decapitation of their military regent. By coming to Pompey’s aid the Trojans are putting themselves in the position wherein they will suffer a defeat that is reminiscent of their epic ruination. In the section devoted to those tribes from the Eastern hinterlands what is most ominous is Lucan’s explicit mention of that tribe that does not rally to Pompey’s aid; the Parthians.

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250 This metaphorical association is developed in the catalogue through Lucan’s various references to woods, dales, and the people who are said to live therein. The most explicit of these subtle references is to the Selloi: *quercusque silentis / Chaonio veteres liquerunt vertice Selloe* (3.179-180.)
Among those people listed in the catalogue, the Parthians alone stand to gain from the destruction promised to Pompey, his Eastern allies, and Republican Rome:

inter Caesareas acies diversaque signa
pugnaces dubium Parthis tenuere favorem
ccontenti fecisse duos.

Whether to be counted among the Caesarian ranks or to be among those included in under the standards of Pompey, the battle-strong Parthians checked their partiality, happy about having reduced the number of generals to two.

(3.264-266)

These Parthians contributed to the outbreak of civil war, Lucan has already stated, by removing the blocking figure of Crassus (1.104-108). As such they are responsible for creating the present situation since the result is the inevitable clash between Pompey and Caesar that will culminate in the battle at Pharsalus; *bellum victis civile dedistis* (1.108). Throughout the epic, and the ethnographic tradition, the Parthians are cast as Roman *άντίπαλοι*.251 This rivalry is largely military due to the sting that Romans continued to suffer on account of their ignominious defeat at Carrhae in 53 B.C. Lucan adopts the traditional ethnographic characterization of the Parthian being bellicose; *pugnaces*. Following Crassus’ defeat a great deal of effort is put into understanding the character of the Parthians, a people who stand as a threat to Rome.252 The impetus behind this ethnographic analysis is the Roman belief that only through knowledge of the enemy, in all facets of their character, can the Romans be afforded the ability to foresee how they may neutralize militarily the threat they pose. Lucan’s subtle use of the Parthians in books 1 and 3 suggests that, while they are responsible largely for the events at hand,

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251 Strab. 11.9.2; Cass. Dio. 40.14.3.
they are outside the space circumscribed by Roman power and this grants them the autonomy to indulge in the spectacle of civil war.\footnote{Poetically the Parthians may serve as the Lucanian model of the initiated and informed Roman audience. Those who can best appreciate Lucan’s epic must have a penchant for bloody spectacularity and they too must be beyond the reach of Roman power. As is the case with the Parthians, this privileged removal challenges the political and imperial institution since it underscores the autonomy afforded by figurative distancing. While Lucan may have been essaying this with success poetically, his literal pretense thereto, namely his alleged involvement with Calpurnius Piso was somewhat less accomplished.}

The catalogue reaches its pathetic climax in the historical comparison of Pompey’s assembled troops with those of former generals.\footnote{cf. Hunink (1992), pp. 136-7.} Cyrus, Xerxes, and Agamemnon are all invoked as legitimate comparative characters with reference to whom Pompey’s current situation may be evaluated.\footnote{Berno (2004), pp. 79-84, sees Lucan’s use of Agamemnon as a reference, through Seneca’s tragedy by the same name, to Priam. This association is apt given the circumstances suffered by the Trojan regent and Pompey alike.} The overt commonality shared by these four men is that they assembled enormous forces under their leadership. This, however, is the extent of their situational coincidence. The historical referent of Cyrus may be Cyrus the Younger who led the campaign through which he had hoped to wrest power from his brother Artaxerxes.\footnote{The other character to whom this historical allusion may apply is the founder of the Persian empire, Cyrus the Great.} Unlike Pompey, Cyrus depended upon his impetuosity and vigour when campaigning, something that would result in his death upon a rash attack against Artaxerxes’ bodyguard. Pompey does share Cyrus’ situational crisis of undertaking a campaign against a member of his family, in this case his father-in-law. The next monarch with whom Lucan associates Pompey’s forces and leadership is Xerxes. He, like Cyrus, would be undone by his own brashness and hubris. Throughout his ill-omened Greek campaign Xerxes routinely practiced acts of wanton and unnatural
excess. Lucan employs the character of Xerxes also to prefigure Pompey’s own actions at Pharsalus. Xerxes chooses to sit upon a throne and to view, as a removed spectator, the naval disaster at Salamis. Correspondingly Pompey will later retreat upon spectating the rout of his forces (7. 647-727). Finally, by making reference to the character of Agamemnon, Lucan is looking beyond the events that are to take place upon the battlefield itself. While Agamemnon would eventually lead a successful expedition against Troy, he would be destroyed by the Aeschylean Klytemnestra upon his return home. Here a woman, Agamemnon’s proper wife, takes his life. Similarly Julia, who views Cornelia contemptuously as nothing more than a Cassandran paelex, threatens to be the spectral counterpart of Caesar, bringing horror and death to even the dreams of Pompey. Thus does the character of Agamemnon inform the circumstances within which Pompey finds himself when he will seek refuge on Lesbos in the arms of Cornelia.

Lucan situates this catalogue within the historical and poetic tradition by employing Cyrus, Xerxes, and Agamemnon as generals who established the precedent of amassing countless numbers of troops, both foreign and national, under their standards. However, the repercussions of this association to Pompey is more refined in that this Roman general has also collected their associated shortcomings and will suffer a comprehensively analogous demise.

257 Munson (2001), pp. 199-201, understanding these as innate characteristics of the Persian monarch, evaluates the circumstances leading up to the disaster at Salamis.

258 Herodotus, 8.88; 8.90.
2.4 A View to a Kill

The military catalogue, by nature, looks forward to the battle that will take place in book 7. Only among his foreign allies can Pompey portray himself as the king of kings, as being *primus inter impares*. The collective force, amassed under the leadership of Magnus, is ethnically, politically, and socially dissonant. This is manifest in the cacophonous din caused by the troops:

..., unum
tot reges habuere ducem, coiere nec umquam
tam variae cultu gentes, tam dissona vulgi
ora.

[Never before had] so many kings followed commonly one military leader, nor had so many people, diverse in their costume, assembled, a multitude so verbally discordant. 259

(3.287-290)

Lucan’s *machina discors* is here suggested by the *Pompeianus exercitus disonans*. This conclusion emphasizes that this multi-ethnic Eastern force mustered by Pompey is incapable of acting concordantly. The result of his eastern campaigns in the 60s, Pompey

259 Homer employs this same technique when contrasting the orderly advance of the Greek forces with the confused preparatory cries of the Trojans:

\[
\text{Αὔτὰρ ἐπεὶ κόσμηθεν ἂμ' ἠγέμονεσσιν ἔκαστοι,}
\text{Τρώες μὲν κλαγγῇ τ' ἐνοπῇ τ' ἱσαν, ὅρνιθας ὡς,}
\text{ἡὔτε περ κλαγγῇ γεράνων πέλει οὐρανόθι πρό,}
\text{αἱ τ' ἐπεὶ οὖν χειμώνα φύγων καὶ ἀθέσατον ὁμβρόν,}
\text{κλαγγῇ ταί γε πέτονται ἐπ' ἱ' ὦκεανόιδο ροάων,}
\text{ἀδράσι Πυγμαιοίσι φόνον καὶ κήρα φέρουσαι.}
\]\n
(2.1-6)

The jarring sound raised by this polyglot assembly is an epic *topos*. It may not be a coincidence that the lines cited above come immediately after the close of the Homeric catalogue, and that Lucan’s employment of this same description comes at the virtual end of his Pompeian catalogue. In both instances the poets are describing an eastern army that the audience knows is promised ruin.

135
had bragged, was that he had made the boundaries of Roman power and those of the ὀίκουμένη coextensive.\textsuperscript{260} The cohesiveness to which such a peremptory boast pretends is made questionable at best by Lucan who asserts hyperbolically that the legacy of this eastern alliance will be nothing more than subservience to the forthcoming universal domination of Caesar:

\begin{quote}
acciperet felix ne non semel omnia Caesar, 
vincendum pariter Pharsalia praestitit orbem.
\end{quote}

Lest fortunate Caesar not win for himself all things at once, the lands surrounding Pharsalus offered up all the world to be conquered in one fell swoop.

\begin{quote}
(3.296-297)
\end{quote}

Throughout books 1 and 3 Lucan’s rendering of Pompey’s character and actions is influenced by various Oriental aspects. As a general he had been able to build a legacy through eastern campaigns. Successfully these past victories, and the people over whom they were won, came to structure Pompey’s own Roman character. He had allowed himself to become a product of these vanquished people and places. This is made manifest in the troops, listed in the catalogue, that he is able to muster under his standards. What had been initially a civil war, that had leadership at Rome as its prize, has become a global conflict that will see the Pompeian East challenge Caesar’s universal aspirations of power.

At Pharsalus Pompey proves himself, once again, to be an ineffective leader. His characteristic hesitation, a product of his unremitting desire to live vicariously through his dreams of past success, continues to alienate him utterly from his troops. His flight from Rome has meant his abandonment of those institutions that are the underpinnings of power.

\textsuperscript{260} Nicolet (1991), pp. 30-34; Mattern (1999), pp. 165-166.
his *fama Romana*. Lucan will contrast Pompey’s evanescent Roman character once again with the prototypically Republican Domitius Ahenobarbus who will succeed finally in winning glory through death. Pompey, on the other hand will betray the senate’s faith and the army’s trust by deserting the field and eventually suggesting that the help of the Parthians must be sought. Throughout books 7 and 8 Lucan continues to inform Pompey’s character with the affect of the eastern despot, as he approaches his military defeat and then flees consequently therefrom.

In book 7, even as the Pompeian troops are demanding battle, Pompey remains reluctant to engage the enemy. Lucan’s narrative itself lurches haltingly forward, beginning with the supernatural reluctance of the Sun to rise in the east (7.1-6), proceeding through Cicero’s call to action, and ending with a list of Thessalian portents that symbolize what the global ramifications of this war will be (7.151-213). Lucan the poet appears to balk at the promise of having to compose the Republican defeat at Pharsalus, vacillating in his verses similarly to Pompey in his address within the camp. This anxiety will reach its height when, as Lucan begins to describe the melee at furious centre of the battle, he refuses ironically to continue with his poem:

```plaintext
hanc fuge, mens, partem belli tenebrisque relinque,
nullaque tantorum discat me vate malorum,
quam multum bellis liceat civilibus, aetas.
```

Get thee hence, dear mind, fleeing this moment of the war, let it remain obscure. May no future age learn, from me the vatic poet, of evils so great, nor of the licence afforded civil war.

(7.552-554.)
While Lucan suggests that he can not speak of the products of Caesar’s madness (*furor, rabies*), nonetheless the narrative, as though itself a *machina discors*, continues on. What is lost on the battlefield is not the Republican cause *per se*, but rather the Roman character required to champion such a thing.

As the action of the book begins, the troops enumerated in the catalogue of book 3 are now chafing at Pompey’s hesitancy. In contrast to the somnolent laudation that Pompey dreams he is receiving in his theatre at Rome (7.9-24), the general here finds himself at the head of an army that is rumbling, casting aspersions upon his capacity as a leader. It will take Lucan’s imagined intervention of Cicero to precipitate the inevitable commitment to war at Pharsalus. Lucan foresees that Caesar’s imminent victory can result only in public, theatrical mourning for Pompey (7.40-44). Within his camp a furious *dira rabies* inspires the various troops.²⁶¹

Like those of their Roman counterparts, the complaints of these foreign soldiers, who represent largely the widespread nations of the East, only serve to hasten the Pompeian funereal train that will be their sortie. Rather than seeing Pompey as their champion, these men now look to their general as the impotent leader whose political power and character have withered:

```
segnis pavidusque vocatur
ac nimium patiens soceri Pompeius et orbis
indulgens regno, qui tot simul undique gentis
iuris habere sui pacemque timeret.
nec non et reges populique queruntur Eoi
bella trahi patriaque procul tellure teneri.
```

Slothful, they called Pompey, and they said that he endured excessively his father-in-law. He was too inclined to global rule, and ,while he wished

²⁶¹Hershkowitz (1998), pp. 201-209, argues that *rabies* and *furor*, epic madness, surrounds the climactic battle scene at Pharsalus.
altogether to hold in his power people from far and wide, he feared peace. Even kings and eastern peoples complained about being dragged into this war and about being detained for so long distant from their homeland.

(7.52-57.)

True to character Pompey’s sluggishness persists and now threatens to cause the uprising of the forces that he had been able to gather. At this moment of crisis Lucan employs poetic license to invoke the character of Cicero. Cicero here serves as Lucan’s emblematic Republican statesman. In his scathing address to Pompey, the general’s shortcomings are laid out in full and he is made to realize that the soldiers that are to be under his lead threaten to turn even on the general himself (7.68-85). The potestas afforded by the fides clientelarum that Pompey might still have assumed had been his has now all but disappeared. If he does not proceed against Caesar immediately Pompey will be ruined by those very allies upon whom all of his previous hope had once rested.

Action itself is now required and Cicero here serves as its advocate.

Pompey, in response to Cicero’s public speech, would appear to have no choice but to capitulate. A failed epic hero, he moans initially in response, recognizing that the only choice left to him is that of conceding to fata. While Pompey continues to lament the dire situation foisted upon him by history, nonetheless he acknowledges that now is the time for action, regardless of the ill-fated outcome.262 No Roman can hope to win in this battle as involvement in the civil war will mean the end of both Rome and her Republican men. Lucan makes reference to this dire situation brought about by the conflict, first by his employment of Cicero as the Pompeian catalyst, and secondly in his description of the noble death that is afforded Domitius Ahenobarbus. Once Pompey


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leaves the field, the ideal aspect of the Republican Roman, with the sole exception of Lucan’s Cato, will have suffered extinction. In its place various foreigners will come together who, in their ethnic melange, will struggle for and dilute the imperial power that was once centered upon the city of Rome. The result will be a capitol free of Romans but filled with foreigners; ...Romam sed mundi faece repletam (7.405). Those who once lived at the periphery of Roman control are then to rush centripetally upon the city, marking the utter end of Roma.

Having conceded to the demands for battle of his troops, Pompey can do little but watch the events at Pharsalus unfold. When describing Pompey’s order of battle (7.214-234) Lucan again stresses the exotic character of his troops including a multitude of eastern kings and tyrants. The blood of the entire world will be spilled before Caesar wins his victory at the end of the day. As he reflects upon the ramifications that this one battle will have Lucan offers an encomium to libertas stating plainly that, like Hesiodic δίκη, it has been expelled from the streets of the city, in Lucan’s case Rome, and the lands of its dominion. Now, among tribes who have forever lived under tyrannical rule, has freedom come to seek refuge:

haec lucrum cruenta
effectum, ut Latios non horreat India fasces,
nec vetitos errare Dahas in moenia ducat
Saramaticumque prenat succinctus consul aratrum,
quod semper seras debet tibi Parthia poenas,
quod fugiens civile nefas redituraque numquam
Libertas ultra Tigrim Rhenumque recessit
ac, totiens nobis iugulo quaesita, vagatur
Germanum Scythiumque bonum, nec respicit ultra
Ausaniam, vellem populis incognita nostris.

When that day broke it was all made to be, so that India may not have to dread Roman fasces, that a consul not enclose the wandering Dahae with city walls, nor that he, with toga hiked-up, plough Sarmatian lands. As
such the Parthians will always owe far-gone penalties to you. For Liberty has fled the profanity of civil war, never to return again. Freedom has sought refuge across the Tigris and the Rhine, and whenever we risk our throats in seeking it, freedom, now a blessing among the Germans and the Scythians, never looks back again upon Ausonia. Would that *libertas* had forever remained unknown to our people.

(7.427-437.)

The Republican principle of *libertas*, the shade of which Cato is willing to follow alone as his leader in this civil war, has sought refuge among those foreign people who are most hostile to Rome. To seek such freedom again would not mean to wrench it from its current beneficiaries as *libertas* now appears to be a categorical good that has abstracted itself from Rome. Instead the champion of freedom will have to find it in the deserts of Africa, the Scythian plains, the woods of Germany, abandoning the static monuments of Rome and the now defunct ideals of the Republic.

Upon the battlefield archetypal Roman men die. Lucan laments only that the countless foreigners fighting in this battle had not fallen in their place. Instead men, such as the champions Brutus and Domitius Ahenobarabaus, are fated to be killed thus denying the coming ages the promise of a defended and revived Republic. Pompey, removed from the centre of battle, incapable of involving himself in this embroiled conflict, has to watch as these men, the foremost Republican Romans at Pharsalus, fall before Caesar and thereby win their private Stoic battles for freedom. As these events unfold before the eyes of Pompey in this, his theatre of war, he can only turn in retreat. Lamenting the flight of his *fortuna* and shirking responsibility for the rout, Pompey leaves the battlefield praying only that his forces not be killed to the last man. Walking among the fallen arms and standards, Pompey becomes the quintessential eastern monarch who abandons his men in the midst of battle.\(^\text{263}\) Lucan would have his audience believe, however, that

\(^{263}\text{cf. Arrian 2.11-12. Upon realizing that his Persian army, ruined by disorder, had given way to}\)
Pompey quit the battle fearing lest the very world itself, manifest in his ethnically diverse army, fall upon him thus producing the monumental sepulchre that he will be denied eventually in Egypt.

Running from the debacle at Pharsalus, Pompey longs only to be reunited with his beloved Cornelia on Lesbos. His former dreams of popular acclaim gives way at the beginning of book 8 to his desire to shed his name and his Roman identity:\n
\[
cunctis ignotus gentibus esse \\
mallet et obscuro tutus transire per urbes \\
nomine.
\]

Alone he wished to be unknown to all people, to be safe wandering through cities with an obscure name.

(8.19-21.)

The effect that the events in Thessaly have had upon him is so great that he will become utterly unknowable to even his own wife:

\[
Tum puppe propinqua \\
prosiluit crimenque deum crudele notavit, \\
deformem pallore ducem vultusque prementem \\
canitiem atque atro squalentis pulvere vestis.
\]

As the boat approached Cornelia hurried forward and then witnessed the cruelty of the gods: Pompey, the general, unrecognizable in his pallor, hair matted about his face, and his clothes, squalid, caked with black dust.

(8.54-57.)

Lucan states plainly that the effect suffered by Pompey is not only figurative, but that his body itself becomes indicative of his fallen state.\footnote{cf. 1.131-133; 7.9-24.} Upon seeking refuge with Cornelia Alexander’s advance, Darius fled the battlefield. He rode his chariot, abandoning his panoply, privileging his own safety over that of his soldiers and even his family.

\footnote{cf. 1.131-133; 7.9-24.}

\footnote{Ahl (1976), pp. 169-170.}
Pompey is all but unrecognizable with his ashen complexion, his dishevelled hair and his dusty clothing. While this description may resonate with the portrait offered of Cato at the moment of his funereal marriage to Marcia, here Pompey might be better viewed as a walking corpse, his Roman spirit having already passed away. This is not the triumphant return for which he had hoped. Instead he arrives at Lesbos as the metaphorical celebrant of a funeral march. Cornelia’s response upon seeing her husband, as she falls unconscious, paints in bold strokes the portrait offered here of Pompey. He literally has become the *umbra nominis Magni*.

The reunion is to be short-lived as Pompey continues on his journey of isolation that will end in his own destruction. Boarding a vessel with his wife, the woman who has herself become to Pompey collocative and synonymous with Rome itself, Pompey again heads eastward being met first by his son Sextus, some senators in flight, and then a group of regal retainers (8.205-7). Pompey’s nadir as a Roman general will be evidenced at the moment when, to the astonishment of Lentulus and the Republican institutions for whom he speaks, he suggests allying himself to the Parthians.266 Having now realized that he himself is an exile (*exul*) from Rome, Pompey turns to his eastern, sceptre-bearing retainers, rather than the fugitive Republican senate, for support (8.208-9).267 Just as he had ordered his son, Gnaeus, to raise his foreign troops, Pompey now looks to King

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266 Mayer (1981), pp.112-3, discusses the intentionality of Lucan’s obfuscation of the historical details surrounding Pompey’s choosing and sending King Deiotarus as a legate to the Parthians. This, Mayer argues, is to be understood as a literary testament to the unwavering support that Pompey can still draw from those true Asiatic allies. This, then, prepares a sharp contrast with the perfidious character of the Egyptian King Ptolemy who will betray Pompey. The importance of Parthia, and the ensuing argument that Lentulus will offer in favour of Egypt, is not discussed by Mayer. The question regarding Pompey’s devolved Roman character, made clear by his willingness to invoke the help of Rome’s arch enemy during the late Republic, is suppressed.

