Edited by
Charles Tesoriero

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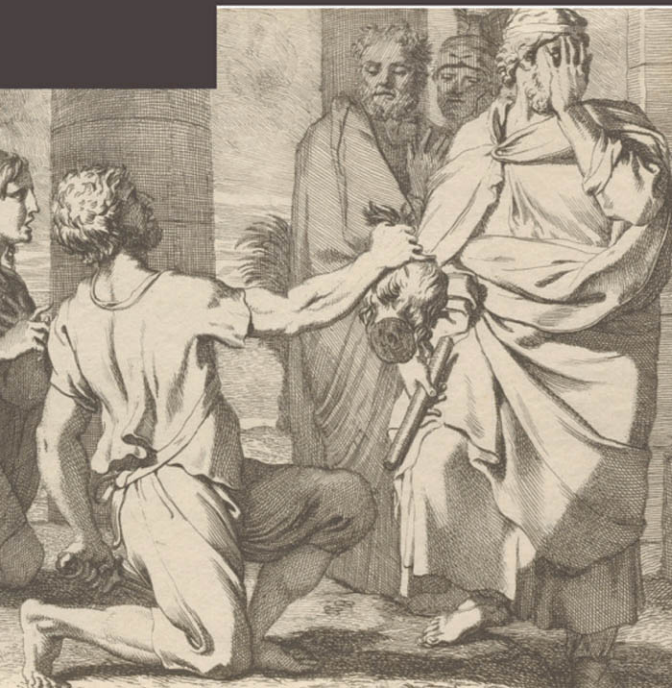
Lucan



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Lucan

Edited by

CHARLES TESORIERO†

assisted by Frances Muecke and Tamara Neal
with an Introduction by Susanna Braund

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To Ciali della Torre

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Preface

Charles Tesoriero, whose book this is, was a promising young Latinist who was beginning to make his name in the field. He completed his PhD thesis on Lucan Book 6 at the University of Sydney, and was appointed lecturer in Classics and Ancient History at the University of New England, NSW. There he quickly established himself as a generous, energetic, and inspiring teacher. During his brief career he became well known to colleagues in Australasia and the wider world for his sociability and adventurous conference papers. In 2001 he convened an international conference at UNE on Ancient Magic ('Hecate at the Crossroads') and in 2004 co-convened the Pacific Rim Roman Literature Seminar ('Performance and Roman Literature') at the University of Sydney. The success of these conferences was largely owing to his enormous capacity for friendship.

Charles's original proposal for the book (from which we quote) was motivated by his observation of Lucan's fast-growing popularity, which he perceived to be the result of 'a renewed interest in the literature and culture of the Neronian period'. He believed that 'a collection of readings in Lucan would be an extremely useful aid to students and teachers alike', noting that 'to date there is no volume of this sort in English'. The guiding aim of his selection of papers was 'to cover a range of approaches to Lucan's poem and classic issues which arise in its study'. He therefore largely avoided (with a few significant exceptions) 'papers which focus on an individual book or episode within the poem' and sought instead those of a general nature 'which deal with broader issues and themes of the epic . . . issues that are of continuing importance for the appreciation of Lucan'.

Except for the Introduction, all the essays in this collection have been previously published elsewhere. The editors and the Press are grateful to the publishers of the relevant journals and books for permission to reprint. We would like to note that minor editorial changes have been made to a number of the essays appearing in this collection. Chapters 1, 2, 3, 15, and 16 are here translated into English for the first time. Except in Chapters 8, 12 and 17, the

quotations from Latin and Greek not already translated have been translated by Erik Hamer (that is, in Chapters 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 10, 15, 16 and partially elsewhere).

The form of this book was in place when Charles Tesoriero died by his own hand on 21 August 2005. What remained to be done was basic editorial work, which we have completed, and the Introduction, generously undertaken by Susanna Braund, one of Charles's PhD examiners. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to Erik Hamer for supplying Greek and Latin translations, and we thank Erica Bexley and Michelle McVeigh for research assistance. We are also grateful to the editorial staff of Oxford University Press for their guidance and patience.

Frances Muecke, University of Sydney
Tamara Neal, University of New England

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List of Abbreviations

ANRW	H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* (Berlin and New York, 1972–)
DGG	H. Diels (ed.), *Doxographi Graeci* (3rd edn, Berlin, 1879)
GLK	H. Keil (ed.), *Grammatici Latini* (Leipzig, 1855–80)
OLD	P. G. W. Glare (ed.), *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1982)
ORF	H. Malcovati (ed.), *Oratonim Romanorum Fragmenta* (4th edn, Turin, 1976–9)
RE	A. Pauly, G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll (eds.), *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* (Stuttgart, 1894–)
SVF	H. von Arnim (ed.), *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* (Leipzig, 1903–24)
TLL	*Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Leipzig, 1900–)
U.R.	H. Usener and L. Radermacher (eds.), *Dionysii Halicarnasei Opuscula* (Leipzig, 1899–1929)

Abbreviations for journal titles generally follow the system used in *L'Année Philologique*; guides to the standard abbreviations for Greek and Latin authors and works may be found in Liddell and Scott's *Greek–English Lexicon* (9th edn, Oxford, 1996) and the *Oxford Latin Dictionary* (Oxford, 1982).

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Introduction

Susanna Braund

One striking feature of classical scholarship in the closing decades of the twentieth century is our surmounting of a deep-seated aversion to so-called 'Silver Latin' literature. The last gasp of that aversion was perhaps Gordon Williams' 1978 volume *Change and Decline*. But, even at that moment, the formerly magisterial Williams was out of step with some of the most exciting developments in the study of Latin literature, which included taking post-Virgilian epic poetry seriously. Ovid was the first beneficiary of this shift in attention (as explained by Peter Knox in the Introduction to his *Oxford Readings in Ovid* (2006)), then Lucan. Statius is currently benefiting from this wider perspective and Valerius Flaccus and Silius Italicus are waiting in the wings; for example, there is currently in preparation a companion volume to Silius. Perhaps later Latin epic poets such as Claudian and Prudentius will receive proper attention before too long. Curiously, or not, Antipodean classicists seem to have taken, and continue to take, a leading role in these revivals.

One of these Antipodean scholars was Charles Tesoriero—a young scholar who thought Lucan worth reading. It is entirely fitting that the Oxford University Press invited him to assemble this volume of Oxford Readings. Charles' 2000 doctoral dissertation, written under the direction of Lindsay Watson at the University of Sydney, and of which I was the external examiner, was an extremely competent commentary on the Erichtho episode from Book 6 of Lucan's poem. Had Charles not taken his own life in August 2005 he could and would surely have been a leader in Lucan scholarship. (We do at least have his

four articles and his commentary on Book 6, which will be published posthumously.) This volume is most welcome and will sit alongside two books currently in progress: Paolo Asso's *The Brill Companion to Lucan* and Michael Dewar's *Lucan's Civil War* in the Oxford Approaches to Classical Literature series, which promises an examination of the killers, megalomaniacs, liars, fanatics, failures, and cowards who bring the corrupt Republican system crashing down upon their own heads. As in other volumes in the Oxford Readings series, the focus here is upon twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholarship, drawn from a wide range of authors and approaches, with the imaginative and valuable inclusion of five papers translated into English for the first time. Now that we are equipped with several recent translations of Lucan, and commentaries on most of the individual Books, along with my *Lucan Reader* (aimed at intermediate Latin students), we finally have the tools to extend the reading of Lucan and to reclaim his place in the canon.

If that last phrase surprises, that is because of the success of the revilers of Lucan of the past century, if that is not too fierce an expression. What is clear is that Lucan has always inspired passionate responses in his readers, occasionally negative but for the large part strongly positive. Most famously, perhaps, Dante was a firm admirer: for him, Homer, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan made up 'the lovely school of that lord of highest song, who soars above the others like an eagle' ('la bella scola | di quel signor de l'altissimo canto | che sovra li altri com' aquila vola', *Inferno* 4. 94–6, trans. R. Durling (Oxford, 1996)). It should not, then, be surprising that we meet a number of Lucanian characters in *The Divine Comedy*, including Julia, Marcia, Cornelia (all at *Inf.* 4. 128), Curio (whose encouragement to Caesar at Lucan 1. 280–1 is paraphrased by Dante at *Inf.* 28. 98–9) and Cato, who becomes keeper of Purgatory. Less familiar is Chaucer's putting him on a par with Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and Statius in *The Hous of Fame* (1497–1502-3. 407–12; likewise at *Troilus and Criseyde*, V. 179-1–2):

> Thoo saugh I on a piler by,
> Of yren wroght ful sterneley,
> The grete poet, daun Lucan,
> And on hys shuldres bar up than,
> As high as that y mighte see,
> The fame of Julius and Pompe.

Dante and Chaucer are just two in a continuous sequence of Lucan fans from his own era to the eighteenth century, punctuated by rare dissenters, including Fronto in the second century CE, who was clearly irritated by what he sees as pointless repetitions in the opening seven lines of the epic (*De orationibus*, 6),[1] and perhaps Lucan's contemporary Petronius, if his character Eumolpus' criticisms in *Satyricon* 118 are indeed aimed at Lucan. Twenty-five years after Lucan's suicide in 65 CE in the aftermath of the failed conspiracy to replace the emperor Nero with Calpurnius Piso, Statius is full of praise for the dead poet in an ode addressed to his widow Polla on the fiftieth anniversary of his birth (*Silvae* 2. 7), praise which is echoed by Martial in *Epigrams*, 7. 21–3. Their contemporary, Quintilian, the professor of rhetoric, commends Lucan's vigour when he calls him 'blazing and passionate and most brilliant in his apothegms' (*ardens et concitatus et sententiis clarissimus*, *Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.90); Quintilian's rider, 'if I may say what I feel, more suitable for imitation by orators than by poets' ['ut dicam quod sentio, magis oratoribus quam poetis imitandus',] has often been read as a criticism, but need not be, given his purpose in selecting literature for budding orators to study. At any rate, sales of Lucan's books were evidently high, according to Martial (14. 194).

In fact, Lucan seems to have enjoyed more or less constant popularity from the fourth century to the early eighteenth century and only fell out of favour, and the canon, during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The approval of Christian readers may relate to his removal of the pagan gods from the panoply of epic. It seems clear that the fourth- to fifth-century Christian poet Prudentius drew on Lucan for his portrayal of martyrs. The fact that the sixth-century grammarian Priscian often quotes from the poem is testimony to his and his readers' familiarity with Lucan. In the Middle Ages, the correspondence of Abelard and Heloïse includes several deployments of lines from Lucan.[2] In an overview of Lucan and English Literature, O. A. W. Dilke suggests that during the Middle Ages Lucan was 'almost a legendary figure' and shows that early Elizabethan drama paid him the double-edged compliment of

[1] van den Hout 1954.

[2] See von Albrecht 1997: 926–7 for details.

plagiarism in battle scenes.[3] The zenith of his reception came with his recruitment to the Republican cause before and during the English Civil War and in France towards the end of the eighteenth century.

