PARIS-LYON-MÉDITERRANÉE

ROME PAR LA VOIE DU MONT-CENIS

Affiches Photographiques ROBAUDY - Cannes

Theorising Rome

Edited by

Rhiannon Evans and Sonya Wurster

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ROMAN MULTIPLICITIES

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1. Introduction

What did Rome mean for the ancient Romans, and what does it mean for us? It is no surprise that how we theorise Rome, that is how we *view*, *reconstruct*, and *analyse* Roman culture, is conditioned by our own social, temporal, and geographical context. In our case the "we" engaging with Rome is a group of scholars based in Australia and New Zealand alongside the students we teach. These students often have a firmer grasp on wider perceptions of Rome and the locations in which it is found. While literary scholars and historians focus on the elite works of orators, poets, philosophers, and historians, our students tend to name epic films (*Gladiator, Pompeii*), television shows (*Britannia, HBO Rome*), and video games (*Rome: Total War, Age of Gladiators*). It is difficult to think of a modern production of Rome without a warrior character, a soldier or gladiator, at its centre. Based on sources like this, it is no surprise that our students and the general public tend to view Rome as a place of savage violence, aggressive masculinity, rigid hierarchies, and mystical religion. Some of this is certainly true and clearly present in ancient texts! However, the Rome of popular culture does not catch the full complexity of ancient society that we see in material culture and ancient texts (and arguably is not intended to do so). And, although the vast majority of extant Roman literature is by men, and usually men with power, ancient texts do show us a world of different social classes, ethnicities, political views, and ideas about people and their place in Roman culture.

In this chapter, we, as Antipodean scholars, engage with current debates on how Rome has been theorised in a number of contexts. Firstly, we seek to counter the perception of Rome as a monolithic cultural entity: Rome changed over time and was extremely diverse in its makeup and output—it is important to view Rome as a multivalent society. Secondly,

we address the ways in which Rome has been seen as a model or parallel for a number of social, ethnic, and political groups. Although these groups often have little in common, they tend to fix on one strand of Rome's reception (for example, as an imperial superpower; as a patriarchal or hierarchical society), or to distort what we know of Rome for ideological purposes. And finally, we seek to show that the wide possibility of meanings which can be attached to Rome is both an opportunity and a hazard—we have the opportunity to explore the complexities of this often contradictory past and its fascinating afterlife, yet we should be ever alert to Rome's potential to be reduced to either a mere model of "greatness," or a cautionary tale of how states fall (mostly mad emperors and orgies). It is Rome's multifaceted nature which makes it worth "theorising Rome."

2. Roman flux

If it is difficult to pin down what Rome means today, it is equally difficult to summarise ancient views of the city and its empire. We need only look at the contrasting views of contemporaries such as Caesar, Cicero, and Catullus, and it would be hard to argue that they shared the same idea of Rome.[1] The reality is that there was no simple definition of Rome or Romanness even in antiquity, no single past for later cultures to recall. It has never been easy to reduce the concept of Rome to a single idea. Romans themselves repeatedly questioned and reconfigured the meaning of "Rome" and "Roman" throughout antiquity. From one perspective this is hardly surprising, since the very geographical space encompassed by Rome changed drastically over time, from hilltop village to a vast territory stretching over three continents. Rome's ethnic composition was correspondingly complex, as citizenship was extended ever further amongst peoples of varying language and cultural backgrounds. Thus, most Romans potentially felt (at least) a double allegiance, both to Rome and to their native or transplanted home. This was the case even for those born in Italy, as stated by Cicero: *ego mehercule et illi et omnibus municipibus duas esse censeo patrias, unam naturae, alteram civitatis.*[2] And the Romans' own narratives of their past emphasised multiple origins—Trojan, Latin, Etruscan, Arcadian, elite, refugee, and criminal—rather than a fixed and single ethnic source. The most famous version of the Trojan arrival in Italy, the *Aeneid*, features a war between Italian natives and Trojan incomers. As Anne

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[1] Evans *infra*; and compare, for example, alternative ways of referring to Rome's conquest of Gaul to be set against Caesar's account (Catull. 29, Cic. *Prov. cons.* 32).
[2] "By Hercules, I think that he and all who live in Italian communities have two fatherlands, one by nature and the other by citizenship," Cic. *Leg.* 2.5.

Rogerson explores, this involves a questioning of Roman identity and purpose, particularly in the *Aeneid*'s war narrative, as the ideals of Rome's imperial vision come into conflict with the devastating division and violence out of which it grew.[3]

The polyethnic, kaleidoscopic nature of Roman identity is thrown into sharp relief by the autochthonous models available in the ancient Mediterranean, most notably at Athens.[4] In contrast, Rome's own origin myth is famously messy: Romulus and Remus are descendants of Trojan migrants and Latin locals; their story tells of both retributive justice, as they recover the kingdom from the usurper Amulius, and of fratricide, as they squabble over the site of Rome. The city of Rome is founded by a son of Mars on a platform of righteous strength and the murder of kin; it welcomes outsiders to the Asylum, and it facilitates the rape and abduction of neighbouring women. Populated by wise kings, tyrants, misfits, and immigrants, the legendary history of the city illustrates why the meaning of Rome is hard to pin down.

Rome has always held, and continues to hold, radically different meanings. At the same time, the idea that there might be an ideal version of both the Roman state and the Roman people *is* expressed in Roman texts of both the Republican and Imperial periods.[5] These writers tend to express a core model of "Romanness" through an ethical and moral framework centred on concepts such as *virtus, pietas, libertas*, and *iustitia* (manliness, duty, freedom and justice). They are often inherently conservative and see the "real" Rome as a mirage of a lost past. These elite authors maintain a myth that Rome "fell" at a specified point when it had achieved excessive wealth or colonial power,[6] and it was common for imperial writers in particular to situate the pristine version of Rome in the lost past of the early and mid-Republic. In the liminal period of the late first century BCE, when the Republic was in freefall chaos and the Principate was not yet established, we can see Roman power brokers attempting to negotiate public perception. It was clear that the concept of Rome was evolving and becoming more

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[3] "Questions are posed, but no clear answers are given. Rather, the reader's desire for answers and narrative progress is intensified and through this tactic the ideal of Rome is made more tantalising and more important." Rogerson *infra*.

[4] E.g. Eur. *Ion* 589–90, Loraux 2000.

[5] E.g. Enn. *Ann*. 156 Skutsch (= 500 Vahlen) = Cic. *Rep*. 5.1; Hor. *Carm*. 3.5.13–56; Livy, *Praef*. 11–12; and Tac. *Agr*. 1.2–3.

[6] Polyb. 31.25.3; Diod. Sic. 31.26; Sall. *Cat*. 10.1–6, *Iug*. 41; Livy, 39.6–7; Vell. Pat. 2.1.1; Calp. *hist*. fr. 38 *HRRel* = Plin. *HN* 17.244; Plin. *HN* 33.150. See Evans 2008, 5–6, 120–24.

complex as late-Republican warlords attracted the sense of duty previously owed to Rome. Julius Caesar ultimately failed to iron out these contradictions, at least in a way which satisfied the Senate in the 40s BCE, but he did attempt to exploit his dynasty in order to counter his autocratic image and to spin his primacy in a way which might disperse the sensitivities of republicans.[7] Caesar's actions confuse the allegiance of Romans: is it to the Julian family or to Rome? Eventually the two become essentially the same, but it would take Augustus to mediate these tensions successfully, through strategies such as associating himself with key Roman values and attaching the adjectival form *Augusta* to personified abstractions such as *Pax* and *Victoria*.[8]

3. Rome and its interpretation today

In the twenty-first century, the place of Classical Studies as an exclusive, high-brow club is frequently being raised and questioned. Ancient Rome is being claimed as a prototype for fringe and extreme behaviours, particularly those which justify stratified identities and serve to entrench racism or misogyny. Donna Zuckerberg has shown how pick-up artists draw authority from ancient texts such as Ovid's *Art of Love*, using it as though it were a modern-day self-help manual. Here, a Roman poem is taken out of context and read superficially with a view to confirming misogynist positions and a false continuity of gender roles.[9] In addition, groups broadly categorised as the alt-right commandeer Stoic writers and feel an affinity with a version of Rome cast as rigidly militaristic and patriarchal.[10] We are recognising that museums full of seemingly endless white marble statuary, many of them Roman, with no hint of their original polychromy, are not only misleading, but also implicitly consolidate the hierarchical narrative of European imperialism.[11] The issue of how to read Rome's reception is a pressing and

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[7] Stevenson *infra*.

[8] See Galinsky 1996, 82–90 for the co-option of virtues. Other Augustanised abstractions include *Concordia*, *Iustitia*, *Fortuna*, *Ops* (Galinsky 1996, 299), *Salus*, and *Pietas Augusta* (Fishwick 1991, 465).

[9] Zuckerberg 2018, 91–5.

[10] See Sharpe 2018, who critiques Zuckerberg 2018, 45–88 and argues that alt-right appropriation of Stoicism requires a superficial level of interaction with the ancient philosophy.

[11] See Sarah E. Bond, "Whitewashing Ancient Statues: Whiteness, Racism, and Color in the Ancient World," *Forbes*, April 27, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/drsarahbond/2017/04/27/whitewashing-ancient-statues-whiteness-racism-and-color-in-the-ancient-world/#3e55884f75ad.

increasingly interrogated one, one that should force us to renegotiate the various lenses through which we look back at Rome.

The idea of a diverse Roman Empire, however, is also contested, at least on platforms where non-specialists can pose their views on the past. The social media spat over a Romano-British black man in a BBC cartoon,[12] which drew accusations of political correctness, shows the way that anyone can apply modern arguments and debates to the past.[13] As Jennifer Raff, a geneticist at the University of Kansas, commented "The theme uniting all these efforts is rhetoric accusing scholars and the BBC of 'rewriting history' while simultaneously projecting contemporary notions of race backwards in time onto a society that didn't share them."[14] She goes on to say that Roman Britain was indeed multi-ethnic and included people from North Africa. The claim that specialists are rewriting history contains an implicit assumption that there is a single, "correct" version of ancient Rome, and that it is the one familiar to them. In this case, those who object to a multi-ethnic Rome are deploying an image of a "white" Rome that bears a striking resemblance to nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century views of "Romanisation," the process by which Rome transferred its more civilised and superior culture to those it conquered. Roman culture was envisaged as a monolithic entity consisting of the Latin language, art, religion, urban structures, and villas.[15] Rome was held up as the ultimate civilisation, and Roman conquest was represented as beneficial to the "natives" of Western Europe.[16] It was commonly thought that Roman expansion had prepared Western Europe for

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[12]   https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p01zfw4w;   http://blogs.reading.ac.uk/the-forum/2017/07/28/how-diverse-was-roman-britain/;
https://www.classics.cam.ac.uk/news/roman-britain;
https://www.the-tls.co.uk/articles/roman-britain-black-white/;
https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/08/dna-romans/535701/.
[13] https://twitter.com/PrisonPlanet/status/890658172158881793.
[14]   https://www.theguardian.com/science/2017/aug/09/if-africans-were-in-roman-britain-why-dont-we-see-their-dna-today-mary-beard
[15] See Haverfield 1912, 11 for an example of this belief. For recent discussions on this see Alcock 1997, 103; Dietler 2005, 36–47; Hingley 2005, 34; Woolf 1998, 4.
[16] For the way in which Rome and Greece were regarded as civilised by nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century scholars see Dietler 2005, 35–47. See also Habinek 1998, 15. Habinek discusses the fact that Rome was held up as an ideal in France, Britain, and the US, whilst, because of political differences, Germany looked to Greece. On Romanisation in an eastern context see Alcock 2005; Woolf 1994; Woolf 1997.

its colonising efforts in the modern period, and imperialists saw their role as continuing the civilising mission started by Rome.[17]

Traditionally, scholars imagined Roman and modern European expansion as working in essentially the same way, and in this sense European expansion functioned as a false paradigm for Romanisation.[18] Proponents of this view included Theodor Mommsen, Francis Haverfield, and Fustel du Coulanges. Haverfield coined the term "Romanisation" in 1905, later publishing a work entitled *The Romanization of Roman Britain*.[19] All three regarded Romanisation as progressive and beneficial, a notion exemplified by Haverfield's contention that the Roman élite "acted for the betterment and happiness of the world."[20] Haverfield also argued that the process operated differently throughout the empire. By virtue of its "older" cultures, the East was represented as less Romanised than the West, with Greece the least affected as a consequence of its already highly developed culture.[21] The latter idea was very much affected by ancient representations of Greek culture as superior.[22]

There are two ideas implicit in accounts like Haverfield's, as Greg Woolf has noted:

first, a belief that not all races had an equal potential to participate in civilization; and second, a faith in the absolute validity of the values of European culture, seen as the heir to the civilization of the classical world.[23]

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[17] Dietler 2005, 45; Hingley 2005, 18ff. and 113; van Dommelen 1997, 307; van Dommelen 2005, 109.

[18] Brunt 1990, 111; Dietler 2005, 39, 43–44.

[19] Haverfield 1912, 10; For modern discussions about Haverfield's impact see Clarke 1996; Freeman 1997; Hingley 1996, 35–48; Hingley 2003; Hingley 2005, 16; Mattingly 1997; Woolf 1998, 5. For an opposing view see Freeman 1996.

[20] Haverfield 1912, 12. As Dietler 2005, 45 has remarked "[a] major aspect of this invocation of ancient empires was the representation of modern colonialism as the continuation of the civilising mission that had been inherited from one's cultural ancestors. Colonization could thus be portrayed as an unavoidable altruistic duty imposed by history."

[21] Haverfield 1912, 12. This notion is heavily influenced by "Graecolatry," and scholars tended to believe that Rome had been conquered by Greece's culture.

[22] See Alcock 1993 and Alcock 1997. Alcock begins her 1993 book *Graecia Capta: The Landscapes of Roman Greece* with Horace's quote which encapsulates a common theme in ancient sources; see Hor. *Epist*. 2.1.156–57: *Graecia capta ferum victorem cepit et artis / intulit agresti Latio* ("Greece, the captive, took her savage victor captive, and brought the arts into rustic Latium").

[23] Woolf 1998, 5.

The widely held conviction that Western cultural values were more valid than other systems contributed to the tendency of nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century accounts of Romanisation to become narratives of modern European descent that had very little to do with Roman history.[24] The way they understood and represented the Roman Empire centred around a number of central themes: the monolithic nature of Roman culture, the agency of the local élite in the transformation process, and the positive way in which western "natives" received culture and civilisation from the technologically advanced Romans.

This is clearly seen in the settlement of Australia by the British. As Sarah Midford argues, "When Captain Cook claimed *Terra Australis* for the British Empire in 1770, the continent was understood to be an empty land, devoid of history, culture, and civilisation. In place of built environments and written histories, or what was thought of as recognisable cultural and historical heritage, the new settlers emphasised Australia's great potential: Australia was a sleeping continent brought to life by European settlement."[25] To do so, officials and poets deployed Rome in order to imagine the colony of New South Wales as an antipodean Arcadia that would prosper and become a great empire. Of course, as the more recent debate between specialists and social media users highlights, there is no one uniform deployment of Rome at any particular moment. In an Australian context, there was a tendency to use Rome in an official way. By way of contrast, it was possible to engage with Rome more personally. John Davidson, for example, shows how the New Zealand poets R.A.K. Mason and James K. Baxter explored Rome to channel and express their own feelings and views on life. They both "responded positively to the highs and lows of personal human experience as reflected in the significant contribution made to western literature by Roman poets such as Horace and Catullus."[26] Despite the dominant, and still influential, narrative that Rome is the spiritual ancestor of European culture and empire, it has always been possible to negotiate a nuanced, specific way to employ Rome.

However, the overwhelming legacy of Rome is its association with power. If we return to an Australasian student's view of Rome and dig a little deeper, we might find that students also identify Roman influence over institutions, architecture, and language which seek to convey authority. Melbourne's motto, first adopted in 1843, is *vires acquirit eundo* ("it gathers

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[24] Woolf 1998, 5.
[25] Midford *infra*.
[26] Davidson *infra*.

strength by going"): Latin not only connects the city to an ancient European heritage to the exclusion of all others, but also links Melbourne to a worldwide network of cities and institutions with Latin tags. It also ignores the source of the phrase: Virgil's description of the devastating force of Rumour personified at *Aeneid* 4.175—something which even the City of Melbourne's website struggles to explain![27] Clearly the power and vitality of the phrase appealed to the city's early leaders, regardless of its sinister origin. From popular movies to Latin mottos, we still connect Rome with violence and authority.