267 Lucan emphasizes phonetically this word by its primary placement in line 210. Pompey will be described as an exile only once more in the epic, when his corpse is left to lie anonymously on Egyptian shores (8.837.); Johnson (1987), p. 79.
Deiotarus to summon the support of these same powers. His listing of those people to whom his legate should make this appeal, while it does include many of those troops who had rallied to his aid at Pharsalus, is distinguished by the fact that Pompey hopes most of all that King Deiotarus could win over the Parthians, the people who had been happy to stand by as the Romans hobbled themselves as a widespread politico-military power. The tone of this final military invocation is different in that Pompey will not call foreigners to fight under the aegis of the fallen Roman Republic, but rather they are now to follow the leadership of the Parthians. The ruination of the Roman world would be complete if, entering into the fray, the Parthians were to fill the power vacuum created by the disaster at Pharsalus.

Falling into two parts the speech first directs Deiotarus to the regions where he might find support and secondly it offers the address that Pompey would have him deliver. The territories to which Deiotarus is to make his Pompeian appeal are described deductively not as repositories of the general’s remaining authority but rather as places that remain free from Caesarian influence; ...adhuc securum a Caesare (8.214). While Pompey suggests that he expects his emissary to approach all of those tribes who live in the lands demarcated by the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, in addition to making his appeal to the Medes and Scythians, the intended adresses of this supplication are the Parthians themselves:

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268 The narrative of Pompey’s eastward flight and his eventual appeal to the Parthians parallels notably that of the Athenian Themistocles. Having fallen out of favour after the Persian war, Themistocles was ostracized, thus made an exul legislatively, and found his way to the Persian court of Artaxerxes I. Similarly, were Pompey’s appeal successful, having sailed eastward via Epirus and Lesbos, he might have hoped for similar support, acceptance, and foreign promotion. The result for either man is that they must concede power and station to those over whom they had once been able to exercise control.
... vocesque superbo Arsacidae perferre meas: “si foedera nobis prisca manent mihi per Latium iurata Tonantem, per vestros astricta magos, implete pharetras Armeniosque arcus Geticis intendite nervis, si vos, o Parthi, peterem cum Caspia claustra et sequerer duros aeterni Martis Alanos, passus Achaemeniis late decurrere campis in tutam trepidos numquam Babylona coegi, arva super Cyri Chaldaeique ultima regni, qua rapidus Ganges et qua Nysaeus Hydaspes accedunt pelago, Phoebi surgentis ab igne iam propior quam Persis eram: tamen omnia vincens sustinui nostris vos tantum desse triumphis, solusque e numero regum telluris Eoae ex aequo me Parthus adit. nec munere Magni stant semel Arsacidae; quis enim post vulnera cladis Assyriae iustas Latii compescuit iras? tot meritis obstricta meis nunc Parthia ruptis excedat claustris vetitam per saecula ripam Zeugamque Pellaeum. Pompeio vincite, Parthi, vinci Roma volet.”

Convey my very words to the Parthians, “If age-old pacts, sworn to by Thundering Jove and made fast by your own priests, still hold fast for me, now is the time to fill your quivers and to ready your Armenian bows with Thracian strings. If ever, Parthians, when I sought out the Caspian barricades and when I was pursuing, in unremitting war, the rugged Alani, passing through these areas I drove your people, who roam wide upon the Achaemenian plains, trembling into the safety of Babylon. Even beyond the realms of Cyrus and the furthest reaches of the Chaldaean kingdom did I go, where the Ganges and the Hydaspean Nysaeus approaches the sea. I was closer even than Persia to the risings of the fiery sun. Having conquered all peoples alone I allowed you the great honour of being not included in my triumphs. Alone, among the number of eastern kings, did the Parthian ruler attend to me as an equal. Nor would Parthia later have continued to stand were it not for the service of Pompey, for who else, after the blow of losing Assyria, may have contained the justifiable rage of Rome. Now, Parthia, bound in debt to me, unbolt the gates and cross that shore so long forbidden and make your way past Alexander’s Zeugma. Conquer for Pompey, Parthians, as Rome wishes to be so conquered.

(8.217-238)
The opening words of the address that Pompey would have Deiotarus deliver to the Parthians betrays the despair that the general feels. The result of this civil war, Lucan stated in his catalogue *caesarum belli* in book 1, would be that the discordant machinations of the universe itself would destroy the *foedera* that maintained the *concors mundi* (1.79-80). In turn this would cause great nations and, by extension, their leaders to collapse under their own weight. Pompey, now calling upon the Parthians, appeals to age-old *foedera* that would demand their *fides* to the general. Lucan’s Roman audience would be suspect of the validity of Pompey’s call to arms due to the poet’s earlier denunciation of him as *exul*, a term of disgrace that categorizes Pompey as abject.269 Pompey’s present rendering of his eastern successes is rhetorically excessive while being historically dubious. Through his reformulation of his *res gestae* Pompey attempts to generate the circumstances that would have the Parthians accept him as their own *princeps*, something that would cast Pompey among the Parthians as the *summus rex*. The Pompeian paradox is that now he will only be able to hold onto his delusions of primacy not within the walls of his theatre at Rome but by aligning and identifying himself with the Parthians, the paradigmatic antipodean people, something that makes them the most appropriate agents of Rome’s sought-after destruction.

With Deiotarus already dispatched, Pompey will come before the exiled Republican assembly at Syhedra one last time in an effort to persuade them that the involvement of the Parthians ironically will restore the senate at Rome (8.262-327). Already suspicious of Egyptian loyalty, Pompey argues that the kingdoms lying to the east, beyond the scope of Caesarian influence, will establish him once again in a position

of power. Before these Roman statesmen Pompey is careful to claim that this appeal is to be made solely upon the basis that tribes such as the Medes, Assyrians, and Scythians, are by nature inclined to fight strongly. Pompey is careful to downplay the hopes that he has placed upon the Parthians themselves. Although they are catalogued among the other kingdoms to which Pompey would have military recourse, the Parthians alone can supply the fighting force required to advance successfully upon Caesar and thereby to effect Pompey’s resumption of his affected Roman primacy. As the Psylli are to Cato, so too would Pompey have the Parthians in relation to himself.

Upon hearing Pompey’s call to make an appeal to Parthia, Lentulus steps forward to counter the proposal on behalf of the senate.270 Why, Lentulus asks, would Pompey entrust himself and Roman affairs to people living on the opposite side of the world? The only product of such an act, which in and of itself would be tantamount to submission, would be the availing of Hesperia for Parthian conquest. Lentulus articulates the conventional Roman ethnographic view of the Parthians in his dismissal of Pompey’s proposal. By appealing to the Parthians Pompey, Lentulus claims, will render himself utterly subservient, realizing thus what, to date, had only been the Parthian aspiration to conquer. Pompey’s diplomatic issuing of Deiotarus has done irreparable damage to the potestas of Rome, something that can only serve to inspire the Parthians to take action against their debilitated enemies. Lentulus reminds Pompey that alone the Parthians chose not to involve themselves in the battle at Pharsalus and now that Pompey has suffered defeat it is most unlikely that they will take up his losing and self-aggrandizing cause. In response to Pompey’s promise that the Parthians are the best of fighters, Lentulus concedes that this is only the case when they have room enough to flee. This

270Lucan may choose Lentulus here to be the spokesman because he had earlier been the consul who had called for Pompey to be made the interim leader: ..., Magnumque iubete / esse ducem (5.46-7.)
assertion may be intended to sting Pompey to the quick as he too had withdrawn from the battlefield when all had appeared lost. The duplicity and cowardice that characterize Lentulus’ ethnic portrait of the Parthians may be extended to the view one has of Pompey at this same moment. Roman *honestas* will be ruined, as has already been its claim to *potestas*, if Pompey’s plan is pursued. The only result, Lentulus ironically states, is that Magnus would be divorced utterly from his *patria* being left to die in a foreign world, buried in a shallow grave. This, of course, will be the very end that Pompey meets when he concedes to Lentulus’ plan of going instead to Egypt. Not only to the Parthians, but to the Roman senate itself, Pompey has become utterly insignificant, leading Lentulus to make his most damning comment of the speech: *quis nominis umbram / horreat* (8.449-450).

The intervening verses in book 8 usher narratively Pompey to his death. Like the oak tree in his introductory simile, Pompey is already dead in essence as he holds no power within or without Rome. His vain aspirations of invoking the help of the Parthians make clear finally his inclination towards assuming the character and goals of the eastern despot. His is a fight not for Rome but for the opportunity to win the greatest prize; the indebtedness of Rome for having staved off destruction from civil war. His assassination alone will afford him the opportunity to serve as an example of courage, fortitude, and Roman strength to both his immediate spectators and to Lucan’s poetic audience.271 History itself pushes Pompey from the Hesperian peninsula and to Syhedra where he proposes taking that final step that would mean his renunciation of all things Roman in favour of his Parthian resurrection.

The successful actions of which Pompey dreamed in life are to be realized only

271 George (1985), pp. 126-128, discusses that here Pompey, as the Stoic *proficiens*, may serve as a didactic example upon the occasion of his death.
once his headless body is buffeted along by waves along the Egyptian coast. With Pompey dead, *libertas* in exile among Rome’s antipodal enemies, and the forces soon to be under Cato’s correspondingly ineffectual command, it is left to Lucan to compose an apostrophe that may serve as Magnus’ literary sepulchre. The encomium of Pompey and the corresponding damnation of Egypt that close Book 8 of the poem establish a narratological endpoint that emphasizes the forthcoming focal shift of the work.

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temeraria dextra,
cur obicis Magno tumulum manesque vagantis
includis? situs est qua terra extrema refuso
pendet in Oceano; Romanum nomen et omne
imperium Magno tumuli est modus:...
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Impetuous right hand! Why do you heap up a tomb upon Magnus and imprison his free-wandering ghost? His funerary mound itself is situated over earth’s vast expanse which floats upon backward-flowing Oceanus. Only the Roman name and the full-expanse of our Empire is the limit to Pompey’s grave.

(8.795-800)

And later:

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Tu quoque, cum saevo dederis iam templa tryanno,
nondum Pompei cineres, o Roma, petisti;
exul adhuc iacet umbra ducis.

You, dear Rome, even though you have granted a sacred temple to a savage tyrant, nonetheless you have not yet sought out the ashes of Pompey; even now the ghost of the general lies as an exile.
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(8.835-837)

No longer is Magnus localized within the boundaries defining Rome, but finally in death he has become co-terminous with them. In opposition to the ineffectiveness that informed Pompey’s persona at the poem’s outset, his actions throughout the war betray
his progress towards both recognizing and employing fundamental tenants of Stoic
philosophy.\textsuperscript{272} The apex of his philosophical evolution is the resolution with which he
goes to meet his death in Egypt.

Thus we begin to ascertain the philosophical sub-text that is responsible for the
apparent evolution of Pompey’s character throughout the poem. In order for the struggle
to be for the sake of freedom and Rome proper, it must be fought between legitimate
opponents.

\begin{quote}
Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos
iusque datum sceleri canimus,...

I sing of battles, worse than civil war over the Emathian plains and of the
name Justice being given to crime...
\end{quote}

(1.1-2)

The only thing that could further pervert this civil war is that it is being led on either side
by men who are related by marriage.\textsuperscript{273} In this way Lucan is able to metonymously
employ the image and aspect of the Roman households as being rendered utterly
impotent. Familial propriety and the social allegiance usually afforded between families
through marriage has broken down between Caesar and Pompey. The poet employs this
trope suggestively in his depiction of the larger abstracted struggle of the older,
established and conservative ideal of Republicanism against the mobile, young and
blood-thirsty desire for monarchical power. As is the case at the beginning of the work,

\textsuperscript{272}Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 364-366, note that Stoic ‘right action’ results from engaging one’s
\textit{ratio} in the proper function. The virtue of prudence, which Pompey demonstrates at the moment of his
retreat from the Pharsalian battlefield, is the ideal function of one’s \textit{ratio}.

\textsuperscript{273}This is Lucan’s appropriation of Livy’s pronouncement that it was viciousness itself for
Hannibal to be born a Carthaginian (\textit{AUC} 21. 4. 9): \textit{has tantas viri virtutes ingentia vitia aequabant,}
\textit{inhuma crudelitas, perfidia plus quam Punic, nihil veri, nihil sancti, nullus deum metus, nullam ius
turandum, nulla religio}.
both generals can not be fighting for the sake of imperial rule if this is to be a politically and ethically sound fight. Until Pompey becomes a legitimate Republican, which occurs ironically only in his death, Lucan and Cato both are trapped within the confines of a poetic world that has no place for *libertas*. It is an idea maintained latently within the poem by the early introduction of Cato in book 2. These men have been spatially displaced, seeking security in the constructs of non-Roman spaces such as Parthia, the epic and North Africa. However, the audience, like Pompey himself, must learn to view the Lucanian program through the explicitly visual and horrific episodes of the epic.¹⁵¹ Not meant to entertain, these events set in greater relief the ideological fortitude of Cato and Brutus who both, though they apprehend the program somewhat differently, bear the true Republican standards.

²⁷⁴ Examples of horrific narrative in the epic include the sea-battle of book 3 (583-751), Scaeva’s monstrously heroic stand in book 6 (138-262), and the extensive catalogue of deaths suffered by Cato’s soldiers when attacked by the snakes in book 9 (734-838).
CHAPTER 3

CATO’S ISOLATION

Cato’s character throughout Lucan’s epic is captured in the general’s continuous struggle to reconcile his Stoic inclinations with political and military activity. The narrative importance attributed by Lucan to Cato is revealed by the early use of this aspiring Republican hero. From his first introduction Cato is cast as the self-willed martyr, choosing to set himself and his actions at odds with the gods (1.128). This stance establishes early the true ideological character of Lucan’s Cato. Given Lucan’s historically themed epic, Cato, cast as the proto-Republican, does not have the luxury of a legitimate philosophical choice. He must side with the Pompeians, he must pick up the pieces of the Pharsalian debacle, and he must die by his own hand at Utica. The narrative casts Cato as removed, both literally and philosophically, from his country, his political supporters and even from the wife, Marcia, with whom he is about to renew his vows. Only in the desert of Libya is Cato given the opportunity to make a display of his political position and his Stoicism. In this region, far removed from his Rome, Cato must come to rely upon an equally detached tribe, the Psylli, to physically protect his men and act as the ψυχοτόμοι to the Republican troops. Cato’s story is one of tragic isolation, both at Rome and abroad.

275 Acting contrary to the quasi-theistic duality of fatum and fortuna, Cato engages in a course of action that runs contrary to the basic Stoic tenets regarding προσέρεσις.
The portrait that Lucan sketches of Cato is one enriched by its geographical landscape. While the doublet of Rome and the East underpinned Pompey’s character and agenda in the poem, Rome and Africa, both serving as the backdrop of Catonian action, underscore the ideological detachment of the Stoic Cato. Are solitude and ineffectiveness the aims and fruits of Lucanian *libertas*? Given the solitary, tragic, yet redeeming execution of Pompey at the close of book 8 it would appear that *libertas* was left to be practiced by the isolated and abandoned Roman. Freedom has become but the privilege to be destroyed. Would that the poet had the opportunity to complete his epic, though one may still derive an understanding of Lucan’s tragic hero, Cato Uticensis, from those portions of the epic that were handed down.\(^{276}\) In the following chapter the complementary depictions of Cato at Rome and in Libya, capturing the philosophical aspect of his tragic figure, will be developed. As was the case with Caesar and Pompey, Cato must leave Rome in order to distil and realize his ethnic and philosophic complexion. Like his tyrannical antagonists, Cato too is a character outside of the political presence and place of Rome.

3.1 The Stage is Set.

While consideration of Cato’s character often begins with a study of his interview with Brutus in Book 2, Lucan has been making subtle preparations in the opening book for Cato’s entrance.\(^{277}\) Unlike the bold depictions of Caesar and Pompey (1.129-57),

\(^{276}\)Masters (1992) argues that the abruptness of the poem’s end is intended to reflect the overall incompleteness of the civil war.

\(^{277}\)Johnson (1996), 38-63, understands the character of Cato in terms of the complementary castings of the hero in books 2 and 9 alone. Ahl (1976), 231; 252, makes the obligatory reference to *BC* 1.128 in his opening remarks regarding Cato, and does point to the general’s second mention later in Book 1, though only with the purpose of illustrating the coincidence of Cato’s ideological characterization and that suggested by Lucan throughout the epic.
which cast these two figures as a doublet, Cato is given an independent introduction. He
is not simply at odds with the affairs of mortal men. Cato has decided wilfully to engage
in a cause that Lucan and his audience know will fail. Already he enjoys jealously a
privileged disconnection from the immediate worldly affairs of his fellow citizens.

The contrast between the initial Lucanian portraits of Pompey and Caesar
establishes the former as the ineffective hero of the past, acting only so as to defend the
_fama virtutis_ that his career had produced.\(^\text{278}\) From this early description Caesar emerges
as the commander of the moment whose recent successes, _nova...acta_ (1.121) and _victis...
_Gallis_, threaten the fabric of Pompey’s civic and martial character, namely his age-old
triumphs and the victories he earned in his eradication of piracy from the eastern
Mediterranean.\(^\text{279}\) The emergent Northern European now confronts the decayed power of
the East. Most simply this conflict is essentially between the reserved expansionism of
the Roman Republic, and that self-motivated imperialistic program of the principate.
Caught between these two agendas and their respective proponents is Cato. His middling
position is reinforced by Lucan’s introductory mention of Cato immediately prior to the
central comparison of the relative characters of Pompey and Caesar.

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\(^{278}\) Consideration of the complementary descriptions of Pompey and Caesar most often treats only
the verses between 1.129-57, introduced by the following half line: _nec coiere pares_ (nor did men, true
equals, vie with one another). The comparison being made by Lucan begins nine verses earlier upon his
enunciation of the fifth cause of the war: _stimulos dedit aemula virtus_ (rivalry in virtue caused headlong
action[1.120]).

\(^{279}\) It is worth noting that Lucan makes no mention here of the extended powers afforded Pompey
by the _Lex Gabinia_. Upon ridding the sea of pirates in three months in 67 B.C., Pompey then had his
_imperium_ expanded to include what would be the final Mithridatic campaign. Though he did not caputre
Mithridates himself, Pompey caused the leader to flee over the Caucasus mountains after which he killed
himself. With the exception of Parthia, Pompey was responsible for the colonization and eventual Roman
organization of the East.
In one of his most famous *sententiae* Lucan introduces Cato as the ideologically isolated and futile character that can only assume a tragic stance throughout the proceeding epic:

\[ \text{victrix causa deis placuit sed victa Catoni.} \]

The triumphant cause pleased the gods, while the defeated cause found favor with Cato.

(1.128)

Struggling with the equally unacceptable characters of both Pompey and Caesar, Cato is cast as the only possible answer to Lucan’s bootless attempt to assert a hero in this epic. The futility is a function of Cato’s inherent opposition to the gods.

The *deis* referred to here by Lucan are not the conventional gods of epic. The historic theme of his poem, compounded with the non-doctrinaire Stoicism that informs the narrative and characters both, does not allow for the intrusion of the meddling Olympians. This initial mention of the Stoic hero, Cato, establishes him as an ideological failure. The successful Stoic chooses only those things that will afford the two aspects of a truly happy life: *securitas* and *tranquilitas*. These choices are dictated

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280 The use of the verb *placuit* bears certain political intonations as it may be used to express impersonally the acceptance of ordinances and resolutions of the Senate or another such authoritarian body. This reading would suggest then a scene of metaphorical factionism in which Cato may be read as acting contrary to popular public opinion. This would undercut Cato’s professed Stoicism as he chooses to forgo both *tranquilitas* and *securitas*.

281 Millard (1891), 26-8, makes this observation on the basis of his investigation of the elevation of *fatum* and *fortuna* both to the role of Stoic divinities in this poem. A different approach is taking by Ahl (1976), 68-9, who interprets the absence of divinities as necessary. If the gods were present, Ahl argues, some legitimacy must be granted *de facto* to the success of Caesar in the civil war. Given the poet’s sympathy for the Republican cause, and his desire to thematize Stoic ethics, the dismissal of conventional characterizations and poetic employments of gods sets in greater relief Cato, Pompey and Caesar and the appropriate and inappropriate decisions that they make.

282 Seneca, *Ep.* 92.3: *Quid est beata vita? Securitas et perpetua tranquillitas. hanc dabit animi magnitudino, dabit constantia bene tenanti tenax. ad haec quomodo pervenitur? si veritas tota perspecta est; si servatus est in rebus agendis ordo, modus, decor, innoxia voluntas ac benigna, intenta ratione nec umquam ab illa recedens, amabilis simul mirabilisque. denique ut breviter tibi formulam scribam, talis
by one’s inability to affect things outside the sphere of one’s control, things that are the product largely of fatum. The goal towards which the Stoic is to strive is the reconciliation of his will to that of god. In so situating himself ideologically the true Stoic realizes that each event, ranging from the affairs of state to the actions undertaken by close relatives, is necessary and reasonable for the best interest of the universal whole (κόσμος). Cato’s introduction casts him as a man who chooses to set himself at odds with Lucan’s gods. An attendant symptom is that this will deny Cato any meaningful or effective association with his soldiers when in Africa.