Activity measured by editions and translations bears out the picture of Lucan's near-perennial popularity. According to Robert Bolgar,[4] Lucan was among the first Latin poets to receive an *editio princeps* in his entirety, as early as 1469, keeping company with Virgil and Juvenal, Cicero, Apuleius, Augustine, Caesar, Gellius, Lactantius, and the Elder Pliny; at least sixteen further editions followed before 1500. Even before the *editio princeps*, Lucan had already been translated into European vernaculars, with *In Cath Catharda* (a twelfth-century Irish prose version), an Old French paraphrase by Jehan de Tuim, a French translation from 1380, and two Spanish, a further French, and two Italian translations from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. English translations start in 1593 with Marlowe's version of Book 1 and culminate in Rowe's expansive heroic couplets from 1718, which was admired by Pope as well as by Samuel Johnson, who called it (1779–81) 'one of the greatest productions of English poetry; for there is, perhaps, none that so completely exhibits the genius and spirit of the original'.[5] Lucan also garnered scholars' attention, with important editions by Grotius (Amsterdam, 1614), to which Farnaby's notes were added in 1618 (often reprinted), Oudendorp (Leiden, 1728), and Bentley (London, 1760). Hölderlin translated at least an excerpt of the poem into trochaic hexameters in 1790; in 1815, Shelley after reading the first four books of the poem wrote in a letter that the poem was 'of wonderful genius and transcending Virgil';[6] and Lucan's witch Erichtho makes an appearance in the *Classical Walpurgisnight* scene in Goethe's *Faust Part Two* (1832). Even as Lucan was fading from fashion, scholarly editions by Haskins (London, 1887), Hosius (Leipzig, 1892), Lejay (Paris, 1894), Francken (Lyon, 1896–7), then Housman (Oxford, 1926, which was essentially the text used by J. D. Duff for his 1928 Loeb Classical Library edition) were published; in 1896, Postgate produced a school text of Book 7 and, in 1940, Getty of Book 1. Of these, I still find W. E. Heitland's introduction to Haskins' edition valuable and

[3] Dilke 1972b: 108.
[4] Bolgar 1954: 276.
[5] Johnson 1905: 77.
[6] Shelley 1964: i. 432; see also *Adonais*, 51.

sometimes remarkable, while Housman's vitriolic aspersions on previous editors in the introduction to his edition afford a perverse form of entertainment.

One of the first signs of the adverse change in climate is the criticism by his 1896 translator Sir Edward Ridley of Lucan's 'ghastly details of horrors'. Still more unsympathetic to the poet's project is Robert Graves, who his 1956 Penguin Classics version (it cannot with any decency be called a translation) calls Lucan 'the father of yellow journalism, for his love of sensational detail, his unprincipled reportage, and his disregard for continuity between to-day's and yesterday's rhetoric';[7] Graves condemns Lucan's 'impatience with craftsmanship, digressive irrelevances, emphasis on the macabre, lack of religious conviction, turgid hyperbole, inconsistency, appeal to violence'.[8] Graves' hostile and condescending attitude seems to typify the twentieth-century reaction to Lucan in England.

But, scholarship in English was out of step with the rest of Europe. While Lucan was languishing in the Waste Land (as implied by Graves when he identifies Lucan as 'the standard-bearer' for the modernist poets such as Eliot and Pound),[9] German and French scholars gave him intelligent and sympathetic attention. Eduard Fraenkel's 1924 essay, here translated into English for the first time, 'can be considered a turning-point in Lucan scholarship and the appreciation of his poetry', to quote Tesoriero's words in the proposal for this volume. Further important scholarship in German includes the 1938 *Hermes* article of W.-H. Friedrich on Cato, Caesar, and Fortuna (included here); W. Rutz, 'Studien zur Kompositionskunst und zur epischen Technik Lucans'; K. Seitz, 'Der Pathetische Erzählstil Lucans'; and O. Schönberger, *Untersuchungen zur Wiederholungstechnik Lucans*, as well as his many articles. Scholarship in French includes important work by B. M. Marti over a period from 1941; by R. T. Bruère from 1949; by P. Grimal from 1949 (for example, his 1960 study of the eulogy of Nero—included here); and J. Brisset's 1964 monograph, *Les Idées politiques de Lucain*. In Italy, leading Lucanisti include E. Paratore (many articles from 1943) and D. Gagliardi (from 1968), while Lucan's homeland Spain furnishes studies such as R. Castresana Udeata's *Historia y política en la 'Farsalia' de Marco Anneo Lucano*.

[7] Graves 1956: 13. [8] Ibid. 23–4. [9] Ibid. 23.

The year 1970 saw the publication of two collections of Lucan essays: the Fondation Hardt volume, consisting of seven essays in French and German covering topics including the structure of the poem, philosophy, rhetoric, religion, and the epic tradition, and the prolific W. Rutz's landmark 1970 *Wege der Forschung* volume comprising thirty-two papers, of which three overlap with Tesoriero's choices here. In Germany, work on Lucan continued in the 1970s with H.-D. Leidig's study of his reception in English literature (*Das Historiengedicht in der englischen Literaturtheorie*) and with W. D. Lebek's *Lucans Pharsalia: Dichtungsstruktur und Zeitbezug*, while in Italy, among scholars working on Lucan such as D. Gagliardi (*Lucano, Poeta della Libertà*), Emanuele Narducci was perhaps the most productive, with his book *La provvidenza crudele: Lucano e la distruzione dei miti augustei*, along with several articles and another book since then (discussed briefly below).

When Lucan begins to be appreciated by English-speaking scholars, it is first as a master of rhetoric, in Stanley Bonner's 1966 article (reprinted in this volume) and Mark Morford's 1967 book *The Poet Lucan*, which is still worth reading, with its discussion of storms, divination, magic, and dreams in Lucan. The first holistic overview was Frederick Ahl's *Lucan: An Introduction*, published in 1976; the sheer enthusiasm of this study makes it a rarity among books on Latin literature and it is still good to recommend to students. Traces of dislike linger, however—for example, in Roland Mayer's 1981 commentary on Book 8, in which he tells us straightaway that 'Lucan is not a poet of the first rank'[10] and in which the section on 'Style' begins: 'Ever since the elder Scaliger gave it as his opinion that Lucan seemed to bark rather than to sing, the poet's style has been faulted.'[11] At the same time, and in contrast with Mayer's ambivalence and lukewarm apology for his author, studies by Michael Lapidge and Charles Martindale were attempting to provide a fuller and more sympathetic context—Lapidge in his 1979 paper on the Stoic dimension and articulation of Lucan's imagery of cosmic dissolution (reprinted here) and Martindale in a series of articles on Lucan's use of paradox, on his underworld scene, and on his

[10] Mayer 1981: p. vii. [11] Ibid. 10.

politics,[12] as well as in chapter 5 of his book on Milton[13] and in a discussion of 'Lucan Restored' in his provocative *Redeeming the Text: Latin Poetry and the Hermeneutics of Reception*.[14] A major turning-point in appreciation of Lucan in English is Bramble's contribution to the second volume of *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature*, published in 1982.[15] Bramble's perceptive essay draws attention to Lucan's prosaic language, his paradoxes, and his inversions and negations of standard epic tropes to produce a 'predominantly monochrome epic': 'traditional epic was too wordy, too august'.[16]

So, it is only in the late 1980s that English-speaking academia seems collectively to decide that Lucan is worth wrestling with. The witch Erichtho is the subject of Richard Gordon's intelligent and wide-ranging essay 'Lucan's Erictho'[17] and is the starting-point for W. R. Johnson's study of Lucan's 'violently counterclassical poem',[18] developed from his Martin Classical Lectures at Oberlin College. As often, Johnson is in the vanguard. He sets out to describe what he finds attractive in 'this peculiar poem'[19] and exposes its sardonic style, its grim humour, its grotesquerie, and its fascination with horror. Even more important, and of enduring relevance, is John Henderson's lengthy 1987 essay entitled 'Lucan/The Word at War', reprinted here. The section titles of the essay give some taste of Henderson's approach: 'The War of Words'; 'The War in Words'; 'The Warp of Words'; 'The World of War'; 'The Wall of Words'. He articulates the essential inconsistency of Lucan's poem in a reading which is a reverberation of Lucan's Latin, such as 'the concussion of civil war', 'collapse in word and world', 'collision and collusion between the elements', 'deformation of the tradition', 'suicidal implosion', 'pulverization', 'chaos in cataclysm', 'lacerated, mutilated, unmade bodies', 'Earth decomposed and mushed into Lucanian broth', and, perhaps the best, 'the ruination of ruination'. Henderson's deployment of English is always challenging; here it fits his theme perfectly: his linguistic contortions match those of Lucan quite brilliantly.

[12] Martindale 1976; 1980; 1984 (Chap. 10 here).
[13] Martindale 1986.
[14] Martindale 1993: 64–72.
[15] Bramble 1982.
[16] Ibid.: 542.
[17] Gordon 1987.
[18] Johnson 1987.
[19] Ibid.: 2.

The impact of Henderson's study was instantly decisive. Denis Feeney, within his framework of discussing the divine in epic, sees that Lucan's is a 'fractured voice, unsystematic and at odds with itself',[20] while Jamie Masters, a pupil of Henderson's, combines the far-fetched thesis that the poem as we have it is complete, with excellent close readings of less-noticed parts of the poem in a book which could appropriately have been entitled 'Lucan's Fractured Voice'.[21] Lucan also figures prominently in two crucial books published in 1993: Philip Hardie's *The Epic Successors of Virgil* and David Quint's *Epic and Empire*. Both books are still essential reading for any understanding of Latin epic poetry. Hardie highlights the theme of sacrificial violence in Lucan, explores the manifestations of the energy of Hell in Caesar and other characters, and reads Lucan as no 'respectful son entering into a father's inheritance' (meaning, the epic tradition) but rather as a rebel.[22] In his diachronic analysis of the European epic tradition, Quint labels Lucan's poem as an epic of the defeated and links it with *La Araucana* of Ercilla and *Les Tragiques* by Agrippa d'Aubigné. In his discussion of the *Pharsalia*,[23] he argues that the simplistic view of Lucan as an anti-Virgilian poet does not match the complexities and internal contradictions of the poem: 'Lucan's ideological position as both republican *and* imperialist . . . places him both outside and inside Virgil's camp.' He proposes that Lucan's reaction to the weight of epic conventions is satirically to bend them 'out of shape, even to the breaking point' but never to abandon them.[24] The large perspective of both studies seems to prescribe an assessment of Lucan in his relationship with Virgil, which is of course a persisting theme in all the scholarship on Lucan.

At the same time as this in-depth scrutiny of the poem came the rather remarkable coincidence of four English translations in five years, by P. F. Widdows (Bloomington, Ind., 1988), Douglas Little (Dunedin, 1989), Jane Wilson Joyce (Ithaca, NY, 1993), and my own 1992 translation for the Oxford University Press World's Classics series. Alongside these came new commentaries from Elaine Fantham (on Book 2: Cambridge, 1992) in the Cambridge Greek

[20] Feeney 1991: 250–312, at 282. [21] Masters 1992.
[22] Hardie 1992: 109. [23] Quint 1993: 131–57. [24] Ibid. 157.

and Latin Classics series and from Vincent Hunink (on Book 3: Amsterdam, 1992), thus expanding the range of teachable Lucan from the old warhorses of Books 1 and 7 (R. J. Getty: Cambridge, 1940 and J. P. Postgate: Cambridge, 1896, respectively) alongside the relatively unnoticed commentary on Book 5 by Pamela Barratt (Amsterdam, 1979) and the rather limited Aris and Phillips commentary on Book 8 by Roland Mayer (Warminster, 1981). Elaine Fantham is also, of course, the author of at least seven articles on Lucan.