4. Multivalent Rome

Although no one *should* ever claim Rome as a bastion of liberal democracy or freedom—the Roman Empire was undoubtedly brutal and enslaved hundreds of thousands of conquered peoples; moreover, women had no voting rights—it was undoubtedly a multicultural and diverse city. One only need think of the opening scene in Mary Beard's *Meet the Romans* when she canvases gravestones along the Appian way with the names of people of all social classes and from all over the empire who had come to Rome. And if Rome appeared as complex and contradictory in both the Republican and Imperial periods,[28] it certainly continued to produce a multiplicity of meanings in later periods. Roman models have long been recognised as templates for more recent cultural, legal, and political systems.[29]

The simultaneous positive and negative reactions towards Donald Trump's comment that "The United States and Italy are bound together by a shared cultural and political heritage dating back thousands of years to Ancient Rome" speaks to Rome's multivalence.[30] It is this multivalence that explains why confirmation bias happens so often when the concept of Rome is used: it is easy to make Rome stand for anything when we have such limited evidence. It also represents the ongoing tendency to cherry-pick from the Roman past: Rome as great empire, militarily powerful, culturally authoritative. While it is easy to point to connections between ancient and modern cultures, a neat assimilation of the two is misleading. Trump's

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[27] https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/melbourne-heritage/history/Pages/coat-of-arms.aspx
[28] Conrau-Lewis *infra*, Evans *infra* and Wurster *infra*.
[29] Brunt 1965, Hingley 2000, Murphy 2008, Turner *infra*, Blyth *infra* and Midford *infra*.
[30] https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/trump-takes-heat-for-tracing-us-cultural-and-political-heritage-to-ancient-rome.

comment ignores Rome as slave economy, the gladiatorial games as entertainment, the torture and capital punishment that were enshrined in Roman law and empire, and its patriarchy. The calls to take "Western Civ 101" to understand the truth of Trump's statement is indicative of the tendency to ignore Roman diversity. Rome was not either an empire or a culturally diverse place: it was diverse *because* it was an empire. Certainly, modern institutions, buildings, and political systems have been influenced by Rome, but this influence is so filtered through the lenses of later peoples and ideas that they bear only passing resemblance.

In Australia the ongoing controversy surrounding the Ramsay Centre,[31] which is funded by a politically conservative foundation, and its program in western civilisation that would study the key texts and "achievements" of western culture highlights the ideologically fraught place of Ancient Greece and Rome today. For universities that have accepted money, it is a rare chance to inject funds into the humanities. However, to critics, the centre represents the elitism rife in the discipline of Classics: accepting the funding raises legitimate concerns that it negates the work of scholars working to show the complexity, nuance, and shortcomings of Ancient Greece and Rome. The ability to re-theorise Rome is potentially undermined by any affiliation to an institution that promotes an ideological vision of Rome as a monoculture. This argument is also relevant in Australia and New Zealand, whose peoples comprise anything but an homogeneous culture. Australasians come from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, and many, including their indigenous peoples, do not have an historical connection to European heritage and traditions. For them the so-called canon of Ancient Greek and Roman texts is potentially meaningless. Thus, studying Rome from an Antipodean context underscores its reach, both chronologically and geographically, but it also emphasises the way that it needs to be positioned alongside other cultures. In so doing, it becomes clear that Rome is worth studying, not because it is the purveyor of western culture, but because it makes us aware of our own biases.

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[31] https://www.ramsaycentre.org/

CHAPTER ONE

ON THE WAY TO ROME IN *AENEID* 8

ANNE ROGERSON

Of all the books of the *Aeneid*, Book 8 is undoubtedly the one in which Rome as a city and the Roman people as an actuality feature most strongly. Aeneas' tour of the future site of Rome and the shield he is given, displaying Rome's glorious future, are two of the most talked-about and most obviously significant moments in this book.[1] Moreover, much of the book looks forward to the shield that Venus will give Aeneas, its encompassing of Roman history and in particular the appearance upon it of Augustus in his triple triumph.[2] Book 8, indeed, holds out for us the end which the *Aeneid* promised from the beginning. Here we see the site where "the walls of the great city of Rome" will rise,[3] walls which featured at the end of the first sentence of the epic, the ultimate consequence of Virgil's story of arms and a suffering man:[4]

> arma virumque cano, Troiae qui primus ab oris
> Italiam fato profugus Lavinaque venit
> litora—multum ille et terris iactatus et alto
> vi superum, saevae memorem Iunonis ob iram,
> multa quoque et bello passus, dum conderet urbem,
> inferretque deos Latio; genus <u>unde</u> Latinum,
> Albanique patres, atque <u>altae moenia Romae</u>. (*Aen*. 1.1–7)

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[1] We can note Rome's particular dominance in Book 8 in how the book is summarised in the scholarship: the chapter on *Aeneid* 8 by Boyle 1999 is titled "Images of Rome"; Horsfall 2000, 162–67, briefly discusses Book 8 under the heading "Historical allegory"; Smith 2011, 131–35, opens his account of the book: "The eighth book gives form to Rome's future" (131).

[2] For a brief outline, see Smith 2011, 131–35.

[3] *Aen*. 8.337–65.

[4] For the text, see Conte 2011. All translations are my own.

> I sing of arms and the man who first came to Italy and Lavinia's shores, a refugee driven by fate—he was much tossed about on land and on sea by the violence of the gods above, all because of savage Juno's unforgetting anger, and he suffered many things also in war, until he could found a city, and import his gods to Latium; and from all this came the Latin race, our Alban ancestors, and the walls of the great city of Rome.

And by means of the shield Book 8 looks even more explicitly to the future, showing us in multi-coloured metal relief both Rome's city walls (*Romana . . . moenia*, *Aen*. 8.714–15) and the *gens Romana*, the promise of which forms the conclusion to the proem of Book 1, the final outcome of Aeneas' toils (*tantae molis erat* <u>*Romanam*</u> *condere* <u>*gentem*</u>, *Aen*. 1.33: "such a struggle was it to found the Roman race").[5]

    From the beginning of the *Aeneid* the revelations of Book 8 and particularly the description of Aeneas' shield which fills the book's final lines are constructed as the aspirational and Roman end of Virgil's epic story. Though the poem has several more books to go before it reaches its hard-fought conclusion on the plains of ancient Latium, the eighth book clearly has much to tell us about how the *Aeneid* speaks to contemporary questions regarding Roman identity. These messages have been studied in particular in analyses of the shield itself,[6] but in this chapter I focus not on the end of the book but its beginning, which looks not to Rome but to Latium, and shows us a very different image of the future unfolding than we might expect from a book that ends—and is strongly associated—with the cosmic and triumphal shield. Before moving to the opening lines of Book 8, however, it is important to note the preoccupation in this book with strangeness, a preoccupation which enhances and highlights its destabilising effect on the epic narrative and its trajectory. Much about Book 8 is unexpected. Its genre is mixed, and the *Aetia* of Callimachus is at least as strong an influence as Virgil's epic predecessors.[7] The book is more than usually episodic, with long inset narratives describing the conflict between Hercules and Cacus as well as the history of Rome on the great shield given to Aeneas.[8] And it is, in addition, a book where strangeness and wonder are repeatedly stressed. Aeneas marvels (*miratur*) at the shield both when it first

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[5] For the deep significance of this line and the verb *condere* in the *Aeneid*, see James 1995.

[6] See, for example, Hardie 1986, 336–76; Putnam 1998, 119–88; Vella 2004.

[7] For *Aeneid* 8 and the *Aetia* see George 1974.

[8] We can also note shorter stories, such as Evander's reminiscence of his meeting with Anchises, ll. 157–68.

appears and at the conclusion of the book.[9] The omen of the sow and her thirty piglets is marvellous (*mirabile monstrum*, *Aen*. 8.81) and Aeneas himself appears as a marvel to the landscape when he floats upstream with his picked band of Trojans as the Tiber's current reverses to help his journey.[10] Pallas is stunned (*percussus*, *Aen*. 8.121) when welcoming Aeneas to Pallanteum, and his amazement echoes that of his father Evander when he received Priam's Trojan delegation a generation earlier.[11] Remarkable stories are told (*mirabile dictum*, *Aen*. 8.252). Stupendous sights are seen.[12] Astonishment even becomes an educational tool, as Evander hopes that Pallas will learn to be a warrior hero by marvelling at Aeneas.[13] This is a book of wonderment.[14] The only other book which equals its stress on amazement is Book 1.[15] This is no coincidence: the two books are linked not only by their emphasis on the marvellous, but also by key events,[16] by arrivals, by strange beginnings *in medias res* and by an interest in false starts. They are also connected by a theme that runs throughout much of the *Aeneid*: the confusion of human beings in the face of a bewildering divine plot.[17] The cloud of uncertainty that hangs over human existence is stressed

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[9] *expleri nequit atque oculos per singula voluit / miraturque* (*Aen*. 8.618–19: "Aeneas cannot be satisfied and his eyes roam over the separate vignettes, and he marvels"), *miratur rerumque ignarus imagine gaudet* (*Aen*. 8.730: "Aeneas marvels and, not knowing what it is about, rejoices in the representation").

[10] *mirantur et undae, / miratur nemus* (*Aen*. 8.91–92: "The waves marvel, and so do the woods").

[11] *mirabarque duces Teucros, mirabar et ipsum / Laomedontiaden* (*Aen*. 8.161–62: "I [Evander] marvelled at the Trojan leaders, and in particular at Priam").

[12] *miratur facilisque oculos fert omnia circum / Aeneas* (*Aen*. 8.310–11: "Aeneas marvels and his eyes swiftly survey all around him").

[13] *primis et te miretur ab annis* (*Aen*. 8.517: "May Pallas marvel at you in his foundational years").

[14] For this theme, see further Bacon 1939 and Labate 2009.

[15] There are nine cognates of *mirari* in Book 1 and ten in Book 8. Other books have between two and four.

[16] Each contains a divine epiphany (Venus in Book 1, Tiber in Book 8), in each the Trojans arrive in a foreign, strangely Rome-like city as they seek aid (Carthage and Pallanteum respectively), and each also is distinguished by a significant historical ecphrasis (the decorative frieze around Juno's temple with its Trojan history in Book 1, the shield in Book 8).

[17] Compare, for example, the state of anxious confusion with which Aeneas starts Book 8 to his emotional turmoil after Venus reveals herself as she departs in Book 1, and note also how Aeneas' wakeful night of thought in Book 1 (l. 305) is echoed by his troubled deliberations in the early lines of Book 8 (ll. 18–21).

throughout Book 8,[18] despite the apparent certainties of its future predictions, and this uncertainty—as we will see—also surrounds the book's opening lines, setting the tone for a bemused reading experience mirroring that of the hero of the text, in which Virgil's audience must struggle to see how the troubled present and glorious future that is promised can be reconciled.

Book 8 opens not with Rome's future, but with scenes set elsewhere in Italy:

> ut belli signum Laurenti Turnus ab arce
> extulit et rauco strepuerunt cornua cantu,
> utque acris concussit equos utque impulit arma,
> extemplo turbati animi, simul omne tumultu
> coniurat trepido Latium saevitque iuventus
> effera. ductores primi Messapus et Ufens
> contemptorque deum Mezentius undique cogunt
> auxilia et latos vastant cultoribus agros.
> mittitur et magni Venulus Diomedis ad urbem
> qui petat auxilium, et Latio consistere Teucros,
> advectum Aenean classi victosque penatis
> inferre et fatis regem se dicere posci
> edoceat multasque viro se adiungere gentis
> Dardanio et late Latio increbrescere nomen:
> quid struat his coeptis, quem, si fortuna sequatur,
> eventum pugnae cupiat, manifestius ipsi
> quam Turno regi aut regi apparere Latino. (*Aen.* 8.1–17)

> When Turnus brought war's standard out from the Laurentian citadel and the horns blasted with their raucous song, and when he excited the fierce horses to activity and set arms in motion, immediately their spirits were thrown into disorder, and at the same time all Latium banded together under

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[18] When the god Tiber appears with his prophecy about the foundation of Alba Longa, for example, he emphatically underscores its truth (and deflects attention from the fact that he is suppressing some unpalatable aspects of the future he recounts) (ll. 39, 49), see further O'Hara 1990, 31–35. Evander is keen to emphasise that his people's religious practices are not the result of empty and ignorant superstition (ll. 185–88), and later talks about superstitious peasants who are terrified by the numinous Capitol (l. 348–49), which houses a god, though he himself is not sure which one (l. 352). Familiarity and Venus' knowingness is a key feature of her seduction of Vulcan when she persuades him to make the shield (ll. 388–93). Amazement is an understandable reaction to the portentous appearance of Aeneas' armour glowing in a clear sky (ll. 530–31), and Aeneas is marked as the only one who recognises what is going on. Finally, when Evander parts from Pallas he notes that he is in a state of suspense, with the future uncertain (l. 580).

oath in confused rebellion, and the wild youth raged. And the leaders out the front were Messapus and Ufens and Mezentius, the despiser of the gods, and they conscripted auxiliary troops from every side and despoiled the broad fields of their cultivators. Venulus was sent as well to the city of great Diomedes to ask for aid, and inform him that the Trojans were settling in Latium, that Aeneas had been carried there in his fleet and was importing his conquered gods into Italy with him and was claiming that the fates said that he had to be king, and that many races had joined themselves to the Dardanian hero and his name was spreading through Latium far and wide: what Aeneas might be plotting on the basis of these beginnings, and what outcome he desired from the war, if fortune turned out as he wished, would be more clearly apparent to Diomedes himself than to Turnus the king or to king Latinus.

This is a strange beginning to a book that is to be mostly about Aeneas sailing upstream away from the war that has just erupted, towards Evander's Arcadia and the shield. These lines do not give a sense at all that this is the book's destination: they gesture instead towards a book in which Turnus will be the hero, rather than—as it turns out—Aeneas. Indeed, the first line's *ut . . . Turnus* ("when Turnus . . . ") closely echoes the first line of Book 12, *Turnus ut* ("when Turnus"), and hints that Turnus will be the protagonist here too, as he is in the final book.[19] As well as suggesting that Turnus is to play a major role as the book develops, these lines also intimate that the nitty gritty of the present war will be the book's focus, instead of a retreat up the Tiber to look at the past (Hercules) and the future (Rome and Rome's heroes). It turns out, however, that this short segment which begins and ends with Turnus is all the action that Turnus gets in Book 8. The next section begins in line 18 with *talia per Latium* ("so much for Latium") and our attention turns to Aeneas. There are very few references to Turnus in the remainder of the book,[20] and he does not appear again until the opening of Book 9, with the return of the action to Latium and the advent of Iris:

> atque ea diversa penitus dum parte geruntur,
> Irim de caelo misit Saturnia Iuno
> <u>audacem ad Turnum</u> (*Aen.* 9.1–3)

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[19] See further Tarrant 2012, *ad Aen.* 12.1, and compare also the opening line of Book 4, *at regina* ("but the queen") which establishes Dido's central role in that book.

[20] He is mentioned as a refuge for the exiled king of the Etruscans, Mezentius (l. 493); addressed by Aeneas with a promise of defeat and suffering (l. 538); and spoken of by Venus as an enemy with whom her son should not hesitate to engage (l. 614). In all these cases he has a role outside the present action described in the book.

> And meanwhile as all this was going on in a completely different locale,
> Saturnian Juno sent Iris down from the heavens <u>to bold Turnus</u>.

As has been noted, it is these lines and not the opening lines of Book 8 that
mark the real start of the action for Turnus;[21] Book 8 begins with a lengthy
false start.[22]

It is perhaps for this reason that discussions of Book 8 tend on the
whole to ignore or downplay its opening lines.[23] When they have been
subject to scholarly attention, they have not avoided adverse critical notice.
In the late eighteenth century Christian Heyne, the editor of the first great
modern edition of Virgil, observed that "the start of the book seems a bit
lacklustre" (*principium libri parum splendere videtur*),[24] and criticised
Virgil for repeating, in the first eight lines of Book 8, events that he believed
had already been sufficiently narrated at the end of the previous book. Georg
Wagner, who edited the fourth edition of Heyne's text and commentary,
soon added a salutary note, cautioning against the easy dismissal of these
lines:

> si verum est, quae modo narrata sunt, hic repetita legi, in iustam gravemque
> incurrit Virgilius reprehensionem. neque excusat poetam, quod Heynius ait
> 'nexum tamen posci et progressum a superioribus ad alia.' sed quidquid in
> hoc exordio haeretur, id interpretibus vitio vertendum est, non Virgilio.

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[21] See Hardie 1994, 65: "a new stage in the action. . . . Servius observes that 'in this
book there is a complete change [from book VIII]: for both the characters and the
setting are different, and a different action is begun'; book VIII had been Aen.'s
book, book IX is T.'s book."

[22] Preparations for war and approaches made to potential allies unite ll. 1–17 with
the rest of the book, as noted by Heyne 1833, 178, but Aeneas's mission to Evander
takes on a life of its own and expands to a book-length narrative in its own right.

[23] See, for example, Smith 2011, 131, who states that "[t]he book begins with Aeneas
encountering the river god Tiber." The opening is briefly discussed by Putnam 1966,
107, who sees lines 1–17 as "a study in concentrated action . . . [that] suggests with
intensity the human concerns which are now the lot of Aeneas and which must
ultimately force him into long hours of trial and conflict." For Cannon 1967, 85, the
opening lines serve to characterise Turnus as "fierce, warlike and savage . . . rough
and hard."

[24] Heyne 1883, *ad Aen.* 8.1. Heyne's first edition of his text and commentary appeared
1767–75. A very different opinion was expressed by James Henry 1889, 630, in the
late nineteenth century: "Nothing can be more spirited than this commencement of
the eighth Book; . . . all the more striking when taken in contrast with the sweet, soft,
and tender peacefulness of the commencement of the preceding Book." Later
commentators refrain from judgement.

> If it is the case that a story already told is here repeated and to be read again, then Virgil rightly incurs our serious censure. What Heyne says—'that there is, however, need for a narrative link, and something that allows the poem to move on from what happened before to other things'—does not excuse the poet. But whatever problem is associated with this beginning is attributable to the fault of Virgil's interpreters, not Virgil himself.