In addition to being unwilling to submit to the tyrannical programs of either Caesar or Pompey, Cato has begun to orchestrate the effective manner of his suicide. In acting contrary to Caesar and the gods both Cato is doomed to suffer the same destruction that awaits Pompey. Lucan’s brief mention of Cato in this line links his death with that of Pompey. While Pompey is doomed to fail because he has allowed his military muscle to atrophy, choosing instead to rest on his laurels (1.129-143), Cato’s defeat is the result of his own choosing.

The mention made of Cato in the opening book of the epic is a preparatory move that suggests the ambiguous role that the poet will attribute to his Stoic leader in the epic. Within the order of the universe Cato resigns himself to be sacrificed for the Republic, animus esse sapientis viri debet qualis deum decret. Lucan’s Cato is in contraposition to this Senecan definition. Voluntas is driven for Cato by his contrary disposition, not in an effort to realize wisdom for the sake of philosophical beatification. In the case of Cato and the poetic narrator Lucan, stoicism compels the individual to segregate himself from others. This occurs intellectually, socially, and geographically as it shall be seen in Cato’s case.

\[283\] Long and Sedley (1987), pp. 331-332, note that the Stoic divinity is a compound principle that at times appears to be the providential, immanent, rational and ubiquitous force denominated either as natura or fatum. Two derivations of this view are those that hold god as the universe proper and that inclination to describe god in terms of the traditional Greek Pantheon. This tendency to refer to a multiplicity of Stoic gods may be the product of the utter comprehensiveness of this philosophical deity.
choosing eventually to become a Pompeian rather than to align himself with the gods. Cato’s position is one of isolation, both in the physical and metaphysical worlds. The second reference to him, Caesar’s denunciatory description of Cato as nothing more than a phantasmal name, suggests that Cato’s enemies see him as ineffectual, preferring the Stoic privileges of removal and resignation to potent action. In books 2 and 9 Lucan underscores the inward struggle in which Cato indulges to reconcile himself to his inevitable course of martial action. What Cato will find is that there is no place, either at Rome, or in the whole of the orbis terrarum, where he will be able to adhere to his Stoic ideals while championing the Pompeian Republican cause.

Assessment of Cato’s character is undertaken largely on the basis of his entrance in book 2 and the ensuing interview with Brutus. While this scene is employed in order to set in greater relief Cato’s Stoicism, it might also be read as a criticism of his philosophical and political positions. Cato’s character is shaped by an altruistic allegiance to Rome. The images that Cato has of both the Roman state and the true Roman citizen are realized only in the public display he makes of his own character. These are amplified by the relationship of general and soldier captured in the particularized relationship he has to his nephew Brutus.

Another instance upon which Lucan communicates Cato’s removal from the Roman political and popular milieu is the narrative describing Marcia’s return and the renewal of the couple’s wedding vows. While on one level this prepares the audience for the parallel scene on Lesbos where Pompey and Cornelia will be reunited only after the

2841.313.

285Marti (1945) and George (1985).
disaster at Pharsalus, Cato’s willingness to marry is only driven by his desire to be realized figuratively as the legitimate husband of Roma proper.\textsuperscript{286}

\begin{quote}
hi mores, haec duri immota Catonis secta fuit, servare modum finemque tenere naturamque sequi patriaeque impendere vitam nec sibi sed toti genitum se credere mundo. huic epulae vicisse famem, magnique penates summovisse hiemem tecto, pretiosaque vestis hirtam membra super Romani more Quiritis induxisse togam, Veneris quoque maximus usus progenies: urbi pater est urbique maritus,...
\end{quote}

Such were the customs, such were the immutable principles of the austere Cato, to live the temperate life, remain focused upon the end, to reconcile one’s life to nature, to devote oneself to Roma, to believe that a man was not born for his own selfish good, but for that of the entire world. To him the mere staving off of hunger was a feast. To him a mean building warding off snow was a palace. The coarse toga, thrown over his limbs in the manner of a Roman citizen, was a precious garment. The greatest employment of love-making was the conception of children. Cato is father and husband both to the city...

(2.380-388)

These are the words of Lucan’s final \textit{laudatio} of Cato.\textsuperscript{287} The poet leaves us with this idealized characterization of Cato as the general is removed from the narrative, only to return in the opening lines of book 9. Cato is depicted, both in his interview with Brutus, and the mournful matrimonial ceremony he celebrates with Marcia as a man whose political and philosophical character has no place in the Rome that has already been violated by Caesar on the banks of the Rubicon. Cato’s Republican army, as Brutus himself will express, will consist of nothing more than one general and one true soldier.

\textsuperscript{286}For an analysis of the structure of Lucan’s entire epic see Frank (1970).

\textsuperscript{287}Sallust, \textit{Cat. Con.} 54.5-6: at Catoni studium modestiae, decoris, sed maxume severitatis erat; non divitiis cum divite neque factione cum factioso, sed cum strenuo virtute, cum modoestu pudore, cum innocente abstinentia certabat; esse quam videri bonus malebat: ita, quo minus petebat gloriem, eo magis illumadsequebatur.
The Rome to which he and the poet Lucan would promise their allegiance and their lives is a city that has no place on the banks of the Tiber. Caesar and Pompey both, upon leaving the city of Rome, grounded their characters in foreign places and with aspects of foreign people thus undermining their identity as Roman. Cato, upon quitting his home, his wife, and his city, with the naive intention of preserving altruistically the values of the Republic, compromises his privileged sense of civic connectedness. Cato is a self-generated outcast, whose quest for the lost Republic will take him to the periphery of the Roman world in Africa, and whose only victory can be the utter rendering of citizen and state: death.

Cato’s appearance in book 2 is an episode that critics of Lucan point to as evidence of his unwillingness to adhere to the historical chronology of the conflict in his poetic narrative. The decision that Cato will make to engage personally the *ira Caesaris* renders the Stoic in the guise of the traditional Republican heroes including Horatius and P. Decius Mus (*devotum hostiles Decium pressere catervae:*...[2.308]). Cato would have his audience, namely Brutus, and Lucan’s audience, the poem’s reader, recognize in his actions the Republican act of *devotio*.\textsuperscript{288} In contrast to Cato’s self-portrayal as the unperturbed elder, the Roman citizens of Lucan’s epic display their lack of resolve and their ignorance of the ramifications that this civil war will have not only for the city of Rome but for the whole of the world. In contrast to the culpable, ignorant, and

\textsuperscript{288}Johnson (1987), pp. 42-43, makes a strong association between Cato’s *devotio* and proceeding scene depicting Marcia’s return. Coming directly from Horatius’ pyre Marcia already appears the part of the mourning widow. The reductive description of the preparations and the ceremony casts the marital reunion of Cato and Marcia literally as a funeral.
anonymous men of Rome stands Cato. Again the traditional viewing of Lucan’s portrait of Cato sees the general as the Stoic exemplum, embodying the ideals of the Republic, suffering willingly for the sake of *libertas.*289

Upon introducing Cato in his second book, Lucan suggests that the Stoic suffers the same kinds of anxieties as those that beset common Roman people. What the proceeding section will argue is that Cato suffers from the concerns that are better suited to a lover than to the man who embodies the failed hope of the Republic. Cato, in both his character and his attendant actions, is out of step with the world that is Lucan’s poetic Rome. Even at home in Rome, Cato still appears foreign, not only in the stance that he must take in the conflict, but even in his relations with Brutus and Marcia both.

Book 2 of the epic opens with a proem dedicated to lamenting man’s ability to ascertain future catastrophe through the reading of prodigies. Poetically this introduction establishes a thematic continuation from the closing scenes of book 1 wherein Arruns and Nigidius Figulus both fail to read the signs properly.290 The ill-omens catalogued in book 1 convey the geographical expanse of the Roman world that will suffer as a result of the war. By listing portents as appearing not only in Latium (1.533-535), Sicily (1.545-549) and the Alps (1.552-554), but even in the farthest reaches of Spain (1.554-555), Lucan conveys that the scope of this conflict will not be restricted in actions or ramifications to

289 Haag (1978), pp. 194-216, offers this traditional reading of Cato. Even Johnson (1996) does not suggest the possibility of irony in Lucan’s description of Cato and his actions. Instead Johnson sees Cato as the hyperbolically Stoic character, whose ultimately puritanical character makes him nothing more than a caricature.

290 Hoover (1995), p. 94, has noted the peculiar placement of these prodigies. Tradition would have them announce the coming of civil war. Lucan, however, appears to use these images at the close of book 1 in order to reinforce the suggestion that origin of this civil war was Caesar’s crossing of the Rubicon. This *iunctura,* establishing a correspondence between the actions of Caesar and the omens themselves, takes on increased signifigance in that it is the general’s *furor* that compels *natura* to dismantle the laws of the natural world, making a display of that which is contrary to divine law, signs that must first be recognized rightly and then articulated in order to convey the confused horror that is now Caesar’s civil war.
Rome herself. Instead the entire world will similarly participate in and suffer from inevitable civil war. This desperate tone resonates in the opening lines of book 2 (1-4) and it reaches a climax when Lucan, through his interpretation of the omens (manifestaque signa belli), pronounces the unspeakable; civil war is at hand.291

The second half of this proem, lines 5-15, serves a twofold purpose. First of all the gods are distanced from the impious affairs of men. Though Jupiter is addressed through the regal title of rector Olympi, he, and his attendant Olympians will be suppressed in these lines. The tragic rhetorical question is that asking why men, already afflicted with the hardships of mortality, should be burdened with the ability and science of prognostication.292 Lucan further articulates man’s pathetic lot in his brief exposition contrasting Stoic and Epicurean teleological beliefs.293 Simply put, either the Stoic view, that understands a theistic principle to be the first cause, and thereby asserts that the universe is governed and directed through determinism, or that of the Epicureans, namely that chance alone governs all things, ought to sate man’s desire to understand the world in

291Schrijvers (1988), p. 346, mentions the etymological connection between (ne)fus and the verb fari. This association was made already by Varro who associates the terms as follows: dies nefasti, per quos dies nefas fari praetorem do, dico, addico. (L.L. VI 30).

292Hesiod’s description of Pandora, and her accompanying ills, offers a striking parallel (WD 59-105). Her introduction to mankind marks the advent of ten thousand ills, filling both land and sea. Hope (Ἑπίστ) alone remained within the πίθος thus being preserved as the one possible antidote to the affliction that is mankind’s fleeting mortality. Lucan, however, denies even this small solace as nothing remains obscure to the minds of men, thus disallowing the consolation of hope to the anxious and fearful (2. 14-5).

293These lines are a reiteration of the Neo-Pythagorean Figulus’ juxtaposition of the cosmic views held by the Epicureans and Stoics (1.642-658). The possibilities are that either fatum directs teleologically the affairs of men and the world alike or that the world is the plaything of chance, with no intended end established. Drawing upon Haskins early commentary, Getty (1992) parallels Figulus’ Stoic teleological thought with the astrologer Manilius’ view that fata is a motive force in the universe, though this is reconciled to the randomness suscribed to by the Epicureans: hoc nisi fata darent numquam fortuna tulisset [4.49]. In book 2 Cato will open his reply with a rearticulation of this sentiment: sed quo fata trahunt virtus secura sequetur [2.287].
which he lives. Since *natura* reveals impending doom through anomalous events, the fear that is produced as a result of these omens can only be offset by the gift of hope.  

In book 2 that hope will be personified ironically in the character of Cato.

Lucan follows the proem with complementary scenes describing the actions of anonymous men and women upon their realization that war is imminent (2.16-66). Both the public and private spheres of Rome retreat, abandoning the responsibilities of business and government, choosing instead to act as though already in a state of personal and political bereavement. These lines, which set the tone of the proceeding description of the atrocities endured at Rome upon the occasion of the civil war undertaken by Sulla and Marius, shift the reader’s attention from the leaderless political body of Rome, to the scene of mourning women. This emphasis prepares the call to lament threnodically as only this moment, pregnant with crisis and open to the success of either camp, offers the mothers and wives an opportunity to grieve publicly.

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294 Fantham (1992), p. 82.

295 The tone set in these lines is reminiscent of the scene at the end of the interview between Hector and Andromache in the *Iliad* (6.494-502).

"Ὡς ἀρα φωνήσας κόρυθ᾽ εἶλετο φαιδίμος Ἐκτωρ ἱππουριν᾽ ἀλοχος δὲ φίλη οἰκόνδε βεβήκει ἐντροπαλιξώμη, θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσα. αἴσχρα δ᾿ ἐπείθ᾽ ἱκανο δόμους εὑ ναιετάοντας Ἐκτορὸς ἀνθρωπόνοιο, κιγήσαστο δ᾽ ἐνθίθι πολλὰς ἀμφίπολους, τησιν δὲ γόον πάσησιν ἐνώρσειν. αἱ μὲν ἔτι ζωοὶ γόον Ἐκτορα ὡ ἐνὶ οἰκῷ οὔ γάρ μιν ἔτ᾿ ἐφαντὸ ὑπότροπον ἐκ πολέμιοι ἱξεθάι, προφυγόντα καὶ πείρας Ἀχαιῶν.

And having so spoken, Hector picked up his horse-hair crested helmet. His dear wife went homewards, casting longing glances back over her shoulder, while shedding a tear. Soon she arrived at the well-built halls of man-slaughtering Hector. Many of her attendants rushed to her side, and her very appearance incited all to wailing though Hector as yet lived in the house. Never would they look upon him again returning from battle, escaping the wrath and grasp of the Achaians.

296 While Lucan emphasizes the concern and terror felt by the women who initially cannot find words adequate to describe their sorrow, the poet’s own verses serve as the introductory verbalization of
The scene of despair at Rome, set by the nobles casting off the trappings of political and public privilege through their donning of the anonymous clothes of a private citizen, is conveyed clearly in the separation of the dignitary representative and the display of power afforded by the escort of lictors. 297 Already the Republican establishment has begun to give way to Caesar. This is signalled by Lucan’s description of men separating themselves visibly, through their change of clothes, and physically, when the Senate flees eventually to Epirus, from the city. 298 This abandonment undermines the principles that establish the political and civic identity of the city. Being abandoned by the Senate and its people no longer is this location Roma per se. The dominatio for which Caesar is striving will signal the true end of the Republic, with libertas, like the cowering politicos themselves, fleeing from the city left only with Metellus and Cato as her defenders. 299

After describing the public abandonment of Rome by her legislators and political leaders Lucan shifts his focus to the private hardships suffered by women and men, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers. The attention paid to the anxieties felt by these anonymous Romans prepares the audience both for the Marian narrative and for the introduction of Cato later in the book. Disruption, despair and grief buffet the crowd at Rome threatening the populace that is all too familiar with the vicissitudes of civil war. the horrors that will attend upon the coming confrontation, one that will be delayed essentially for yet another five books until the showdown at Pharsalus.

297Fantham (1992), p. 83, notes that the lines in question are not intended to suggest the Republican dichotomy between the patrician and plebeians. It may be, however, that Lucan did hope that his audience have this distinction in mind. The result would be that the social infrastructure that had caused so much political, economic and social developmental success throughout the middle and late Republics had all but collapsed. Instead of these larger socio-political classes, Rome is now characterized by those who either will be Pompeians or Caesareans. This, Lucan will suggest, is Cato’s view of the situation upon his effective introduction to the poem.

298In fact this will be mentioned explicitly by Lucan later in book 2 (2.541ff.).

299Morford (1966), 111.
The weakness of the city is underscored by the division of men and women, with the former abandoning the latter inside the walls. Roma, depicted in book 1 as an old mother in mourning (1.185-203), has been preemptively surrendered by men who will instead take up the Pompeian or Caesarian cause of tyranny.

Just as the politicians have given up their costumes and duties, namely the purple-bordered toga and public debate, Roman mothers are first described by Lucan as mourning silently throughout the city. *Dolor, not libertas*, is what resonates in their words and actions. Lucan suggests this poetically by having this one word frame the private scene in which a nameless mother lays out her dead (2.19-28):

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tum questus tenuere suos magnusque per omnis
erravit sine voce dolor. sic funere primo
attonitae tacuere domus, cum corpora nondum
conclamata iacent nec mater crine soluto
exigit ad saevos famularum bracchia planctus,
sp sed cum membra premit fugiente rigentia vita
vultusque exanimes oculosque in morte natantes,
necdum est ille dolor nec iam metus: incubat amens
miraturque malum.
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Then mournful outcry beset them and pathetic grief wandered voicelessly all about. Just as a home, first stunned by a death, wherein the corpse, which ought to be cried over, is not yet laid out, and the mother, with hair still fixed, does not compel her attendants to beat their breasts. Instead she caresses the rigid limbs, from which life flees, his lifeless face and eyes swimming in death. Not yet have grief and dread beset her: dazed she lies upon him and is astonished by this hardship.

(2.20-28)

Like the terrified inhabitants at Ariminum (1.257-258) who are the first to be confronted by the invading Caesar, fear and grief take hold of the women left at Rome. Lucan captures the public grief of the city poetically by using the private scene of a mother

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300 Ahl (1976), 234.
mourning the unexpected death of a son. There are numerous points of contact between
the city and the mother in this simile. In both instances the primary focus is upon the
solitary situation of the woman. In the first case she has been left by her husband in favor
of partisanship, while in the simile she is left to mourn alone their stricken child. In both
situations there is a sense of disbelief. At Rome the women are dazed, stunned by grief,
unable to express their fear (... magnusque per omnis / erravit sine voce dolor [2.20-1]).
The tone of public mourning in Rome was suggested already by Lucan when he colored
the suspension of activity in the city by denominating it as a *ferale iustitium* (2.17-18).301
Rome is inhabited alone by frail old men, concealing their position of public authority in
order to save themselves, and women, who are denied the private responsibility of proper
mourning. The civic strength of Rome is utterly undone. The city has been abandoned to
its rape by the advancing Caesar.

Before mentioning the situation in which male Roman citizens find themselves,
Lucan gives his grieving women a voice. While first blood has not yet been spilled, an
anonymous woman, leading other frenzied mourners to the temples of the gods, offers up
a prayer and calls upon those around her to indulge in all of the rituals of grief.302

‘nunc,’ ait ‘o miserae, contundite pectora, matres,
nunc laniate comas neve hunc differte dolorem
et summis servate malis. nunc flere potestas
dum pendet fortuna ducum: cum vicerit alter,
gaudendum est.’ his se stimulis dolor ipse lacescit.

Then the woman said, “Now, wretched mothers, beat your breasts, now
rend your locks, do not hold off this grief for the utmost hardships. Only

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301Fantham (1992), 83, notes that no historical source relates similarly such a suspension of public
business at Rome in 49 B.C. Lucan is thus generalizing, through his description of the *iustitium* as *feralis*,
that the tumult felt at Rome was a macrocosmic version of the grief one would feel at home. Thus the
approach of Caesar might be thought of as a funerary procession marking the death of the Republic.

while the fortune of the leaders hangs in the balance, are we afforded the power to cry. Once one or the other proves victorious it will be necessary to rejoice.

(2.38-42)

Only now are these women free to indulge in dolor. Anachronistically they must exercise their freedom to mourn as they, these wives and mothers, will be compelled to celebrate regardless of which faction proves victorious. Their potestas is a paradox in that it can be exercised only before the civil war begins. Private grief will become a luxury denied by Pompey and Caesar both, leaving these women isolated with no course of action save that of watching their families and their city be destroyed.

Lucan’s introductory use of women establishes at Rome a funereal city-scape. Mourning preempts the slaughter, and a strong association is made between public weakness and private hardship. Emotion itself, specifically dolor, assumes a principal role, effecting Stoically the action of these women. Their private grief, coupled with their public outcry, is intended by the poet to preemptively generate indignation with both leaders in the civil war. Already the language and themes of erotic elegy have been employed in the description of the pitiable predicament of women at Rome. This establishes the linguistic and thematic framework within which Marcia’s relationship with Cato will be developed later in book 2.

In contrast to the scene inside the city walls, Lucan relates what men are doing now that they have fled Rome, seeking instead the camp of either Pompey or Caesar (2.45-64). The tirades levied by these male soldiers are traditional Augustan complaints in that they lament the lack of a foreign enemy. In such absence Roman turns upon Roman. From the moment of their brief introduction these men are already exhibiting

303 Seneca explores the dynamic relationship between person and emotion with reference to ira in particular (De Ira 1.7, 12).
partisanship in that they wish to align themselves with one of the two factions (*diversa campa*). Thus they give up Rome in favor of a man. These are the very same men whom Brutus will denounce, stating plainly that their partisanship was purchased by the promise of future financial gain (*castra petunt magna victi mercede* [2.255]). Although blood has not yet been spilled, the Republic, Lucan suggests, is already dead and is being ceded by these men who would be the soldiers of either Caesar or Pompey.