Lucan's position as a major poet in the classical canon is enhanced by a number of important studies of Lucan during the 1990s, including a major article by Roller (1996) and monographs by Bartsch and Leigh, both published in 1997. In a development of Henderson's approach, Matt Roller's substantial article 'Ethical Contradiction and the Fractured Community in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*'[25] focuses upon the issue of community; according to Roller, Lucan 'leaves competing articulations of the community and competing discourses forever in conflict, with no resolution in sight'.[26]

Combating this consistent view of Lucan as inconsistent are the monographs by Shadi Bartsch (*Ideology in Cold Blood: A Reading of Lucan's Civil War*)[27] and Matthew Leigh (*Lucan: Spectacle and Engagement*),[28] which from different perspectives both attempt to resolve the conflict between the pro-Caesarian and pro-Republican elements of the poem. James O'Hara characterizes these swings of the pendulum with great acuity in the final chapter of his study *Inconsistency in Roman Epic: Studies in Catullus, Lucretius, Vergil, Ovid and Lucan*.[29] Mapping the terminology of Homeric criticism onto Lucan scholarship, O'Hara offers an appreciation of both the 'Separatist' and the 'Unitarian' readings of Lucan.[30] In his view, Bartsch and Leigh, who represent the 'Republic Strikes Back' approach, both attempt to 'restore a dependably Republican poet'.[31] O'Hara rightly characterizes both books as 'brilliant'—but unconvincing. Neither can resist Lucan's pull towards two contrary and irreconcilable ideological positions, however much they want to. As O'Hara remarks, 'the case for Lucan being fractured is looking pretty

[25] Roller 1996. [26] Ibid. 345. [27] Bartsch 1997.
[28] Leigh 1997. [29] O'Hara 2007: 131–42.
[30] Ibid. 133. [31] Ibid. 136.

good, and attempts to put him back together again have not worked'.[32]

The tension is more obvious in Bartsch, who starts by sustaining the view of the poem as fractured and ideologically conflicted but then asserts the narrator's intense and impassioned commitment to Pompey. Her aim is to avoid siding with 'the two Lucans of scholarship: the poet as rebel and the poet as nihilist'. In place of these, she puts 'Lucan the storyteller',[33] who creates something new by combining political cynicism with political commitment,[34] yet her argument cannot erase the palpable self-contradictions in Lucan.

Similarly, Leigh uncovers traces of 'two contrary ideological positions',[35] using the lens provided by spectacle and focalization, but argues that the pro-Republican surface reading can be recuperated once one accepts that the subversive readings are themselves subverted. This is perhaps too subtle a reading to be convincing, but for me the central value of Leigh's study is his elucidation of the pervasive theme of viewing/watching/spectating in the poem. The idea of spectacle is undoubtedly a crucial element in Lucan's poetic armoury and indeed in his world-view, as seen by earlier scholars, including P. Jal in *La Guerre civile à Rome* and Ahl and Masters. According to Leigh, Scaeva in Book 5 represents gladiatorial combat, the seabattle near Massilia in Book 3 and the mass suicides on Vulteius' raft in Book 4 function as *naumachia* displays, and the Libyan snakes episode in Book 9 resembles a *uenatio*. What Leigh does here is present yet another contradiction in our poet, between the enjoyment of watching the slaughter as if it were entertainment in the amphitheatre and the lamentation for the end of the Republic.

The renewed appreciation of Lucan has seen due attention to textual matters with new editions by D. R. Shackleton Bailey (1988) and R. Badalí (1999), and work on the transmission and scholia by S. J. Werner and P. Esposito. The remaining gaps in commentaries are rapidly being filled, with Book 10 now covered by E. Berti (2000) and Book 9 by C. Wick (2004), along with C. Raschle's 2001 commentary on the snakes episode in Book 9. This leaves only Books 4 and 6 without a modern commentary, although Book 6 is in hand with the

[32] Ibid. 138. [33] Bartsch 1997: 9.
[34] For example, ibid. 102. [35] Leigh 1997: 40.

posthumous publication of Charles Tesoriero's commentary, currently being completed by Lindsay Watson.

Two recent books adopt highly polemical stances towards earlier scholarship—and yet seem to differ not nearly so much as they think they do. In *Lucano; Un'epica contro l'impero: Interpretazione della Pharsalia* (2002), Emanuele Narducci exudes hostility towards much scholarship in English, yet his in-depth study covers all the familiar themes in familiar enough ways—for example, through intertextual readings and discussion of the multiple voices in the poem. Though Narducci is keen to deny that Lucan had any coherent programme, the carefulness of his readings seems to pull in the opposite direction.

Robert Sklenár has a more specific focus in *The Taste for Nothingness: A Study of Virtus and Related Concepts in Lucan's Bellum Civile* (2003). Dissenting from Johnson, Henderson, Bartsch, and others, Sklenár asserts that 'it is possible to describe chaos without being chaotic, to document with clinical precision the absence of precision in language, to make a logical case for the absence of logic'.[36] After a series of excellent close readings, he recurs to his central theme, that the nihilism we attribute to Lucan is a simplistic nihilism and thereby damaging to Lucan: because we are unwilling to accept 'the positive affirmation of nihilism itself' we ignore or underestimate Lucan's 'sublime orchestration of thought and language' which arises from his 'taste for nothingness'.[37] That said, it is not transparent that the scholars with whom he takes issue would take issue with him. What I observe here, however, is the strength of feeling that Lucan continues to inspire in his readers. Lucan, it seems, invariably makes partisans of us.

We find a significant turn away from deconstructionist readings in Francesca D'Alessandro Behr's *Feeling History: Lucan, Stoicism, and the Poetics of Passion* (2007), which is a fine study of the figure of apostrophe and its many implications in Lucan's poem. Rejecting the view of Lucan as a nihilist, she argues that Lucan's interventions into his own narrative are designed to guide his audience's moral interpretation of that narrative through both participation and alienation. Her assertion of Lucan's strong didactic purpose relies especially on the example of Cato as the positive embodiment of Lucan's message:

[36] Sklenár 2003: 2. [37] Ibid. 151–2.

'the Stoic sage as the perfect *miles*'.[38] This acknowledgement of Lucan's 'emotional intensity'[39] in effect resurrects a much older view that values his 'resistance to political and spiritual enslavement'.[40]

It seems fair to say that certain features and episodes of the poem have inspired and continue to inspire persisting interest through the centuries, including Lucan's relationship with Virgil, Lucan's political stance, the reliability of the narrator's voice, Caesar's felling of the grove, Erichtho's necromancy, Caesar's visit to Troy, and Cato and the snakes. The topics in *The Brill Companion to Lucan* (2009) reflect the preoccupation of recent Latin scholarship with intertextuality and give a snapshot of current approaches, with papers on memory, poetic geography, and horror, for example, and a discussion of the poem as a specimen of literature of trauma. Reception receives an entire section in the volume, in accord with the refocusing of Latin scholarship in the past two decades, although it must be stated that there has consistently been work on the reception of Lucan for much longer than that. Other contemporary studies of the reception of Lucan include discussions of Lucan by D. Norbrook in 'Lucan, May and Republican Literary Culture' (1994) and *Writing the English Republic: Poetry, Rhetoric and Politics, 1627–1660* (1999); the valuable introduction to S. Brown and C. Martindale's Everyman edition of Nicholas Rowe's 1718 translation of Lucan (1998); B. Backhaus's (2005) edition of the *Supplementum Lucani* by Thomas May, the seventeenth-century translator of Lucan; and P. Cheney's *Marlowe's Republican Authorship: Lucan, Liberty, and the Sublime* (2009), as well as several PhD dissertations which one can only hope will be published.

In recent years, Lucan has been the subject of international conferences at Salerno (2001), Princeton (2003), Basle (2004), Rostock (2007), and Bordeaux (2008), two of which have generated publications: P. Esposito and E. Ariemma (eds.), *Lucano e la tradizione dell'epica Latina: Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi; Fisciano-Salerno, 19–20 ottobre 2001* (2004) and C. Walde (ed.) *Lucan im 21. Jahrhundert* (2005), the latter including valuable papers such as Annemarie Ambühl on 'Lucans *Bellum Civile* und die Tragödien aus dem thebanischen Sagenkreis'[41] and M. Dinter on 'Lucan's Epic

[38] D'Alessandro Behr 2007: 163. [39] Ibid. 1.
[40] Ibid. 170. [41] Walde 2005: 261–94.

Body'.[42] Much the most valuable tool now for anyone interested in Lucan is the comprehensive bibliography on Lucan and his reception assembled by Christine Walde, arranged both alphabetically and chronologically, at the 'Lucan-Homepage'.[43]

Let me conclude by remarking that it is a pleasure and an honour to be able to introduce this volume of readings assembled by Charles Tesoriero.

[42] Ibid. 295–312.
[43] Updated to Aug. 2007 <http://www.klassphil.uni-mainz.de/181.php>.

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1

Lucan as the Transmitter of Ancient Pathos

Eduard Fraenkel[1]

At the very outset of his scholarly career Professor Warburg posed with great clarity a significant question for the understanding of European intellectual life, and since then has indefatigably pursued it further—namely, what exactly the much-acclaimed awakening and liberating influence exercised on the Early Renaissance in Italy by the plastic and literary arts of Graeco-Roman antiquity was and how, beyond individual details, it can be demonstrated and really brought to life. Since it goes without saying that mere adoption of material is never decisive for intellectual development, it was necessary to seek a deeper dynamic for that remarkable devotion of a powerful age for so long-vanished a world. In his very first publication, Warburg established that 'in the fifteenth century "antiquity" did not automatically require the artist to abandon the modes of expression resulting from his own observations, but simply directed attention to the hardest problem for plastic art, capturing images of life in motion'.[2] Later he researched on a broad canvas the effect of 'ancient superlatives in the language of gestures'. It was with particular felicity that, by analysing a single motif, the death of Orpheus, he distinguished the constrained medieval outlook from that newly liberated and proved

[1] Originally published as: 'Lucan als Mittler des antiken Pathos', *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg*, 4 (1924), 229–57; repr. Fraenkel, *Kleine Beiträge zur klassischen Philologie* (Rome, 1964), ii. 233–66. Translated by Leofranc Holford-Strevens.