Wagner goes on to argue that those who believe the opening of Book 8 is repetitive fail to recognise that Virgil has added a new element here to his account of events throughout Italy after the outbreak of war in Book 7, by telling us what is happening among Latinus' people. The people of Latium, he notes, are not mentioned in the catalogue of Italians that makes up the final part of Book 7, and so have finally to make their appearance as the preparations for war spill over into the next book.[25] Wagner stresses the unorthodox situation in which the Latins find themselves, noting that they do not appear in the catalogue in Book 7 because they do not have a leader, since Latinus has shut himself away, and thus it is only here that we see them, when they enthusiastically take up arms after Turnus displays the *signum belli* ("the standard of war") from the Laurentian citadel. Swept excitedly into the conflict, the inhabitants of Latinus' city break the mould of people following their appointed *duces* that we see so clearly in the catalogue in Book 7, and which was introduced as a key theme of the *Aeneid* with the simile of Neptune calming the winds like a statesman soothing the tumultuous rabble in Book 1.[26] Their entry into the war may reflect this, spilling as it does beyond the ordered confines of the catalogue and into the beginning of a book that is really not about them and their self-appointed leader, Turnus, but the Trojan Aeneas.

The unorthodox position and uncontrolled emotions of the Latins are highlighted by the details of their entry into the war. The passage looks back to Virgil's earlier description of the Italians' entry into war, where there are similarly a *signum*, a blast of trumpets, horses, weapons, and some anxiety in the midst of the preparations for battle:[27]

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[25] This argument can be further developed when we note Henry's observation that *Aen.* 8.1–3 closely echoes *Aen.* 7.637–40, the lines immediately before the catalogue of Italians, a digression which fills the remaining lines of Book 7. Virgil's diction as well as the similar action described mark the beginning of Book 8 as the resumption and continuation of the action, rather than a repetition.

[26] *Aen.* 1.132–41. On the ways in which issues of power in Book 1 are developed in the rest of the *Aeneid*, see Cowan 2015.

[27] See n. 25 above. Direct echoes with *Aen.* 8.1–3 are underlined; where different language is used but a similar event is described, I have used italics.

> classica iamque sonant, it bello tessera signum;
> hic galeam tectis trepidus rapit, ille trementis
> ad iuga cogit equos, clipeumque auroque trilicem
> loricam induitur fidoque accingitur ense. (*Aen.* 7.637–40)

> Now the trumpets sound, the standard appears—the sign for war—one man
> snatches his helmet from his house in fearful haste, another compels his
> trembling horses to be yoked, and dons his shield and breastplate with its
> triple layer of gold, and girds himself with his trusty sword.

As we will see, however, the passage in Book 8 introduces a number of
uncertainties not present in the previous book, and heightened emotions lead
to a relative lack of confidence and control. Ambiguity, for example,
surrounds Turnus' raising of "the sign for war" (*signum belli*, *Aen.* 8.1–2),
which could refer either to the flag raised to call Romans together under
arms for the *comitia centuriata* or the flag flown from a general's quarters
to call soldiers already in the field to fight in a sudden emergency.[28] As
Virgil gives no indication of which he means, it seems likely that both
actions are in play at once, and the Latins are to be understood both as a
people being mustered before war starts and as soldiers already engaged,
their confused and liminal status a reflection of the fact that the war that has
broken out in Latium is not—as Roman wars were supposed to be—an
ordered or controlled affair.[29] The Gates of War were violently broken apart
by Juno rather than opened by the king as is proper procedure at the end of
Book 7, and the war that erupts as a result does not strictly follow normal
rules. The connection between the beginning of Book 8 and the deviant
opening of the war in the previous book is underlined by the way in which
the horns sounding with their raucous song (*et rauco strepuerunt cornua
cantu*, *Aen.* 8.2) both echo and differ from those that sound in hoarse accord
in Virgil's description of the usual practice when the Gates of War are
unchained (*aereaque adsensu conspirant cornua rauco*, *Aen.* 7.615).[30] In
Book 8 there is little of the accord seen in the idealised picture of war's
beginnings in Book 7, however, and tumult reigns. Though the Latin people
take the oath as one (*coniurat*, *Aen.* 8.5), their spirits are disordered (*turbati
animi*, *Aen.* 8.4), and they band together in a confused rebellion (*tumultu* /.

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[28] Cf. *vexillo in arce posito comitiorum causa exercitus eductus esset* (Livy 39.15.11:
"The army was gathered together for the *comitia centuriata* by a flag set up on the
citadel"); *vexillum proponendum, quod erat insigne, cum ad arma concurri
oporteret* (Caes. *BGal.* 2.20.1: "The flag had to be displayed, which was the sign
that it was necessary to rush together to arms"). The double meaning of *signum* here
has long been noted: see de la Cerda 1617, ad loc.

[29] See further Fowler 1998.

[30] Similarities are underlined, and differences highlighted in bold.

. . *trepido*, *Aen*. 8.4–5). The turbulent nature of their uprising is emphasised by its echoes of the barbarian onslaught stayed by the Roman hero Marcellus in the future revealed by Anchises in Book 6 (*hic rem Romanam magno turbante tumultu / sistet eques*, *Aen*. 6.857–58: "This is the stalwart soldier to stabilise the Roman state when a great crisis rages"). Raging and confused as they come together to fight, reminiscent at one and the same time of citizens, soldiers, and a barbarian horde, Virgil's Latin troops at the beginning of Book 8 look as though they are about to engage in a civil conflict, in which they will become their own country's enemies.[31] This implication was recognised by Virgil's epic successor Lucan, who echoes the language of this passage in the first book of his epic about the civil wars that ended the Roman Republic. Here, Caesar calls citizens to arms, and silences them so he can speak:[32]

> convocat armatos extemplo ad signa maniplos,
> utque satis trepidum turba coeunte tumultum
> conposuit vultu dextraque silentia iussit (Luc. 1.296–98)
>
> Immediately [Caesar] calls the armed companies together to the standards, and when the anxious uproar of the crowd coming together was sufficiently quelled by his look, he ordered silence with his hand [and spoke].

The close correspondences with *Aeneid* 8, which are underlined here, emphasise the uncontrolled nature of the war erupting there, where young men rage wildly (*saevitque iuventus / effera*, *Aen*. 8.5–6), and the broad fields are depopulated of their cultivators (*latos vastant cultoribus agros*, *Aen*. 8.8) in a way that foreshadows the effects of the war to come.[33]

Even Virgil's diction joins the mayhem. The third line is particularly problematic (*utque acris concussit equos utque impulit arma*, *Aen*. 8.3: "and when he excited the fierce horses to activity and set arms in motion") and was excised by Ribbeck who "preferred it not to be there".[34] Ribbeck's criticism was based on the belief that the line interrupted the logical

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[31] For *tumultus* "in the special sense of a Gallic rising," see Horsfall 2013, *ad Aen.* 6.857.

[32] Echoes of *Aen.* 8.1–6 are underlined. For the correspondences, see further Roche 2009, ad loc.

[33] For the destructive impact of war on the landscape of Roman epic, see Newlands 2004. Note also the echo of this line in the description of the Etruscan armies spreading out across the broad fields later in the book (*et latis tendebat in arvis*, *Aen.* 8.605).

[34] *abesse malim*, Ribbeck 1895, *ad Aen.* 8.3.

progression of the Latin uprising,[35] though there seems little reason why Turnus should raise the standard and then refrain from further martial activity until after the Latin people had caught the excitement of war. The fact that he may seem to act impulsively in line 3 accords both with his hot-headed character and with the speed and urgency with which the opening lines of Book 8 unfold.[36] There is, however, another reason to pause over this impetuous line: the verbs used are not the ones we might naturally expect with their respective objects, and the line would be smoother, though less interesting, if *concussit* governed *arma* and *impulit* governed *equos* instead. Then Turnus would appear brandishing his weapons, as is not infrequently seen in Latin poetry,[37] and urging on his horses.[38] Instead, readers make a different sense of these verbs, imagining horses not brandished but shaken up and roused to action (*concussit*), and arms not urged into motion but, as the phrase is usually interpreted, beaten against (*impulit*) an unspecified object, perhaps the hero's shield or breastplate. Neither Virgilian phrase does genuine violence to the language,[39] but the

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[35] He explains this decision in the critical notes that accompanied his edition: *perversus est, nam animos prius turbari et saevire iuventutem consentaneum erat, tum demum equos et arma excitari*, Ribbeck 1866, 83. "The line is awry, for it makes sense for their spirits to be in an uproar and the youth to rage first, and only then the horses and weapons are roused up." It is not clear from Ribbeck's note that he takes Turnus to be the subject of *concussit* and *impulit* in line 3, and a misapprehension may partly explain his dissatisfaction with the line.

[36] For the ambiguities and flaws of Turnus' character, see Tarrant 2012, 9–16. The succession of conjunctions *ut . . . utque . . . utque . . . extemplo . . . simul* in the first four lines emphasise the speed at which events unfold in Latium and, as Henry 1889, 628–29 notes, the verbs *concussit* and *impulit* in line 3 "signify the violence and impetuosity with which Turnus [acts]. . . . Virgil wished to express something more than the mere making of war—wished to express the violence, suddenness and impetuosity with which it was made."

[37] Cf. *concutit arma* (Ov. *Met.* 1.143, 7.130), *arma(que) concussit* (Ov. *Met.* 12.468, Sen. *Tro.* 683), *concussa . . . arma* (Sil. *Pun.* 2.212, 12.183). The meaning "to brandish (a weapon)" is among the primary definitions of *concutere* in the *OLD* 2nd ed. s.v.

[38] Also a common epic phrase, e.g. *impellit equos* (Stat. *Theb.* 7.83), *impellebat equum* (Sil. *Pun.* 7.697). Cf. also *impulit . . . currus* (V. Fl. 6.6).

[39] Note that Virgil's usage is followed by Statius, who rephrases and clarifies *impulit arma*, specifying the arms he refers to and substituting two different verbs for the action taken: *ter sustulit hastam, / ter concussit equos, clipeum ter pectore plausit*, *Theb.* 7.133–34 ("three times he raised up his spear, three times whipped his horses forwards, three times beat his shield against his chest"). Here too, this inspiring action is followed by a tumultuous and disorderly uprising (*Theb.* 7.135–38).

slight dissonance of the two together underscores the discord of the scene and the confused nature of the start to the war in Latium.

This discord can also be seen in the debate in the commentary tradition about the nature of the *arma* of line 3. Servius believed that the word referred to Turnus' foot soldiers (*ad pedites*), who balanced the *equites* that he believed were implicit in the *equos* seen earlier in the line.[40] Later commentators dismiss this idea, generally agreeing that the *arma* are Turnus' own weapons.[41] Consensus holds that Virgil here describes how Turnus "clashed his arms by way of exciting the ardour of his followers."[42] It is difficult, however, to read of *arma* being "set in motion" (*impulit*) in the *Aeneid* without also thinking of the *arma* of the first line of the epic. When the phrase appears, as it does here, in the opening lines of another book in which the wars promised in the proem appear about to erupt into full-scale conflict, it seems not unreasonable to interpret it also as a reference to Turnus as a driving force behind the battles that fill much of the second half of the *Aeneid*.[43] The slightly cryptic and historically problematic third line of Book 8 thus encapsulates the strong forward momentum that its opening appears to give to the epic plot. As Turnus drives the *arma* on, he impels the story forward, allowing the Iliadic half of the *Aeneid* to get properly underway.

Soon afterwards we are explicitly reminded of the *Iliad* when the Latins send an embassy to the Greek hero Diomedes in line 9, asking his advice about Aeneas, whom he knew from encounters in the Homeric epic.

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[40] He also mentions a tradition in which the leader who has taken on the responsibilities of war enters a temple of Mars and agitates first the shield and then the spear of the god's statue, crying "Mars, wake up" and suggests that this may be what Turnus is to be understood as doing here (see Serv. *ad Aen.* 8.3).

[41] The comments of Servius *auctus* make it clear that this interpretation was favoured in antiquity as well: *quidam sane suos equos et sua arma de Turno tradunt, scilicet ut ceteris esset exemplum*, *ad Aen*. 8.3: "some sensibly say that these are Turnus' own horses and weapons, no doubt from the example of comparable phrases elsewhere."

[42] Conington and Nettleship 1875, ad loc., comparing *clipeo increpat* at *Aen*. 12.332 and Sil. *Pun*. 12.684–85.

[43] A similar argument is advanced by Henry 1889, 629: "*equos* and *arma* jointly represent *bellum*, being the two principal requisites necessary to be provided before making war: these provided, the belligerents were in a fit state for the *pugna*, or actual battle, which we therefore find sometimes added to *equos* and *arma* in order to complete the idea of *bellum*, as 9.777." Page 1900, *ad Aen*. 8.3 notes "Henry prefers [the translation] 'roused the spirited steeds (of his followers) and urged on the war.'"

This too helps to mark the opening of Book 8 as a true beginning both to the wars promised in the proem, and to the repetition of the great battle of Homeric epic in the second half of Virgil's poem.[44] As we have already seen, this promise is significantly delayed when the book's focus changes in line 18, and its trajectory follows Aeneas upstream to Rome instead of pursuing Turnus' headlong course into battle. The story returns to Turnus in Book 9, which follows his exploits during Aeneas' adventures off the stage of battle, and he and Aeneas come close to engaging in combat in Book 10, but the action begun in Book 8 does not fully resume until Diomedes replies to the Latin embassy early in Book 11, where he declines to become involved in the war that has broken out between the Italians and the Trojan invaders, advising the Latins to sue for peace and choose a different path to that upon which they set out at the bidding of Allecto and Juno earlier in the epic.[45] This long delay mirrors the postponement of personal combat between Turnus and Aeneas until the end of Book 12, and one function of the enthusiastically martial and uncontrolled opening of Book 8 is to highlight the series of digressions and deferrals that put off the conflict that had been promised since the first word of the poem.

When looked at from a narrative perspective, the action at the opening of Book 8 is a new beginning, doomed to be placed on hold for a considerable period of time. It is also a beginning *in medias res* as battle fervour rages, and in that way, it looks back to the start of the *Aeneid* with the raging storm that threatened to drown the Trojans almost before their story had begun. In addition, it is a type of ending, recalling as it does the end of Book 7, with the main action of Book 8 starting later with Aeneas. It thus evokes the beginning of Book 7 too, where the burial of Caieta and the cautious skirting of the land of Circe look back to the first half of the *Aeneid* and come before the delayed second proem that announces the start of a greater enterprise, an epic of war. Rather than dismiss these lines, then, in our haste to get on to Aeneas' adventures, we can employ them to think more deeply about the tortuous pace and complex development of the *Aeneid*'s epic plot. Indeed, the message sent to Diomedes might be seen as encouragement to think about the plot as we think about these lines. As Venulus reports the Italians' experiences of Aeneas' arrival to the Greek hero, he constructs a miniature version of the epic, with a number of echoes of the portrayal of Aeneas' mission elsewhere, and a striking alternative point of view. When he reports how "the Trojans have settled in Latium"

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[44] On repetition in the *Aeneid*, see in particular Quint 1989, and for the *Iliad* in the *Aeneid* see Anderson 1957 and Knauer 1964*a*, 1964*b*.
[45] *Aen.* 11.243–95.

(*Latio* <u>consistere</u> *Teucros*, *Aen*. 8.10), for example, he recalls the desire for a settled homeland expressed several times elsewhere in the epic.[46] His description of Aeneas "<u>importing</u> his conquered gods" (*victosque penatis /* <u>*inferre*</u>, *Aen*. 8.11–12) similarly evokes earlier accounts of Aeneas' pious mission.[47] And the statement that Aeneas "was claiming that <u>the fates said that he had to be king</u>" (<u>*fatis regem se dicere posci*</u>, *Aen*. 8.12) closely echoes Latinus' belief that Aeneas is fated to marry Lavinia (*hunc illum* <u>*poscere fata*</u> */ reor*, *Aen*. 7.272–73), though casting the idea as hubristic by putting it in Aeneas' own mouth. We can see here on the one hand a peculiarly Italian perspective on the Trojan "invasion" of Italy, similar to though less exaggerated than, for example, Numanus Remulus' summary of recent Trojan history in Book 9,[48] and on the other a further indication that the opening lines of Book 8 are to be thought of in relation to the overarching narrative of the *Aeneid*, despite the fact that this passage has in the past generally been seen as tangential at best to the epic's plot and progress.

As well as offering the opportunity to reflect on the progress of Virgil's epic narrative, these lines raise important thematic issues, not only for the rest of the book but the epic as a whole. By casting Rome at one and the same time as a delayed project and a glorious promise which itself interrupts the progress and delays the climax of the battle narrative, the opening of Book 8 highlights the problematic relationship between the Roman ideal and the violent and confused steps historically necessary to achieve it.[49] Contrasts and continuities with the rest of Book 8 and the epic as a whole underline this message. We see, for example, how the fields despoiled by conscription (*latos vastant cultoribus agros*, *Aen*. 8.8) not only indicate the threat the violence of war poses to a productive, agrarian

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[46] E.g. <u>*consistere*</u> *terra* (*Aen*. 1.541: "<u>to settle</u> the land"). The phrase also appears at *Aen*. 1.629 and 6.807.

[47] E.g. <u>*inferretque*</u> *deos Latio* (*Aen*. 1.6: "and <u>imported</u> his gods to Latium"), *Ilium in Italiam portans* <u>*victosque penates*</u> (*Aen*. 1.68: "bringing Troy to Italy and <u>his conquered gods</u>").