Not only are men situationally different from women, finding their place on the battlefield rather than in temples, men also find it necessary to protest in prayer the wretchedness of their situation. This suggests that these men are active, articulating clearly their outrage with the heavens, in public statements that are recognized as just (*iustas querellas*), something which stands in contrast to the alleged emotionalism exhibited earlier by women. Together these men voice common complaints that would become little more than pitiable laments of the fact that they were not granted the opportunity to live in a time when they would find themselves taking the field against either Pyrrhus or Hannibal. The wars brought on by the Greeks and Carthaginians, in addition to the list of threatening peoples immediately enumerated, afforded the Roman a sense of identity and citizenship. To be Roman was to be given the opportunity to engage a legitimate enemy, a group representative of either an ethnic or linguistic Other, in conflict. Roman military expeditions had made expanded boundaries and the Roman

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304 Fantham (1992), 87.

305 For a thorough discussion of the situational relationships, psychological and actual, that Rome had to her foreign foes see Mattern (1999), especially pp 25-122. Military expeditions not only afforded the army important logistical information, such as the distance between certain towns and the availability of supplies in a given region, but it also became a method through which geographical knowledge itself was enhanced. The importance of such information is made clear in the case of Crassus, when Plutarch (*Crass.* 21-22) relates the folly of Crassus beginning with his dismissal of Armenian support. The general’s fatal weakness is his eventual reliance on perfidious guides.
dominion of the οἰκονομήνη, increasing Roman knowledge and imperium through the assessment and surveying of these lands.\footnote{Mattern (1999), p. 43.} The partisans in this episode wish that there were a legitimate external threat, a people that would force the military movements of Pompey and Caesar to be ectropic. Ironically Lucan casts this desire as the wish that the entire world rise up against Rome: 

\textit{coniuret in arma / mundus} (2.48-49). What these men fail to understand is that Rome herself has become synonymous with the world proper. Roman imperium has already reached ultima Thule.\footnote{Virgil, \textit{Georg}. 1.30.} The crisis being suffered by these soldiers is that their political identity has been obfuscated. Their place, both socially and politically, with respect to Rome has been obscured because the parameters by which it had been defined, namely the traditional denominations of proper foes, have been effaced.\footnote{Batstone (1997) interprets the didactic thrust of Virgil’s \textit{Georgics}, particularly \textit{Geor}.1, as being a poem through which man is able to understand his place with respect to the world. \textit{Geor}. 1 offers the audience analogies for civil war through the imagery and vocabulary of farming. By very nature, the labour that man besets himself with is successful only in so far as it generates yet more work. Batstone illustrates that violence is a central linguistic theme stating that “[w]hen military destruction becomes ineluctable, one realises that it was there all along, growing from the seeds of order and violence, power and victory, since the poem began, since before the poem began, and the poem catches the reader within the developing force of the metaphor.”} The soldiers ask Rome to incite again the ire of all foreign enemies. This is the only foreseeable way of avoiding civil war: omnibus hostes / reddite nos populis: civile avertite bellum (2.52-53); nulla vacet tibi, Roma, manus (2.56). If enemy hands do not direct their weapons at Rome, Roman dextra will be compelled to turn upon themselves (\textit{in sua ... viscera} [1.3]). Through the agency of Caesar and Pompey, Rome has been forced to concede Republican virtus and libertas to imperial dominatio. Lucan, by establishing that the agenda championed by each general runs contrary to the interests of Rome, suggests that these two men are not truly Roman. Their march upon one
another, and by extension the city, takes on the shape of a ‘foreign’ threat. In answer to the soldiers’ prayers Caesar and Pompey both become the hostile ‘Other’.

If no rightful enemy can be found to attract the martial attentions of these two leaders, the soldiers hope instead that they will be protected from the nefas that is civil war through the agency of cosmic dissolution. May the gods strike down the leaders and their partisan supporters both before they ruin themselves and the legacy of Rome through the imminent conflict. Although the speaker acknowledges the criminality of civil war, he nonetheless has fled to the field and a camp intent upon participating in battle. This speech introduces what will become Cato’s dilemma later in book 2: he must reconcile his actions in the civil conflict and the preservation of Republican libertas.309

What Lucan suggests in the opening section of book 2 is that the Roman community, capable of apportioning shame and of recognizing, thus realizing, virtus is effectively effaced. There will be no one at Rome who will distinguish Cato’s practical and ideological decisions. The confusion of the heavens, manifest in the portents described in book 1, is mirrored by the compromised social system at Rome. No one remains who can judge his actions, celebrate his conceived of excellence. The result of this distancing is that the nameless Roman people are figuratively distanced from the character of Cato. There is a certain incommensurability between the two that will result in Rome’s champion, Cato, assuming the role of the ethico-political ‘Other’. He first must act, and secondly function as the arbiter of his actions, judging them in terms of his Republican Rome’s standards.310  Alone, in the heart of his home, at the centre of Rome,

309The best examination of this paradox is Gagliardi (1976).

310Johnson (1987), pp. 37-38, suggests this very thing when he states that Cato is a Lucanian caricature, a pseudo-hero whose character and actions are both undermined by his zealous adherence to an “outworn ideal.”
Cato is forsaken by his fellow-citizens, and he will be portrayed by Lucan as a man whose self-interested adherence to the *mos maiorum* will render him as antipathetic, not only to the Caesarian cause, but even to his imagined Rome.

3.2 Cato the Counsellor.

The preceding discussion elaborated the way in which Lucan establishes the setting for the dramatic entrance of Cato. This long preemptive scene structures narratologically the man’s introduction and thus offers an initial delineation of his character.\(^\text{311}\) Simply put, a contrast is established between *Roma* and her hero, Cato. At Rome loyalties are confused, men and women alike are helplessly the victims of a world that they view as atheistic. To support either general is to submit equally to a contrary form of tyranny, a political threat that has rendered even the nameless Senator mute (2.18-19). Once the voice of the political might that was the old Republic, the politician is even more powerless than the women who openly indulge in threnodic cries in the temples of the gods. Rome thus is portrayed as the *urbs discors*, mirroring the macrocosm that is Lucan’s *machina discors* (1.79-80).

Lucan depicts Rome, and by extension Hesperia itself, as an abandoned and decrepit region. Civil war is the only fruit that can be produced by the desolate geographical and political landscape that is Rome in 50 B.C. Thematically this is suggested early in the epic in a passage that functions as a realistic counterpart to the poet’s introductory lament that Rome lacks a legitimate foreign foe:

\[
\text{at nunc semirutis pendent quod moenia tectis}
\]

Yet now fortified towns up and down the Italian peninsula teeter under half-burned out roofs, and great rocks lie about, a symptom of dilapidation. A household has no one to tend to it, and but the most occasional inhabitant wanders through the city streets. Moreover the Hesperian countryside bristles with brambles having been left unworked for so many years as there lack hands to tend to the needs of the fields.

(1.24-29)

Roman men have left Roman lands, the very fields that were the prize of true Republican forefathers such as Cincinnatus.312 This detachment from the soil signals a greater crisis in terms of the national Roman identity. No longer is Roma herself, and her constituent geography, fundamental to the Roman character. This is signalled by the desertion of the city and countryside both, something emphasized by Lucan in his effort to stress the errant nature of the devolved Roman. The political effects of this confusion suffered by the citizenry are dire. Like Hartog’s despot, Rome, in the character of her aspiring tyrants, has transgressed the geographical boundaries that served as defining aspects of her political Republican identity.313 This effects a shift in the conceptual focus of the ‘Roman’ and his relative position to his city ‘Roma’. No longer is the Republican institution of Rome to be considered the localized centre of the oikouμενη, the place of focalized primacy in the geocentric model of the cosmos. Rome, and the lands

312 cf. Virgil, Georg. 1. 505-508:
... tot bella per orbem,
tam multae scelerum facies, non ullus aratro
dignus honos, squalent abductis arva colonis,
et curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ensem.

surrounding it, are described hyperbolically as being depopulated. Community is thereby undermined, freeing men from the politicized restraints of the state, something that has as a symptom the confusion of one’s political ethos. The dead oaken trunk that is, by analogy, Pompey may also serve as an apt interpretive image of the state of Rome.

It is within this state of crisis that Lucan places Cato at the moment of his introduction in book 2. \textsuperscript{314} Brutus makes his way, in the dead of night, to Cato’s humble home. Before the two meet Lucan deliberately suggests that they form a political and ideological doublet: \textsuperscript{315}

\begin{quote}
At non magnanimi percussit pectora Bruti
terror et in tanta pavidi formidine motus
pars populi lugentis erat, sed nocte sopora,
Parrhasis obliquos Helice cum verteret axes,
atria cognati pulsat non ampla Catonis.
\end{quote}

Fear did not cow the great soul deep within the breast of Brutus, though the greater part of the Roman public had already set about mourning with the promise of panicky terror at hand. Yet in the dead of night, the time when Arcadian Helice runs her wheels aslant, then did Brutus knock at the modest home of his relative, Cato.

(2.234-238)

Brutus, like Cato, is separated off from the common crowd at Rome because he does not allow himself to indulge in lamentation. The use of the verb \textit{lugere} reminds Lucan’s

\textsuperscript{314}The popular assessments of Cato’s character offered by Ahl (1976) and Johnson (1987) only endeavour to evaluate the character of Lucan’s character from this point in the epic. No attention had been paid to the subtle ways in which the poet has generated the atmosphere of abandon at Rome, thus suggesting the hopelessness of Cato’s position and the imminent failure that will attend upon his decision to become involved in the conflict. In many ways Cato’s decision is Achillean in that he knows that it will be impossible to turn his back on the battlefield and his figurative beloved; Rome. He must fight and, like Lucan, the audience knows that tragically he must also fail.

\textsuperscript{315}Ahl (1976), pp. 234-235, elaborates a similar point remarking that Brutus and Cato who are \textit{cognati}, the latter being the \textit{socer} of the former, parallel curiously the familial relationship shared by Pompey and Caesar.
audience of the scene described at the opening of book 2 in which the women are encouraged to realize their dolor now because the civil war’s conclusion will generate forcibly an atmosphere of celebration (1.21-42). Emotionality does not obscure Brutus’ sense of duty, and he is thus protected against the formido pavidi that is the product of terror. Lucan thus sets Brutus, and by introductory suggestion Cato, off from the common Roman who has propelled the narrative of the first third of the book. The concerns and actions of Brutus and Cato both are beyond the immediate worries and reactionary deeds of the men and women within and without Rome.316

The setting for the interview between Brutus and Cato is none other than his modest home (atria ... non ampla).317 This location underscores the suggested division already established between the anonymous Roman public, described early in the book (2.16-66), and these two men who will assume the figurative standards of the Republic. Cato’s innocence, in terms of his ability to preserve his civic and philosophical integrity, is marveled at even by Brutus who wonders rhetorically why the man chose to protect

316Fantham (1992), pp. 122-123, follows the suggestion put forth by Lausberg (1985) who states that this scene is equivalent to that which takes place in Helen’s bedroom between Hector and Paris (Il. 6.311-341). There is a certain amount of freedom taken by Lucan in his employment of this type-scene. It is Hectorian Cato, pacing the inner chambers of his home, who is sought by the young Brutus. Cato’s pseudo-erotic concerns are not directed toward a woman proper, instead he is looking to Roma as his Helen.

317This, as evidenced by Plutarch (Cat. Min. 4.1-2), becomes a traditional touchstone upon which the quality of Cato’s character may be tested: ‘Ὁ δὲ Κάτων ἐπειδή τὴν ἱερωσύνην ἔλαβε τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος, μετοικήσας καὶ νειμάμενος τῶν πατρώων, ἑκατόν ἔκοις ταλάντων γενομένην, τὴν διαίτην ἔτι μάλλον συνέστειλεν, Ἄντιπατρον δὲ Τύριον τῶν ἀπὸ τῆς στοὰς φιλοσοφῶν προσεταιρισάμενος, τοὺς ἡθοκοῖς μᾶλλα καὶ πολιτικοῖς ἐνεφύετο δόγμασι, περὶ πάσαν μὲν ἀρετὴν ὡσπερ ἐπιποίησε τινὶ κατάσχετος γεγονός, διαφόρως δὲ τοῦ καλοῦ τὸ περὶ τὴν δικαιοσύνην ἀτενεῖς καὶ ἀκαμπτόν εἰς ἐπεικείαν ἢ χάριν ὑπερηγατηκός. Rather than taking a house that would reflect his increased political, financial and social status, Cato instead looks to his ancestors, namely Cato the elder, as literal examples of the truly Republican life. His home is intended to reflect the tradionality of his political and ideological agenda. This association is suggested by Lucan through the coincidental mention of Cato’s friendly association with the Stoic Antipater of Tyre, the very man who would introduce the young man to the underpinnings of Stoic philosophy. Cato’s home may come to be a referential parallel to and comment upon his Stoic philosophy.
himself from the societal decay that afflicted the late Republic (quid tot durare per annos / profuit immunem corrupti moribus aevi? [2.256-257]). 318 Brutus’ comment amounts to sceptical derision of the philosophical disaffection practiced jealously by Cato to date. Nonetheless, current circumstances compromise this practice. Spatially, as well as socially and politically, Cato is separated from the Roman public, a public that finds itself having to accept partisanship. Already Pompey and the Senate have taken flight (1.521-522), leaving Cato alone at Rome as the sole defender of libertas.

Cast in a role that is antonymous to the quasi-tyrannical depictions of Caesar and Pompey, Cato’s political concerns are not his own. At this moment when Cato is called upon by Brutus, Lucan describes Cato’s insomnia as the product of his altruistic concern for the state:

invenit insomni volventem publica cura
fata virum casusque urbis cunctisque timentem
securumque sui,...

[Brutus] came upon the man turning over in his mind the dire destiny of the state, what may happen to the city of Rome. He feared for everyone else though he was sure of himself.

(2.239-241)

The paternalistic concerns that Cato has for Rome are mirrored situationally by the familiar relationship that he has to his devotee. Brutus, though free from terror, suffers from anxiety that inspires the young man only to go to the home of Cato in an effort to incite his relative and mentor to action. Upon arriving he discovers Cato who is shaken by timor, a private concern that is publicly directed because of the familial relationship that he imagines that he has with Rome. Already Cato’s Stoic character is described as discomposed. His timor is an impairment to his sapientia, an impairment produced by

318 Endt (1909), p. 56.
the intimate association that he has with the state.\textsuperscript{319} That Cato is overcome by such
public concerns demonstrates that he has already made up his mind to assume a role in
the conflict. The proceeding interview illustrates that Cato wishes only to give himself
up in an act of \textit{devotio} for the already dead Roman Republic.

Lucan attributes to Brutus a \textit{suasoria} that is intended not to compel Cato to
choose the camp of Pompey over that of Caesar, but that he should protect his position as
the optimal Roman \textit{civis} by remaining true to the Republican abstract of \textit{libertas} alone.
Using arguments that contradict one another, Brutus suggests first that Cato’s
involvement in the civil war will legitimatize the conflict (2.247-250). Brutus then goes
on to argue that Cato will be rendered \textit{nefas} by his forced participation in these affairs:

\begin{verse}
\begin{quote}
\textit{quid tot durare per annos}
\textit{profuit immunem corrupti moribus aevi?}
\textit{hoc solum longae pretium virtutis habebis:}
\textit{accipient alios, facient te bella nocentem.}
\end{quote}
\end{verse}

To what end were you able to remain steadfast through so many years,
untouchable in an age of moral decay? This alone you will have as your
reward for such continued virtue: while accepting others as such already,
wars will make you corrupt.

\textsuperscript{319}Lucan’s depiction of Cato in this scene stands in stark contrast to that of Homer’s Agamemnon
at the beginning of the second book of the \textit{Iliad}. Agamemnon’s ineptitude as a leader, developed in book
one, is reinforced by the apparent lack of concern that he has for the Greek host as he spends his nights
sleeping rather than anticipating battle. \"\textit{Ωειρος} is employed here by Homer as a poetic agent of \textit{δειοεος}. Cato needs no such inspiration, and the sole source of reproof will be Brutus who hopes only to establish
Cato in a position of leadership, one who might best counter-vail the tyrannical agenda of both Pompey and
Caesar. Ahl (1976), p. 239, sees in this interview narrative aspects that would appear to be borrowed from
the epic convention of the council of the gods. This observation is based on the epic formula whereby a
lesser deity visits Jupiter in an effort to seek either his explanation for events that are unfolding or his direct
involvement therein. In contrast to Cato’s response which will illustrate the injustice being suffered by the
state, Jupiter traditionally relies on the argument that the affairs of mankind occur justly in that they are
nothing more than the dictates of fate. Situitionally this parallel further emphasizes the gap between the
common Roman, who has fallen prey to to either the Caesaraean or Pompeian agenda, and the doublet of
Cato and Brutus that, by their own machinations, stand alone at Rome remaining true to the evanescent
ideals of the old Republic.
The prize to be given to Cato on account of his virtue is none other than that he will be undone, both philosophically and literally, through his becoming a participant. This is the paradoxical profit that will be afforded the Stoic should he decide to jeopardize his dedication to the ideal of *tranquilitas*.

By choosing to set this scene in Cato’s home, rather than on the Senate floor, Lucan retains the dichotomy that groups Pompey and Caesar together as equal threats to the integrity and existence of the Roman Republic. Were Lucan’s Cato to declare his support for either of the generals his position both as the ideal Roman *civis* and the true Stoic *sapiens* would be undermined. This speech is an effort at reaching, albeit rhetorically, a compromise through which he can preserve his personal integrity, but that will also allow him to be representative of the ideals of an absent Republican Senate, two purposes underscored by the poet’s own *laudatio* that functions as a denouement for this central section of book 2.

Brutus opens his speech with a description of Cato’s solitude, suffered because of the conflict between Caesar and Pompey for tyrannical ascendancy. As the incarnation of the cardinal Republican quality of *virtus*, Cato is being called upon by Brutus not for advice, but rather in order that the elder statesman fill the leadership vacuum suffered by the abstract Roman state:

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omnia expulsae terris olimque fugatae
virtutis iam sola fides, quam turbine nullo
excultet Fortuna tibi, tu mente labantem
derige me, dubium certo tu robore firma.
namque alii Magnum vel Caesaris arma sequantur,
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You who are alone the guarantor of virtue, driven out and set to flight some time ago, you whose excellence Fortune has never toppled with any manner of whirlwind, give me, who is faltering, direction. Render me strong with your steadfast strength. While some men follow Pompey and others the arms of Caesar, Cato alone will be Brutus’ leader.

(2.242-245)

Brutus wishes only to be able to join Cato in his position of political removal caused by his devotion to the state’s welfare alone. These opening lines foreshadow Cato’s own eventual removal from the city and flight to Africa where he will assume the position of *dux* for the leaderless Pompeian army in book 9. Brutus articulates the crisis that is the product of civil war: *virtus*, like *libertas*, has suffered exile from the state. This suggests that virtue’s champion, Cato, similarly has no place within the city. Fortune, which can not assail Cato’s philosophical fortitude, can drive him physically from the city he would protect. The Rome over which Pompey and Caesar will fight is one that

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324 This would appear to be a poetic refashioning of Hesiod’s development of Δίκη and the harm that the goddess suffers at the hands of men who neglect civic duty:

καὶ τὸ τέλεσθαι τῷ δή πρὸς “Οὐλομένων ἀπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδεῖσι λευκοῖσιν φάρεσι καλυμμένω χρόνοι καλὸν ἀθάνατων μετὰ φύλου ἵτων προλιπώντι ἀνθρώπους Αἰδώς καὶ Νέμεις· τὰ δὲ λείψασται ἄλγεα λυγρὰ θυσίτοις ἀνθρώποις· κακοῦ δ’ οὐκ ἔσσεται ἄλκη. [WD 197-201]

and later

τῆς δὲ Δίκης ρόδος ἐλκομένης ἢ κ’ ἀνδρεῖς ἄγωσι δωροφάγοι, σκολιής δὲ δίκης κρίνωσι θέμιστας· ἢ δ’ ἐπεται κλαίοσα πόλιν καὶ ἡθεὰ λαῶν, ἡρά ἐσσαμένη, κακοῦ ἀνθρώποις φέρουσα οὐ τέ μιν ἐξελάσσωσι καὶ οὐκ ἰδίειαν ἐνείμαν. [WD 220-224]

While Hesiod’s civic villain is typified by his brother Perses and his bringing of a civil suit against Hesiod himself, the offenders in Lucan’s case are Pompey and Caesar who are engaging in the bloodiest and most public of conflicts; civil war.
has been forcibly abandoned by the ideals of the old Republic. The essence of Cato’s, and Lucan’s, Roma has been contaminated. There remain no tokens of the true Republican community at Rome with the exception of Cato and, if he is so accepted, Brutus. Brutus hopes that together the two of them will be able to protect pax in a Roman world whose fate promises ruin (dubio ... mundo [2.248]).

Cato is not only distinct from the common Roman public in terms of his abstract philosophical positioning and in terms of the private space within which his introduction takes place, he is also separated from the rabble of partisans, Brutus argues, on the basis of his particular causae belli. The men who have already run to support either Caesar or Pompey do so because of private crimes (2.252), because of poverty (2.253), and because of the promise war makes of profit (2.255). Contrariwise Brutus suggests rhetorically that Cato alone finds satisfaction in war undertaken for its own sake (...tibi uni / per se bella placent? [2.255-256]).