[2] Warburg 1892: 49.

that at the pinnacle of Quattrocento art dramatic power of expression is owed to the survival of 'pathos formulae'. This is an extremely fruitful concept. One cannot fail to recognize how strongly ancient oratory and poetry, beginning with those of Rome, legitimated a new pathos and how the expression of the most individual passions was prepared and supported by the use and transmutation of classical pathos formulae.[3] I do not feel called upon to present a broad survey of this process; permit me to confine myself to a very modest contribution to the grand thing, by drawing your attention to a Roman poet who is eminently an exponent of the pathetic and as such had the most powerful effect. A certain justification for considering him in isolation may result from the fact that Lucan, who up to the educational catastrophe of the nineteenth century was a much-read and highly influential representative of Roman poetry, has for several generations, at least in Germany, retreated to the shadows; amongst those who dealt with him as a matter of duty, the classical scholars, the judgements even of the finest minds demonstrate an astonishing incapacity to understand his essence. The poet whose magnificent imagination helped produce the wonderful prologue figure of the *Klassische Walpurgisnacht*—Goethe did not scorn to reread the *Pharsalia* directly in the last decade of his life—this poet, for almost two millennia, was hardly less renowned than Vergil, Horace, and Ovid. He was among the earliest Roman classics to be printed: the *editio princeps* was published at the same time as that of Caesar's *commentarii*—in 1469 at Rome by the courageous German pioneers of the then still dangerous art, the text overseen by the energetic bishop of Aleria, Giovanni Andrea de' Bussi. In the next generation, Luca Signorelli included him in the small number of illustrious poets with whose images he decorated the socles of his Last Judgement in the Duomo at Orvieto; he portrayed him as a handsome youth, with a crown of oak in his luxuriant locks; a trace of vanity in the poet's lips as he reads his manuscript is as individual as beside him the ironic man-of-the-world expression of Horace and the excited ecstasy of Vergil. In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century France, it was bitterly debated for generations whether Vergil or

[3] Warburg 1905; cf. Warburg's retrospective of 1922. See, also, on the whole topic, Saxl 1922: 220 ff.

Lucan deserved the precedence; calmer judges protested at least against the misuse of Vergil's greatness to belittle Lucan. In antiquity, the epic left incomplete by the youthful poet at his death at once made a powerful impression, which persisted in the following age: Martial attests the huge success at the booksellers' enjoyed in his day by the *Pharsalia*. Interest in the work remained lively throughout the centuries of late antiquity, nor were commentaries lacking. The role of Lucan's poem throughout the Middle Ages is most eloquently attested by the great number of surviving manuscripts with their sometimes very different versions of the text. Ludwig Traube, at *Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen* ii. 154, has observed that at the beginning of the Middle Ages Lucan was second in popularity only to Vergil.[4] In the Renaissance, therefore, the *Pharsalia* did not need to be exhumed like so many works of Roman literature; but we know that even those venerable witnesses of antiquity that have always remained above ground, like the bronze equestrian statue then supposed to be of Constantine and the giant *cavalli marmorei*, the *opus Praxitelis*, and *opus Fidiae*, often had to change places, not just spatially, but also in the evaluation of the generations that beheld them. The Middle Ages may have been powerfully impressed, at the level of individual passages, by the wealth of *sententiae* and brilliant pointed expression, but overall by the lustre around anything that related to the fortunes of Caesar, the original of all imperial power on earth, and above all by the massive uncanny element in the poem, infernal ghosts, grisly omens, frantic apparitions by night. But, from the Trecento it is the component of pathos in Lucan's work that seems to have had as much or even more effect, at least in Italy. We shall encounter examples of this in due course. One would like to think there was evidence for Lucan in this role to be found in the comment made on Dante's lines in the poets' parade by Benvenuto Rambaldi da Imola, 'unquestionably the most important and outstanding Dante commentator of the fourteenth century':

> Quegli è Omero, poeta sovrano;
> l'altro è Orazio satiro, che viene;
> Ovidio è il terzo, e l'ultimo Lucano.
>
> (*Inf.* IV. 88–90)

[4] Franke 1911: ii. 154. See, also, Sandys 1906: i. 641.

'Accepit Dantes tres insignes poetas Latinos in triplici stilo, Horatium in satira, Ovidium in comedia, Lucanum in tragedia' [Dante approved three Latin poets, illustrious in three styles, Horace in satire, Ovid in comedy, and Lucan in tragedy].[5]

It would be too incautious to seek here a profound stylistic conception of *tragedia* or the *tragicum* such as Dante himself, apart from a brief reference in the letter dedicating the *Paradiso* to Cangrande della Scala, provides at length in *De vulgari eloquentia*, bk 2, ch. 4. There we read, for example: 'et iste quem tragicum appellamus summus videtur esse stilorum, illa quae summe canenda distinximus, isto solo sunt stilo canenda: videlicet Salus, Amor et Virtus et quae propter ea concipimus, dum nullo accidente vilescant' [And if that which we call tragic is seen to be the highest of styles, those things we have singled out to be sung in the highest way, ought to be sung in that style alone—namely, Salvation, Love and Virtue and whatever we conceive on account of these, provided they not be cheapened by any accident]. In this work, in which a new approach to language and style are expressed so powerfully as a programme, Dante very clearly characterizes the *tragicum* as the only appropriate mode of expression for the sublime. Certainly, he too, like his commentator, saw in Lucan an outstanding exponent of this very *tragicum*. *Virtus*, one of the three subjects for which he demands this style, is after all, the main topic in the most important parts of the *Pharsalia*. But, Benvenuto da Imola's words, 'Horatium in satira, Ovidium in comedia, Lucanum in tragedia', must not be taken as evidence for a stylistic evaluation of Lucan or indeed for any spontaneous verdict on him: they merely perpetuate a school classification already attested at the beginning of the twelfth century and possibly older: Honorius Augustodunensis knows of four castles in the city of Grammatica: Tragedy, Comedy, Satire, and Ode; in the castle of Tragedy the castellan is Lucan.[6] The poet's effect on the new poetry of the great Trecento Florentines as an exponent of the sublime and mediator of a peculiarly ancient pathos will be illustrated later with a few examples; but we must first seek to acquire a certain conception of this Roman epic poet's individuality. That

[5] Scartazzini 1892: 472. [6] Creizenach 1864: 28.

could be done far more impressively if I were at liberty to present you directly with longish extracts from the poem and analyse them; as it is we shall seek an admittedly very imperfect substitute in the description of some essential characteristics.

The history of Roman heroic epic shows, shows indeed with paradigmatic clarity, the passage of an art from the archaic to the classical and then beyond it to the post-classical, the anti-classical, if one will, the baroque. The *Annales* of Ennius, the first work in Latin hexameters, stands at the beginning of all monumental Roman poetry. Down to the end of the Republican period, for a century and a half of blisteringly rapid literary development, it remained one of the nation's proudest possessions, the model for creative writers (its traces may be found in the most varied genres, the satires of Lucilius, the didactic poem of Lucretius, the 'epyllion' of Catullus) and the lasting delight of connoisseurs. The remnants still exert a powerful charm on us; this spell resides not least in a peculiar archaic weight and density. The better-trained eye, to be sure, can discern, over and above what is in a sense primitive, the refinement of Hellenistic art, but these two elements are not, or at least not often, in conflict: the powerful feeling for life of the still youthfully receptive Italian, the proud certainty of the representative of a victorious generation, hold the whole together. Far closer to us than the refined literary circle of the imperial period, despite his here and there somewhat barbarous technique, is the contemporary of the great Scipio Africanus, the conquest-happy *vates* from the small town in Southern Italy, and if we but tone down a little the all too contemptuous belittling of Lucan, explicable in the light of sixteenth-century quarrels, we shall full-heartedly concur with the passionate outburst of Joseph Scaliger:[7] 'Ennius poeta antiquus magnifico ingenio. Utinam hunc haberemus integrum et amisissemus Lucanum, Statium, Silium Italicum et tous ces garçons-là' [Ennius is an ancient poet of magnificent talent. If only we had his entire work and had lost Lucan, Statius, Silius Italicus and all those guys]. But the loss of Ennius, nay the inevitability of that loss, was brought about above all by the poet who replaced the archaic epic by the classical—namely, Vergil, and

[7] Cf. Bernays 1855: 282.

next to him by the theoretical outlook of his literary companions, the finest of whom was Horace.

The *Aeneid* was welcomed enthusiastically as soon as portions of it first became known, its completion awaited with suspense. When shortly after the poet's death the entire work appeared, the conviction prevailed in contemporary consciousness, at once and despite the malevolent polemic of a few *literati* almost without a struggle, that the longed-for Roman national epic now existed. It seems to belong with a work's being judged a classic that it can be set against older productions in the same genre that now appear to be mere preliminary stages and therefore no longer satisfy the new demands. Within Graeco-Roman literature theoretical awareness must first have accompanied this process in respect of oratory: Demosthenes (and similarly Cicero later on) was established as the classical peak, compared with which Lysias and other previous orators were reduced to the level of the primitive and pre-classical. If certain circles would later seek models precisely in these pre-classics, it was only the general recognition of the classical that made this turning away from it possible, rather in the way that, in the last century, weary of the High Renaissance, people set the pre-Raphaelites on the throne. Vergil's discharge of the epic poet's task seemed to an insistently demanding generation no longer a step on the way to the goal, but definitive in content and in form. With that, Ennius' fate was sealed. Certainly the gentle Vergil, in all his *pietas*, had been far from wishing to cast into oblivion the work of the revered forebear of his art. He ranks himself with particular affection amongst the old master's followers, not only in numerous individual motifs and expressions in the *Georgics* and above all the *Aeneid*, but also in the adoption as a whole of crucial products of his inventiveness. In one of his most gripping overall descriptions, the outbreak of war in Book 7 of the *Aeneid*, he deliberately, as Eduard Norden has shown,[8] allows Ennius' framework to be glimpsed throughout; indeed, the grand overall conception is as much Ennius' own as the poetically most fruitful moments of the action. But that has no significance for the outcome; Ariosto superseded Boiardo, and Vergil Ennius. From now on it is the

[8] As a note in *Kl. Beit.* points out, Fraenkel later resiled from this position. See *JRS* 35 (1945), 12–14; repr. *Kl. Beit.*, ii. 165–71.