[48] *Aen*. 9.598–620. Commentaries suggest that the negative presentation of Aeneas here is motivated in part by Turnus' *invidia* and in part by a rhetorical attempt to manipulate Diomedes into joining the Italian forces in the war. The dismissal of the embassy as a partial and rhetorical exercise, however, fails to take account of the importance of the presentation of alternative points of view throughout the *Aeneid*, on which see further Fowler 1990.

[49] As already noted, issues raised in *Aen*. 8.1–17 such as control, the exercise of power, and the uncertain nature of human existence, which also can be seen reflected in the embassy to Diomedes, resonate throughout the epic.

community in general, but focus that threat in the Roman heartland, as the repetition of rhyming vocabulary throughout the opening lines of the book put Latium at the very centre of the action.[50] Questions are posed, but no clear answers are given. Rather, the reader's desire for answers and narrative progress is intensified and through this tactic the ideal of Rome is made more tantalising and more important. *Aeneid* 8 will go on to present readers with a series of parables, omens, and images of the future and the past, all of which bear on the question of Roman identity, but none of which (even the shield) fully encompass it. Rather, their multiple perspectives suggest the impossibility of fully answering the question. Through the destabilising strangeness of an epic world where absolutes are continually questioned even as they are reasserted, Book 8 fosters the urge to impose certainty at the same time as it deliberately stymies such effort. The opening, far from being otiose, is crucial. In narrative terms it pulls the rug out from under our feet: it shows us a chaotic upsurge of war frenzy, that then is allowed to go nowhere; it sends off to a Greek hero from a previous epic, who now waits in the wings but never actually comes on stage and whose answer is not heard for several long books. The passage draws us into the fast-moving tumult of Latium, before dumping us with a half-line summary "that's what was going on Latium" (*talia per Latium*, *Aen*. 8.18) and proving that the excited sense of war building which it deliberately fostered was misguided. Indeed, one could say that the opening lines of Book 8 perfectly represent an epic that repeatedly, and wilfully, frustrates its own narrative drive towards a telos.

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[50] Note *Latium* (l. 5), *latos* (l. 8), *Latio* (l. 10), *late Latio* (l. 14) and *Latino* (l. 17). These echoes are highlighted by the etymologizing of Latium's name later in the book (*Aen.* 8.322–23), on which see further O'Hara 1996, 207–8.

CHAPTER TWO

STATIUS' *BELLUM CIVILE* AND THE MYTH OF ROMAN LUXURY

KYLE CONRAU-LEWIS

Why does civil war happen?* In the ancient world, luxury and greed were often blamed. Herodotus' Croesus expounds this view when he warns Cyrus that any person who comes to possess great wealth will rebel against the Persian king (1.89), something which does eventually happen (1.154).[1] This is by far the prevailing paradigm among Roman historians and poets, who connect luxury with greed, civil war, and eventually fratricide.[2] Luxuries impel avaricious men to seek new, more lavish wealth, culminating in rebellion and kin-killing. Certainly not all Romans associated luxury with

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[1] See Gorman and Gorman 2014, 86. They however point out that it would be wrong to abstract a coherent Herodotean theory of moral decline since at 9.122.3 Herodotus also posits a fixed relationship between geography and moral character.

[2] In Greek literature, see also Xenophanes who condemns luxury more broadly (ἀβροσύνη, Ath. 12.526a–b) and Theognis who associates greed with moral degradation and violence (1.345–47; 1.677–78). Gorman and Gorman 2014 argue that the particular connection between luxury and civic discord is more a trope of Roman historiography that later entered Greek imperial literature. In Roman literature, see Sallust (*Cat.* 5.8, 11.4–7, 12.2; *Iug.* 41.1), Lucretius (3.70–72), Virgil (*G.* 2.495–512), Lucan (1.160–82; 4.373–80), Petronius (*Sat.* 119.1–60, Eumolpus' civil war poem), and Valerius Flaccus (1.745–48). A contemporary Greek and Jewish writer Philo also saw luxury and greed as a source of civic disturbance in his *Vita Mosis* (2.13). Luxury as the cause for civil war is briefly discussed by Jal 1963, 390–91, but he only notes Sallust, Petronius, and Florus; see also Lintott 1972, who surveys literary representations of oriental luxury and moral corruption more generally and concludes that this rhetoric likely originated from propaganda of the Gracchan period. For a brief survey of luxury in Roman literature, see Zanda 2011, 7–24, and Dalby 2011, 11–12.

civil war in this way,[3] and an astute philosopher would more carefully delineate between luxury and greed.[4] Nevertheless, the casual association between greed, luxury, civil war and fratricide in particular had become so conventional in Roman literature that Statius at the beginning of his epic had to deny that luxury was the cause of civil war between the two brothers, Polynices and Eteocles (*Theb*. 1.144–51).

Yet not quite. This chapter will argue that in subtle ways Statius alludes to luxury in his poetics of civil war.[5] While Statius initially denies that the brothers Polynices and Eteocles fought over a luxurious city, he does in the course of the poem subtly show the emergence of luxuries in Thebes. In doing so, I will suggest that Statius sets up this civil war as a precursor to Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. Statius' *Thebaid* rapidly turns into the world of Lucan's poem, of an aristocracy dominated by two factional leaders pursuing total power and luxuries.[6] This is not to say that Thebes becomes an opulent city in the poem or that luxury is actually the cause of civil war but rather that Statius suggests the city will eventually become opulent and luxuries will play an indirect role in its civil war. Like the leaders of Rome in Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, its rulers want luxuries and to solicit alliances with those who possess wealth, and Statius repeatedly notes the movement of commodities at large.[7] Statius positions his epic as a mythic prequel to Lucan's and as a grand mythological precursor to the Roman civil war. In the process, he participates in and reframes Greco-Roman discourses about luxury and civil war.

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[3] Valerius Maximus (9.1), for example, connects luxury with *libido* and his exempla show how luxuries can enervate soldiers' military *animus*. Seneca the Younger also associates the luxury of Maecenas with effeminacy rather than violence, let alone civil war (*Ep.* 114); in *Ep.* 122.5 Seneca similarly explains how luxury induces young men to lead perverse lives contrary to nature, such as sleeping during the day and revelling during the night, but does not implicate this in civil war.

[4] For example, Seneca the Younger demarcates between luxury, avarice, and libido at *De Ira* 1.21.1, though luxury and avarice are almost indistinguishable except that avarice involves the accumulation of all kinds of property.

[5] For some earlier scholarship on this topic, see Gibson 2015, 123–38. See also Coffee 2009 on Statius' attitude to wealth and economics and their place in his poetic discourse.

[6] On Statius' dependence on Lucan, see most recently Roche 2015, 393–407; Ganiban 2011; Micozzi 1999; Lovatt 1999. On Lucan's general Stoic influence on Statius, see Vessey 1973, 57–60.

[7] See also Harrison 2005, 292–93, on the pairing of luxury and avarice for affluence and territorial expansion.

Statius, Lucan's priest

Statius wrote movingly of Lucan as an epic poet. His birthday poem in honour of the dead Lucan (*Silv*. 2.7) imagines him lamented by all the Muses, and he calls upon all with knowledge of poetry to celebrate this day (1–4), including the gods Mercury, Bacchus and Apollo along with the Muses (5–11). Lucan's birthday has a sacred significance to Statius, who asks for religious silence while he sings of Lucan (*favete linguis*, he says, demanding sacral *euphemia*). In requesting silence, he fashions himself as Lucan's priest. Not all scholars see Statius' poem as a straightforward praise of Lucan but detect an element of irony and rivalry.[8] But whether the poem is a simple panegyric, an ironic eulogy or a competitive gesture, it provides a summary reading of Lucan's poem and its themes (pious Cato, the criminal execution of Pompey) and parallels them with impious Nero and his nefarious matricide (119). When Statius talks about Lucan's *Civil War*, he focuses on themes which are relevant to both their works: *pietas*, crime, and kin-killing.[9] The birthday poem illustrates a deep thematic connection between these two poets' epics especially lines 64–72 as Statius' extols the *pietas* of Cato and the *scelus* of the civil war, alluding to thematic concerns in his own work. Paratextually in the *Silvae*, Statius encourages his readers to pair his poetic career and literary output with Lucan.

Lucan and Statius: the causes of war

Statius' *Thebaid* repeatedly evokes the corrupt world of Lucan's poem. The very first line of the *Thebaid* alludes to Lucan. Statius writes of "fraternal wars" (*fraternas acies*, *Theb*. 1.1) while Lucan writes of "wars more than civil" (*bella . . . plus quam civilia*, 1.1) and "familial battle-lines" (*cognatasque acies*, 1.4), hinting at the familial nature of the civil war.[10] Their civil wars

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[8] In particular, Malamud 1995, 1–30. Lovatt also suggests that the praise in 2.7 is undercut by the fact that it is a public poem and the words of praise are put in the mouth of Calliope, thereby distancing Statius from praise of Lucan: Lovatt 1999, 127. Certainly not all of Statius' praise is to be taken at face-value, see for example van Dam 1984, 470. Newlands, however, argues that the birthday poem is part of a nascent biographical tradition of birthday poems and that the poem functions as a rehabilitation of Lucan: Newlands 2011, 435–51. See also Vessey 1973, 46–49.

[9] See Ganiban 2011.

[10] Vessey 1973, 61; see also Roche 2015 for a recent discussion of this allusion to Lucan and its implications about Statius' competitive rivalry with Lucan. Lucan's *plus quam civilia* is a pointed reminder that the civil war was not just a civil war but also a family strife. See also *non satis est adhuc / civile bellum: frater in fratrem ruat* (Sen. *Phoen*. 354–55: "no longer is civil war enough: let brother fight against

are also family strife. Statius' first book contains a number of other allusions to Lucan. In both cases, the authors explain the genesis of the civil war; in both cases, anonymous citizens lament the fate of their city (cf. Stat. *Theb.* 1.173–96 and Luc. 1.273–91). Statius maps the beginning of his epic poem onto Lucan's and although he performs an act of *recusatio*, declining to write a Lucanian tale of moral decadence as the cause of civil war (1.144–51), he in fact persistently evokes the *topoi* of the Lucanian moral landscape.

For Lucan, the civil war is the cosmic result of the unstable nature of the universe. He evokes Ovid's description of the chaos of the creation of the universe, but he inverts it to describe the decline of the universe into disorder. Lucan writes how "his mind brings him to reveal the causes of such things" (*fert animus causas tantarum expromere rerum*, 1.67), just as at the beginning of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid's mind brings him "to speak of changed forms" (*fert animus mutatas dicere formas*, 1.1).[11] Ovid and Lucan are each inspired by their *animus* to speak of the chaotic, changeable universe. Lucan describes how nothing remains for long, predicting that eventually all the world will return to chaos, as the fiery stars return to the ocean and the earth shakes the seas and the discordant machine of the universe disrupts the order of the world (72–80). This is the inversion of Ovid's description of the creation of the universe where the *deus* separates the elements into discrete, ordered parts (1.21–56). For Lucan, Rome will engage in civil war precisely because nature is inconstant, and nothing lasts forever.

But philosophical principles aside, Lucan provides more proximate historical explanations for the civil war.[12] One is the private motivations of Caesar and Pompey. The other is what he calls the "public seeds of war" (1.158), the general cultural circumstances which gave rise to civil war: this is Rome itself (1.84–86), which for him cannot accommodate dual power. Lucan writes that *regnum* ("kingship") cannot be shared by a *turba* ("crowd"). Indeed, he shows this in the example of Romulus and Remus who fought over their "little asylum" (1.94–97). Similarly, with the death

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brother"); Lucan frames the civil war as a transgression beyond simple civil war: see Roche 2009 *ad Lucan* 1.1. Statius makes this point even clearer with his *fraternas acies*.

[11] Roche 2009, 148–49; Tarrant 2002, 355–58; Narducci 2002, 42–50.

[12] On how Lucan follows historiographical accounts of the decline of the Roman Empire, see Lintott, 1971, 488–505; cf. Tracy 2015, 45; Gibson 2010, 33. See also Wiseman 2010 who examines how historians located the origins of civic discord in the period of the Gracchi and the moral decline of aristocratic Romans. See also Evans 2008 on discourses of utopia and decline in Roman literature.

of Crassus, there was no one to mediate between Caesar and Pompey, a state of dual power Rome could not accommodate for long.[13] With only two preeminent men, each vying with the other, civil conflict became inevitable. As Lucan writes, "fortune did not allow two" (*non cepit fortuna duos*, 1.111), an allusion to Seneca's *Thyestes*—a tragedy also about familial conflict (between Thyestes and Atreus)—where "kingship does not take two" (*non capit regnum duos*, 444).[14] Here Seneca and Lucan both emphasise the significance of power shared by two rulers in a Roman context, evoking the memory of Romulus and Remus or of Sulla and Marius, the historic precedents for civil discord. In Lucan's view, two equipotent leaders will only destructively compete for power and glory.

The public cause for the civil war, however, is *luxuria*. Lucan's explanation of the public causes of civil war begins at 1.158:

> suberant sed publica belli
> semina, quae populos semper mersere potentis.
> namque, ut opes nimias mundo fortuna subacto
> intulit et rebus mores cessere secundis
> praedaque et hostiles luxum suasere rapinae,
> non auro tectisue modus, mensasque priores
> aspernata fames; cultus gestare decoros
> vix nuribus rapuere mares (Luc. 1.158–65)

> But there were hidden public causes of war which have always sunk powerful peoples. For whenever fortune brought excessive wealth from a conquered world and morality ceded in favourable circumstances and plunder and enemy spoils persuaded luxury, then there was no end to gold and to houses, and hunger spurned its earlier tables. Men grabbed beautiful adornments not appropriate for women to wear . . .

This echoes the common Roman motif of luxury as the source of Roman moral decline, found in historiography,[15] but also frequently in poetry. Lucretius associates envy of wealth with fratricide (3.70–72) and Virgil explicitly connects the desire for wealth and luxury with civil war in the *Georgics*, contrasting the happy farmer with those greedy individuals who seek wealth and luxuries and who ultimately "rejoice to be splashed with

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[13] On the opposition of one vs. many and the problem of dual kingship, see Hardie 1993, 3–11.
[14] Roche 2009, 171.
[15] For example, see Cic. *Rep*. 2.7–8, Sall. *Cat*. 11, and Livy, *Praef*. 11–12.

the blood of their brothers" (*G.* 2.510–12).[16] The theme reappears in *Aeneid* 3 when Aeneas, learning of the death of Polydorus asks, *quid non mortalia pectora cogis, / auri sacra fames!* ("what do you not urge mortal hearts to do, o cursed hunger for gold!" *Aen.* 3.56–57). King Polymestor had killed Polydorus, the brother of his wife Ilione, precisely for gold. Following these poets,[17] Lucan describes how military success and plunder led to luxury and moral degradation.[18] Fortune granted wealth and there was "no end to gold and houses" (*non auro tectisue modus*, 163). The desire for wealth, the flight from rural simplicity and poverty, culminated in a society that is prone to war (171–82). Consequently, "the measure of law is force," as Lucan tells (175–76). Because of luxury and ambition, the Romans witness tribunician conflict, seized consulships, usury, interest and war, which Lucan says has become "useful" for many (182).

Lucan repeatedly identifies luxury as the cause of civil war. For example, in a later apostrophe, Lucan condemns those who are not content with water and grain alone and seek to find gold and myrrh (4.373–81). Caesar says that Pompey's soldiers are "seizing wealth" (*rapiuntur opes*, 7.746) and Lucan describes them "blind with a desire of gold" (7.747). Later Lucan complains again about the shameless desire of Romans for profit (9.706–7). The motif of luxury becomes much more apparent in Book 10 when Caesar arrives in Egypt and is seduced by Cleopatra.[19] Lentulus characterises Egypt as a "country content with its own resources" (*terra suis contenta bonis*, 8.446) and in fact Egypt abounds with luxuries in Book 10.[20] Here Caesar encounters luxuries "which had not yet been brought into the

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[16] See also *Aen.* 8.325–27 where Virgil describes how post-golden age peoples were marred by a "madness for war" (*belli rabies*) and "desire for possessions" (*amor habendi*) but this does not explicitly connect greed with civil war or fratricide.

[17] But Lucan's moralising also plays on concerns about ostentation in the Neronian period: Turner 2010, 206–7.

[18] Caesar himself had been accused of luxuriousness (as he himself recounts, *Civ.* 3.96), and while Lucan plays on this (in Book 10 particularly), *luxuria* is depicted as a pervasive cultural problem, rather than just the moral fault of Caesar in particular.

[19] This meeting between Caesar and Cleopatra is first noted in Lucan: Zwierlein 1974, 56–57. But there are many depictions of Cleopatra before Lucan (Hor. *Carm.* 1.37; Prop. 3.11.29–56, 4.6.55–69; Verg. *Aen.* 8.685–703): Zwierlein 1974, 54. On the theme of luxury in Book 10, see Tracy 2015, 44–45.

[20] Tracy 2015*,* 54–55.