In addition to the political isolation in which Cato indulges at Rome, Brutus also points to the ideological separation that Stoicism grants his uncle from the destructive influence of the gods. Through the employment of his philosophy Cato has afforded

325 cf. above pp. 165ff. Here Lucan captures the grief suffered at Rome in the image of the mother mourning privately the death of a child. Suffering abandonment through the partisanship of her husband, this anonymous woman is left, still in denial, to mourn her child. This resonates with the introductory image of Cato who, it will be seen upon the moment of his reunion with Marcia, is in the guise of a funerary mourner. Grief and dread for the now dead Republic have not yet beset Cato.


327 Fantham (1992), p. 130, notes that Brutus’ statement that cosmic discord focuses upon small affairs, leaving greater matters untouched (lege deum minimas rerum discordia turbat, / pacem magna tenent [2.272-273]) runs contrary to the Lucanian sentiment that great things tend to collapse in upon themselves (...) magna se ruunt [1.81]). Fantham’s remark would suggest that she would have the poet’s voice be consonant with those of his characters, something that artistically should not be the case.
himself an ethereal existence:

... melius tranquilla sine armis
otia solus ages, sicut caelestia semper
inconcussa suo volvuntur sidera lapsu.

Better that alone you should lead a life of tranquil leisure, one free from
arms, just as the heavenly stars unshakable are turned about by their own
steady motion.

(2.266-268)

Lucan subverts Brutus’ analogy by showing Cato, at the moment of his entrance in book
2, as a man consumed by his cares for the state. His Stoic \( \alpha \pi \alpha \theta i\alpha \) has been undone by
his consideration of externals, affairs of state that are beyond his control.\(^{328}\) The life of
tranquil leisure is no longer a viable option for him. Circumstances dictate that Cato act
upon his concerns. He must enter the war realizing, as does Brutus, that any action
whatsoever is tantamount to Cato’s condoning the hostilities between Caesar and
Pompey. The result foreseen by Brutus is that Cato’s support of the Pompeian camp will
bring about his effective subjugation to this leader (\( \ldots \) quibus adde Catonem / sub iuga
Pompei,\( \ldots \) [2.279-280]). Cato’s partisanship will then leave paradoxically Caesar as the
sole man who is free (\( \ldots \), toto iam liber in orbe / solus Caesar erit. [2.280-281]).\(^{329}\) Once
all of Rome’s former great men have given up support of the state for that of either of
these counterfeit despots the ideals of both \textit{lex} and \textit{libertas} will become synonymous with

Moreover Brutus may be referencing the endless security afforded to the heavens in Stoic cosmology,
something suggested just a few lines above where he likens Cato himself to the fixed stars (2.267).

\(^{328}\) cf. Rist (1978), pp. 259-272 who argues that involvement can be justified if reason dictates that
one must have immediate public concerns. The question in this instance is whether or not Cato is
considering truly the public good.

\(^{329}\) In this line Lucan suggests hyperbolically that all men will support Pompey leaving Caesar truly
alone and thus granting him the absolute freedom to exercise his will.
Therefore if it is of service to take up arms for the sake of our patria and for the sake of protecting liberty, now then it has Brutus not as an enemy either of Pompey or of Caesar, but rather of the man who emerges victorious from the civil war.

(2.281-284)

Brutus can not maintain his position of non-partisan hostility and thus justifies his inclination to join the Pompeian camp with the argument that this is being done only in the interests of patria, lex, and libertas.

331

The rhetorical thrust of Brutus’ speech initially draws its strength from its being an assessment of Cato’s person and character (2.242-281).332 It is only in his concluding remarks that Brutus makes any explicit reference to the larger concerns of the country and to the influence that this ought to have upon Cato and his decision to fight. This offers Cato the opportunity to justify his predisposition to action on the basis of the argument that he is being compelled to act given the course of events that has been established by the divinities. In his speech Cato will emphasize his absolute autonomy, something that affords him utter independence from the public concerns suffered by everyone else at Rome. This civil war has effectively divided the civic community of Rome, turning first of all Pompey and his supporters against Caesar, all of whom can be


331 Fantham (1992), pp. 131-132.

judged *impius* because they have turned fellow *cives* into *hostes*. In contrast to these two groups stands Cato whose struggle to maintain an ambiguous sense of *virtus* and *pietas* is an effort to rise above his immediate social circumstances in favor of his philosophical position. Cato is unwilling to suffer the assimilation that would attend upon his open and active support of the Pompeian faction. He will choose instead to maintain *secura virtus* as his *dux*.

Cato opens his speech, in which he will address each of Brutus’ points in turn, with his assertion that, more than being merely *scelus*, civil war is the greatest of divine abominations (*summum, Brute, nefas civilia bella fatemur* [2.286]). Metrically Brutus is located right in the midst of this most heinous impiety, a poetic effect that communicates the embroilment that has already befallen Brutus and Cato both. In line 2.287 Cato’s proceeding comment regarding the path he, as a Stoic, must take poses certain problems: 

\[ \textit{sed quo fata trahunt virtus secura sequetur}. \]

The use of the word *trahunt*, Ahl remarks, is suggestive of Cato’s reluctance, even unwillingness, to become involved in the war.334

This observation is made on the basis of the traditional Cleanthic Stoic view articulated twice by Seneca wherein it is stated plainly that the *sapiens* follows willingly *fata*.335 Instead Cato inverts paradoxically the *sequi - trahi* opposition produced by *fata*.336

Having inverted this view that the Stoic ought to hold concerning the fates Lucan

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335 cf. Cicero Div. 1.125-126: *fatum autem id apello, quod Graeci eìμαρμενη, id est ordinem seriemque causarum, cum causae causa nesa rem se gignat. ea est ex omni aeterntitate fluens veritas sempiterna, quod cum ita sit, nihil est factum quod non futurum fuerit, eodemque modo nihil est futurum cuius non causas id ipsum efficientes natura contineat. ex quo intellegitur ut fatum sit non id quod superstitione, sed id quod physique dicitur, causa aeterna rerum, cur et ea quae praeterierunt facta sint, et quae instant fiant, et quae sequuntur futura sint*; Seneca Ep. 107.11: *ducunt volentem fata, nolentem trahunt*; Seneca De Prov. 5.4: *boni viri ... non trahuntur a fortuna, sequuntur illam.*

illustrates that Cato suffers a certain hesitation that is made manifest by his trepidation. Cato concedes to what Brutus construes as his fated participation though he holds fast to the view that the cause itself, civil war, does not receive his approval. The gods will be responsible for making the circumstances such that Cato must act contrary to his principles (crimen erit superis et me fecisse nocentem [2.288]). This remark is made in response to Brutus’ earlier suggestion that it will be the war itself that turns Cato into an instrument of political harm (2.259). The dissociation that Cato has been able to enjoy from the common Roman crowd affords him Stoic tranquility. This otium is threatened by the advent of civil war. The tranquilitas, or Stoic ἀταραξία, that he has worked so hard to establish will be undone making this man accommodate his role as sapiens to that of the true Roman politicus.337

The relationship that Cato suggests he has to Rome is that of a father bemoaning the destruction of the state as others do the death of their children:

ceu morte parentem
natorum orbatum longum producere funus
ad tumulos iubet ipse dolor, iuvat ignibus abris
inseruisse manus constructoque aggere busti
ipsum alas tenuisse faces, non ante revellar
examinem quam te complectar, Roma;...

Just as when grief itself compels a parent, robbed by death of his children, to lead a long line of mourners to the burial mounds, the father jumps to put his hands to the funerary fires, and to put the black torches to the built-up mound of the pyre. Likewise I shall not be torn away until I have embraced your lifeless body, O Rome.

(2.297-302)

These lines constitute a recasting of the scene at the opening of book 2 wherein the

mothers lament the loss of their children (2.21-42). This is signalled not only by the situational parallels but also by the thematic employment by Cato of dolor. Thus the grief that Cato feels for the now deceased Republican state is analogous to that felt by a parent upon the death of a child. Alone Cato suffers dolor in this instance because he would have Brutus believe that he alone cherishes the leges that were the lifeblood of his Roman state. Cato will follow the spectral name of Roman libertas as a father would the lifeless body of a child during a funerary procession: ...tuumque nomen, Libertas, et inanem persequar umbram.338 Already the cause for which Cato would fight, that is the Roman Republic, has been irretrievably lost.339 His pursuit of the Republican program will lead Cato only to his own demise.340 Libertas and Cato both must be escorted from within the walls of Rome as law would prohibit these two effectively dead characters from being buried inside of the city.341

The most effective way that Cato envisions he might serve Rome is by giving up his own life for the good of the state in an act of devotio. This will be essentially the course of action followed by Cato, resulting in his eventual suicide in 46 B.C. Although Lucan was not able to offer an account of this event it would mark the preliminary end of civil conflict and it would mark the ascension of Caesar.342 In his own words Cato sees

338It is worth noting the resonance in these lines of Lucan’s earlier description of Pompey as nothing more than the shade of a once great man: stat magni nominis umbra,... (1.135). Cato’s pursuit of the shade of libertas will be realised in his literal pursuit of the Pompeian program, something that is the product of Magnus’ former greatness.


340Tucker (1977), p. 82, only goes so far as to say that the relationship between Cato and Rome is that of a father and son. Here I am suggesting that both the man and the state are coextensive.

341Cicero (De leg. 2.58).

342Vögler (1968), p. 222, would have this as the narrative goal of Lucan’s epic: Prooemium, Exposition, und Handlungsverlauf wiesen auf Catos Tod als Höhe- und Schlusspunkt hin ... Lucans Pharsalia ist ein teleologisch angelegtes Epos und sollte, 12 Bücher umfassend, mit dem Tod Catos in Utica
the Roman conflict as being waged undeservedly by eastern peoples who are prone to submit to tyranny (\textit{ad iuga cur faciles populi, cur saeva volentes / regna pati pereunt? [2.314-315]}). Willingly will they cede to either Caesar or Pompey as their effected despot. True Romans are not fending off the threat of despotism and the utter destruction of Roman Republican \textit{pax}. Instead foreigners, even worse, effete Easterners, are assuming the responsibility of the Roman \textit{civis}. National identity has been destroyed in this civil war that sounds the death knell for the Republic. Even Cato, who would give his own blood should that mean an end of hardships for the Roman people (2.317-318), is incapable of attaching himself to any progressive image of Romanism that might ensure the evolution of the Roman citizen and the developed sense of community that would attend upon the resurrection of a new Republic. Cato asserts that justice, both in terms of \textit{leges} and \textit{iura}, has suffered the same fate as his dear Republic. Like the causes that he would champion, Cato himself is an \textit{umbra}, a man whose convictions render his vision of the state utterly incommensurable with any promised by the current crisis.

As he brings his response to a close, Cato states clearly that he understands that Caesar and Pompey both share the intention of regal domination (2.320-322). Cato intends that by backing Pompey and marching in his ranks he may serve as a reminder to the general that his is the legal cause, backed by the Senate, the goal of which is the re-establishment of the Republic and not personal gain. The effect of his speech is the emotional inspiration of Brutus as he begets \textit{ira, calor} and \textit{amor belli} in the young man.\footnote{In being able to elicit these responses from Brutus, Cato shows that he is capable of creating an inspiration similar to that of Caesar. Both men are able to rouse the incendiary ire of their followers. The Catonian irony is that his is but an army of one.} This distinguishes Cato from his young charge as he remains staid. Cato can not schliessen.
even be identified with Brutus who promises to follow his lead alone. Alone Cato is
doomed to follow behind the funeral procession of *libertas* having no legitimate fellow
mourners to share in his grief. This is the result of the dismantling of the identity of the
Roman Republican citizen. The associative connection between the man of Caesar’s
Rome and that typified by the Decii, Regulus, and Mucius Scaevola has been severed. Cato is both out of time and out of place in Rome at the outset of the civil war between
Caesar and Pompey. There is no community of which he can be a part as his politico-
philosophical identity renders him utterly foreign to the demands of the current
circumstances.

3.3 Cato the Lover

Upon concluding this interview Lucan introduces the character of Marcia. She
comes to the home of Cato straight from the pyre of her deceased husband Hortensius.

More than offering Cato the opportunity to make yet another display of his steadfastness,

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344 Ahl (1976), p. 244.

345 Marcia was Cato’s second wife, as he had divorced Attilia because of what he deemed to be her
immorality. Marcia would also be divorced from Cato, though the circumstances surrounding their
separation may cast Cato’s character in a suspicious light. Q. Hortensius Hortalus approached Cato in 56
BC seeking the hand of his daughter Porcia in marriage. As her father was not willing to force Porcia to be
divorced from her husband in order to meet Hortensius’ proposition, Cato instead ceded to the request that
he give up his own wife Marcia, who may have been as young as 25 at this time, in Porcia’s place.
Suspicion arises from the suggestion that Marcia, in her new matrimonial situation, promised to become
the heiress to Hortensius’ throne. This money then would have made its way back to Cato, through Marcia,
whenever Hortensius should die. Plutarch relates the circumstances that could substantiate such a charge
(*Cato Min.* 52.5): τῆς δ’ οἰκίας καὶ τῶν βυγατέρων κηδεμόνος δεομένων, ἀνέλαβε πάλιν τὴν
Μαρκίαν, χεριέουσαν ἐπὶ χρήμασι πολλοῖς ὁ γάρ Ὁρτήσιος δυνάμεων ἑκέντην ἀπέλιπε
κληρονόμον. Caesar would use this as an opportunity to accuse Cato of covetousness (φιλοπλουτία) and of having essentially pimped his wife for the sake of financial gain (μισθαρνία ἐπὶ τῶ γάμῳ).
Lucan suppresses this financial situation choosing instead to develop the symbolic signifigance of Marcia’s
return.
Marcia manifests her husband’s image of and association to the dying Republic. While the preceding scene gave Cato an opportunity to realize his paternal role with respect to Rome represented in the character of Brutus, Marcia will evoke paradoxically the erotic aspect of Cato. In a number of ways Cato’s reunion and conversation with Marcia parallels the confrontations that Caesar and Pompey both have with the personifications of Republican Rome represented in the apparitions of Roma (1.185-203) and Julia (3.9-35) respectively. The associations that Caesar, Pompey and Cato have with Lucan’s female characters reflect the destruction wrought by the civil war on the family. In the case of Cato and Marcia, Lucan here offers this scene as a complement to the preceding dialogue between Cato and Brutus. While their discussion dealt primarily with public affairs and actions, the interview that Marcia will have with Cato centers instead on the private concerns of husband and household.

As the first light of dawn breaks the horizon, Marcia comes to the home of Cato. He has already decided that he will side ostensibly with Pompey, intending this only as an effective way of preparing what would be his personal crusade for the deceased Republic. She appears to Cato at this moment of decision much as the ghost of Roma appeared to Caesar as he advanced to cross the Rubicon. Marcia can only sorrow at the fact that she, like Rome, will be abandoned when Cato chooses to share in Pompey’s exile. Marcia is characterized best by her mourning (maerens, maesta):

... sancta relict
Hortensi maerens irrupit Marcia busto.
quondam virgo toris melioris iuncta mariti,
mox, ubi conubii pretium mercesque soluta est
tertia iam suboles, alios fecunda penates
impletura datur geminas et sanguine matris

permixtura domos; sed, postquam condidit urna
supremos cineres, miserando concita vultu,
effusas laniata comas contusaque pectus
verberibus crebris cineresque ingesta sepulchri,
non aliter placitura viro, sic maesta profatur:...

[Through Cato’s doors] saintly Marcia, straight from the pyre of
Hortensius, burst in. Once upon a time, when she was a pure bride,
Marcia had been wed to a better husband. Then, when she had proffered
the wealth and prizes of marriage in her three children, she was passed,
still fertile, to another household in order that she might fill it too and so
that the two homes would be bound by the blood of a common mother.
Once, however, she had placed [Hortensius’] last ashes in an urn, she
hurried to Cato, wretched, rending her hanging locks, beating her already
bruised bosom with harsh blows and having poured over herself the ashes
of his tomb. In no other guise could she be pleasing to Cato, and so she
addressed him mournfully...

(2.327-337)

In her effort to seduce Cato, Marcia has found that funerary garb, complete with tattered
hair, ragged clothes, and bruises is all that might entice him. Cato can not look forward
to the promise of future success either for the state or for himself, and it is this pessimism
that is captured in the relationship that he resumes with Marcia.347 In her introduction
Marcia is portrayed as the ideal Roman woman, she privileges her duty over herself. She
willingly was married to Hortensius at Cato’s request in order that she might beget more
worthy children not to her husband proper but rather to the state. Her reputation is thus
drawn from the willing sacrifice of her private life for the public good of Rome.

Lucan offers Marcia a conspicuous entrance through his description of her
caracter using the double epithet of sancta and maerens.348 The second of these two

347 Plutarch (Cato Min. 52.5) states that the real and sole reason that he took Marcia back was that
he lacked someone to look after his home and daughters both.

348 Fantham (1992), p. 117 and 141, remarks that the use of double epithets was not uncommon in
Augustan and post-Augustan poetry
epithets describes her public display of the private grief that she is currently suffering because of the recent passing of Hortensius. Such ritual mourning is required by custom and its observance would signal one’s abstention from public life. Marcia, by entering the house of Cato and seeking a renewal of their marriage vows is breaking the ten month period of mourning required by the social convention intended to guard against the generation of bastard children. This would be only deemed acceptable in a select number of circumstances that include the occasion of a family member entering public office. Lucan has constructed this scene so that Marcia’s entrance would follow hard upon Cato’s announcement that he will in fact engage in the civil war, fighting on the side of the Pompeians. This is tantamount to his assuming a figurative position of public office whereby he would be representative truly of the Roman Republic. Thus Marcia finds herself in a place that allows her to emerge prematurely from her period of private mourning in order that she might celebrate pathetically a reunion with Cato.

Marcia’s introductory epithet, sancta, signals that she is a most appropriate companion to Cato as both share characteristically this ideological chastity. It is this same immutable, yet ironically unproductive, virtue that characterizes them both. Later in this same scene Lucan will use this adjective in reference to Cato as he prepares to welcome Marcia back as his wife: ille nec horrificam sancto dimovit ab ore / caesariem...

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349 Bodel (forthcoming).
350 Bodel (forthcoming).
351 This is the first instance of Lucan’s use of the word sancire in the whole of the poem.
353 Of the seven instances noted by Deferrari, Fanning and Sullivan (1965), p. 469, in which the verb sancire is used, five of these are in contextual reference to Cato himself.
which Lucan describes the old man’s countenance as *durus* (2.373-373) and again later as a *rigida frons* (2.375). His appearance reflects his inward Stoic disposition. Lucan’s initial portrayal of Marcia as the wife in mourning makes her, in addition to being the civic and familial counterpart to Cato, his physical counterpart as well. While her hair lies unkempt in front of her face, he does not brush his bristling locks back from his brow. While Marcia’s countenance is appropriately mournful given that she has smeared ashes all over herself Cato, though in a somewhat more subdued fashion, will not admit any expression of joy (*gaudia*). In their outward appearances these two mirror one another.

The effective strength that Marcia and Cato both have is similarly reflected in their respective inabilities to be productive. In Marcia’s case this is developed plainly and physically as she returns to Cato being of such an age that she is no longer to bear children:

*dum sanguis inerat, dum vis materna, peregi iussa, Cato, et geminos excepi feta maritos: visceribus lassis partuque exhausta revertor iam nulli tradenda viro. da foedera prisci illibata tori, da tantum nomen inane conubii; liceat tumulo scripsisse “Catonis Marcia”, nec dubium longo quaeratur in aevo mutarim primas expulsa an tradita taedas.*

While there yet remained blood and motherly strength in me, I obeyed your orders, o Cato, and, still fertile, I accepted twin husbands. Now, however, I am come back to you with my internal organs useless and broken from childbirth, me a woman worthy of being handed over to no other man. Grant me the undiminished bonds of our previous bed. Grant me in name only the denomination of wife. Let this be so that it may be written on my stone “Cato’s Marcia”, and lest it be pondered through the ages whether I gave up my first union by force or by choice.

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354 *OLD rigidus 5a.*
Her very lifeblood, the strength of her character was her fertility as this was what allowed her to be a productive bride to Cato and Hortensius both, and by extension, a praiseworthy Republican woman. She has consecrated her body through childbirth to the Republican cause to the point that Lucan has her claim hyperbolically that she has worn out her womb. This has been her way of giving physically of herself in a gender specific form of devotio. She sacrifices her body to childbirth while Cato wishes and will give up his body and life to Republican Rome.