Aeneid that is *the* Roman epic, its influence extends far beyond the purely literary, it helps win adherents for Rome's language and literature in the provinces and spreads the idea of empire and monarchy.[9] When under Nero the highly gifted and immeasurably ambitious Lucan, in his early 20s, after numerous other literary productions that manifested his precocity, decided to grasp for an ancient poet's supreme crown and create a great heroic epic, not on a Greek topic like his Trojan epic, his underworld poem, his tragedies, his Orpheus—peripheral stuff that did not raise one much above the host of *Graeculi* and the many poetic dilettanti of Rome—but from the central point of Roman history, he no longer needed to compete with Ennius' Roman *Annales*: at most they were read by the odd reactionary *antiquarius*, but the *Aeneid* had reigned brilliantly and with acclaim for nearly three generations; it was that poem beside which the new work must take its place, that it must seek if possible to trump, if it was not to forfeit all reputation from the outset. The very choice of subject was a bold stroke. Vergil's was the good *pius Aeneas*, the ancestor, not the founder, of Rome in the mists of antiquity, *Odyssey*-like and Argonaut-like adventures, small archaically straightforward struggles with impoverished peoples in the narrowly circumscribed space of a coastal stretch of Latium: all well and good, but how remote, how tiny, how little it affected the living generation for all those exalted prophecies, visions of the future, and evocative allusions! How different the mighty historical catastrophe that had brought about the condition in which people still found themselves, the whole *oikoumene* in turmoil, ever new theatres of war, numerous minor players in the great struggle, in the centre Fortune's gladiators, the warrior-pair Caesar and Pompey, the one a truly exceptional phenomenon, the other at least elevated by something of a tradition to a worthy opponent. The objection that these events, lying only a few generations back, might be all too close and too technical in presentation, that the breath of myth without which a genuine epic cannot exist must needs be lacking, will hardly have alarmed Lucan, partly because his own time was far more remote from the horror of the Civil War than the purely temporal distance might suggest, owing to the completely altered condition of the

[9] Cf. Dessau 1924: i. 508–9.

world at peace and to a monarchy that seemed established for eternity, but above all because he felt himself able to dispel the dangers of an all too familiar this-wordliness: in his burning and boundlessly ranging imagination the last struggle for power in the Roman state appeared to be nothing other than a universal storm, a cosmic eruption of gigantic dimensions. That Lucan chose his subject because he was confident it would have a new and surprising effect, because he was attracted by its immensity and its power to inspire, and because he hoped to give an especial proof of his talent in overcoming the difficulties that it threatened to cause him, cannot properly be doubted in view of the young man's whole nature, as stamped on his poem and as preserved in the few reliable data of the biographical tradition. Classical scholars often suppose that the youthful poet wished to release in his epic an overwhelming enthusiasm for the Republican cause; Gundolf, that sure judge of Lucan in all his aspects, is far sounder in giving the predominantly artistic impulse its due. To be sure, Lucan will have stood close to the circles that in Nero's time propagated republican ideals, with greater or lesser seriousness—we know how easily in such matters snobbery or an irresponsible romantic sentimentality intrudes—and increasing alienation from the ruler may have played a considerable part in the fact that, in contrast to the first three books (which alone Lucan published himself) and especially the positively repulsive outlook expressed in the hymn to Nero in the proem of the whole work, thereafter the tone directed at Caesar and the monarchy became ever more biting, the glorification of Pompey and the other so-called heroes of freedom ever more unbounded. In Book 5 (ll. 381 ff.), Lucan says of Caesar:

> Ipse petit trepidam tutus sine milite Romam
> iam doctam servire togae: populoque precanti
> scilicet indulgens summo dictator honori
> contigit et laetos fecit se consule fastos.
> namque omnes voces, per quas iam tempore tanto
> mentimur dominis, haec primum repperit aetas,
> qua sibi ne ferri ius ullum Caesar abesset
> Ausonias voluit gladiis miscere secures.

[Safe without his troops, himself he heads for trembling Rome, | which now had learnt to serve the garb of peace. Giving in, of course, | to the

people's prayer, he honoured the highest office as dictator, | and by his consulship made the calendar rejoice. | And, indeed, all those expressions with which for so long now | we have lied to our masters were invented by that age, | when Caesar, to preserve every right to wield the sword, | wanted to combine Ausonian axes with his blades].

But, more than to personal experiences and growing political passion, the sharpening of this opposition will have been due to the necessities of poetic composition. In order to execute his plan at all, Lucan needed an ever sharper contrast between the monarchical and the republican principles; even so, it was hard enough to create something of a counterpoise to the thrusting Caesar in the yielding Pompey. Ever more violent exaggeration, a constant seeking after 'superlative pathos formulae', is in any case one of the most essential marks of this tendency. In this respect, the whole work is symbolized in the opening lines:

> Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos
> iusque datum sceleri canimus.

[Of wars across Emathian plains, worse than civil wars, | and of legality conferred on crime we sing.]

This poet cannot be satisfied with the positive degree *bella civilia* [civil wars], even in the plural; the comparative appears almost by necessity. This also determines his attitude to Vergil, from which this discussion began. Lucan frequently reminds his reader of Vergil, on purpose, just as by adopting Ennian coinages Vergil often alludes to his great and revered predecessor. But, the difference in manner and outlook is significant. In Vergil, as is well known, there occur almost unaltered quotations from the older poet, as for example in book 6 of the *Aeneid:* 'unus qui nobis cunctando restituis rem' [you, who are the one man who saves our state by delaying] or very slight adaptations like 'tuque o Thybri tuo genitor cum flumine sancto' [and you, father Tiber, with your sacred stream] in place of Ennius' 'teque, pater Tiberine tuo cum flumine sancto' [and you, father Tiber, with your sacred stream]. Such things are obviously meant as straightforward homage to the predecessor. That attitude is alien to Lucan. On the other hand, he is a true ancient poet in not scorning ready-made material in a kind of quest for originality unknown in antiquity; as all

Greek epic poets sometimes go back to the founding father of their genre, so Lucan often goes back to the Roman Homer, the poet of the *Aeneid*, here, in extended verbal correspondence, 'non subripiendi causa sed palam mutuandi, hoc animo ut vellet agnosci' [not to steal, but borrow openly, with the intention to be noticed], as Ovid expressed the motive for his borrowings from Vergil. But, Lucan does not wish, as Vergil often does in respect of Ennius or Horace or Lucilius, to give his model a classical expression, to make it more polished in its language, more euphonious in its rhythm, he wishes to exceed the classic in sudden passion. It is not enough for him to lead a willing and beauty-loving reader with him, he has in mind the indifferent and blasé reader, whom he whips forward, startles, and shocks, causes to shudder, puzzles with riddling expressions that will be explained only in the later course of the poem—in short, he attacks his understanding and imagination with all the means of refined arts. Yet it would be completely misguided to see in all that a cold-blooded calculation. Even Lucan, the student of rhetoric (whose powerful influence on him we in no way deny, but whose mere mention we do not, in contrast with prevailing opinion, believe to say anything significant about his imagination and the true basis of his writing), even Lucan, in whom rhetorical effects have become flesh and blood, writes as he must, and what makes him an artist who at times can still astonish us, is probably not what he could learn in the schoolroom. He does not consciously seek out the extreme, rather he lives and thinks in the extreme, it is his intellectual form. When he can be compared with Vergil, his words and verses have the effects of pure superlative beside the moderation of the great Mantuan's work. How unconsciously and as it were automatically this exaggeration of the classical within this new stylistic outlook is realized, is shown in miniature by a delightful example. In the portrayal of the battle of Actium, on Aeneas' miraculous shield all the gods and demons of war and strife take part in the struggle (*Aen.* 8. 700–3):

> saevit medio in certamine Mavors
> caelatus ferro tristesque ex aethere Dirae;
> et scissa gaudens vadit Discordia palla,
> quam cum sanguineo sequitur Bellona flagello.

[Mars rages in the middle of battle | cast in iron and the grim Furies from the sky; | and Discord strides rejoicing with her rent robe | whom Bellona follows with bloody scourge.]

Seneca, who has an especial love for Vergil and very often cites him, adduces this passage (particularly famous, of course, because of the battle's importance) in Book 2 of *De ira* (2. 35. 6). He states that we must imagine Ira, the goddess of wrath, as a dark horror; there follows a detailed portrait, then Seneca continues: 'vel si videtur, sit qualis aput vates nostros

> sanguineum quatiens dextra Bellona flagellum
> aut scissa gaudens vadit Discordia palla.'

[Or, if you like, let it be such as we find in our poets: Bellona shaking her bloody scourge in her right hand | or Discord strides rejoicing with her rent robe.]

Seneca's chief model for his Ira was Bellona, which is why in his memory she emerged from Vergil's subordinate clause, where she featured only as a companion of Discordia, to be a figure in her own right taking precedence of the other goddess. This breaks up the structure of Vergil's line; Seneca, himself a poet, effortlessly reconstitutes it, but in the process the expression is noticeably strengthened: in the classicism of the *Aeneid* Bellona is given the bloody scourge simply as an attribute: 'quam cum sanguineo sequitur Bellona flagello' [whom Bellona follows with bloody scourge]; this casual and unspecific association now becomes a precisely conceived and emotive movement: the goddess brandishes the bloody scourge in her right hand as it whistles through the air: 'sanguineum quatiens dextra Bellona flagellum' [Bellona shaking her bloody scourge in her right hand].

For Lucan's spiritual formation as for his glittering career, his intimate relation with that great man his uncle Seneca was decisive: his intellectual dependence is perceptible all over, not only in his extensive borrowing of recondite knowledge, especially from the philosopher's writings on natural science, but also in his stylistic imitation, not confined to the tragedies even though it is naturally of particular prominence in relation to them. The uncle's brilliant creations meshed powerfully with Lucan's feeling for language and style; where he can, he adopts them and frequently takes them

further. The intensification of Vergil's line in *De ira* made an impression on the young poet: he will have copied it out, so that later he could at a suitable opportunity introduce the comparison not in Vergil's phrasing but in Seneca's recasting of it (7. 568): 'sanguineum veluti quatiens Bellona flagellum' [Like Bellona shaking her bloody scourge]. Elsewhere, too, he often looks for uncontrolled movement. Even in the strongest pathos Vergil remains moderate. With a sure hand he depicts in Book 6 the ecstasy of the prophetess, but how calmly he lists the symptoms (46–51):

> cui talia fanti
> ante fores subito non voltus, non color unus,
> non comptae mansere comae; sed pectus anhelum
> et rabie fera corda tument, maiorque videri
> nec mortale sonans, adflata est numine quando
> iam propiore dei.

[And speaking, | There by the threshold, her features, her colour were all at once | Different, her hair flew wildly about; her breast was heaving, | Her fey heart swelled in ecstasy; larger than life she seemed, | More than mortal her utterance; the god was close and breathing | His inspiration through her.] And later on (77–80):

> at Phoebi nondum patiens immanis in antro
> bacchatur vates, magnum si pectore possit
> excussisse deum: tanto magis ille fatigat
> os rabidum, fera corda domans, fingitque premendo.

[But the Sibyl, not yet submissive to Phoebus, there in her cavern | Prodigiously struggled, still trying to shake from her brain the powerful | God who rode her; but all the more he exhausted her foaming | Mouth and mastered her wild heart, breaking her in with a firm hand.]

Lucan has this scene in view when depicting Appius' interrogation of the Pythia. The prophetess recoils from the god's presence, and at first seeks to deceive the questioner with a fictitious oracle, Appius unmasks her, she takes refuge at the tripod:

> tandemque potitus
> pectore Cirrhaeo non umquam plenior artus
> Phoebados irrupit Paean; mentemque priorem
> expulit atque hominem toto sibi cedere iussit

pectore. bacchatur demens aliena per antrum
corda ferens, vittasque dei Phoebeaque serta
erectis discussa comis per inania templi
ancipiti cervice rotat, spargitque vaganti
obstantis tripodas, magnoque exaestuat igni,
iratum te, Phoebe, ferens.