Roman world" (10.110).[21] The rooves are panelled with gold and the hall with marble and gems (112–17). Tortoise shells from India are placed on the doors adorned with emerald (120–21). The furniture is dyed with Tyrian dye and adorned with jasper and gold (122–25). Lucan complains that they pour their wine and food into gold dishes (155–63) and warns that gold is merely a product of the earth and the Nile—only "raging luxury" (*luxus . . . furens*, 156–57) has made gold a desirable commodity. It is this Egyptian luxury which according to Lucan tempted Caesar to want to wage war against Egypt (10.169–71), and it is Egyptian wealth which essentially incites a "second civil war,"[22] the *bellum Alexandrinum*, because Roman soldiers can be so easily bribed by lavish objects (10.403–11). Therefore, like Virgil, Lucan sees the desire for profit, wealth, and luxury as the general cultural genesis of war but Lucan's explanation is more layered: Roman politics is unstable and does not permit divided power, and the decadence and commercial greed of Rome have enabled the civil war in the upper echelons of Roman society.[23] Only a few escape the contamination of this moral decadence. Lucan praises Cato whose home and clothes are austere (2.384–87) and Cato himself praises Pompey for his avoidance of luxury (9.201), but these two are counter-cultural, stark contrasts to Lucan's Roman public mired in the temptations of luxury. And it is Libya ultimately, not Rome, which lacks luxury (9.424–28) and therefore is the ideal place for Cato's austerity.

On the surface, Statius' *Thebaid* does not connect the cause of Theban civil war with luxury but purely with madness and a desire for power, a congenital feature of the house of Thebes. Near the beginning of the *Thebaid* Statius gives a *recusatio* to follow this Lucanian explanation of civil war. Statius writes,

> et nondum crasso laquearia fulva metallo,
> montibus aut alte Grais effulta nitebant
> atria, congestos satis explicitura clientes;
> non impacatis regum advigilantia somnis
> pila, nec alterna ferri statione gementes

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[21] Indeed, Cleopatra's wealth is the antithesis of Cato's austerity, a man who marries the widow Marcia without pomp and abides in a small home: Zwierlein 1974, 59–60.

[22] On how Lucan parses this episode as a civil war, see Tracy 2015.

[23] Lucan does, however, also satirise extreme austerity. Antaeus rejects wealth and luxury, content to live in a cave and not a home, to not even have a bed and to feast on lions (4.601–5). Antaeus is a monstrous instantiation of anti-*luxuria*, not an exemplar of Roman virtue.

excubiae, nec cura mero committere gemmas
atque aurum violare cibis: sed nuda potestas
armavit fratres, pugna est de paupere regno. (Stat. *Theb*. 1.144–51).

Not yet were the panels golden with thick metal, nor did the halls stand shining high on the Greek marble, halls which would open to receive crowding clients. Not yet were there guards during the anxious sleep of kings nor watchmen groaning in their alternating stations of iron, nor was there any care to commit gems to wine or to violate gold with food. But naked power armed the brothers. The fight was about a poor kingdom.

Whereas Lucan at the start of his book identifies luxury as the public cause of war, Statius programmatically announces at the beginning of his book that luxury is not the cause.[24] The ultimate cause is the madness of the Theban dynasty which consumes the brothers and activates their lust for power (1.126), the *gentilis furor* of the Thebans, something repeatedly made clear in the poem.[25] It is the recurring madness of the Theban dynasty and the desire for "naked power" which motivates the sons of Oedipus.[26] Statius denies luxury has any part in the Theban civil war, a programmatic repudiation of a Lucanian explanation for civil war.

But even in Statius' *recusatio* of a Lucanian tale of civil war motivated by luxury, we are reminded of Rome. Polynices and Eteocles resemble Lucan's Romulus and Remus, two brothers who fight for a "little asylum": *nec pretium tanti tellus pontusque furoris / tunc erat: exiguum dominos commisit asylum* ("Nor was the earth and sea worthy of such madness. A small asylum put the masters against one another," Luc. 1.96–97); *sed nuda potestas / armavit fratres, pugna est de paupere regno* ("But naked power armed the brothers, the fight is about a poor kingdom," *Theb*. 1.150–51). Statius' Thebes is not Lucan's Rome but some primitive distillation of it. Polynices and Eteocles, like Romulus and Remus, are two brothers inhabiting a poor city and fighting simply for power. Furthermore, while Statius is writing about Thebes and "Greek pillars," the words he uses have distinctly Roman inflections (*atria* and *clientes*), evoking the contemporary

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[24] Caviglia notes Statius' allusion to Lucan here: Caviglia 1973 on 1.143–64.

[25] On the theme of genetic "predeterminism" in the *Thebaid*, see Hershkowitz 1998, 277; Davis 1994, 464–83; Frings 1992, 21. On Statius' anti-Lucanian move here, see Gibson 2015, 125; Gibson 2010, 40–44.

[26] Though Jupiter himself is also part of the engineering of the civil war, arranging Polynices' marriage into the family of Adrastus 1.243–47, 295–302. Like Lucan, Statius seems to distinguish proximate and distant causes of the civil war: the dynastic madness of Thebes is ultimately the cause but Oedipus, Tisiphone, and Jupiter are the immediate catalysts of civil war in Book 1.

cultural practice of *salutatio* with the *cliens* visiting his patron in the morning in his *atrium*. Indeed, it is also pleonastic for Statius to describe Thebes' pillars as "Greek"; it implies a Roman perspective. Precisely in the act of saying Thebes is not Rome, he makes the reader think about Rome. Finally, the *nondum* ("not yet") at 1.144 signals that Thebes will eventually become rich and luxurious like the Rome of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. Statius' *nondum* explicitly signals that his Thebes will become just such a kind of Rome.

Another Lucanian Rome

Throughout the course of the narrative, Statius presents Eteocles and Polynices as duplicates of Lucan's Caesar. This is signalled by both Lucan's and Statius' use of the word *privatus* ("private citizen"), found in epic poetry only in these poets.[27] Lucan writes that Caesar as a *privatus* would love his son-in-law Pompey (4.188) but in fact Caesar will obviously never be content to live without office. Later in the epic, when trying to disguise himself in order to commandeer a boat, Caesar even then "does not know how to speak like a *privatus*" (5.668). As a storm threatens to kill him, he consoles himself that no one will think that he died as a *privatus* but will die as a dictator (5.664–68).[28] So too are Eteocles and Polynices motivated by a desire for honours and are equally unwilling to become a *privatus*. As an anonymous person in the *Thebaid* then asks, "will this man [Eteocles] ever be a *privatus*?" (1.189). The implication is clear: Eteocles and Polynices had initially agreed that they would alternate power each year, but as the anonymous commentator suggests, this arrangement is not likely to last long. Like Caesar, Eteocles will not be content to be a *privatus*. He will desire sovereign office and honours. Polynices is no different. When he travels through Greece as an exile while Eteocles rules in Thebes, he remembers angrily that day when he became a *privatus* and thinks about when he will be king and can punish those who rejoiced in his exile (2.309–10). Statius presents the two Theban brothers as alternate Caesars, worried about becoming *privati*.

Statius' Thebes increasingly becomes an analogue of Lucan's Rome. While Thebes initially is depicted as a poor city without ornament, the reader begins to see signs of luxury in and around the city. Neil Coffee

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[27] See Roche 2015, 401, Gervais 2017 on 2.310, and Matthews 2008, 244 for discussion of *privatus* in these two poems.
[28] This is ironized by Caesar's later comments that he wishes to lead a *privata vita* (Luc. 7.266).

notes that Statius depicts Thebes' luxury and wealth in an inconsistent manner.[29] For example, while Statius says that Thebes was poor, he also says that Eteocles sleeps on Assyrian rugs (2.91–92),[30] and that Polynices wishes to recapture Thebes and its wealth (1.318); later Creon complains that Eteocles has drained the city of its wealth (*urbem armis opibusque gravem . . . hausisti*, 11.273–75).[31] However, I propose that this is not an authorial accident but is part of the design of the poem. Rather than contradicting himself, Statius suggests that Thebes is in the process of becoming an opulent city. It is poor in comparison to other cities but will become the very Rome that Lucan condemns. As Statius says, Thebes is "not yet" a city of luxuries.

Polynices' arrival in Argos is ominous: while Thebes is poor, he has come upon a wealthy city. Adrastus lives in a lavish apartment bedecked with rugs, purple, gold, and ivory (1.516–26). The exiled prince will soon be the wealthy heir to these impressive riches. Eteocles has also been enriched. Argia tells her husband that there is a rumour that Eteocles has become "proud with plunder" (*raptoque superbum*, 2.346): here *rapto* may metaphorically refer to the kingdom and its power which has been snatched away from Polynices,[32] but it may also just mean literal plunder. The expression is reminiscent of the epic phrase *spoliisque superbus* ("proud with plunder") used to refer to the proud wearing of spoils,[33] and the word *rapto* also recalls Lucan's condemnation of mercenary spoliation.[34] Tydeus

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[29] Coffee 2009, 260n32; Gibson 2015 also notes these inconsistencies and suggests that Statius depicts Thebes becoming wealthy to fit with the stereotype of the tyrant and is inviting his readers to think about narratives of luxury and decline in Rome.

[30] Gervais 2017 notes *ad loc.* the inconsistency here, that Eteocles surprisingly has oriental luxuries in such a poor kingdom and suggests that the reason is that the Romans strongly associated luxury with tyranny.

[31] *Opes* can mean "power" and "military forces" broadly (see *OLD* 1–2) but also "wealth" (*OLD* 3). Both Mozley in his 1928 edition and Shackleton-Bailey in his 2003 edition translate it as "wealth." Creon is listing the different material losses of the city of Thebes (its arms, its citizens, and its wealth).

[32] Gervais 2017 *ad loc.* compares this to *Aen.* 4.217 (*rapto potitur*).

[33] For example, Virgil's description of the doors of the home of Priam (*barbarico postes auro spoliisque superbi*, *Aen.* 2.504) and his description of Hercules (*tergemini nece Geryonae spoliisque superbus*, 8.202); see also Ovid's description of Jason (*et auro / heros Aesonius potitur spolioque superbus*, *Met.* 7.155–56) and Valerius Flaccus' description of Jason in the words of Cretheus (*spoliis nuribusque superbus*, 1.745).

[34] *hostiles luxum suasere rapinae* (*BC.* 1.162: "The plunder of enemies persuaded luxury") and *cultus gestare decoros / vix nuribus rapuere mares* (*BC.* 1.164–65: "the men plundered ornaments hardly fit for young women").

confirms the latter when he sees Eteocles "high on a throne and surrounded with bristling arms" (*sublimem solio saeptumque horrentibus armis*, 2.385) and complains that Eteocles is "rich with Tyrian dye and conspicuous with gold" (*ostro dives et auro / conspicuus*, 2.406–7), very much reminiscent of Dido described as "surrounded with arms" (*saepta armis*, *Aen*. 1.506). Significantly, Dido's palace is also represented as luxurious (*Aen*. 1.637–42). In Book 1, Statius' Thebes was poor and its royalty had no armed guards (1.148–49). Now Eteocles does. Thebes is changing and readers here are primed to think of Carthage.

Indeed, it seems that Eteocles mainly has money on the mind: Eteocles' argument that Polynices should stay in Argos is simple: Thebes is not as rich as Argos and Polynices should be content to pile up his wealth there (2.430–33) since Argia, being accustomed to her "father's luxuries" (2.438–39), supposedly would not be happy in Thebes. Not only does Eteocles collect wealth, he also expects that Polynices wants to as well. Eteocles' claim here that Thebes is too impoverished for Argia obviously contradicts Tydeus' description of him "rich with Tyrian dye and conspicuous gold." Who are readers to believe? Both Tydeus and Eteocles have reasons to rhetorically exaggerate and downplay the luxuries in Thebes (Tydeus to cast Eteocles as a bad king and legitimate a war against him; Eteocles to discourage Polynices from seeking Thebes back). Whatever the case may be, readers can see an eerie foreshadowing of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*, as luxuries become the focus of agonistic disputes over power.

Thebes also aligns itself with big money. Those who fight for Thebes show off their splendid luxuries. The Boeotian priest Eunaeus wears a breastplate with Tyrian dye and a clasp with gold and jasper (7.656–61), reminiscent of Dido's cloak for Aeneas and exotic luxury more broadly.[35] Atys, a Phocian from Cirrha, who more importantly is betrothed to the royal Ismene, the daughter of Oedipus, wears purple and gold and is bedecked with gold:[36]

> tunc auro phaleras auroque sagittas
> cingulaque et manicas, ne coniuge vilior iret,
> presserat et mixtum cono crispaverat aurum. (Stat. *Theb*. 8.566–8)

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[35] Cf. *rubet imbellis Tyrio subtemine thorax* (*Theb*. 7.656: "his unwarlike breastplate gleams with Tyrian cloth") and *Tyrioque ardebat murice laena* (*Aen*. 4.267: "the wool shone with Tyrian dye"). See Smolenaars 1994 *ad*. 7.656.

[36] Gibson 2010, 44 also notes these two examples.

> She [his mother] had pressed his quivers with gold and his arrows with gold
> and his belt and sleeves so that he would not go cheaper than his wife and
> she had strewn mixed gold on his helmet.

His mother had made sure that he would be gold-spangled to ensure he did
not look less rich than Ismene, which also implies that Ismene herself has
some luxuries that Atys must outdo. The anaphora of *aurum* dramatically
evokes his mother's eagerness to show off his wealth to his new Theban
family. That Atys' mother weaves gold into her son's garb is also
particularly significant since in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* Pentheus condemns
the newly arrived foreign god Bacchus particularly for the "purple and gold
woven into his embroidered clothes" (*purpuraque et pictis intextum vestibus
aurum*, *Met*. 3.555). In earlier mythic times, Pentheus repudiated such
luxuries and expected his subjects to as well, but in Statius' *Thebaid*, suitors
to its kingdom now ostentatiously parade it. Over the course of the poem,
therefore, we learn that Thebes is not as rich as Argos—but Eteocles and
Polynices are making it so, seeking out rich allies, dynastic alliances with
wealthy families in Greece, while also importing commodities from the
orient. Luxuries from around Boeotia are pouring into the city. Rather than
seeing Statius as an inconsistent author, it is better to see Thebes as wanting
to become a luxurious city, aligning itself with wealthy cities, and
surrounded by new luxuries. Thebes was initially poor and Thebes is not yet
as wealthy as Argos but its king Eteocles has begun to collect oriental
refinements (or at least Tydeus says so) and Polynices himself has married
into a wealthy family.

Indeed, mythologically this post-Argonautic world is the beginning
of Mediterranean commerce,[37] and Statius' *Thebaid* shows just that, the
growth and spread of luxuries throughout Greece. Elsewhere Statius shows
the nascent luxury in and beyond the city and hints at its invidious
psychological and moral effect. Eriphyle is jealous of Argia who wears the
necklace of Harmonia and surpasses the ornaments of her sister (2.297–98),
and this act ultimately leads to Amphiaraus' downfall and her own death at
the hands of her son, Alcmaeon (4.193–213). The Lemnian men have lavish
feasts with gold goblets (5.187–88), and Statius writes that Lemnos has been
"recently enriched by its Getic triumph" (5.306)—this is not to say luxury

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[37] See, for example, Seneca's *Medea*, lines 301–79, where the chorus reflects on this
turning point of world history with the first ship of the Argonauts sailing the
Mediterranean: their own fathers only knew the wealth of their own land but now
the first ship-travel, motivated by a desire to regain the golden fleece, has opened up
new commerce and new wealth. See also *prima deum magnis canimus freta pervia
natis* (V. Fl. 1.1: "we sing of the waters *first* crossed by the great sons of the gods").

necessarily caused this mini civil war, only to indicate that Statius overtly points out the transmarine movement of luxuries. The spread of luxury is also shown very clearly in the hero Parthenopaeus. Although according to Statius the Arcadians were mythically a people of austerity without cities or homes (4.275–81), Parthenopaeus—himself the son of an ascetic devotee of Diana—is now adorned with gold, purple, amber, and jasper from the east (4.265–70). Similarly, at the funeral of Opheltes, the pyre contains gold, cinnamon, Tyrian dye, and radiant gems (6.59–66) and, when it burns, Statius says explicitly, "Never before was there ash more opulent than that" (6.206–7).[38] The mythic time of the *Thebaid* is the beginning of luxury and commercial exchange, and Thebes too is just in the incipient stage of wealth within a grander Helladic pervasion of luxuries.

Lucan and Statius: luxury and the end of war

Indeed, at the end of the *Thebaid* luxury comes into focus very clearly. Statius describes the unadorned altar of Clementia and evokes the austere temple of Hammon in Book 9 of Lucan, but then contrasts this with the arrival of Theseus carrying spoils. The end of the *Thebaid* where Theseus comes to Thebes and kills the new king Creon has been variously interpreted.[39] Does Theseus represent the advent of justice and the restoration of moral order? Or is he an equally disturbing figure of tyranny and war-frenzy like all the other heroes of the epic? Whatever the case may be, his arrival in Athens surrounded with spoils is a disturbing contrast with the altar of Clementia and shows the profusion of avarice and luxury in the world of the *Thebaid*.

     In Book 12, forbidden to bury their husbands, the Argive women come to Athens and the altar of Clementia, an unadorned asylum for all

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[38] Gibson 2010, 44 also notes here that the world of the poem is becoming very similar to that of Lucan's.