Now barren, Marcia deems herself unworthy of any other man as she is physically incapable of performing her civic duty of childbirth. Her infertility is to be matched only by Cato’s effective impotence. He is now but the forceless pretender to virtue; nomen inane virtutis. His strength has become a shadow, suffering the same sublimation as Pompey’s name. The respective strengths and principles of Marcia and Cato together are now past. The idea of libertas that serves as the Catonian standard is condemned to historicity, with no possibility of continuance or even resurrection. Like Marcia, Rome is infertile and thus incapable of producing future champions. Both woman and state are inanis, looking to the past for their respective fama. This is made the more clear when Marcia states plainly what she stands to gain from the renewal of her marriage vows with Cato. Simply put she does not want to be outdone by another faux-Republican woman, Cornelia, who is attending upon Pompey in his flight (2.349). She also does not want to be remembered because of the confused relationship that she had with Hortensius.

355Johnson (1987), p. 43 n.11.
Instead, by coming back to Cato, she hopes to suppress her history with her second husband, thus affording her the right to resume the character that was representative of the ideal Roman woman: *univira*.\(^{356}\)

Marcia’s conclusory request is that she be given the opportunity to share in the hardships that are to befall Cato. She would not stand by Cato if he were willing simply to continue to live his life only trying to preserve his own *tranquilitas*, ceding his responsibility to the state in favor of his own *otium*:

\[
\text{non me laetorum sociam rebusque secundis}
\]
\[
\text{accipis: in curas venio partemque laborum.}
\]
\[
\text{da mihi castra sequi:...}
\]

Take me not as an allied companion in times of levity and in pleasant affairs. I come to share in your cares and to have a part in your travails. Give me a camp to follow.

(2.346-348)

Marcia differs from Cornelia in that she is not driven erotically to accompany her spouse as he leaves Rome.\(^{357}\) If Cato is to give up his philosophically rewarding life of leisure, Marcia only asks that she too be freed from the security of *pax*. This request is ironic as Lucan and his audience both know that any such request is hollow. Any hope for peace has been shattered by virtue of Cato’s aforementioned acknowledgment of the fact that he will indeed engage in this war. In the remarriage that she will be celebrating with Cato she is asking that he accept her being nothing more than an *umbra virginis*. She also

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\(^{356}\) The *OLD* cites inscriptional evidence in terms of the usage of *univira*. Perhaps Marcia would truly like to have herself so denominated on her own tombstone.

\(^{357}\) Marcia’s request may not be an instance of what Fantham (1992), p. 144, describes as little more than a “fantasy”. Lucan may be anachronistically suggesting that her literal accompaniment could be expected, as it was not until the imperial period that it became common for wives to travel with their husbands as they were commissioned abroad.
recognizes that these marriage rites are empty (nomen inane). In essence Marcia’s willingness to follow Cato and to experience the vicissitudes of his fortune parallels Cato’s own promise to follow the empty shade of liberty (2.303). Husband and wife, these two are but ghosts of their former selves. Libertas, Cato, and Marcia thus all embody the infirmity of the Roman Republic that is not potent enough to withstand men such as Caesar and Pompey who pretend to her power.

While Cato offered a verbal response to Brutus’ speech, he silently grants Marcia’s request. Lucan then describes negatively the preparations made for the marriage ceremony to which Brutus alone will bear witness.\textsuperscript{358} These preparations make it clear that erotic love is not what has brought Marcia and Cato together again. Instead this is a private statement of the public duty that each feels is owed to the Republic.\textsuperscript{359} The amor shared by this husband and wife is characterized as iustus and Cato is praised for the strength he is able to exhibit in choosing to refrain from indulging in conjugal delights. Sex, Cato holds, is useless as Marcia has already gone through menopause. The justness of this mature love that Cato has for Marcia, is not the promise of child bearing and rearing, but rather is that together they might mourn for the human race.\textsuperscript{360}

Liminality is a theme that runs throughout Lucan’s introduction of Cato. Under these circumstances the old man is set off from the public commotion within Rome, ruminating in private about what course of action he ought to take. The time of day at which Lucan sets these interviews between Brutus, Marcia and Cato communicates a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{358} Heitland (1887), pp. cvi-cviii, will mark this passage as an example of Lucan’s willingness to employ poetic “license to an excess sometimes grotesque in the extreme...” For a contrary view see Bramble (1982), pp. 544-545.
\item \textsuperscript{359} Batinski (1993), p. 275.
\item \textsuperscript{360} Tucker (1990), p. 43.
\end{itemize}
similar ambivalence. Brutus arrives in the dead of night, while Marcia will come to the
door at the first light of dawn. Cato marries himself to Marcia and the Republican cause
during that time of day that separates the darkness of night from the brightness of day.
The tenebrous quality of the scene informs best Cato’s disposition and circumstances.\textsuperscript{361}
Although he has agreed to enter the fray, Lucan will hold off his entrance to battle for
another seven books thus making Cato an utterly ineffective component of the Pompeian
camp. While Marcia is essentially little more than a shade of Cato’s former wife, Cato
himself is represented in the gloom of his home with little more than phantasmic power.
On the poetic occasion of his introduction Cato is already lamenting the loss of the
Republic in his very own home. This \textit{urbs} to which he feels the incestuous
responsibilities of both a father (\textit{pater}) and husband (\textit{maritus}) has been eviscerated
through the exile of the Senate and through the defection of its citizens to either Caesar or
Pompey’s camp. These correlative relationships that Cato views he has to the Roman
\textit{urbs} are developed by Lucan in this scene where Brutus evokes Cato’s paternalistic
concerns while Marcia elicits Cato’s cold \textit{amor}. Even with these two characters Cato is
incapable of sharing his concerns for the state. Egoism has gotten in the way of his
ostensibly altruistic Republican agenda.\textsuperscript{362}

Cato shares no sense of community with anyone because, as the \textit{sapiens}, he is
above the immediacy of civic identity. Nonetheless Stoic \textit{oikeiosis}, the inborn
inclination that man has to be a constituent member of his immediate community, would
offer a certain compulsion to have Cato participate in this crisis. In keeping with the
Stoic view Cato must make the rational choice instigated by his primary impulse toward

\textsuperscript{361}Tucker (1970), pp. 56-57, notes that the colour black is more than twice as frequent as any other

\textsuperscript{362}cf. Shrijvers (1989), pp. 74-75.
self-preservation. While Cato would appear to show the state the love owed by a parent to a child, something Cicero deems the basic tenet of the social contract, this is shadowed by the immediate and sterile relationship that he renews with Marcia. Öικείωσις would have the Stoic undertake, out of duty to family and state, a rational involvement in politics. The irrational circumstances that precipitate the civil war, the ultimate civic nefas, compel Cato problematically to involve himself in this conflict in an effort to realize justice. His personal struggle, however, is one of philosophical transcendence whereby he will be able to shed the fetters of Roman citizenship in favor of participation within the Stoic cosmic city. Already at this stage in the poem Cato is a man whose legitimate political identity is unsure. His tie is not to the Roman Republic per se, but rather to Zeno’s ideal. That which is philosophically appropriate, τὸ οἰκεῖον, would have Cato fight with the ethical few against the corrupt many. Given his position Cato is thus set in opposition to the new Rome that is Caesar’s. On the topographically confused and effacing shores of Africa Cato will privilege his indulgence in a spectacular form of Stoicism rather than tending to the immediate needs of his fellow Roman troops. Cato, though he would at first appear to be Lucan’s prototypical Roman, allows his philosophical identity to subvert his inborn ethnicity. It is this same conflict that will come to the fore as Cato marches across the Libyan sands in book 9.

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364 Cicero (De Fin. 3.19ff.).
3.4 The Stoic tenor of Book 9

Lucan’s *Bellum Civile* concerns itself above all with death: namely the death of *libertas*. The poet challenges his audience to extricate from his work the actions appropriate to the Roman citizen during civil war. Porcius Cato Uticensis, clutching at the vestiges of the Republic, assumes the role of the true Roman citizen.\(^\text{365}\) As the aspiring Stoic *sapiens* he typifies the paradox established between the theoretical and practical aspects of Roman citizenship. Adherence to Republican ideals will not offer any safeguard against the Caesarian program, and, conversely, Cato’s allegiance to either camp will run contrary to his philosophy. Thus does his heroic character emerge both via ideological abstractions of the Stoa and through his pragmatic actions in the war. Lucan chooses Libya, with its strange peoples and places, as the stage upon which Cato will display the reconciliation he has been able to attain between his philosophical underpinnings and his public, that is political, persona. There thus arises a characterizing correspondence between Cato and the Libyan Psylli and the role that both assume in the Stoic edification of the post-Pharsalian Republican army.

Familial relations, and the negligence thereof, have been developed in the case of Cato to serve as an example of the domestic perversion precipitated by civil war. This is emphasized by the fact that this conflict is being led on either side by men who are related by marriage. In this way Lucan is able to metonymously employ the image and aspect of Roman households as being rendered utterly barren. Familial propriety and the social allegiance usually afforded between families through marriage has broken down between Caesar and Pompey. The poet employs this trope suggestively in his depiction

of the larger abstracted struggle of the older, established, and conservative ideal of Republicanism against the mobile, young and blood-thirsty desire for monarchical power. As is the case at the beginning of the work, both generals can not be fighting for the sake of imperial rule if this is to be a politically and ethically sound fight. Until Pompey becomes a legitimate Republican, which occurs ironically only in his death, Lucan and Cato both are trapped within the confines of a poetic world that has no place for *libertas*. It is an idea maintained latently within the poem by the early introduction of Cato in book 2. However, the audience, like Pompey himself, must learn to view the Lucanian program through the explicitly visual and horrific episodes of the epic.\textsuperscript{366} Not meant to entertain, these events set in greater relief the ideological fortitude of Cato and Brutus who both, though they apprehend the program somewhat differently, bear the Republican standards.

Bartsch suggests that the linguistic and thematic ‘horror’ that is a fundamental part of Lucanian poetry serves only to detach and thereby numb the reader.\textsuperscript{367} Rather than focusing upon the apparent aversion and disgust that is generated by Lucan’s treatment of the human body and the attendant *securitas nostri corporis* that results from this type of visual engagement, we must pursue an understanding of the apparent dissociation of mind and body.\textsuperscript{368} As the literate audience already we have been engaged in the paradox of ascertaining that which is intended to be ‘seen’ through a textual medium; that which is meant to be ‘read’. The audience’s literary march through these African horrors is intended to parallel in effect and function the edification of Cato’s newly acquired

\textsuperscript{366}Examples of horrific narrative in the epic include the sea-battle of book 2 (583-751), Scaeva’s monstrously heroic stand in book 6 (138-262), and the extensive catalogue of deaths suffered by Cato’s soldiers when attacked by the snakes in book 9 (734-838).


\textsuperscript{368}Barton. (1993), p. 105.
soldiers. The images developed by the poet, replete with filth and aspects of the grotesque, need to be re-conceived by virtue of our literary participation in Lucan’s poetic project. In this way is the symptomatic distancing and literal alienation from the text undercut.

In order to understand rightly the Stoic antithesis of body and mind that propels thematically the poem, we must see the body itself being denigrated, even decimated, and recognize our complicit involvement therein as the co-opted audience of Lucan.\textsuperscript{369} Dualities developed from the Stoic dichotomy of mind and body abound. This doublet inform a variety of relationships within and without the poem. Clearly the two are set in a complementary position to one another in the proem to book 9 in which the disaffected spirit of Pompey infuses the heart of Brutus and the mind of Cato (9.15ff.). This thematic antithesis may be understood as the seminal cause for conflict between the apparently popularist Caesar and the ideologically grounded Republican programme to be defended by Pompey and Cato. Moreover there is a coincident tension between the poet Lucan himself and the poem, characters and action included, that he commands. Like the body, the genre of the epic poem is attacked and threatening destruction that may be stayed only by Lucan himself. A similar menacing force, the snakes, threatens to destroy Cato’s men in the desert. On this occasion it will be the irrational and bodily powers of the Psylli that are called upon to preserve the dying men. This demonstrates the necessity of both terms, the correlation between mind and body, that alone can guarantee their synthetic survival and effectiveness.

\textsuperscript{369}This reflects a refinement in the claim of Epictetus (21) that the Stoic ought to “view” death, exile and all manners of horror on a daily basis so as to safeguard himself against craving anything excessively and to protect against the intrusion of matters contemptible into his thoughts.
Once Lucan’s intention to display the humiliation of the body is understood we can then look to the corresponding component of the suggested antimony; the mind. Once the predominance of mind over body is recognized, then the reader can uncover Stoic attributes of the soul within the poem. The two primary principles sought are the following: a) the commanding-faculty (i.e. ratio) as the soul’s highest part; b) the correspondence of compulsion to and repulsion from action on the basis of ratio. The best example of the Stoic character is found in Lucan’s Cato. The uncompromising historical Cato, in his last act of defiance against Caesar, committs suicide. He comes to be employed by Stoic philosophers under Nero and the Flavians as the anti-imperial emblem. Lucan, in the style shared by many Stoics under the emperors of the first century, latches onto the term libertas and employs it as the traditional Republican mantra. Libertas had been viewed as the primary product generated after the kings had been expelled in favour of the Republic. The political power associated with this term is recognized by the many claims made by the imperial household to being the bestower and defender of freedom. That Augustus himself had coins minted after the battle of Actium upon which he portrayed himself as the ‘champion of the liberty of the Roman people’ and other numismatic evidence reveals that libertas was imprinted upon coins minted after the tyrannicides of Caligula, Nero and Domitian. The irony in the appropriation of the term libertas by the imperial establishment is that the political system itself, though claiming to encourage the freedom of both action and thought, delimited the individual’s ability to engage in any philosophy of the ‘self’ that would be

370 For a categorized list of these and other issues regarding Stoic ideas of the soul and rationality see A.A. Long and D.N. Sedley (1988), pp. 313-323.


in opposition to the political machinations of the state. The Stoic met and welcomed this problem and developed it as a means through which *virtus* could be displayed and, as a result, *libertas* enjoyed.

Cato, from the moment of his introduction in book 2, demonstrates the tension between Stoic philosophy and its realization in public action. It is not enough for Cato to withdraw simply from the forum and thereby guarantee his own well-being. In order to write history which might accord with his Stoic inclinations, Lucan chooses to employ a didactic tone and it is with this end in mind that he develops the character of Cato, who will himself serve as teacher in book 9. He embodies the ideals of true Republicanism and *libertas* which are the primary themes established in the course of the poem.

Lucan employs the philosophical substrate of his poetry most artfully in his construction of the alien mythologies, geographies and ethnographies that shape much of

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373 This philosophy of ‘self’ is a modification of the theorem of self-fashioning offered by Greenblatt (1980), p.3. Although in the passage in question he makes much of the separation of the subject from the imitation of Christ, many of the same tenets which describe self-fashioning can be transferred to our view of Lucan’s Cato. Greenblatt’s term ‘self-fashioning’ emphasizes only one aspect of the subject-object relationship:

...: [self-fashioning] describes the practice of parents and teachers; it is linked to manners or demeanor, particularly that of the elite; it may suggest hypocrisy or deception, an adherence to mere outward ceremony; it suggests representation of one’s nature or intention in speech or actions...[Self-fashioning] invariably crosses the boundaries between the creation of literary characters, the shaping of one’s own identity, the experience of being molded by forces outside one’s control, the attempt to fashion other selves.

This hypothesis accounts for the identification of the author with his philosophically entrenched characters, but it does little for our ability to understand the circumstances within which Cato the Stoic openly welcomes any opportunity to make a display of his adherence to the Stoic agenda. An issue to be addressed is the awareness displayed by Cato with respect to his innate character and that which he generates for public, namely political, display. This is reminiscent of the Stoic belief that immediately upon birth an animal perceives itself. It assumes paradoxically, yet simultaneously, the roles of both object and subject. It must ascertain the reality of its being *qua* being. This is made possible by the dispersion of the soul throughout the body thus allowing the soul to ‘feel’ and ‘know’ anything that impresses itself upon the body. Thus does Hierocles (4.38-53) claim that there is a coincidental awareness of the body, namely the external aspect, and of the soul, the internal aspect. It is only after this primary ‘self-perception’ that man is able to assume to role of subject and establish relationships with the world around him. However, this primary ‘self-perception’ remains the touchstone of all our proceeding impressions of the world. In this way man is compelled to understand the world with respect to himself and, coincidentally, himself with respect to the world.

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book 9. With Pompey’s loss at Pharsalus and his pathetic assassination in Egypt already described, the poet endeavours to maintain the audience’s focus upon the prescribed self-destruction of civil war. This task is complicated by the fact that Cato, the new Pompeian protagonist, enters the narrative as favourably as possible. In opposition to Pompey who struggles to come to adopt rightly the Republican agenda, Cato, on the shores and in the sands of Libya, feels that he must be allowed to display his moral rectitude thereby offering an example to the ethnically diverse troops that are to be his, and more importantly Rome’s, soldiers.

Lucan develops the literary effects of geographical and ethnographical description in order to set in strong relief both the character of Cato and the necessary evolution, both physical and philosophical, of his troops. A close reading of the language used to describe and shape the African landscape reveals that Libya is the region most consonant with the Stoic themes of the work. The Syrtes and the desert, which serve as descriptive complements of *Libye Sicco*, are characterized by their inability to be distinguished liminally. Boundaries are confused in both of these areas and this confusion serves as a defining characteristic of African foreignness. With this view of the land itself, the people that inhabit these shores are to be understood as an embodiment of the land’s static features. The Psylli and the Nasamones, as τὰ ἐθνεῖα of Africa, mirror many of the dimensions of exoticism that shape their land.

Upon viewing the landscape that serves as a backdrop to the action of the book, the characters of Cato and the Roman army therein are better able to be recognized. Cato intends to exploit the *duritia* that Libya proffers abundantly in order that he implement and display his Stoic character. This plan, however, is not in the immediate, that is to say

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physical, best interest of his followers. After suffering the onslaught of snakes, described in language that resonates with the tones of a conventional ἀριστεῖα, Cato and his troops find themselves in a position of crisis. The former can no longer lead because the latter are forced by the snakes to leave off their march. The soldiers thus are compelled by the snakes to shift their attention from Cato’s display of virtus to their own defense against these serpentine hostes. At this point the Psylli are introduced by Lucan in order to guarantee the safety of the soldiers. The Psylli restore bodily security and health to their charges. This allows the men to focus again upon the example set by their general and, in turn, to reassert the process of apprehending the Republican cause. The Psylli, though in terms of their magic and customs they are an antithesis to the intellectual character of Cato, do not only preserve the soldiery but more importantly offer a complementary physical example to that mental model being demonstrated by their general. The Psylli will do more than heal the soldiers wounds, this African people will draw the non-Roman blood from their bodies only to revive them with a new Republican spirit.

3.5 Africa: The Hellish Utopia

The formative role of death in the poem is brought to the fore in book 9. Cato’s thoughts and his actions are driven by dura virtus which, in the rugged landscape of Libya, compels him and his soldiery to embrace their mortality. Their march through the desert serves as the general’s triumphal cavalcade having Lucan’s reader alone as its spectator. The route around the Syrtes through the desert is most important because it necessitates the development of patientia in these men. As a result the march may be
read metaphorically as a progression toward the comprehension of Stoic truth.\textsuperscript{375} This region offers Cato’s army the \textit{labores} required for their philosophical edification.\textsuperscript{376} The geographical quality of the Syrtes and Libyan desert both serve as the structuring elements of the ethnographic descriptions of their respective inhabitants: the Nasamones and the Psylli.

Africa is developed by Lucan as a land in which hybridism, and its resultant exoticism, confront and threaten the Roman constantly. The overall tone of this horrific geography is one which emphasizes the fact that this land is not Italy. Such a reductive mapping and description of the land accentuates the antithesis suggested between Libya and Hesperia. As the latter is the literal centre of the ever expanding Roman Empire of the first century A.D., the former is indefinite. Natural boundaries, such as rivers and mountains, in addition to those \textit{fines} imposed arbitrarily by man, are absent from the African geography. Lucan has set the action of this book in a land that is on the edge of the inhabited world. The physical relationship of this region to those that surround and thereby topographically define it is rendered obscure by the army’s inability to locate themselves with the conventional aid of mountains and rivers. The desert, like the ocean, is best understood in terms of what it lacks. This integral deficiency is what contributes essentially to the portrayal of the desert as ‘Nowhere’.

The ambiguity as to the localization of space within Africa itself is suggested by Lucan’s uncertain placement of it with respect to the rest of the world:

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{375}Viarre (1982).

\textsuperscript{376}Ahl (1976), pp. 268-274 parallels the characters of Cato and Hercules and develops the nature of their characters in light of their respective \textit{labores}.
\end{footnotesize}
Tertia pars rerum Libye, si credere famae
cuncta velis; at, si ventos caelumque sequaris,
pars erit Europae. 377

Libya is a third region of the world, if, in fact, you wish to trust all things
to mere report. Yet, if you rely upon the authority of the winds and the
sky, it will be a part of Europe.