(5. 165–74)

[And at last Paean | mastered her Cirrhaean breast and never more completely | invaded her priestess' frame, drove out her former mind, | and told the mortal part to leave her breast to him | entirely. Mad, she runs wild through the cave with frenzied heart, | and dislodging with her bristling hair the headbands of the god | and Phoebus' garlands, she whirls them with her tossing head | through the temple's empty spaces, scatters the tripods | in her wandering way, and boils with a mighty fire, | suffering your anger, Phoebus.]

The heightening of movement is clear straight away, as it is that the mental disturbance, utterly unlike that in Vergil, has an external effect, occupies space, seizes hold of everything around it, and with literally explosive power flings it far away. But not only here, where the theme might have made it particularly attractive, is such tempestuous raging to be found. Even sections of the poem that in themselves have a static character are gripped by the same restless movement. This may be seen clearly, for example, when the pervasive activity unfolding within a geographical description of the rivers in Thessaly (6. 361–80) is compared with the representation of similar scenic depictions in Vergil.

Significant, too, is the manner in which Lucan treats a particularly venerable prop of epic battle scenes. In Book 16 of the *Iliad*, there is a powerful description of Ajax under a mighty hail of missiles nevertheless standing firm. Ennius imitated these verses in his powerful and individual way; then Vergil in Book 9 of the *Aeneid* skilfully varied the Ennian passage with far-reaching verbal echoes already noticed in antiquity, finally Lucan put Scaeva, a Caesarian centurion, in the same situation. However, he limited himself to adopting a few Vergilian expressions and utterly dispensed with the many lively details that both Homer and the two older Roman epic poets had added. Instead he concludes his description of the hero's straits with a tremendous paradox very much in his spirit:

nec quidquam nudis vitalibus obstat
iam praeter stantis in summis ossibus hastas.

(6.195–6)

[And nothing now protects his naked vitals | except the spears sticking fast in the surface of his bones.]

Speaking of baroque art in Lucan is to some extent justified even by the breaking up of the prolonged classical line and its replacement by short, independent units in vigorous motion, which is one of the chief marks of his art. The very first lines of the poem make that perfectly clear. Anyone who has read Vergil's *Aeneid* will remember the splendid initial period 'arma virumque cano', which by virtue of the well-crafted structuring of a series of participial constructions and adjectival and adverbial clauses fills seven whole hexameters in one long breath. Lucan is quite different. His first sentence too comprises exactly seven hexameters, an obvious reference to the *Aeneid*, but of periodic structure there is no trace, not a single subordinate clause, only one participial ablative absolute, simply individual phrases one after the other. Such a sentence is to Vergil as a prose section of Seneca the philosopher to Cicero. Fronto, the teacher and correspondent of the emperor Marcus, in accordance with the widespread fashion of his time an enthusiastic admirer of the archaic, and a pretty unbearable pedant as well, makes fun of this proem of Lucan's, which he analyses with perfect accuracy: 'At the beginning of the poem', he says, 'in the first seven verses Lucan gives us nothing but an exposition of "Bella plus quam civilia" [Wars worse than civil (wars)]. Just count the clauses in which he says the same thing! "iusque datum sceleri" [and legality conferred on crime]: clause no. 1. "In sua victrici conversum viscera" [attacking its own guts with victorious sword-hand], no. 2, "cognatasque acies" [and kin facing kin], that is the third, and so on'. He could, Fronto concludes by asserting, have continued in this fashion at will for a good long time. For the concentrated power of this introduction and the waves of images that irrestistibly sweep the imagination along with them he naturally has no more feeling than any admirer of the primitive for the high baroque.

Bella per Emathios plus quam civilia campos
iusque datum sceleri canimus, populumque potentem
in sua victrici conversum viscera dextra,
cognatasque acies, et rupto foedere regni

certatum totis concussi viribus orbis
in commune nefas, infestisque obvia signis
signa, pares aquilas, et pila minantia pilis.

[Of wars across Emathian plains, worse than civil wars, | and of legality conferred on crime we sing, and of a mighty people | attacking its own guts with victorious sword-hand, | of kin facing kin, and once the pact of tyranny was broken, | of conflict waged with all the forces of the shaken world | for universal guilt, and of standards ranged in enmity against | standards, of eagles matched and javelins threatening javelins.]

Particularly, admiration is due to the end of this sequence, in which the clash of masses in motion is fully expressed in short phrases full of repeated sounds. Overall, the power of concentrating whole series of thought in a few heavily laden words allows Lucan to achieve utterly incomparable effects. Here too we can see how little is achieved by classification under the heading of rhetoric. Certainly, school exercises considerably enhanced Lucan's capacity to make his *dicta* pointed to the ultimate degree and express them as concisely as possible; the reminiscences of the elder Seneca show us what the profession demanded and achieved in this respect. But neither is there any mistaking how these devices help him to emphasize an inherent value of the truest Roman speech, whether in verse or in prose. Monumentally chary of words, Italic, and therefore Latin had always especially favoured the style that we call lapidary. The greatest masters of Roman discourse, from the unknown poets of the oldest elegies on the Scipios through Naevius, Plautus, and Ennius down to Tacitus, always knew just how to play that instrument perfectly. How deep the Latinization of Spain reached is manifest from the fact that the artists who came from the Iberian peninsula—Seneca, Lucan, and later Martial—always manipulate the language in accordance with its most intimate qualities and without doing it any violence (in this the difference between Seneca and Tacitus is significant); it is as if the genius of *Latinitas* had helped beget their works. Lucan owes a good part of his fame to his powerfully condensed concluding clauses and *sententiae*; that is already clear in the Middle Ages, but even in the nineteenth century, even when the poem had ceased to be read for a while, people still at least knew *sententiae* such as: 'victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni' [The conquering cause pleased the gods, but the conquered pleased Cato]. It is just such short cola that are eminently bearers of Lucan's pathos; the narrow

space available for expression not only sharpens the conceptual part, but at the same time gives intensity to the impact of his poetic imagination. Of this, too, we must be content with a few examples.

In Book 4, Lucan relates, in an episode that made a powerful impression on Dante, the wrestling contest between Hercules and the giant Antaeus. This monster notoriously gained renewed strength the moment his body touched his mother the Earth. Hard pressed by his opponent, he deliberately lets himself fall to the ground; finally Hercules observes the connection and says to the giant:

> 'Standum est tibi' dixit 'et ultra
> non credere solo sternique vetabere terra,
> haerebis pressis intra mea pectora membris,
> huc, Antaee, cades.' Sic fatus sustulit alte
> nitentem in terras iuvenem.
>
> (4. 646–50)

['You must stand, no more are you trusted | to the soil, you will be forbidden to lie prostrate on the earth. | You will stick with limbs crushed within my embrace: | so far only, Antaeus, shall you fall.' So speaking he raised aloft | the youth as he struggled for the Earth.] Obviously it is a grim jest when Hercules, scornful of his opponent's trick, closes his short speech with the words: 'huc, Antaee, cades' [so far only, Antaeus, shall you fall], but the few syllables of this sentence also conceal power and a surprising vividness. Paradoxes such are also found in Seneca but in smaller numbers are frequent: 'arma tenenti | omnia dat, qui iusta negat' (1. 348) [He who denies the armed man his due, gives him everything].

However, it would be wrong to suppose such things completely absent from classical epic. When at the end of a speech we encounter such a verse as this: 'una salus victis nullam sperare salutem' [Losers have one salvation—to give up all hope of salvation] it may strike us as bearing the authentic stamp of Lucan; but it comes from the *Aeneid*.

The starting-point at the end of a paragraph often serves Lucan to heighten the heroic pathos. Cato's army is marching through the African desert, near to exhaustion. A skimpy trickle becomes visible in the sand, a soldier collects the few drops of water in his helmet and hands it to Cato. The others stand by with dry throats, envying the commander. He speaks:

> Mene, inquit, degener unum
> miles in hac turba vacuom virtute putasti!
> usque adeo mollis primisque caloribus impar
> sum visus? quanto poena tu dignior ista es,
> qui populo sitiente bibas. sic concitus ira
> excussit galeam suffecitque omnibus unda.
>
> (9. 505 ff.)

[He said: Degenerate soldier, did you consider | me the only one in this multitude devoid of heroism? | Did I seem so soft and so unequal to the first | heat? How much more do you deserve that punishment, | to drink while the people thirst? Roused by anger so, | he knocked the helmet down, and there was water enough for all].
Here everything is in the last three words: 'suffecitque omnibus unda' [and there was water enough for all].

When Pompey, fleeing after the rout, sees his wife again, he reproaches her for her excessive grief. At the end of his speech he says:

> Tu nulla tulisti
> bello damna meo: vivit post proelia Magnus,
> sed fortuna perit; quod defles, illud amasti.
>
> (8. 83–5)

[No losses have you | suffered from my war: Magnus lives on after the battles; it is | his fortune which has perished. Your tears are for the thing you loved.]

Even from the well-known 'you are carrying Caesar and his Fortune' Lucan extracts a startling expression. In a longish speech, Caesar encourages the skipper who in a violent storm must carry him in a small boat across the Adriatic. He ends by saying:

> Quid tanta strage paretur,
> ignoras; quaerit pelagi caelique tumultu,
> quod praestet Fortuna mihi.
>
> (5.591–3)

[You do not know what is made ready | in such vast destruction: by turmoil of the sea and sky, | Fortune seeks to favour me.]

Often enough Lucan's expression rises above the ingenious to genuine pathos and heroic greatness. When Pompey is defeated at Pharsalus, the poet, in accordance with his general taste for

intervening amidst his characters and events with his own passionate partisanship, addresses him as follows:

> Non impare voltu
> aspicis Emathiam, nec te videre superbum
> prospera bellorum nec fractum adversa videbunt;
> quamque fuit laeto per tres infida triumphos
> tam misero Fortuna minor. iam pondere fati
> deposito securus abis.
>
> (7. 682 ff.)

[With unchanged face | you gaze upon Emathia: success in war never | saw you proud, adversity will never see you broken; | as far beneath him as faithless Fortune was in his happy days of three triumphs, | so is she in his days of misery. Now you have put away the weight | of destiny, and you depart, free from care.]

It is no injustice of history that a poet who accompanies his hero's catastrophic failure with a *sententia* like that should be one of those called upon to give future centuries an inkling of the monumentality of the ancient mind.

From time to time even a single attribute may be heavy with majestic dignity. At the height of the Middle Ages the seals of the German emperors bore the circumscription later appropriated by the tribune Cola di Rienzo: 'Roma caput mundi regit orbis frena rotundi' [Rome capital of the world, holds the reins of the round orb]. The happy coinage 'Roma caput mundi' [Rome capital of the world], which had such an important future before it, is Lucan's.[10] To be sure, Livy and Ovid had already called the capital of the Imperium *caput rerum* and *caput orbis* or *orbis terrarum* before him, but *caput mundi* is incomparably bolder, for in *mundus* the Roman heard, not the same as when we speak of the Old and the New World or even of a world company, but, in accordance with the original meaning of this calque on *kosmos*, the entire universe. It fits the poet who exaggerates the Civil War to a cosmic catastrophe to give Rome such a title. Similarly effective and at the same time very bold is his description of Cato (2. 242–3): 'omnibus expulsae terris olimque fugatae | virtutis iam sola fides' [Of Virtue long ago

[10] At 2. 655, cf. also 2. 136. Other material at *TLL* iii. 426. 32, where add Sidon. *carm.* 2. 438.

expelled and banished from all lands | you are now the sole support]. The Latin is far more expressive than any translation: Cato's existence has the effect that one may still believe in something like *virtus*. Tacitus relished the adventurous expression, which he imitates in calling Titus 'praecipua concordiae fides' [principal support of concord].