[39] For a comprehensive survey of different readings of Theseus and its political implications for a Domitianic poem, see Criado 2015, 291–306. An optimistic reading of the *Thebaid* sees Theseus as a champion of justice and restorer of order: Heslin 2008, 128; Pollmann 2001, 37–43; Vessey 1973, 312–16. However, others see Theseus as another example of *furor* and an ominous figure to end the Theban civil war: Coffee 2009; Ganiban 2007, 212–18; Hershkowitz 1998, 270–71; Dominik 1994, 93–98; Ahl 1986, 2895. Hardie 1993, 47, synthesises the polarised readings of Theseus, writing that Statius is "manipulating the image of Theseus": various similes are used for Theseus, linking him to Polynices and Eteocles, Mars and Jupiter, as well as Virgilian allusions linking him to Aeneas. He is a complex hero.

people.[40] Here Statius evokes Lucan, who very similarly describes the temple of Hammon as a simple austere space. Statius writes that the altar of Clementia is not the property of the powerful (12.481–82) and requires no offering of incense or blood: *parca superstitio: non turea flamma / nec altus accipitur sanguis: lacrimis altaria sudant* ("frugal is their religion. No flame of incense nor deep blood is received. The altar runs with tears," 12.487–89). This temple is surrounded by olive and laurel trees (12.491–92) with no image nor any metal: *nulla autem effigies, nulli commissa metallo forma dei: mentes habitare et pectora gaudet* ("There is however no image, the form of god is not entrusted to any metal. It rejoices to dwell in their minds and hearts," 12.493–94).

This altar of Clementia is the antidote to civil war, a shrine of simplicity and humility. There is no wealth, no luxury, no images, no discrimination of power. While the altar may be based on Athens' historical Altar of Pity, the description is reminiscent of Lucan's altar of Hammon in Libya.[41] The Argive women of Book 12 make a pilgrimage to the unadorned temple of Clementia after the civil war just as the Romans following Cato take refuge from the civil war in the temple of Hammon. Lucan describes Libya as devoid of any riches or luxury:

> in nullas vitiatur opes; non aere nec auro
> excoquitur, nullo glaebarum crimine pura
> et penitus terra est. tantum Maurusia genti
> robora divitiae, quarum non noverat usum
> sed citri contenta comis vivebat et umbra. (Luc. 9.424–28)

[The bounty of Libya] is not corrupted by any wealth. It is not melted for bronze or gold. Its land is pure, without any crime, deep to its core. To this race the Maurusian oak are riches, whose usefulness they not have not yet discovered, but they are content to live under the leaves and shade of the citrus.

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[40] On how Statius modifies the notion of *clementia* and disentangles it from its politically loaded meaning in the Julio-Claudian Empire, see Burgess 1972, 339–49; cf. Ganiban 2007, 215–16. Others have identified Theseus with *clementia,* as a good king, see Braund 2006, 259–73; as an arbitrary tyrant, see Lovatt 1999, 136–37. However, these analyses do not emphasise the significant disjunct between the description of the *ara Clementiae* and Theseus himself.
[41] One might also think of Romulus' asylum as a refuge for all (Livy, 1.8; Plut. *Vit. Rom.* 9; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.15.3–4) but none of these authors emphasise the absence of luxury as Statius and Lucan do for their asylums.

Lucan's altar itself has no gold or gems and it is this Libyan temple which he explicitly says has managed to ward off Roman luxuries (as if luxury were itself an armed enemy despoiling rather than enriching the temple):

> non illic Libycae posuerunt ditia gentes
> templa, nec Eois splendent donaria gemmis:
> quamuis Aethiopum populis Arabumque beatis
> gentibus atque Indis unus sit Iuppiter Hammon,
> pauper adhuc deus est, nullis violata per aevum
> divitiis delubra tenens, morumque priorum
> numen Romano templum defendit ab auro. (Luc. 9.515–21)

> The Libyan races did not place wealthy temples there, nor do their offerings gleam with Eastern gems, and even though there is the same Jupiter Hammon to the happy peoples of the Ethiopians and Arabs and Indian races, their god is still poor, dwelling in temples not violated through the ages by riches, and the god of ancient mores defends its temple from Roman gold.

Both altars are simple, pious temples free of luxury and both serve as a refuge from civil war. Statius pointedly alludes to Lucan here not only with his ecphrasis of an austere sanctuary but by placing it immediately after the Theban civil war. Both Lucan and Statius contrast the bloodshed of their epic civil war with a plain temple uncorrupted by grandeur and luxury.

This image of religious simplicity, however, is immediately undercut in the *Thebaid* by the arrival of Theseus.[42] Immediately in front of him Theseus shows his spoils:

> ante ducem spolia et, duri Mavortis imago,
> virginei currus cumulataque fercula cristis
> et tristes ducuntur equi truncaeque bipennes,
> . . . .
> gorytique leves portantur et ignea gemmis
> cingula et informes dominarum sanguine peltae. (Stat. Theb. 12.523–25 & 527–28)

> Before the leader was a procession of spoils and the image of harsh Mars, chariots of virgins and biers piled with the plumes of helmets, and sad horses and broken quivers, . . . and light arrows were carried and belts gleaming with gems and shields deformed by the blood of their masters.

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[42] Ganiban 2007, 220–24.

The detail of the belts flashing with gems (*ignea gemmis cingula*) is striking.[43] Theseus here seems to be very much like Eteocles, *rapto superbus* ("proud with plunder," 2.346); while Eteocles sleeps on his Assyrian rugs, Theseus has now returned from Scythia with his own plunder. So, at the end of the *Thebaid*, we see the consummation of this theme of *luxuria* as the religious simplicity of the altar of Clementia is contrasted with the greed of rapacious Theseus who has piled up a treasure-trove of begemmed spoils.[44]

Consequently, I offer a different reading of the end of the *Thebaid* with Lucan in mind. At the start of the *Thebaid*, Statius had said that Thebes was a poor kingdom and the brothers fought only for power, motivated by the unique internecine madness of the Theban dynasty. They are Romulus and Remus fighting over a little kingdom; they are mini-Caesars refusing to be *privati*. The epic initially declines to be a Lucanian tale of public mores corrupted by luxury and greed, seeming to follow Lucan's striking image of early Rome as a "little asylum." However, throughout the narrative, we see luxury emerging everywhere: in Thebes itself, in Arcadia, in Nemea, in Lemnos, and finally in Athens. Eteocles shows off his Assyrian rugs and Polynices in exile marries into a richer family, mustering a Peloponnesian army. Atys' mother covers her son with gold so that he does not disappoint the Theban royalty. By the end of the *Thebaid*, we see the commodification of spoils: exactly what Lucan had identified as the public cause of civil war. We hear of Eteocles taking plunder, Lemnian men travelling to Thrace and returning with spoils and the Athenians warring with the Amazonians and stripping them of their shiny belts. Only one generation earlier than the Theban civil war had the Argonauts crossed the sea, marking the inception of navigation and Mediterranean commerce. Statius' *Thebaid* describes the nascence of luxury which contrasts with the civic harmony represented by the altar of Clementia and the temple of Hammon. Even Athens is seizing plunder. Just like Lucan, who shows a Libyan altar free of corruptive *luxuria*, so too does Statius, but it is immediately undercut by the appearance of Amazonian spoils and jewels.

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[43] On the contrast between the altar's simplicity and Theseus' procession, see Coffee 2009, 234–35.

[44] Gibson notes that Statius largely eschews mention of wealth here (except the gems): Gibson 2015, 128n15. Certainly, Theseus has not seized ornate "oriental" wealth from this purportedly austere Amazonian tribe but the association with plunder and jewellery shows the incipient phase of a society wanting to collect and accumulate luxury, in stark contrast to the altar of Clementia.

Conclusion

Statius reconfigures the causes of civil war: it is not luxury but the desire for power and madness that cause the Theban civil war. Yet in the course of the poem the *Thebaid* repeatedly presages the world of Lucan's *Bellum Civile*. Thinking back to Statius' birthday poem, Statius eulogises Lucan but also incisively interprets and comments on the poem itself, elucidating their shared themes of Roman *pietas*, *scelus*, and madness. Statius' description of Lucan's poem could equally be a manifesto about the contents of the *Thebaid*. Statius' *Thebaid* like Lucan's *Bellum Civile* depicts a world largely ruled by impiety and criminality where noble figures are not rewarded by the gods but marginalised and punished. Ultimately Statius presents his epic as an aetiology of future imperial conflicts and provides a mythological genesis for Roman luxury in general, showing the first moments of Mediterranean commerce and spoils. This of course should not be surprising because Lucan himself in his own poem compared the Roman civil war to the Theban myth of the sons of Oedipus.[45] Statius' Thebes is not merely a pre-Rome but a proto-Rome, and the story of *Thebaid* functions as a grand mythological prequel to Lucan's *Bellum Civile*.[46] At the beginning of the *Thebaid*, Statius asks "What if Phrygian and Tyrian wealth were brought together?" (*quid si Phrygiae Tyriaeque sub unum / convectentur opes?* 1.161–62), suggesting the civil war would have been even worse if Thebes had been wealthy to begin with. By Lucan's and Statius' time, with the wider expansion of the Roman Empire and its successive incursions into the Eastern world, the poets and their readers were formulating answers.

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[45] See Luc. 1.549–52, 4.549–51. For more subtle allusions to Theban tragedy in Lucan, see also Ambühl 2015, 179–288.

[46] See Braund 2006 particularly on the idea of Thebes as proto-Rome.

CHAPTER THREE

VENUS GENETRIX AND CAESAR'S THEORY OF ROME

TOM STEVENSON

The argument of this paper is that Caesar employed *Venus Genetrix* ("the Ancestress", "the Begetter") to promote a theory of Rome as a symbolic "family" under his paternal headship. The idea took on its highest profile during his years as dictator, but it evidently built on several moves and related ideas from earlier points in his career. It is more usual to think of Augustus as an exploiter of paternal and familial ideas.[1] Augustus, for instance, capitalised on the power and resources of the Julian family when establishing and managing his *principatus* ("leadership") at Rome. Beth Severy, for one, has demonstrated how this occurred in practical terms, with, for example, the *princeps'* male heirs leading his armies, and his slaves, freedmen, and clients performing functions that would today be the preserve of a government bureaucracy.[2] Such practical considerations partly explain the prominence of the imperial family in ideology, literature and monuments of Augustan Rome. The Roman state in numerous ways was dependent on the Julian family. Family imagery also arose from a desire to present Augustus' autocratic or overwhelming power in a congenial way. In terms of the common dichotomy derived from Greek philosophical and political thought, he was the gentle "father" of the Roman state, who ruled for the good of his "family"; he was not a violent "tyrant," who seized power by force and ruled in selfish, domineering spirit over enslaved citizens.[3] Matthew Roller has demonstrated that such images figured regularly at Rome in social and political discourse which was designed to express, negotiate and defuse deep, ongoing sensitivities and tensions generated by

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[1] Hamlyn 2016, 96–146.
[2] Severy 2003, esp. 140–57.
[3] Stevenson 1992, 421–36.

the advent of autocratic power in a traditionally republican environment.[4] Once more, family imagery tends to paint the Roman state as dependent on the Julian family, and even symbolically subsumed into it, though the state is served, rather than exploited, by the process. The ruler is the "father" and the citizens are notionally the "family." There is, of course, nothing legal or definitive about this imagery. It operates in a world of moral discourse that promotes harmonious social and political relationships within Roman society. No commentator has seriously suggested that Augustus might consequently have been able to exercise *patria potestas* ("paternal control") over the citizens of Rome.[5] Moreover, in 2 BCE, when Augustus accepted the title "Father of the Fatherland" (*Pater Patriae*), he was explicitly the father of the "fatherland" (*patria*), not of the "state" or "commonwealth" in a political sense (the *res publica*).[6] In fact, the title seems to steer clear of such connotations of political dominance. The concepts (*pater*, *patria*) are paternal, familial and ancestral.[7] They are moral, symbolic and charismatic, rather than political or legal. They are evidently powerful, but in an emotionally appealing and comforting way. They are polyvalent and imply discourse. They are not closely defined as one might expect of a political or legal position, which resists imprecision or discourse. It seems highly significant that there were other "fathers of the fatherland" (called *parens patriae* or *pater patriae*) in Roman history, but no one was ever called "father of the state" (*pater rei publicae*).[8] That would have trespassed on political ground which was guaranteed by "freedom" (*libertas*) and other hallowed ideas of the republican state.[9]

Finally, the practice of constructing divine genealogies in the middle and late Republics, when noble families claimed and advertised descent from founding deities and heroes, had the potential to depict Rome symbolically as a "family" of direct and notional or indebted descendants from a parental figure.[10] Certainly, the environment of ideas is abstract and symbolic, but it is just this kind of environment which feeds into charisma

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[4] Roller 2001, 213–87.

[5] Strabo (6.4.2) says that the empire was handed over to Augustus as to a "father," but this remains a metaphor. Cf. the discussion in Dueck 2000, 100–1.

[6] Aug. *RG* 35.1; Suet. *Aug*. 58; Cass. Dio 55.10.10; Cooley 2009 on *RG* 35.1; Wardle 2014 on Suet. *Aug*. 58.

[7] *OLD* s.v. *patria*: "one's native land, city . . . place of origin."

[8] Stevenson 2015b, 196. For this reason, Meret Strothmann's otherwise excellent book probably errs in taking as its title, *Augustus: Vater der res publica* (2000).

[9] The best introduction to *libertas* as a political idea remains that of Wirszubski 1950.

[10] On legendary genealogies, see Wiseman 1974; Rosenstein 1993; Erskine 2001, 21.

and persuasive authority, and subsequently helps to generate reactions such as rituals, cult names, titles, regalia, attributes and monuments. Religious ties might then be added to ties more moral, charismatic and social in character. Paternal and familial imagery seems to be one of the secrets to Augustus' success as a stabilising influence, even if military victory, overwhelming coercive power and matchless material resources are surely primary considerations.

Yet many of these paternal and familial elements were anticipated by Caesar or by contemporaries reacting to Caesar during his lifetime. This paper focuses on Caesar's promotion of the ancestral goddess Venus Genetrix in this light, with both the Julian family and the Roman state able to trace their beginnings back to the goddess. I argue that Caesar sought to set up a discourse in which Rome's citizens were meant to contemplate their relationship to Venus Genetrix, the Julian family and the state in familial terms. The citizens were cast in thought-provoking ways as the metaphorical "children" of these entities. Through contemplation of such congenial ideas and imagery, the power and pretensions of Caesar, especially as dictator, could seem more amenable. I hope in doing this to add weight to a couple of my previous contributions to this field.[11]

The promotion of Venus Genetrix was probably a constant theme in Caesar's life, though our evidence tends to make it seem intermittent and predominantly a feature of his later years. Well before his birth, Venus was claimed simultaneously as the ancestress or begetter of the Julian family and of the Roman state. She was the mother of Aeneas, whose son Ascanius (also known as Iulus) founded Alba Longa and the "Iulian/Julian" family.[12] Romulus and Remus were born into the dynasty created by Iulus at Alba Longa, and eventually of course Romulus founded Rome.[13] On the state

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[11] Stevenson 1992, 1998.

[12] The best general survey of Venus remains that of Schilling 1982. On the Trojan origins of Rome and development of the Aeneas legend, see Verg. *Aen*., esp. 1.286–88 (Aeneas as ancestor of Augustus); Ov. *Met*. 13.623–14.608; Galinsky 1969; Gruen 1992, 6–51. Casali 2010, 37–51, is good on the pre-Virgilian evidence. For the claim that Aeneas' son Ascanius, with the alternative name of "Iulus," was the eponymous founder of the *gens Iulia*, see Verg. *Aen*. 1.267–68; Shannon 1997, 20. On the foundation of Alba Longa by Iulus, see Verg. *Aen*. 3.390–91; Livy, 1.3.1–5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.65–69; Ogilvie 1965, s.v. 1.3.2.

[13] For the myth of Romulus and Remus, see Livy, 1.3.10ff.; 10.23.12 (dedication of a statue by the Ogulnii showing the she-wolf and twins, late fourth century BCE); Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.76.1ff.; Plut. *Vit. Rom*. 3ff.; Cornell 1975, 1ff. (myth existed

level, it appears certain that contact with Greeks, in various forms, caused Roman apologists to stress "Trojan" or "epic" origins in order to place resultant competition and conflict into a more impressive, understandable frame. Roman efforts at creating an impressive founder-figure fit the same set of circumstances.[14] On the level of the Julian family, however, while there were undoubtedly ancestral links going back generations,[15] Caesar's exploitation of Venus Genetrix owes much to the relatively recent phenomenon of constructing heroic or divine genealogies among the Roman nobility. Such efforts at family promotion were common during the late Republic, having begun in the second century BCE.[16] The story that the Julii and the Roman state shared Venus as their common ancestress was commemorated on a famous coin, a silver denarius of 129 BCE, minted at Rome by one of Caesar's ancestors, Sextus Julius Caesar, who spells his name CAISAR on the reverse.[17] The obverse shows the head of the goddess Roma facing right, while the reverse shows Venus (surely Venus Genetrix, given the Julian connection) driving a two-horsed chariot (*biga*) at speed, with a small Cupid perched behind and crowning his mother with a wreath. In similar fashion, Lucius Julius Caesar, who later rose to the consulship in 90 BCE, minted coins in 103 BCE depicting Venus in a chariot.[18] Developments such as these took place in an environment of fierce aristocratic competition. There were in fact other noble families at Rome who advertised "Trojan" origins, so that such claims were hardly unique and hardly as compelling as they might seem later during Caesar's dictatorship.[19] Rome's noble families were trying to out-do one another, rather than justify or ameliorate the individual dominance of one of them

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in the early third century BCE); Bremmer and Horsfall 1987, 25ff. (myth assigned to the first quarter of the sixth century BCE); Wiseman 1995.

[14] Cornell 1975; cf. Smith 2016 (state histories written before family histories).