(9.411-413)

These lines do more than reveal Lucan’s familiarity with the parenthetical style of
geographical narrative. 378 The conscientious student of natura, on the basis of
meteorological phenomena, will recognize the geographical commonalities of Libya and
Italy. 379 The association of these two lands allows us to interpret Cato’s actions in Libya
in terms, antithetical though they be, of the Italian geographical and social theatre. The
fact that Libya and Italy are both part of the same global region does not require that they
exhibit similar geographical traits. The complementary characters of these areas are best
displayed through their characteristically divergent peoples. 380 Italy traditionally is

377 cf. Caesar’s initial description of Gaul in his commentarii: BG 1.1: Gallia est omnis divisa in
partis tris,...

378 Thomas (1982), p. 109, argues that the statement, si credere famae / cuncta velis (9.411-412), is
an attempt made by the poet to display his familiarity with the geographical tradition treating the
regionalization of the world into either two or three parts. Romm (1992), p. 4, goes further in his treatment
of the popularization of geography in the “cultural mainstream” of antiquity by claiming that this type of
verse is a digressive and indulgent embellishment. The similarity of language, however, shared between
these lines and the geographically compartmentalizing lines of Caesar’s BG suggests that Lucan is
employing Caesarean language to enrich the character of the African landscape. In book 9 Libya itself,
with its sands and snakes, will assume the Caesarean role of enemy to Cato and the Republican cause.

379 The Stoic concept of natura, as commented upon by Diogenes Laertius (SVF 2.1022), is one
that views natura as the sustaining and generative power of the world. It generates and completes the
production of all transient things in accordance with primordial axia and upon a determined chronological
schedule. In this respect one’s Stoic understanding of the workings of the world recognizes that natura is
the first principle of all things and this necessitates that our investigation into this primacy shifts from being
a study in phenomenological physics to theology. The most important aspect of the generative power of
natura is its reliance upon ratio λόγος which results in the regularity and the everlasting constituents of
heaven and earth. This would be the antithesis to the Lucanian model of the machina discors.

recognized as being blessed with a temperate climate, being the seat of civilization and exhibiting cultural stability. The climactic harshness and ethnographic marvels increase in a direct proportion to the distance the Roman ventures away from the central region of the Italian peninsula.\textsuperscript{381} Lucan’s concluding equivocation of the two reinforces the sense that Libya is ‘Nowhere’, a displaced region that might be situated only in relative terms.

The suggestion that Libya is a third independent geographical component can, however, be reconciled with the bi-continental reading of the aforementioned lines. This qualification demands that this geographical passage be read in close association with Pompey’s καταστέρωσις which opens the book. In these lines (9.1-18) Pompey’s \textit{umbra}, which is able to fly through the sluggish air between the earth and the moon because of the ennobling power of one’s \textit{ignea virtus}, takes its place in the fiery ether.

Pompey’s attention is directed initially away from the earth and the actions taking place thereupon as he drinks in the pure light and gazes upon the wandering stars:

\begin{quote}
\textit{illic postquam se lumine vero
implevit, stellasque vagas miratus et astra
fixa polis, vidit quanta sub nocte iaceret
nostra dies risitque sui ludibria trunci.
\textit{hinc super Emathiae campos et signa cruenti
Caesaris ac sparsas volitavit in aequore classes,}...}
\end{quote}

Thereupon after Pompey’s soul had filled itself with the pure light, and had seen both the planets and the fixed North star, then did he look down upon how much darkness shrouded our time and he laughed at the mockery made of his corpse. Then he flew over the Emathian fields, the blood-stained standards of Caesar and over the ships spread out upon the sea.

\textsuperscript{381}DuPont (1995), p. 190, argues, on the basis of Ionian and Herodotean views of the association between ethnography and geography, that the degree of ethnic and climactic foreignness is a function of the one’s distance from home. There is no explicit boundary that one crosses when moving from the familiar to the foreign. Instead it is a region through which one travels within which distance and exoticism increase in a direct proportion.
The cosmic order of the heavens is thus set in stark contrast to the earthly chaos that is resulting from the civil war. The scene that Pompey’s shade views below is structured by death in that corpses are being neglected and Caesar’s standards, once the emblem of Rome, have been bloodied in their general’s name. The antithetical vistas, the one of the ordered cosmos and the other of earthly destruction, suggest that Libya is being set in contrast to the celestial regions where the souls of genuine Stoics reside. Granted that this *niger aer* is the heavenly region to which Libya is cast in contraposition, then this land assumes the role of a chthonic Hades.\(^{382}\) The African shores may then be understood in terms of their dichotomous relationship both with Italy and the heavens.

The African tribes encountered in book 9, the Nasamones and the Psylli, are in one respect created, and thereby physically bound, by the lands that they inhabit. The Psylli succeed in mitigating the subordinacy forced upon them by the structuring priority of their environment through both their ability to control the hostile aspects of the desert, namely the snakes, and their resulting security from death. Granting that the Libyan soil plays a primary role in the Lucanian development of these foreigners, we must look first for the sources of utopian nobility in the land itself before venturing to ascertain the role of the Psylli as the Catonian counterpart.

In the literary landscape of Lucan’s Libya (9.411-444) the poet develops many of this land’s defining traits via negation:

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Libycae quod fertile terrae est
vergit in occasus; sed et haec non fontibus ullis
solvitur: Arctoos raris Aquilonibus imbres
accipit et nostris reficit sua rura serenis.
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What is production of the Libyan land is located towards the west. But even this area is not broken up by any sources of water. It drinks in the northern showers brought by the North Wind and therefrom Libya restores its own lands by means of our fair weather.

(9.420-422)

The meteorological association made earlier (9.412) by Lucan between Africa and Europe is employed in this passage so that Libya can assume its role as the Italian antithesis. There are no rivers that scar the African countryside. The poet intends his reader to recall the detailed description offered earlier of Italy which is dependent chorographically upon the Appennine range and the many rivers that flow down from it to the east and west (2.399-438). The absence of rivers is the first suggestion that this Libyan landscape is one in which conventional boundaries do not exist. It has been noted that the geographical location of Libya is tied closely to that of Europe (9.411-413). The fact that the arid shores of North Africa receive rain only from clouds blown across the sea from Italy by the North wind further strengthens the association between these two regions. The conveyance by the North wind of Italian storms to Libya affords the desert its much needed supply of water while granting Romans respite from foul weather. Another product of the meteorological association between Europa and Africa is serenitas that Italy enjoys as a result of the southerly course of these storms. This natural allegory is a comment upon the relief granted to Europe, and more particularly Italy, at this moment in the civil war.\footnote{Africa saves Europe, and most particularly Roman Italy, from the sight and stigma that is the treacherous slaughter of Pompey.} The storm can be understood as a metaphor for the conflict between the Caesarian and Republican factions, a war that will water these arid sands with Roman blood. The transference of these hostilities to Africa gives a temporary, though much needed, pax to Rome. The emphasis made upon the climactic
associations between the two regions indicates that Libya is not a land so foreign to the
Roman as to be completely incommensurable with his political and philosophical
underpinnings. In fact, it will be seen that Libya, a country characterized by ruggedness
and natural hostility, is perfectly tailored for the Stoic encounter and the successful
adoption by the Catonian troops of a renewed Republican ideal.

Lucan further embellishes the antithesis of Libya and Italy by his description of
the mineral and biological products of Africa:

in nullas vitiatur opes; non aere nec auro
excoquitur, nullo glaebarum crimine pura
et penitus terra est. tantum Maurusia genti
robora divitiae, quorum non noverat usum,
sex citri contenta comis vivebat et umbra.
in nemus ignotum nostrae venere secure,
extremoque epulas mensasque petimus ab orbe.

It is despoiled for the sake of no riches, nor is it smelted down for bronze
or gold. The earth is pure through and through, having nothing
blameworthy in its clods. Mauretanian timber is the greatest wealth
belonging to this people, who did not even know of its use, but rather were
happy living under the leafy-shade of the citron-tree. Our axes come into
this unknown wood and we seek our dainties and tables from the farthest
reaches of the world.

(9.424-430)

The land itself is not polluted by metal such as gold and copper that are precious to the
Romans and therefore is not defiled for their procurement. The pure nature of the soil
guarantees that it will not be violated by mining for the sake of material gain. This

384Hinkel (1996), p. 193, argues that the moralizing tone of these lines serves only to demonstrate
that Lucan is engaging in a standard form of ethnography similar to that of Sallust. In his discussion,
however, Hinkel only mentions that the African lands are not ‘violated’ by mining practices yet he makes
nothing of the fact that the ore is completely absent from Libya’s geology. Rather than looking to the
details of Lucan’s African text for the strength of his argument, Hinkel falls into the traditional trap of
apprehending the poem in terms of its deductive relationship with Ovid and Virgil.
purity, in turn, is manifest in this land’s people. Their character is not shaped by a drive for gross financial advancement and the attending luxuriant displays of prosperity which come to plague Rome in Lucan’s day. Instead the Libyans are, like their land, best understood in terms of the desires and attributes that they do not have. Thus Lucan invites a double-reading of the lines describing the citron-tree (9. 426-428). The first, and thereby most literal, reading of these lines is that the *Maurusia robor*a refers simply to the Mauretanian timber of the citron-tree which was prized at Rome as being an extravagant material used in the production of furniture. However, an ethnographically charged reading of these lines points to the inborn vitality of these Africans. The most precious thing afforded this people (*divitiae*) by this land is their inborn strength and vigour (*robor*a). Their cultural simplicity, which is a symptom of the metallurgically pure aspect of the land they inhabit, is most manifest in their satisfaction with the products and effects of *natura* that, in this case, offer the people the shade of the citron-tree as respite from the heat. In contrast to the Romans who conquer lands and import exoticism only for luxurious perversion, the Mauretanian lives harmoniously with the teleologically appropriate riches of his own country. Lucan thus contrasts the ability of the African to be truly happy living in accordance with the dictates and products of *natura* with the Roman who, through his expansionist agenda, appropriates wrongly foreign materials only to pervert their naturally established teleological purpose.

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385 cf. Persius *Sat. I* (50-53)

non hic est Ilias Atti
ebria veratro? non siqua elegidia crudi
dictaturunt proceres? non quidquid denique lectis
scriturit in citreis?

Is there not the Iliad, drunk on hellebore, of Attius?
Do not full-bellied poets recite elegies? Is there anything not written upon citron-couches?

386 cf. *SVF* 3.16.
two regions are the inverse of one another as Italy is pastoral, geographically hospitable, although it is inhabited by decadent people whereas Libya is climactically and geographically harsh while being populated by strong people living a natural life. Lucan is thus suggesting that, as they live in accordance with the dictates of *natura*, the people of Africa are more rightly Stoics. These corresponding portraits, that of the African and that of the Roman, represent the counterdistinction of virtue and vice.

The poet’s geography of Africa is brought to a close with his description of the Syrtes and their inhabitants, the Nasamones. This particular region and its people are employed in order to furnish a particularized example of the aforementioned characteristics of this country’s landscape. Lucan has claimed, in broad terms, that Africa is harsh, exotic, hybridized, rugged and geographically ambiguous and with the Syrtes and its indigenous inhabitants, the Nasamones, he is able to offer a vivid illustration of this:

387

\[ \text{at, quaecumque vagam Syrtim complectitur ora} \\
\text{sub nimio proiecta die, vicina perusti} \\
\text{aetheris, exurit messes et pulvere Bacchum} \\
\text{enecat et nulla putris radice tenetur.} \\
\text{temperies vitalis abest, et nulla sub illa} \\
\text{cura Iovis terra est; natura deside torpet} \\
\text{orbis et immotis annum non sentit harenis.} \]

387 Lucan has already postulated the geographically amorphic character of the Syrtes (9.303-318). It is a region that may be viewed as being in a degenerative transition from land to sea. On the other hand Lucan also claims that *natura* created this region as being neither wholly terrestrial nor entirely submerged (*natura in dubio pelagi terraeque reliquit* ...). The result is the creation of a region that is in a state of topographical flux. It is not able to be denominated in simple geographical terms and thereby is both undefining and undefinable. The Syrtes typify the transient aspect of African boundaries.
And whatever shore is close by the vacillating Syrtes, lying under a blazing sun, and being hard by the torridness of the upper celestial region, it parches the crops and kills utterly the vine with dust, and no plant at all holds together the crumbling soil with its roots. A vital temperate clime is absent as is the care of Jove from this land. *Natura* makes it listless by means of her apathy, for it does not feel the cycle of seasons, since its sands are left unploughed.

(9.431-437)

In contrast to the *serenitas* of the Italian climate, the shores of Africa are scorched as it were by the fire of the heavens (*aether*). The Syrtes and the adjacent regions in this way are set in opposition to the upper world and, as a result, the poet succeeds in casting these regions as an underworld. Later this will allow the march of Cato and his men through the desert to assume the narratological tone of a κατάβασις. The agricultural cycle of the seasons breaks down in this inhospitable zone and with the forced absence of this agrarian system the soil itself is depicted as deteriorating. Here, where the natural order of things and their accompanying chronological schema are absent, the agricultural bases for societal development are unable to evolve. The fact that these lands do not allow for any type of agriculture denies even the possibility that these parched shores could produce a people who might one day come to approximate Romans in their luxuriousness. The ethnographical purity of the Libyan is to be maintained by the apathy of *natura*. What is viewed as neglect from the Imperial Roman vantage point, is in fact a constant test of man’s *duritía*. By denying Libyans even the possibility of embarking upon a course of farming and husbandry, *natura* is staying the tide of socio-political development seen at Rome in the time both of the Kings and of the early Republic. Although Libya is hellish in contrast with the Stoic heavens, it is an arcadia where contrasted with Lucan’s depraved Rome.

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The brief portrayal of the Nasamones further corroborates this hypothesis:

hoc tam segne solum raras tamen exerit herbas,
quas Nasamon, gens dura389, legit, qui proxima ponto
nudus rura tenet; quem mundi barbarā damnis
Syrtis alit. nam litoreis populator harenis
imminet et nulla portus tangente carina
novit opes: sic cum toto commercia mundo
nauplaeis Nasamones habent.

Nevertheless the barren land produces grassy patches, which the
Nasamonian, a sturdy race that lives nude upon the shore hard by the sea,
reaps. The savage Syrtes provide for this people by means of worldly
losses. For the Nasamonian pillager lurks on shore and, even though no
ship puts into port here, he has come to know maritime wealth. For it is in
this way that the Nasamones engage in commerce with the entire world.

(9.438-444)

Again the apparent neglect of natura requires that the land itself provide for the people
who are a figurative extension of it. The ruggedness of the shore forces the Nasamones
to adopt nomadism which denies them the possibility of establishing a fixed civic system
and this disallows the atrophy of the robust character of the tribe. The survival of the
Nasamones depends upon their ability to work in conjunction with the land they inhabit.
Their utter dependancy upon the inhospitable region in which they dwell sets them in
opposition to other Mediterraneans, especially those engaged in sea-faring.390 Just as the

389 It has been suggested that durus is associated etymologically with δὴρῳ (long-lasting) and
δώρῳ (timber). The second of these two roots recalls the play made by Lucan upon the term robora when
detailing Mauretanian wealth. The poet is establishing the ethnographic commonalities of fortitude and
endurance as shared by North Africans.

390 A reading of mundus may be taken even further to suggest that the Nasamones, the Syrtes and
immediately surrounding lands counterbalance the entire mundus. In these lines Lucan is developing the
image of the Syrtes and the Libyan desert as representations of the underworld.
beaches provide scattered grassy areas for the uncultivated harvesting of the Nasamones, so too do the Syrtes provide, through shipwreck, mercantile goods for this tribe’s barbaric trading practices.

The relationship between Africa and the outside world is further complicated by the correspondence seen between the Libyan regions themselves. In apposition to the Syrtes and their adjoining shores there lies the Libyan desert which is a negative complement to the Mediterranean sea. Water is unable to be locally differentiated and is thus unable to exhibit and maintain fixed boundaries. So too in the desert do the sands shift constantly producing a region best understood in terms of its indefinitude:

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   nam litore sicco,
quam pelago, Syrtis violentius excipit Austrum,
et terrae magis ille nocens. non montibus ortum
adversis frangit Libye scopulisque repulsum
dissipat et liquidas e turbine solvit in auras,
nec ruit in silvas annosaque robora torquens
lassatur: patet omne solum,...
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For the Syrtes receive the south wind more violently on their dry shore than it is out at sea, and the wind ravages the land all the more. Libya, lacking mountain ranges, is unable to break up the winds, and dissipate them driven back by the rocky barrier, and to soften them to gentle breezes from whirlwinds. Nor does the south wind flow through forests and thus it is not weakened as it wrenches at aged oaks. No, the entire plain lies open.

(9.447-453)

As threatening as the sea is, Lucan develops the desert as being even more harsh. The indistinguishability of the geographical nature of the Syrtes and their accompanying ambiguity as a liminal image are extended to the poet’s view of the desert. The Libyan interior is similar to the Syrtean shores, only worse. What the shoals, by means of causing shipwrecks, furnish to the Nasamones, the winds, as they whip across the desert
plains, pick up and take away. The storm at sea that turns back the Catonian fleet (9.319-347) is paralleled by the more elaborately crafted sandstorm (9. 445-498) that follows this detailing of Libyan geography. What the poet intends to illustrate is the inherent violence of the landscape itself.

   The desert proper is a true *hostis* to be faced by Cato and his army. The region is wholly foreign and it serves as the enemy which must be overcome in order that the ethnically diverse Pompeian host shed its spurious support of Magnus for the sake of assuming a legitimate fidelity to the Roman Republic. The relative weakness of the troops, however, inhibits their ability to welcome and endure the hardships of the march. Their success in the literal and philosophical journey must be guaranteed by a middle term that establishes a rational relationship between the soldiery and the threatening Libyan environment. The result is Lucan’s complementary portrayal of the Psylli who will offer the physical protection and magical remedies that are needed in order that the troops observe and apprehend the philosophical realization of their Stoic general.

3.6 Psylli: *Auxilium ex Fortuna*

   As the Romans march through the barren Libyan desert, their isolation is accentuated by their inability to cope with the natural hardships of this supranatural landscape. While steadfast virtue alone compels Cato to march through these sands (*hac ire Catonem / dura iubet virtus* [9.444-445]), Cato’s example is needed to encourage the

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391 Morford (1967), pp. 49-50, catalogues the many points of literary allusion employed by Lucan in his composition of the Libyan sandstorm. He suggests that the poet is making the storm in the desert more dramatic than that at sea in order to capture the increasingly toilsome nature of the *labores* confronting the *Roman iuventus* (9.938). The arduous desert march thus becomes the literary vehicle used to realize *virtus* and *libertas* in the Roman army for the reason that it forces the soldiers to exhibit *patientia*.

392 Hinkel (1996), pp. 241-247 elaborates upon the theme of the Libyan snakes as being emblematic of the struggle between Africa and Rome.
troops. This sets the soldiery in a hierarchical relationship of subordinacy to the desert, having Cato as the middle term, thus emphasizing the dependency that these men have upon their leader. As such Cato is that which mediates Africa and virtus. The strength enjoyed by Cato, Lucan suggests, is a symptom of his doctrinaire Stoicism. This is to say that Cato is able to recognize the particular form of harmonia endemic to this land and thereby adapt his actions accordingly.\textsuperscript{393} Virtus supplies Cato with all things absolutely necessary and thus guarantees that he will do nothing that he will either regret or that is against his will.\textsuperscript{394} This philosophical empowerment allows Cato to rebuke rightly the weakness of his soldiers and to offer an antidotal demonstration of his own philosophical character. Like the Stoic ideal of virtus that drives Cato on, he too is described as durus:

\[ \text{ast illae puppes luctus planctusque ferebant} \]
\[ \text{et mala vel duri lacrimas motura Catonis.} \]

Yet those ships bore ills, lamentation and wailing, things able to evoke tears even from harsh Cato.

\((9.49-50)\)

Cato has come to personify both the virtus and the patientia that are the key characteristics of Stoicism.

This epithetical description of Cato is manifest also in the language Lucan uses to describe the Libyan climate and landscape:

\[ \text{et spes imber erat nimios metuentibus ignes,} \]
\[ \text{ut neque sole viam nec duro frigore saevam} \]
\[ \text{inde polo Libyes, hinc bruma temperet annus.} \]

\textsuperscript{393} Stobaeus, 2.75ff., reviews the standards of Stoic happiness. Stoicism dictates that ‘happiness’ (εὐδαιμονία) is the teleological target of all that men do. ‘Happiness’ is the result of living in accordance with virtue. This tenet is then extended so that living in accordance with the demands of virtue comes to mean living in accordance with nature.

\textsuperscript{394} Cicero, (\textit{Disp. Tusc.} 5.40-1; 81-2), develops at length the characteristics attributable to the wise man in terms of the ‘happiness’ that they afford. These include being unafraid, intellectually fortified, honorable and steadfast.
In fact the rainy season was a hope to those fearing excessive heat, so that the season and Libya’s situation both should render temperate the weather, thus extirpating the threat of either harsh heat or cold from their journey. (9.375-377)

And,

serpens, sitis, ardor, harenae,
dulcia virtuti; gaudet patientia duris;...