But, perhaps I have already dwelt too long on the description of individual traits. I could not see how otherwise I could convey a reasonably vivid idea of the poet's nature; and the home of the art historian seemed the appropriate place, if anywhere did, to enter in some detail into questions of style and its history. But, it is time now to devote attention, at least briefly, to the content.

I do not need to speak in general about the *Pharsalia*'s overall character, the poet's basic outlook, and the fantastic and lurid light in which he casts the Civil War, far exceeding his chief source Livy in Pompeian partisanship; I might merely weaken the impression that most of you will have received from the presentation of these matters, as brilliant as it is faithful, in Gundolf's book on Caesar. I shall repeat a few sentences from it, since they lead directly into our chief topic.

> Caesar by the dark Rubicon weighing the well-being of the world against his fortune, the defiant commander as the suitor of his soldiers, Caesar and Amyclas in the storm at sea, the most anxious and care-ridden night in the camp at Pharsalus, the victor's tears over Pompey's head, and Cleopatra's feast of pleasure and wisdom . . . all that remains, glowering and concentrated, in the imagination and has, like the genuine motifs of myth, been constantly renewed in genuine poets' souls . . . The antithesis between Pompey, crowned with fame and heavy with dignity, who bears up law and custom, antiquity and freedom, and the violent criminal, whose power comes only from his genius, his fortune, his army, and the demonic power of guilt itself, was first drawn by Lucan. The antithesis between Caesar and Cato, formulated by Sallust, was staged and orchestrated by Lucan. To be sure he blows up and exaggerates his outlines to the point of caricature, with that very rage of the expressive artist which was taken for partisan fury. But sombre fate—the hubris and nemesis of Rome—he felt and proclaimed, self-indulgently to be sure, but nevertheless as genuinely and deeply as no other Roman poet. There is in him, not an epic of pure action nor any mythical figures, but the pathos of peoples' tragedy, the wind of fate blowing over the gigantic fatal landscape, quivers in his raging cataracts of verse, the

Napoleonic shiver of Caesar's march though the world . . . It is above all through these atmospheric values that Lucan attracted later readers . . . He was the herald of Pharsalian pathos. His effect lay rather in this pathos of ruin than in his republicanism.[11]

I did not come across these sentences of Gundolf's till long after the theme of my lecture had been formulated. It was a happy discovery that the connoisseur of world literature found Lucan's most significant power and effect precisely where even on a far narrower consideration of the individual poet the essential appeared to lie.

Among the traits that give the whole poem on the Civil War its peculiar character, one in particular, as was inevitable, has aroused critics' attention: the complete lack of any mythological apparatus, of divine assemblies, missions of divine messengers, sudden appearances of the Olympians to the solitary hero, and so on. That Lucan should dare to dispense entirely with this venerable prop of epic poetry demonstrates the twenty-year-old's astonishing courage and self-confidence. Certainly his decision was not primarily due to religious or philosophical inhibitions. The divine world of Homer had gradually become tedious. By contrast, occasionally to introduce, in solemn obscurity and semi-scientific words, the governance of the all-pervasive Stoic world Logos and the relevant natural philosophy (occasionally even Epicurean doctrines are adopted word for word) that surely made a far stronger impression on an educated audience. Playful allusions, made with neither conviction nor respect, not to science, but to the findings of physics, geography, zoology, and so forth permeate the whole poem in a manner previously unheard of for epic and demonstrate how much the society that engenders this work and is to enjoy it is already in decay. The pompous adoption of articles from the Stoic creed means at bottom very little, for Lucan's and his readers' intoxication by those exalted noises is no greater than that by the wildest hocus-pocus of demons and delusions of witchcraft. The twitching of subterranean powers is part of the great world convulsion that the poet describes. Ample room is afforded to this ghostly activity by Book 6, which prepares for the battle of Pharsalus. First the guild of Thessalian sorceresses with their manifold arts of conjuring, but it serves as a mere foil to the character who occupies centre stage for a while, the superwitch Erichtho. She deals only with corpses, ready-made or freshly killed by herself; they are subjected to grisly

[11] Gundolf 1925: 35–6.

procedures as the magic rituals demand. When Pompey's son wishes to learn about the future from her, after long preparations she revives for a few moments a Pompeian soldier who has just been killed in the preliminary skirmishes and compels him to prophesy things to come for the son of his commander. All that the poem relates in great detail, starkly, even revoltingly, but in a grand manner. Such things are completely unclassical even in outlook, but this section contains more spontaneous artistry and genuine imagination than the everlasting variations on Homer's divine apparatus in poets before and after Lucan. That the young poet said to himself 'nolo superos, Acheronta movebo' [I do not wish to move heaven, but hell] was one of his happiest thoughts. He may have been confirmed in it by his uncle's example. Ranke in his essay on Seneca's tragedies[12] rightly emphasized that Seneca likes to bring to light the horrors of the underworld, the ruinous workings of secret forces. Lucan's own epic *Catachthonion* can have had nothing but an ancient *Inferno* for its content. By admitting ghosts to heroic epic Lucan introduced an element of authentic belief into poetry. Even if some minds, fully formed by Hellenic learning, still kept free of the mess, the continual spread of belief in ghosts and demons was unmistakable. As far back as the dying days of the Republic it appears that a *deisidaimonia* nurtured and invigorated by Oriental sources was making rapid progress. One of its great masters, who understood how to throw the necessary ingredients of pseudo-philosophical and scientific wisdom into the witches' cauldron of superstition, was the famous Nigidius Figulus. Lucan brings him on in Book 1 following a long passage on the *disciplina Etrusca*, which especially when treating the inspection of entrails is completely technical. After the haruspex, then, Nigidius appears and interprets the fearsome omens that have appeared in the heavens since Caesar crossed the Rubicon. Franz Boll analysed this passage in his *Sphaera*[13] and was able from Lucan's, as he says, not exactly precise rhetoric to recover the underlying astrological technicalities. He also recalled that the great Kepler had already studied these verses in detail.

[12] Ranke 1888: 71.
[13] Boll 1903: 362–3.

These hints must suffice. Let us now attempt to view the *Pharsalia* through Dante's eyes.[14] The Florentine had a great monument of ancient literature before him, easily available, distributed in numerous copies, richly provided with annotations through whose constantly changing mass one generation after the other sought to render the text comprehensible to contemporary understanding (we possess manuscript commentaries on Lucan in which Dante is cited). Here was narrative on a grand scale, with moralizing evaluation, history viewed just as they did, with the focus on venerable figures, models of greatness in rulers and commanders and of ancient Roman *virtus*, the whole an illustrious means 'a divenir del mondo esperto | e degli vizi umani e del valore' (*Inf.* 26. 97–8). Besides the heroic world, permeating it was the storm of the most catastrophic annihilation and every horror of infernal powers: Roman colossality and the gestures of empire without the measured strictness and clear-cut this-wordliness of the classical manner. In such a poet, there was much, whether familiar from close at hand or enticing from afar as an ideal, that must have appealed to the great spirit who stood between the ages, facing both forwards and backwards, always a seeker and preserver together. With the subject matter that Dante took from *Pharsalia*, we are not concerned here;[15] but we are concerned with passages where not merely an idea of Lucan's but the magic of his pathos can be shown to have been at work.

In the famous and happily now no longer contested dedication to Cangrande, Dante cites a series of passages from the Old Testament as evidence for the omnipresence of God. After four biblical quotations he continues: 'Quod etiam scriptura paganorum contestatur; unde Lucanus in nono: Iuppiter est quodcumque vides, quocumque moveris' [To which even the writings of pagans testify: whence Lucan in his ninth book: Jupiter is whatever you see, wherever you move]. For certain, the Christian Dante was gripped by the Stoic religious feeling of this passage (our ancient scholia cite Posidonius on it), but that the poet Dante kept the verse in memory must also be due to the marvellous pathos, with which the notion *οὐδὲν τούτων ὅτι μὴ Ζεύς* [there is none of these things that is not Zeus] is expressed here.

[14] Only after this lecture was in type did I come across Ussani 1917. This vigorous piece of epideictic oratory has other aims than mine: the first part discusses borrowings of subject matter, the second ventures on a bold comparison between the two poets. (Added on proof, Florence, Jan. 1926.)

[15] For example, at one point in *Inferno*, canto 9, he uses Erichtho to assist his plot by making her, soon after Vergil's death, conjure up his soul and send it down to the city of Dis.

The borrowing in Canto 24 of the *Inferno* is mainly concerned with subject matter. There the horrible mass of huge snakes in the *bolgia dei ladri* is described, closely following the detailed portrayal, strewn with names and zoological minutiae, that Lucan gives in Book 9 of the snakes of Libya.[16] Dante himself names his source in the next canto (25. 94):

> Taccia Lucano omai là dove tocca
> del misero Sabello e di Nassidio;
> e attenda a udir quel ch'or si scocca.

At least as great as Dante's receptiveness to the rich factual information is obviously his joy at the intoxicating abundance of resounding names for those fearsome creatures that Lucan placed at his disposal, ultimately from Hellenistic zoology. He positively revels in them (24. 85):

> Più non si vanti Libia con sua rena;
> chè se chelidri, iaculi e faree
> produce, e cencri con amfisibena.

When the text continues,

> nè tante *pestilenzie*, nè si ree
> mostrò giammai con tutta l'Etiopia,

we can see that Lucan's pathetic expression too had an immediate effect: he had described the snakes as 'Libycae pestes' [Libyan plagues].

Antaeus, too, Dante took from Lucan in the first instance for the sake of the subject matter: he could make good use of this figure in the circle of the giants next to Nimrod and Ephialtes. But, when he goes on to make Vergil say to him (*Inf.* 31. 115)

> O tu che nella fortunata valle
> che fece Scipion di gloria reda,
> quando Annibal co' suoi diede le spalle,
> recasti già mille leon per preda,

[O you who in that fortunate valley, which | made Scipio the heir of so much glory, | When Hannibal and his followers showed their backs, | Took more than a thousand lions for your prey]

[16] The relations between Dante and Lucan here have long since been noted in the commentaries. See detailed discussion in Ciafardini 1923: 223 ff.

he not only raises Lucan's 'epulas raptos habuisse leones' [he feasted on the captured lions] to the superlative degree, but above all takes over the pathetic link with the battle of Zama created by the fact that Antaeus' cave lies by the Bagradas, precisely on the site of that momentous event. Having recounted the giant's death, Lucan remarks that antiquity had called the place after this event,

> sed maiora dedit cognomina collibus istis
> Poenum qui Latiis revocavit ab arcibus hostem
> Scipio. nam sedes Libyca tellure potito
> haec fuit.
>
> (4. 656–9)

[But a greater name was given these hills | by Scipio, who recalled the Carthaginian enemy from the citadels | of Latium; for this was his position when he reached | the Libyan land.]