[15] See Badian 2009, 75–78, whose remarks about interpreting the cult at Bovillae are characteristically penetrative. Cf. Shannon 1997, 20; Hamlyn 2011, 55–60; Smallcombe 2017, 62–65.

[16] Wiseman 1974, esp. 153, 155; Rosenstein 1993, 313–38; Erskine 2001, 21.

[17] *RRC* 258.1; DeRose Evans 1992, 28, 39; Shannon 1997, 20; Badian 2009, 70.

[18] *RRC* 320; Shannon 1997, 20. Billows 2009, 33 has good remarks on the dialogue of descent from Venus in the context of noble competition in the second century BCE.

[19] For the works of Hyginus and Varro on these "Trojan" families, see Serv. *Aen*. 5.389, 5.704; Weinstock 1971, 4; Shannon 1997, 20–21. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom*. 1.85.3) claims that there were approximately fifty "Trojan" families at the time he was writing. For use of the Trojan legend in political competition, see Galinsky 1969, 169; Wiseman 1974, 157–58; DeRose Evans 1992, 24–29; Erskine 2001, 21–22.

over the state. These were ideas for Caesar to build on, potentially to activate, for greater advantage in the future.

Relevant developments during Caesar's early career should equally be interpreted in the light of aristocratic competition. It should perhaps be stressed at this point that Venus was a multifaceted goddess, who had power to bring military success, along with her more famous roles in respect of love and sex.[20] Venus was celebrated for helping the Roman state in several campaigns prior to the late Republic, and notable temples were built to commemorate this support.[21] Subsequently, the goddess's patronage was claimed and vigorously advertised by a succession of warlords. Marius sought the protection of Venus Marina during his successful escape from Sulla's troops in 88 BCE,[22] while Sulla, Pompey and Caesar each gave credit to Venus for military successes.[23] Yet Venus Genetrix is an individual manifestation of Venus and is not to be confused with Venus Victrix, nor any other individual form of the goddess, even when she is depicted with military attributes or symbols of conquest. The famous funeral oration delivered in 69 BCE by Caesar for his aunt Julia, the wife of Marius, must be referring to the ancestral Venus of the Julii in its opening lines:

> amitae meae Iuliae maternum genus ab regibus ortum, paternum cum diis immortalibus coniunctum est. Nam ab Anco Marco sunt Marcii Reges, quo nomine fuit mater; a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra. est ergo in genere et sanctitas regum, qui plurimum inter homines pollent, et caerimonia

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[20] Schilling 1982 thinks that in general Venus had power "to exercise a persuasive charm." For Venus' military patronage, see Smallcombe 2017.

[21] Temple of *Venus Obsequens* ("Venus the Obedient") on the Aventine (vowed 295 BCE): Ziolkowski 1992, 167ff.; Steinby 1999, 113–23; Smallcombe 2017, 22–26. Temple of *Venus Erucina/Erycina* ("Venus of Mt. Eryx") on the Capitol (213 BCE): Schilling 1979, 94ff.; Tatum 2008, 87, 90; Smallcombe 2017, 26–31. Temple of *Venus Victrix* ("Venus Victorious/Conqueror") atop the Theatre of Pompey in the Campus Martius (55 BCE): Coarelli 1971–72, 99ff.; Smallcombe 2017, 50–60. Note also the Hadrianic Temple of Venus and Roma on the Velian Hill (consecrated in 121 CE, finished after 137 CE, rebuilt in 307 CE): Boatwright 1987, 120ff.

[22] Livy, *Per.* 77; Vell. Pat. 2.19.2–3; Plut. *Vit. Mar.* 39–41; App. *B Civ.* 1.61.272; Flor. 2.9.8; August. *De civ. D.* 2.23. Cf. Serv. *ad Aen.* 7.47 (on Venus Marina and the Auruncan goddess Marica).

[23] App. *B Civ.* 1.97.452 (the Senate decrees that Sulla should be called "Epaphroditus," a name which he had been using in the sense of "Favoured by/Beloved of Aphrodite/Venus"). Cf. Plut. *Vit. Sull.* 34.1–4 (Sulla as "Felix" and "Epaphroditus" following his triumph over Mithridates in 81 BCE); Shannon 1997, 12–16; Smallcombe 2017, 27–32. For Venus Victrix in connection with Pompey and Caesar, see further below.

deorum, quorum ipsi in potestate sunt reges. (Suet. *Iul*. 6.1, trans. Rolfe 1914, 43)

The family of my aunt Julia is descended by her mother from the kings, and on her father's side is akin to the immortal gods; for the Marcii Reges (her mother's family name) go back to Ancus Marcius, and the Julii, the family of which ours is a branch, to Venus. Our stock therefore has at once the sanctity of kings, whose power is supreme among mortal men, and the claim to reverence which attaches to the gods, who hold sway over kings themselves.

It was by no means common to deliver such an oration for a female, even one as venerable and well connected as Caesar's aunt. Surely, then, Caesar's public aspirations become relevant. He was exploiting an opportunity for promoting a family which had long been in the political doldrums.[24] His claims are essentially charismatic, involving the sanctity of kings (*sanctitas*) and the reverence due to gods (*caerimonia*), who hold power (*potestas*) over kings. He creates an impression of fabulous power with an awesome aura. This has implications for the Roman state, given the earthly and divine authority of the kings and gods respectively, but the claims seem tempered as well as propelled by the aristocratic environment. Caesar admits, for instance, that Venus is ancestress of the Julian clan (*gens*), of which the "Caesar" family (*familia*) is a branch (*a Venere Iulii, cuius gentis familia est nostra*). The aura evoked is sacred, though limited, contestable, and not easily defined. Moreover, aside from divine ancestors claimed by such means, there were numerous Father and Mother deities worshipped at Rome, such as *Iuppiter* (where *pater* is incorporated into the god's name), *Mars Pater*, *Janus Pater*, and the *Magna Mater*. These deities were evidently worshipped for their procreative and tutelary powers.[25] The profile of Venus Genetrix, therefore, is not very surprising up to this point. The base for more significant exploitation in the future, however, is growing.

This base was probably enhanced in 63 BCE when Caesar succeeded in gaining election to the office of *pontifex maximus*, ("chief high priest").[26] His zeal in pursuing this office against more experienced, optimate competitors seemed remarkable at the time, and his victory was something of an upset, apparently the result of uncommon determination

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[24] Suet. *Iul*. 6; Shannon 1997, 21–22; Smallcombe 2017, 65–66.
[25] Stevenson 1996.
[26] See in particular the discussions in Hamlyn 2011, 53–55, 88–91; and Stevenson 2015a, 57–59.

and bribery.[27] Interpretations often focus on political struggles between *optimates* and *populares*, but we should not envisage a party of "the best men" competing with "the men of the people," among whom Caesar should be numbered.[28] Even so, a political dimension is clear in the high public profile of the office, for the pontifex maximus was a very visible priest, and Caesar might have been interested in the special charismatic aura of the office and its ideological connection to his family. Tenure of the chief pontificate afforded Caesar the potential to promote once more his family's links with Venus Genetrix and the Trojan royal house. There is no evidence beyond the circumstantial that he did this during his election campaign, so once more we ought to think in terms of possible exploitation in the future, but the links are most obvious when considering the pontifex maximus' supervision of the Roman community's most revered *sacra* ("sacred objects"), which Aeneas had supposedly brought to Italy. These included the wooden statuette of Athena in warrior pose known as the Palladium,[29] figurines of the *penates* or "store-cupboard gods" of the Trojan royal house,[30] and the *fascinum* or erect phallus which averted evil.[31] These sacred objects were housed in the Temple of Vesta and employed above all by the Vestal Virgins, who tended the sacred fire of Vesta that guarded and promoted the community of Rome. The Vestals, as was well known, were freed from the legal control of their fathers for the period of their state service. They were instead supervised by the pontifex maximus, like a father

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[27] For the bribery, see Suet. *Iul*. 13 (Caesar tells his mother Aurelia on the morning of the election that he will either return home as pontifex maximus or not return at all, meaning that he will be forced to flee Rome in order to escape his creditors).

[28] These terms really relate to political arguments about whether the opinion of leading senators should be decisive on a particular issue or whether the issue should be referred to a vote of the Roman people, given the legal reality of popular sovereignty. Senators might theoretically change their view on this basic question with each new issue because, as is often stressed, there were no political "parties" at Rome of a modern, corporate type. For a detailed discussion of the terms, see Robb 2010, esp. 15–34.

[29] Ov. *Fast*. 4.419–60; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.68–69; Serv. *ad Aen*. 2.162–79; Sil. *Pun*. 13.36–70; Hdn. 1.14.4; Galinsky 1969, 5; DeRose Evans 1992, 41. This was saved by the pontifex maximus, L. Caecilius Metellus, from burning in the Temple of Vesta in 241 BCE: Cic. *Scaur*. 48; *Phil*. 11.24; Livy 26.27.14; Ov. *Fast*. 6.436–38; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 2.66; Val. Max. 1.4.4; Sen. *Controv*. 4.2; Plin. *HN* 7.141; Luc. 1.598; *RIC* I^2.206 (coins of Galba); Faraone 1992.

[30] Cic. *Nat. D*. 2.67; Serv. *ad Aen*. 1.378, 2.296, 3.12; Livy 1.14.2; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.67; Tac. *Ann*. 15.41.1 (worship in the Temple of Vesta); *RRC* 307.1a, 312.1; Dubourdieu 1989.

[31] Varro in Aug. *Civ. Dei* 7.21; Plin. *HN* 28.39; Wiseman 1995, 61; Littlewood 2006, 73.

with his daughters in the family home, and in this fairly loose sense the pontifex maximus was already something like the state's father.[32] With Caesar as pontifex maximus, however, the state cult which employed Julian *sacra* (i.e. the sacred objects of Aeneas) was quite explicitly a Julian cult, and vice versa, so that all members of the state symbolically took the place of members of the Julian clan (*gens*), and even members of the "Caesar" family (*familia*), under Caesar's headship in respect of this vital worship. State and family cult became fused, with Caesar supervising as both pontifex maximus and head of the Julian family, whether in the sense of *gens* or *familia*.

It is not hard to see how Caesar's political career could be advanced by this development. The public prominence of his new office was enormous, given the highly visible rituals, house and association with the Vestals. Moreover, commentators now habitually stress that religion is about power and that "politics" and "religion" were not separate spheres in ancient Rome.[33] Moreover, no rival clan would ever be able to surpass the Julian claim to the chief pontificate on sacral grounds. Yet any prerogatives were clearly susceptible to challenge. Antony and Lepidus did not recognise a family claim to the chief pontificate when they engineered Lepidus' appointment to the office in the wake of Caesar's murder—though of course it was to their advantage to thwart any family claim on behalf of Octavian, who was by then known as "Julius Caesar."[34] In addition, other noble families had been associated with special priesthoods, rites, and objects under the Republic, only for the state gradually to take over these prerogatives, so that the family cult was subsumed into the state cult, rather than the other way around.[35] Caesar was probably bucking this trend at a time when the Republic was under pressure, but the state's independent claims were apparently still potent.

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[32] Scott 1993, 138–42; Beard, North, and Price 1998, 1.51–58; Wildfang 2006.

[33] E.g. Beard and Crawford 1999, 25–39.

[34] See the discussion and references in Stevenson 2013, 129–30. Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* 1.70.4) saw Augustus' claim as a hereditary one, given that Iulus and a succession of Julii had presided over the cult of the Trojan *sacra* at Alba Longa. Cf. Cass. Dio 44.5.3 for a senatorial decree granting Julian succession to the pontificate maximus, discussed in more detail below.

[35] Note the experience of the Pinarii and the Potitii, and the activities of Ap. Claudius Caecus, the famous censor of 312 BCE, who transferred the cult of Hercules to state control. For discussion and references, see Wiseman 1979, 85–89; Oakley 2005–6, vols. 3–4, s.v. indexes.

Venus does not figure in Caesar's account of his Gallic Wars (58–51 BCE), though her presence in his thinking and her relevance to military campaigning should not be doubted. In 54 BCE, he set in motion plans for the acquisition of land in the city centre, adjacent to the old Forum Romanum ("Roman Forum"), at a cost of 60 million sesterces, to be funded from spoils of his Gallic campaigns. This land would subsequently serve as the site for his Forum Iulium ("Julian Forum / Forum of Caesar").[36] Cicero had a hand in the purchase of the land, as he wrote to Atticus from Rome on the 1st October in the same year:

> itaque Caesaris amici, me dico et Oppium, dirumparis licet, in monumentum illud, quod tu tollere laudibus solebat, ut forum laxaremus et usque ad atrium Libertatis explicaremus, contempsimus sexcenties HS; cum privatis non poterat transigi minore pecunia. efficiemus rem gloriosissimam. (Cic. *Att.* 4.17.8, trans. Winstedt 1912, 325)

> And so we friends of Caesar—myself and Oppius I mean, though you may explode with wrath at my confession—have thought nothing of spending sixty million sesterces[37] for that public work of which you used to speak so enthusiastically, the extension of the Forum and continuation of it as far as the Hall of Liberty. We could not satisfy the private owners with less; but we will make it a most magnificent affair.

The focal point for the new forum was an impressive octastyle temple to Venus Genetrix, which was eventually opened in 46 BCE. There is debate as to when this temple was added to the plan,[38] but the honouring of Venus Genetrix is consistent with the developments described above, and it also served to distinguish Caesar's divine patroness from Venus Victrix in the circumstances. The new temple not only monumentalised Julian claims to the goddess' patronage but also responded in formidable fashion to the recently completed Theatre of Pompey.[39]

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[36] On the Forum Iulium, see Weinstock 1971, 80–82; Amici 1991; Richardson 1992, 165–67; Ulrich 1993, 49–80; Morselli and Gros 1995, 2.299–307; Shannon 1997, 30–35; Stamper 2005, 84–104; Smallcombe 2017, 75–85. Suetonius (*Iul.* 26) says that the forum was constructed using "the proceeds of his spoils."

[37] Pliny (*HN* 36.103) claims that Caesar "gave 100 million sesterces merely for the ground on which his forum was to be built." However, his account cannot be as reliable as that of Cicero, who was himself charged with purchase of the land.

[38] See below for detailed discussion.

[39] See the acute discussion in Tatum 2008, 89–94; cf. Orlin 1997, 197.

Pompey's enormous marble theatre, the first permanent theatre complex in Rome, was opened in 55 BCE.[40] Located in the Campus Martius, it featured a prominent temple to Venus Victrix above its seating. This temple was dedicated in 52 BCE during Pompey's third consulship. Pompey and Caesar were political partners and relatives by marriage in these years, and it might consequently be wondered whether Venus Genetrix was designed to evoke Caesar's extended family, perhaps encompassing the son that Pompey and Julia, Caesar's daughter, were expecting around this time.[41] The chronology is not particularly helpful, however, since Julia died in childbirth in August 54 BCE, and her son died a few days later.[42] It seems better to think that Venus Genetrix was an element in competition (rather than cooperation) between Caesar and Pompey. It is not the case that Venus Victrix was being demeaned or superseded. In fact, in military contexts she retained all her old power and attraction. At Rome, however, in circumstances that would have underlined his competition with Pompey, Caesar preferred to promote Venus Genetrix. Location, for instance, was an important consideration. The Theatre of Pompey was situated in the Campus Martius, beyond the *pomerium* or sacred boundary of the city. Caesar's forum, for which land was being purchased in 54 BCE, the year following the grand opening of Pompey's theatre, occupied prominent space in the heart of the city, and was architecturally linked to the Forum Romanum, so that both fora would henceforth facilitate the conduct of vital public business. In competitive terms, notwithstanding the impressive rooms and spaces created for public business within Pompey's complex, the location of Caesar's forum was more hallowed and prestigious than that of Pompey's theatre.[43]

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[40] On the Theatrum Pompei, see Richardson 1992, 65–67; Wiseman 1993, 220–24; Coarelli 2007, 261–304; Smallcombe 2017, 50–60.

[41] Note changing definitions of "nobility" around this time, and the unprecedented display of *imagines* ("masks") of *gens* members, especially at noble and imperial funerals, in circumstances where they would previously have been excluded: Cic. *Fam*. 9.21 (where Papirius Paetus' pretensions are mocked by Cicero); Flower 1996, 122–26, 223–55.

[42] Plut. *Vit*. *Pomp*. 53; Billows 2009, 179.

[43] Tatum 2008, 93. On the imposing size of the new forum, see Claridge 2010, 164. For the impressive visual impact of the marble temple, and Caesar's status as the first individual to donate a public space in Rome, see Ov. *Ars am*. 3.2; Morselli and Gros 1995, 299. Very little evidence for the sculptural decoration is extant, though Ulrich 1993 discusses remnants of a frieze depicting cupids in various martial poses and activities.