Serpents, thirst, searing heat, and sands: these things are sweet to virtue. Endurance delights in hardships. (9.402-403)

The first example illustrates the climactic mirroring of the land. Cato’s assumption that the weather will be temperate, however, proves to be wrong. The diurnal swing in temperature in the desert ends up inflicting extreme heat and cold upon the men during the day and night time respectively. The second example suggests that Africa ought to be defined in terms of the hardships it proffers. Snakes and sands are not products of Libya so much as they produce the hostile character of the region.395 Similarly these effects require that patientia be engendered in whomsoever should undertake a journey through this land. Lucan states this clearly as he narratologically concludes the list of sufferings endured by the soldiers:

sic dura suos patientia questus
exonerat. cogit tantos tolerare labores
summa ducis virtus, qui nuda fusus harena
excubat atque omni Fortunam provocat hora.

395 Lucan interjects in this episode the etiological myth of Medusa’s decapitation by Perseus in order to explain the presence of these snakes (9.624ff.). Within this narrative context Cato must confront not only the physical threats posed by these serpents but he is also set narratively against the irrationality of the Medusa myth. This parallels Lucan’s own poetic struggle as myth is the traditional subject, that is to say monster, of epic.
The soldiers’ unwavering endurance relieved their complaints. The irreproachable virtue of their general, who slept stretched out on the open sands and who challenged Fortuna at every moment, compelled these men to endure such great hardships.

(9.880-883)

The desert provides Cato the opportunity to offer a public performance of his Stoicism and thus he welcomes the opportunity to share in the trials of the crossing. Beyond simply generating a theatrical portrayal of the general, Lucan uses these scenes to chart the development of the evolving Republican soldiery. No longer do they want to disband on account of Pompey’s death, in fact they are now willing to undergo a figurative death in the desert if that alone will grant them the opportunity to follow Cato’s shining example.396

A troubling component of the language Lucan uses to describe Cato’s defiance of Fortuna is the poetic employment of the term provocare. Although provocare may be rendered to mean ‘to challenge to a duel’, it may also rightly be translated as ‘to invoke or call upon’. Can it be that Cato recognizes the latent weakness of his troops and has come to realize that commitment to virtus is not enough to defend his soldiers against thirst and snakebites? The troops have come to fear to show their fear, hesitating in death and shaming themselves before Cato (9.884-889). The Stoic example, however, fails and Cato contravenes his allegiance to ratio in his appeal to Fortuna for help. She responds by furnishing the Roman army with the Psylli:

396Malamud (2003), pp. 31-44., argues that Lucan’s use of the snakes, and his development of their mythological cause, is a mythological translation. The head that haunts these men and that sets them upon this desolate course is now that of Pompey. Pompey’s decapitated head drives the soldiers into the hostile Medusan desert where an apparently untouchable Cato can order them effectively to their death. Pompey is the head while Cato is the adapted and destructive gaze of the Gorgon.
Vix miseris serum tanto lassata periclo
auxilium Fortuna dedit.

At the very last moment Fortuna, worn out by inflicting such great toil
upon the army, finally granted aid to the wretched soldiers.

(9.890-891)

Lucan mysteriously introduces the Psylli only after Cato realizes that his
philosophical program will not be enough to safeguard his men. This nomadic African
people is the succour granted to the Roman army. As though in response to Cato’s
paradoxical challenge of *fortuna*, the Psylli remedy the circumstance physically thus
compelling the general to admit complicitly his defeat, one that costs him his
philosophical integrity. The function of the Psylli is to offer the soldiers a physical
eexample of fortitude that is complementary to the ideological agenda being pursued by
their general.

gens unica terras
incolit a saevo serpentum innoxia morsu
Marmaridae Psylli.

One tribe alone, living in these lands, is immune to the deadly bite of
snakes; The Marmaridan Psylli.

(9.891-893)

Lucan nominally localizes this people by the denomination *Marmaridae*. Thus we know
that they inhabit some region of Cyrenaica which stretches from Derna to West Egypt.\textsuperscript{397}

The Psylli are a solitary tribe in these lands because they alone are able to withstand
snakebites. They are both unique and socially isolated because their innate strength is the

\textsuperscript{397}The Marmaridae, as a broader ethnic group, are understood as a people that would attack towns
and outposts lying upon or just outside of their own prescribed boundaries. Their subsistence depended
upon their disregard for any type of border (*fines*). Salmon (1980), p. 106, cites the conflict of the
Marmaridae with P. Sulpicius Quirinus, which took place before 12 B.C., as an example of the sporadic
unrest that was characteristic of Africa’s eastern and southern frontiers.
result of their racial purity. Only are the Psylli able to inhabit this desert because alone are they not threatened by its dangers. In a perversion of Stoic doctrine, the faith that the Psylli put into the purity of their corpora allows them to co-opt the power of natura for the sake of their own physical well-being.

The dichotomy established between the philosophically based strength of Cato and the ultimately irrational potency of the Psylli is suggested in the remedies that they offer those afflicted with snake bites:

\[
\text{par lingua potentibus herbis,} \\
\text{ipse cruor tutus nullumque admittere virus} \\
\text{vel cantu cessante potens.}
\]

Their incantations are as strong as powerful drugs, even their blood is immune, even when they are not singing incantations, and cannot be corrupted with poison.

(9.893-895)

Although the Psylli have been marching with the Roman army, their congenital ability to withstand the mortal threats posed by the Libyan snakes maintains their foreign identity. While the other soldiers are struggling to adopt Romanism, and thereby effectively fight for Catonian Republicanism, the Psylli must adhere to their static isolationism demanded by their peculiar physical condition.

The correspondent relationship between the physical fortitude of the Psylli and the ruggedness of the Libyan landscape is employed in Lucan’s account of the immunity to serpentine poison acquired by the tribe:

_____________________

398 This stands in stark contrast to the ethnic melting pot that has become Rome. Lucan has criticized that the extinction of the proper Roman has left his city to be replete with the cast offs of the world. See above, pp. 1-2.

399 cf. 9.911-912.
natura locorum

iussit ut immunes mixtis serpentibus essent.
profuit in mediis sedem posuisse venenis.
pax illa cum morte data est.

The innate nature of the region demanded that they should be immune to the snakes in their midst. Thus is the benefit bestowed, that they are able to inhabit a place amongst poisons. That is the peaceful truce granted [to the Psylli] with death.

(9.895-898)

The Libyan sands have the Psylli as a natural complement to the snakes. Just as the serpents produce poisonous venom, the Psylli have songs and saliva that serve as antidotes. The inborn immunity of the Psylli both integrates them with the monstrous landscape and simultaneously ostracizes them from any legitimate social commerce with foreigners. Their existence is static in that it is only guaranteed on the basis of their naturally mandated localization and isolation. Their immunity to venom, therefore, fortifies their bodies against the dangers of the desert, but the bitter symptom of this immunity is their utter dependence upon the environment that afforded them this same strength. The Psylli live as is demanded by natura, thus by circumstance modelling their lives upon the Stoic crede. Like the snakes, the Psylli are a coincidental yet monstrous creation of the Libyan desert. This accounts for the apparent harmony between the two. Lucan does not suggest that the Psylli are in constant conflict with the snakes, rather he relates that the pax enjoyed by the Psylli is the result of their inborn immunity that alone off-sets the deadly strength of the snakes.\textsuperscript{400} Without the snakes the Psylli, as a foreign

\textsuperscript{400}This etiological understanding of the Psyllian immunity is the bodily manifestation of the Druidic view of death. The latter understands death as but the interruption of an extended life. In the case of the Psylli this is manifest physically as they are a people that forms part of the Libyan landscape. They are one therewith and so they enjoy a certain natural harmonia with this typically hostile envrionment.
tribe, would lose their primary ethnographic characteristic. In their own way the Psylli require the snakes in order that they might retain their denomination as ‘Other’.

The physical basis of this pax is described in terms of the required genealogical purity of the Psylli. In the language of conventional ethnography, Lucan highlights the isolation that alone affords the Psylli both immunity and survival:

\[
\text{fiducia tanta est} \\
\text{sanguinis, in terras parvus cum decidit infans,} \\
\text{ne qua sit externae Veneris mixtura timentes} \\
\text{letifica dubios explorant aspide partus.}
\]

So great is their reliance upon their bloodline that, when an infant is born, they test the suspect child with the mortiferous asp, fearing that the woman may have had a liaison outside of the tribe.

(9.898-901)

This ritual exposure of children to the asp is a formal means of recognizing the covenant that they have with natura that alone grants them pax with their environment. Similar to the tests made of the chicks born of the divine eagles of Jove, the racially pure Psyllian children will play immediately with the snake (9.906-908). Should they be bastards the children presumably will cower, be bitten and die. Lucan does not detail the events that befall the non-Psyllian child in the course of this contrived baptism. However, given the importance of maintaining genealogical purity within the tribe, one might deduce that the underlying purpose of this exposure is both to reveal the impure and thereby rid the tribe of any falsifiers. The integrity of the Psyllian bloodline fixes a figurative boundary of social discourse between their tribe and the outside world. Although the Psylli live in a land that is conspicuous on account of the absence of naturally demarcated boundaries (fines), they must limit themselves literally in terms of their sexual intercourse.
Upon describing, in ethnographic terms, the curious habits of the Psylli, Lucan modifies their isolatory character in order that they may fulfill their narratological function as the *auxilium* granted to the army by *Fortuna*. It has been noted that Cato morally empowers his troops during their crossing of the desert, and yet his axiomatic Stoic doctrine is not able to remedy the physical ills suffered by the men. The Psylli are now employed to fulfill a corresponding corporeal role:

Nec solum gens illa sua contenta salute
excubat hospitibus, contraque nocentia monstra
Psyllus adest populis.

Not happy with their own safety alone, the Psylli keep watch over foreigners, and defend strangers against deadly serpents.

(9.909-911)

This passage could be read as an adaptation of the role attributed by Homer to the Phaikians.\(^{401}\) Both peoples do afford their respective charges passage, and both live in lands located on the edges of the earth. To focus only upon this inter-textual referencing is to avoid the Lucanian portrayal of the Psylli *per se*.\(^{402}\) While they have an inborn need to protect themselves from the ruin of their blood-line, they also feel compelled to help others in the desert. They communicate their own immunity to those who are most susceptible to the dangers of the region. The irony is that this must be done physically by incantations and by demarcating boundaries around those whom they wish to protect. The social and sexual isolation that they impose upon themselves they grant to those in

\(^{401}\)Hinkel (1996), pp. 247-249.

\(^{402}\)Morford (1967), p. 129, engages in a similarly dismissive treatment of the Psylli. He interprets their introduction as an example of Lucan’s emloyment of a provisional *deus ex machina* fulfilling both “prophylactic” and “curative” roles needed necessarily in order to bring the entire snake episode to a close.
their custody for the sake of provisional protection. When this fails they bodily withdraw
the venom from the afflicted whom Lucan describes as already suffering the throws of
death:

\[
\text{saepe quidem pestis nigris inserta medullis}
\text{excantata fugit; sed, si quod tardius audit}
\text{virus et elicitum iussumque exire repugnat,}
\text{tum super incumbens pallentia vulnera lambit}
\text{ore venena trahens et siccat dentibus artus,}
\text{extractamque potens gelido de corpore mortem expuit;...}
\]

Oftentimes the destructive venom flees from the magical incantations
making their way into the black marrow. But, if it should happen that the
poison is slow to obey and resists the command to depart, then, leaning
over, the Psyllian licks the pale wound. Sucking out the venom with his
mouth he then drains the infected limb through his teeth and victoriously
he spits out the death he has drawn out of the frigid body.

(9.930-936)

The Psylli do not offer a portrait of the horrible and the bizarre.\textsuperscript{403} The intentionality
behind the action of the Psylli is directed toward the legitimate safety of the army.
Although the Psylli’s powers are magical, it is the purity of their employment that makes
them different from the spells of Erictho.\textsuperscript{404} She allows the corpse to die while the hope
of the Psylli is to bring back to life the Roman soldiers. Rather than damning these men
to a liminal hellish life, the Psylli escort the Roman army through the “underworld” of the
Libyan desert ensuring its arrival at Leptis and a peaceful winter reprieve.

\textsuperscript{403}This may be compared with the scene in which Erictho raises the dead. She too is discovered
alone in a field practicing monstrous incantations. Johnson (1987), pp. 22-29, views Erictho as
“horrifying and absurd simultaneously”. She engages Sextus only because she hopes to attain some portion
of Pompey’s body \textit{quid corporre Magni / proiecto rapiat,...[6.585-586]). The Psylli, conversely, appear to
assist the Roman army out of legitimate compassion.

\textsuperscript{404}Hinkel (1996), pp. 249-251.
The character of Cato’s troops prior to their march through the desert sands was shaped by their allegiance to Magnus Pompey alone. The journey through the trails and trials of Libya affords them the opportunity to apprehend and to begin adopting the Stoic temper of Cato. In order to do this effectively the soldiers must don the Republican mask of *libertas* by expelling any foreign or erroneous allegiances they once had. The image of the Psylli extracting poison from the soldier’s veins suggests that they are also healing the wounds of misdirected fidelity. Just as Cato, via his resolute physical example, is able to allay the mental anxieties of his troops, the Psylli are required complementarily to revitalize their weak and vulnerable bodies. The *corpus* is the charge of the Psylli whereas the *mens* is that of Cato. The Psylli do not simply guarantee safe passage through the desert, but rather they allow the Roman soldiers to shed their pasts in order to embrace Cato’s tragic future.

3.7 Conclusion: The Commensurability of the Psylli and Cato

Lucan dismisses the Psylli from the narrative as abruptly as he introduces them. Once they have offered their *auxilium* to Cato’s men, and given them an example of the physical fortitude afforded by an established *harmonia* with *natura*, the Psylli melt back into the Libyan landscape having helped make the soldiers ready to fight for Rome. The language used by the poet to close this scene suggests that another type of identification has taken place:

Hoc igitur tandem levior Romana iuventus
auxilio late squalentibus errat in arvis.
bis positis Phoebe flammis, bis luce recepta
vidit harenivagum surgens fugiensque Catonem.
And so the Roman army, relieved by this aid, continued wandering far and wide over the parched plains. Twice, losing her light and receiving it again, did Phoebe, rising and setting, see desert-wandering Cato.

(9.938-941)

Lucan loads the characterization of Cato in this section with the use of the epithet *harenivagum.*\(^{405}\) The general too, like his soldiery, has adopted a certain aspect of the isolated and nomadic Psylli. Only in the Libyan sands is one able to adhere to the Stoic program that Cato champions. Although the passage through the desert does not grant the general any legitimate military advantage, but rather only puts his men into undue danger, this route alone allows for their Republican edification. The irony lies in the fact that we, like Lucan, know that Cato and his men will never return to Rome. Their *libertas* and assumed allegiance to the Republic can only be exercised in Libya, a region which, as the poet describes, has been abandoned both by Jove himself and *natura.* Cato, dressed in funereal garb in book 2, promised to attend upon the ghost of freedom. Already did his home within the walls of Rome capture the tenor of death and despair that was to be the failed Catonian cause. It is a paradox that in this place, an Africa both that mirrors death and that is the geographical antithesis to Italy, Cato and his men, with the help of the Psylli, are best able to approximate the Republican ideal of *libertas* that exists in a similarly removed and isolated place: the transcendental Stoic vision of Rome.

\(^{405}\)This word also happens to be a Lucanian ᾗπαξ ιεγόμενον.
CONCLUSION

_LUCAN’S EPIC OFFERS A PORTRAIT OF A TIME, OF AN EVENT, AND OF THE CHARACTERS THAT WOULD DENY THE SURVIVAL OF AN IMAGINED ROMAN REPUBLIC._ It is a poem that, like Lucan’s sorceress Erictho, endeavors to resurrect the dead and mythologized city of Rome. This effort becomes but paradoxically the Republic’s eulogy. The poem is a ghost story in which the characters and the city are but insubstantial shades of their former selves. Cato, Pompey, and Caesar, they all try to grasp the power of Rome only to have it slip vainly through their arms. The result is that these men realize that they must look beyond the walls of the city on the Tiber, beyond the Hesperian peninsula, in order to find the strength and support of character required to realize their hegemonic aspirations. Caesar derives his characterizing strength from Gaul. Pompey is drawn to the East, moving away from what should be the seat of Roman power, whereby he reveals the inefficacy of his pretense to egoistic autocracy. The fighting force that he can raise is little more than a polyglot assemblage of Oriental client states, a group that is accustomed to despotic submission. Cato, alone among his men, requires that the Psylli, the magical African tribe, rescue physically his troops in order that there be a complement that would benefit from his esoteric intellectual example.

Caesar, as was discussed in the first chapter, is represented as the Northern
invader. Drawing upon Lucan’s tripartite global view, Caesar is to be associated initially with *Europa*. His power is derived from his ability to assume the characteristic strength of those peoples and places that fall under his dominion. As the epic progresses, and as the sphere of Caesar’s influence expands to the East, including Greece, the general betrays an innate connection to the Hellenistic tyrant Alexander, another man who aspired to global power. This metamorphosis of character captures the influence that place, and Romanized stereotypes, have upon Caesar. His threat to Rome is not that of a Roman, but rather that of a foreign invading enemy. His *ira*, his *furor*, his *rabies*, these are the forces that drive destruction, forcing the evacuation of Rome and thus leaving the city to be inhabited but by Lucan’s foreign dregs of the world (*faeces mundi*). As the epic closes only Africa remains just beyond Caesar’s grasp. In Ptolemy, it would seem, he has found an adversary whose jealous desire for power proves to threaten Caesar’s advance. Caesar is left alone, rightfully afraid (*et timet incursus indignaturque timere* [10.444]), wishing that he might be glorified in death as was his dedicated Scaeva.⁴⁰⁶ As the epic finishes in Africa, so too does the poetic account of Caesar’s rush to dominion thus leave the audience to judge the outcome that would be Caesar’s orientalizing by the Egyptian Cleopatra. His promised submission to her marks the effective end of Rome. In this his action and his character would bear the mark of the world over which he aspired to wield imperious rule.

Pompey’s defect is his inability to find a legitimate place for himself at Rome. As such he is incapable of becoming the legitimate defender of the waning Republic. His inclination to hesitancy and flight is indicative of the associative connections that Lucan makes between Magnus and the traditional Eastern tyrants. Cyrus and Xerxes managed

⁴⁰⁶ cf. O’Gorman (1995), pp. 127-129, who will see in this retrospective a narrative move that is intended to signal the end of the war as *civilis*. 

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no more successfully on the battlefield than did Pompey. This alignment with the Romanized view of Asiatic weakness in employed pathetically when Pompey, like his epic antecedent Priam, will be truncated before his wife. Pompey wishes that his *fama*, his *inane nomen*, which had once been co-terminous and coincident with the boundaries of Roman power, were still potent enough to rouse his Eastern clients about him in an effort to buttress this toppling, dead oak. This vain reliance, however, destroys him doubly. Firstly it drives him to abandon his imagined Rome, running nightly from the Fury that is Julia and daily from the *furor* that is Caesar. Then from Dyrrachium to Pharsalus, from Lesbos to the shore of Egypt, dreams of past successes and fame push Pompey to the scene of his treacherous execution. Like the power of the East, Pompey’s is relegated to a dreamy past. He must cede to the maniacal drive of European Caesar thus giving up Asia to the global aspirant.

Finally Cato finds himself alone, sharing no affinity to popular causes and their proponents within the city of Rome and suffering a philosophical disconnect from his men in the African field. The interview he has with Brutus and Marcia at Rome in book 2, while ostensibly demonstrating the austerity of his political position, in reality portrays the artifice of Cato’s distinction from other Romans. Initially his foreign aspect is a product of his Stoic bearing. Later as he walks through the Libyan sands, drinking from polluted pools, and driving his men headlong into the hostile environment that will be their destruction, Cato becomes the ideological despot who would ruin all, in a manner worthy of Caesar, in order to demonstrate his fortitude and to justify the rectitude of his Republican altruism. It will take the introduction of the Psylli, who are developed ethnographically as the irrational and nomadic antithesis to the Catonian Roman, to secure the bodily passage of these troops who hope to resurrect *Roma.*
Lucan’s epic is his own enchanting song, his particular *cantus*, that, in the tradition of the Gallic *Bardus*, is intended to preserve for coming generations the fabulous events that marked the passing of Rome and the heroic Roman citizen. At the same time this ghost story, dogged by the Fury Julia and poetically textured with haunting colour, is an effort on the part of the poet, like the Psylli, to suck poison from the mortal wounds inflicted upon the state by each of his epic heroes. The poem, an incantation, endeavours not only to revive textually a bygone age but to regenerate in its audience the strength and political sensitivity to recall Rome and to be its native hero. Perhaps if the reader were to believe this story it would effect a poetic cautery that could heal the wounds inflicted by the Principate.


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