The fall of the Republic, seen in Lucan's mirror, gives even quite alien situations force and shattering power. After the angel of God has granted the repentant poet access to further atonement, the gate of Purgatory opens with an immense roar. That reminds Dante of the fearful noise that (as Lucan narrates) arose from the Tarpeian rock, when Caesar overcame the resistance of the tribune upholding the law, and broke open the state treasury (*Purg.* 9. 136 ff.).

Amongst the stirrers of discord in one of the lowest circles of hell dwells Curio, who had deserted Pompey for Caesar, bribed Dante supposes on the basis of Lucan's account. 'Venali lingua', says Book 1 of the *Pharsalia*; in the *Inferno* (28. 101) his tongue has been cut out. He eggs on the still hesitant Caesar into the Civil War: 'tolle moras; semper nocuit differre paratis' [End delay! Procrastination always harms the men prepared for action]. One of those magnificently compressed Lucanian *sententiae*. Dante felt the brilliance of the passage and took it over word for word, though he could not attain the conciseness of the original: 'affermando che il fornito | sempre con danno l'attender sofferse'.

But, far above minor characters like Curio and his peers, in dimensions and dignity stands Cato, a pagan but a saint, whereas the other figures in the *Aeneid* as in the *Pharsalia* remain in the realm of the secular. The hero's impressive march through the Libyan desert, which we have already encountered—allows the poet to

present a vivid idea of a region of hell and at the same time elevate it to the heroically grand.

> Lo spazzo era una rena arida e spessa,
> non d'altra foggia fatta che colei
> che fu da' piè di Caton già soppressa.
>
> (*Inf.* 14. 13)

[The ground was thickly covered with dry sand. | Not different in fashion from that which was | Trodden under the feet of Cato.]

But, this is no more than a rapid flash of light, a distant recollection of Cato. It is a quite different arena that the poet has prepared for his hero's contemporary manifestation. Like a mighty arch before the first canto of the *Purgatorio* there stands the proem in the ancient style with its majestic invocation of the Muses. Heavenly brightness, spreading out from the highest aether, permeates the breezes in the sacred hour of dawn on the earthly Easter Sunday. The poet's eyes are directed to four stars that encircle the pole in the southern hemisphere; the sky seems to rejoice at their wondrous brilliance. When the inspired viewer's gaze glides down, he sees near him a solitary venerable figure—Cato.

> Vidi presso di me un veglio solo,
> degno di tanta reverenza in vista,
> che più non dee a padre alcun figliuolo.
> Lunga la barba e di pel bianco mista
> portava, a' suoi capegli simigliante,
> de' quai cadeva al petto doppia lista.
> Li raggi delle quattro luci sante
> fregiavan sì la sua faccia di lume,
> ch'io 'l vedea come il sol fosse davante.
>
> (*Purg.* 1.31)

[I saw near me an old man, alone, | With looks deserving as much reverence | As ever any son owed to his father. | He wore his beard long and there were white strands | In it, like his hair which tumbled down | In two white bunches over his chest and shoulders. | The beams which came from those four holy lights | So played upon his face and lit it up | That I saw him as if he had been facing the sun.]

With the reverent fidelity that he believes himself to owe the testimonies of antiquity, Dante follows Lucan right down to the details of

physical appearance. In grief at the outbreak of the Civil War, Cato let his hair grow long and ceased to shave (2. 374–5): 'intonsos rigidam in frontem descendere canos | passus erat maestamque genis increscere barbam' [He had let his white hair fall unshorn on to his stern brow | and his mournful beard grow on his cheeks].
But, what matters for us even more, Dante found the model for his heightened expression of veneration in Lucan: 'degno di tanta reverenza in vista, | che più non dee a padre alcun figliuolo', for: 'ecce parens verus patriae, dignissimus aris, | Roma, tuis' [Look the real father of his country, most worthy of your altars, | Rome].

This Lucanian Cato is the stern guardian of the entrance to Purgatory, the honoured enforcer of God's will. Later he appears as the figure who with harsh rebukes recalls those who have become lazy in the task of atonement to their duty. Despite such elevation Dante does not neglect Cato's earthly life as portrayed by Lucan. Marcia, Cato's wife, was divorced by him after bearing him several children, and married the orator Hortensius. Hortensius died in 50 BC and Marcia now returned to Cato. Lucan combines the reconciliation with the beginning of the Civil War and gives Marcia a ringing speech. She does not, so she says, wish for the rights, only the name, of Cato's wife, let him help her ensure that after his death the question is not asked, 'mutarim primas expulsa an tradita taedas' [whether by divorce or by transferral I changed my first marriage]. In this fairly unemotional lecture, the poet of the *Divine Comedy* nevertheless was struck by the rhetorical and pathetic expression. In Book 4 of the *Convivio*, he gives a full translation and allegorical interpretation of the entire speech; the pointed disjunction just quoted becomes: 'che dopo me si dica che tu non mi scacciasti, ma di buono animo mi maritasti'. It will be seen that, within the prose of the *Convivio*, he strives with the help of rhyme to reproduce something of the effect imparted in Lucan by the concise antithetical participles. His rendering shows in any case that he was highly sensitive to the formal attraction of the speech. In the *Purgatorio*, the reminiscence of this scene is poetically ennobled. Vergil conjures Cato by his love for Marcia, who in countenance and gesture still begs him to take her as his own. Cato remembers his love warmly, but now this earthly concern lies beneath him, he is a spirit of a higher order.

It is through Lucan's eyes too that Dante sees into the deepest trait in Cato's human nature, his heroism in the service of freedom. Vergil informs Cato about the poet whom he accompanies (*Purg.* 1. 71–5):

> libertà va cercando, ch'è sì cara
> come sa chi per lei vita rifiuta.
> Tu il sai, che non ti fu per lei amara
> in Utica la morte, ove lasciasti
> la vesta che el gran dì sarà sì chiara.

[He looks for liberty. which is so loved. | As he knows who gives up his life for her. | You know this; that is why death was not bitter | To you in Utica, where you abandoned | That garment which will shine in the last day.]

Of the freedom that Dante went in search of Lucan had as little an idea as of his love, his reverence, his pride, and his pains. Every verse of the Cato scene at the foot of the Mountain of Purgatory is a thousand times weightier than anything the poet from Corduba could ever achieve. That the imagination of one of the greatest persons ever to have trodden this earth could take such powerful flight from Lucan's tone, language, rhetoric, and ethos would in itself suffice to ensure him the gratitude of posterity.

At this point we could break off, for so significant and so deep a mediation on Lucan's part we shall not encounter again. It would, however, be surrendering to an anti-historical hedonism if we stopped at the figure of Dante, all of a piece, in whom the force of an irresistible creative power makes everything that comes from outside enter the inner self, everything alien become something truly his own. We must not flinch from considering the less sovereign, in many ways dependent, writing that comes after him. We must listen to at least the greatest leader of the new age, for whom the minds of antiquity became powerful helpers in the miracle of the *reformatio*, the shaping anew of life in its entirety and the rebirth of the individual spirit.

Two sonnets of Petrarch's begin, in a manner we find surprising, with a brief summary of the same scene in Lucan. When Caesar landed in Egypt, he was brought the head of Pompey as a greeting gift from Ptolemy; he recognizes it and bursts into tears. Lucan insists that they were crocodile tears:

lacrimas non sponte cadentes
effudit gemitusque expressit pectore laeto,
non aliter manifesta potens abscondere mentis
gaudia quam lacrimis.

(9. 1038–41)

[Tears which did not fall of their own accord | he poured out and wrung out groans from his happy breast, | not otherwise able, except with tears, to hide the obvious | joy in his mind.]

Here we see at work that 'absurd psychology' from which Lucan has derived many characteristics for his portrait of Caesar: elsewhere we are told that Caesar turned away at once from the hideous sight, and then, weeping, took delivery of the dead man's seal-ring. It is the hypocrisy that Petrarch takes over when he begins his sonnet (102):

Cesare, poi che'l traditor d'Egitto
li fece il don de l'onorata testa,
celando l'allegrezza manifesta,
pianse per gli occhi fuor, sì come è scritto.

Then he speaks of Hannibal, who laughed in the bitterest grief: so does every soul conceal its passionate emotion under the cloak of its opposite. Lucan is cited here directly: 'sì come è scritto'. A finer and more moving use is made of the same passage from Lucan at the start of another sonnet (no. 44). There he adopts the grand antithesis that the man who in Thessaly had watched so much blood flow with dry eyes now weeps before the lifeless head:

qui sicco lumine campos
viderat Emathios, uni tibi, Magne, negare
non audet gemitus.

(9. 1044–6)

[He, who had seen the Emathian plains | with dry eye, to you alone, Magnus does not dare | to deny groans.]

This time Petrarch does not mention the hypocrisy, but continues: 'David too wept at the death of his opponents, his close kindred, only you, lady, are implacable.'

Que' che 'n Tessaglia ebbe le man sì pronte
a farla del civil sangue vermiglia,
pianse morto il marito di sua figlia
raffigurato a le fattezze conte.

Only incomprehension could see in these two incipits a mere learned reminiscence. Monumentality and heroic dignity are imparted to the personal experience through the exalted parallel, in the same way that Propertius prefixes an erotic narrative with a threefold mythological comparison in Hesiodic vein in order to enhance the whole. The internal function is no less unmistakable: the power of the passion to which the poet is subject and against which the beloved hardens herself, finds its fitting expression in being equated with the strong man's emotion: even Caesar is in tears—such is the human heart. In this juxtaposition, Petrarch did not even create anything new. When the emperor Frederick II's renegade son Henry perished (I tell the story in Gundolf's words), he permitted mourning for him mindful of David's tears over Absalom and Caesar's tears over Pompey, the son-in-law who had deserted him. For us this coincidence is valuable. It shows us that the situation in Book 9 of the *Pharsalia* had become a genuine 'pathos formula', which the Hohenstaufen emperor and the poet, who both constantly suffused the present with elements from antiquity, could use in order to express their own sufferings.

Another passage of Book 9 also moved Petrarch; the conception has indeed a superb quality about it. Pompey's apotheosis is portrayed, his soul reaches the heavenly region between the earth and the moon's course, where dwell the spirits of those who spent their lives in innocence and *virtus*.

> illic postquam se lumine vero
> implevit, stellasque vagas miratus et astra
> fixa polis, vidit quanta sub nocte iaceret
> nostra dies.
>
> (9. 11–14)

[Then, when it had filled itself with real | light, and marvelled at the wandering planets and stars | fixed in the skies, it saw the depth of the night beneath which | lies our day.]

All that went almost literally into Petrarch's fine poem on a dead friend, 'Sennuccio mio'. 'With scorn', he writes, 'did you rise in flight aloft from the body in which you suffered and died' (as Pompey 'risit . . . sui ludibria trunci' [laughed . . . at the insults to its torso]) and then

> or vedi inseme l'uno e l'altro polo,
> le stelle vaghe e lor viaggio torto,
> e vedi il veder nostro quanto è corto,

except that the conclusion is made more spiritual and religious.