There is evidence that both generals invoked Venus Victrix at Pharsalus in 48 BCE, and some commentators, following Appian (*B Civ.* 2.68.281), have argued that the temple in the Julian Forum was initially vowed at Pharsalus as a temple to Venus Victrix, which would indicate that the temple had either not been part of the original planning for Caesar's forum or that Caesar changed his mind about the temple dedicatee (from Victrix to Genetrix) following his victory at Pharsalus.[44] Ulrich even argues that the Forum Iulium as a separate complex was neither planned nor constructed until after the Battle of Pharsalus, since Cicero (*Att.* 4.17.8) only speaks of a plan to extend the Forum Romanum.[45] These views hardly seem likely. Pompey's theatre included a shrine to Venus Victrix. Caesar's forum surely included a temple from the beginning, from motives of imitation/emulation and piety, not to mention inspiration from temple precincts in the East.[46] Next, it would have been a matter of great impiety to change the identity of the goddess invoked at Pharsalus, so we must assume that Venus Genetrix had been intended all along, and that Appian's mention of Venus Victrix at Pharsalus is flawed, perhaps a product of confusion created by hindsight knowledge that the temple to Venus Genetrix was subsequently opened in a public setting that commemorated Caesar's military success.[47] There can be little doubt that a privately funded project on this scale was meant to engage in self-promotion. Venus' military credentials were well established by this time, and Caesar might still have trumped Pompey through his forum's location in the heart of the city, if he too had initially contemplated a temple to Venus Victrix. Yet the strong association between the Julii and Venus Genetrix suggests otherwise, and it was well advertised before Pharsalus, even if there were no cults or temples to Venus Genetrix in Rome prior to the opening of Caesar's forum. Lucretius mentions Venus Genetrix in his *De Rerum Natura*, a poem that may be dated *c.* 55 BCE,[48] and both Cicero and Caelius refer to Caesar in short-hand fashion as "him sprung from Venus" (*Venere prognatus*) or "the youth born from Venus" (*aetatis a Venere orti*).[49] The initiative is not really

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[44] Plut. *Vit. Pomp*. 68; App. *B Civ.* 2.68.281 (Venus as the "Bringer of Victory"). For a critical discussion of scholarship based on Appian's evidence, see Weinstock 1971, 80–82.

[45] Ulrich 1993, 54–55; followed by Senseney 2011, 438.

[46] See App. *B Civ.* 2.102 (eastern precedents); Stamper 2005, 84–104.

[47] Weinstock 1971, 80–82. Speidel 1984, 2226, believes that Venus Victrix and Venus Genetrix were simply the same goddess, a view that must be discounted.

[48] The poem opens (1.1) with an invocation to Venus as "Mother of Aeneas and his race" (*Aeneadum genetrix*); cf. 1.1–40; 1.228; 2.173; 2.437; 3.776; 4.1037–1287; 5.737; 5.848; 5.897; 5.962, 5.1017.

[49] Cic. *Fam*. 8.15.2 (Caelius, 9 March 49 BCE); Suet. *Iul*. 49.3 (Cicero).

that emphasis on Venus Genetrix was somehow new but that the Gallic spoils enabled Caesar to monumentalise and institutionalise his family's links with Venus as Rome's ancestress.[50] He was lifting the bar on the nature of the relationship between the Julii and the state, and on the debt owed by the state to his family. This relationship remained charismatic in character, but it was now at the forefront of Roman discourse and would persist in the public consciousness beyond Caesar's lifetime. Citizens would confirm their ties to Venus Genetrix and the house of Caesar whenever they used the new forum.

Evidence from the years following Caesar's victory at Pharsalus appears to support this view, with Caesar exploiting symbols that underlined his connection to Venus Genetrix. Coins of 47–46 BCE depict images of Venus in conjunction with symbols of the chief pontificate and of the augurate to which he was appointed in 47 BCE.[51] The *lituus* which appears on these coins was used by augurs for taking the auspices, though it could be used by non-augurs to evoke *imperium*, the right to command troops.[52] One denarius shows a bust of Venus wearing a diadem on the obverse. The reverse depicts Aeneas, holding the Palladium and carrying his father Anchises on his shoulder as they flee from Troy. Carson has dated this coin to the period following Pharsalus; Crawford assigns it more precisely to the years 47–46 BCE.[53] There has been debate about whether these coins depict Victrix or Genetrix, partly because the cult statue of the temple to Venus Genetrix was not yet complete, but Genetrix is surely more likely, given Caesar's responsibility and the presence of symbols of the chief pontificate, which independently recall the Trojan origins of the Julii.[54] Caesar was described as the "descendant of Ares and Aphrodite" in a monument set up at Ephesus by the provincial assembly of Asia;[55] he seems to have visited Ilium (Troy) and bestowed privileges on the city;[56] and he followed Sulla's lead in making a dedication at the sanctuary of Aphrodite at Aphrodisias in

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[50] Taylor 1931, 64.

[51] E.g. *RRC* 456.1a, 458.1, 467.1a, 468.1, 468.2.

[52] Linderski 2007, 164–70. Schilling 1982, 303 and 318, argues that the pontifex maximus was invested with power to take the auspices, but this view is neither compelling nor necessary in the circumstances, given Caesar's appointment as augur.

[53] Carson 1978–81, 1.222; (Crawford) *RRC* 458.1.

[54] See Crawford's notes on other relevant coins of these years, e.g. *RRC* 456.1a, 467.1a, 468.1, 468.2.

[55] Sherk 1984, 100, doc. 79.

[56] Nic. Dam. 68; Luc. 9.950–100; Suet. *Iul*. 79.

Caria.[57] His dedication of a golden Eros, however, appears deliberately to invoke Genetrix rather than Victrix, in direct contrast to Sulla, not only because of the Eastern setting, but also because of the reference to Venus' role as mother.[58] In addition, on 26 September 46 BCE, the final day of his quadruple triumph and the day on which he dedicated his forum temple, Caesar launched the inaugural *ludi Veneris Genetricis* ("Games of Venus the Begetter"), sometimes later called the *ludi Victoriae Caesaris* ("Games of the Victory of Caesar"), a fact which shows the close association between Caesar's successes of these years and the patronage of Venus Genetrix, who should not in fact be confused with roles played by entities such as Victoria or Felicitas.[59] A special college of priests was created to administer the games, indicating that they were to be an annual event.[60] From the beginning, it seems that Caesar envisaged the festival as a public celebration of his family, for he celebrated the funeral games of his daughter Julia, held over from 54 BCE, at the inaugural games.[61] This must have generated much comment, because, as Suetonius says, a gladiatorial show and feast for a woman were unprecedented.[62]

Caesar needed the socially cohesive and emotionally appealing properties of Venus Genetrix and related familial ideas to come to fruition during the final years and months of his life. Unfortunately, the impressions are of limitation and ultimate failure. Caesar had apparently encountered a problem he did not foresee: he became convinced that the state would descend once more into civil war were he to step down from his sovereign position.[63] The solution was for him to signal uncompromising commitment to stability by taking in February 44 BCE the office of *dictator perpetuo* ("dictator forever"), a position which officially recognised and extended his

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[57] Reynolds 1982, 101–3, doc. 12.

[58] Shannon 1997, 28.

[59] *Ludi Veneris Genetricis*: Plin. *HN* 2.93; App. *B Civ.* 3.28; Cass. Dio 49.42.1. *Ludi Victoriae Caesaris*: Cic. *Fam.* 11.28.6; Suet. *Aug.* 10.1. Shannon (1997, 36, 61) concludes that the evidence is not sufficient to support Weinstock's (1971, 91) idea that the games were formally renamed in 45 BCE in honour of a new cult to Caesar himself.

[60] Plin. *HN* 2.93; Obseq. 68.

[61] Cass. Dio 43.22.

[62] Suet. *Iul.* 26.2.

[63] The encouragement of supporters is stressed by Tatum 2008, 152–66; and Stevenson 2015a, 153–60, esp. 160 ("lumbered by others with sole responsibility for state harmony").

autocratic power.[64] This move probably exacerbated existing tensions, which had in recent years been negotiated through extraordinary honours. Paternal and familial ideas were part of the discourse, notably the title *Parens Patriae*, which also seems to have been taken in February 44 BCE.[65] This title indicated in congenial terms that Caesar's autocracy was like that of a gentle father living with the citizens as his "children."[66] Yet such ideas were insufficient to protect him from assassination, which followed in March 44 BCE. Venus Genetrix herself featured in a famous miscalculation because her new temple provided the setting when Caesar failed to stand for the senatorial delegation which was bringing him news of, *inter alia*, the *Parens Patriae* title.[67] If Caesar and/or his advisors thought that the senators were in some sense approaching their "father" in a family space, they might have thought that it was appropriate to remain seated. They were quickly made aware of their mistake.[68]

It seems obvious, at any rate, that the capacity of paternal and familial imagery to win allegiance, soothe sensitivities or negotiate new types or levels of power was distinctly limited. Evocations of this kind did not mean that the state was subsumed into the Julian family beyond the charismatic sphere. Furthermore, parental and familial imagery was deployed in conjunction with other ideas, notably ideas about relationships between humans and gods. Much has been written about the sets of "divine" honours received by Caesar, especially in 45 and 44 BCE.[69] Taylor argued that Caesar's attitude to these honours was influenced by his appreciation of Egyptian monarchy,[70] but this view has been well and truly superseded, with prevailing interpretations focusing on Roman precedents, the accommodation of absolute power and the relative rather than absolute status of divine beings.[71] Caesar was not a megalomaniac seeking kingship but an autocrat negotiating his power in the interests of stability and

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[64] For the date of February 44 BCE and the continuing possibility that Caesar might step down at some point in the future, see Jehne 1987, 15–38.

[65] For the circumstances surrounding Caesar's *Parens Patriae* honour, see Stevenson 1998.

[66] For use of the father analogy to distinguish "tyrants" from "good kings," who were like gentle fathers to their people, see Stevenson 1992.

[67] Suet. *Caes*. 78.1; Plut. *Caes*. 60.4; Cass. Dio 44.8.2.

[68] See Aul. Gell. 2.2 for embarrassment followed by philosophical discussion when a provincial governor and his father were presented with only one available chair.

[69] For an overview, see Stevenson 2015a, 145–51.

[70] Taylor 1931, 62.

[71] Price 1984; Gradel 2002; Koortbojian 2013.

advantage.[72] Moreover, he was not establishing a family dynasty with political and military implications. Autocratic power need not imply succession at all, let alone by a family member, and especially in Republican Rome. Roman dictators conventionally stood down; Sulla had retired; Romulus and Numa had not been succeeded.[73] The single measure that might be relevant is referred to by Cassius Dio, who says that a *senatus consultum* ("decree of the Senate") was passed to enable a Julian successor to take over the pontificate maximus.[74] This might seem to flow from a view of the chief pontificate as a "Julian" office, a view which in any case could support the measure, but it seems more probably a product of hindsight knowledge that this office became an imperial prerogative, and in any case it falls miserably short of a decisive plan to pass on Caesar's autocratic power to a member of his family at his death. Military and political control would require more substantial powers, above all *imperium*, for a start.

Remarkably, however, paternal and familial imagery came strongly to the fore after Caesar's death in the ideological battles between Caesar's supporters and opponents. It seems that the charismatic aura created by Caesar around his family was strong enough (and well enough known) to fuel a series of crucial developments, which themselves must have augmented the aura still further. For example, heavy emphasis was placed on Caesar as *Parens Patriae* in the wake of his assassination, partly to condemn the conspirators as parricides, and partly as a reflection of genuine popular sentiment towards the murdered dictator. A cult to Caesar as *Parens Patriae* sprang up in the Roman Forum on the site where he was cremated. Popular feeling ran so high that the consul Dolabella was charged with breaking up this cult and scattering its adherents.[75] Octavian stressed his devotion to his father and determination to take on the responsibilities left to him by Caesar. In consequence, the concept of "dutifulness" (*pietas*) received much attention, especially "dutifulness towards one's father" (*pietas erga parentem*), which was expressed by both Octavian and the "Caesarians" towards Caesar, and by the sons of Pompey and the "Pompeians" towards the dead Pompey.[76] The civil war looked at times like conflict

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[72] Stevenson 1998; Wardle 2009.
[73] Hamlyn 2011, 98.
[74] Cass. Dio 44.5.3; cf. Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom*. 1.70.4.
[75] See Stevenson 1998 for a detailed discussion.
[76] Welch 2012, 304–12.

between warring families. Virgil's "dutiful" (*pius*) Aeneas took shape against this background.[77]

Venus Genetrix remained prominent under Augustus. Aside from her role in Virgil's epic *Aeneid*, she had a statue in the temple to Mars Ultor ("the Avenger"), which was ideologically as well as visually aligned to Caesar's Temple of Venus Genetrix, since Mars was the consort of Venus and the temple to Mars Ultor was vowed at Philippi in 42 BCE, where Antony and Octavian overcame the forces of Caesar's assassins. The promotional programme of Augustus, however, was not so reliant on Venus Genetrix. Other deities, such as Apollo and (of course) Divus Julius, rose to prominence, and members of the imperial family gradually took on highly visible commands in the army and elsewhere.[78] Paternal and familial imagery remained valuable, but Rome's citizens increasingly became accustomed to autocratic power.

I have tried to show how Caesar sought progressively to exploit paternal and familial ideas, how such ideas became more visible and explicit, if not necessarily more socially powerful, during the years of his dictatorship and how the role of Venus Genetrix was enhanced as it became more advantageous to present Caesar's autocratic power in terms of paternal and familial ideas which were normally congenial to the people of Rome. It seems that Caesar wanted Rome's citizens to think of the state as owing a fundamental debt to the Julian family, and even as being an extension of it, given mutual descent from, and dependence on, Venus Genetrix.

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[77] For references and discussion, see Weinstock 1971, 200–5, 214–17, 248–59, Shannon 1997, 37–39; Stevenson 1998, 267–68; Smallcombe 2017, 86–91.
[78] For references and discussion, see Weinstock 1971, 80–87; Stevenson 2009; Stevenson 2013; Smallcombe 2017, 91–104.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEORISING ROMAN CULT: AUGUSTINE ON VARRO

DOUGAL BLYTH

Marcus Terentius Varro's *Antiquitates Rerum Divinarum* (hereafter, as conventionally, *Divine Antiquities: ARD*),[1] written at the end of the Roman Republic, is known only from fragments, most from Augustine's early fifth-century *De Civitate Dei* (hereafter *City of God: De civ. D*), Books 4, 6 and 7, in which Augustine develops a series of criticisms of traditional Roman religion as interpreted by Varro.[2] Both writers present theoretically loaded explanations of something that is a central feature of the life and working of the Roman political community, and, piled one on top of the other, the result is a bizarrely kaleidoscopic view of Roman religion. Yet Varro's *ARD* is profoundly important as the first ancient work from which anything significant survives on this topic, and it comes from Rome's most celebrated scholar; moreover, Augustine was the greatest intellectual influence on western Europe after his own time until the Renaissance and the *City of God* his fundamental apologetic for Christianity and denunciation of pre-Christian Rome.

My particular interest in this study is Augustine's repeated insistence that Varro teaches that Roman religion is false, and yet must be maintained. To be more precise, according to Augustine, Varro communicates this indirectly, in a way that only a certain kind of philosophically acute reader will recognise. Nearly all modern commentators agree that Augustine is mistaken, but little attempt has been made to understand why. Explanation of Augustine's criticisms usually remains at the level of listing and

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[1] For the title see Jocelyn 1982, 183–86: *antiquitates* + gen. is used in the sense of the Greek historiographical term ἀρχαιολογία ("an account of something ancient").
[2] For the collected fragments of the *Divine Antiquities* see Cardauns 1976, Vol.1, with commentary in Vol. 2. Augustine is cited from Walsh 2007 and 2010.

evaluating them individually, under the assumption that, owing to his different set of Christian theological presuppositions, he is just unsympathetic to and dismissive of Varro's real enterprise, with the possible implication that the claims he makes about Varro's real meaning are insincere.[3] Yet in order to account properly for the kaleidoscopic impression Augustine's report produces, it is necessary not just to demonstrate that he is mistaken about Varro's theory of Roman religion, but also to explain why.

Following an account of Varro's *ARD*, I will turn to an analysis of Augustine's technique for interpreting him. This will lead to my explanation of his error. I will argue that, by contrast with the still basically oral political culture of first-century-BCE Rome, the transformed social role of books and literacy in late antiquity encourages the presupposition that truth, and a thinker's real state of mind and beliefs, are to be found primarily and ultimately in a text. Given the mental potential to conceal, and the assumption that the text is, in effect, equivalent to a writer's mind, it then becomes the special expertise of those considered wise or learned to interpret the hidden and underlying meanings of complex texts, on the mistaken assumption that writers from quite different cultural and historical contexts will have produced texts addressed to readers with just this expertise.

Varro's Divine Antiquities

Varro's slightly younger contemporary Cicero presents himself in the *Academica Posteriora* as telling Varro,

> nam nos in nostra urbe peregrinantis errantisque tamquam hospites tui libri quasi domum deduxerunt ut possemus aliquando qui et ubi essemus agnoscere. tu aetatem patriae, tu descriptiones temporum, tu sacrorum iura, tu sacerdotum, tu domesticam, tu bellicam disciplinam, tu sedem regionum locorum, tu omnium divinarum humanarumque rerum nomina, genera, officia, causas aperuisti. (Cic. *Ac. Post.* 1.9)

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[3] See especially Pépin 1976, 311–13; Lieberg 1972, 193–99; Hagendahl 1967, 604–9, and 613–15; also Walsh 2010, 164, Ando 2010, 76; Van Nuffelen 2010, 164, 166–68, 186; Clark 2010, 182–86, 192–93; Rousseau 2009, 166–67; Ando 2008, 17–18; Klauck 2007, 340; Burns 2001, 57–60, 64; Baier 1997, 52–53; Lehmann 1997, 195; O'Daly 1999, 105–7, 109; O'Daly 1994, 71–75; Lieberg 1982, 50–51; Pépin 1956, 276–77. Augustine's interpretation of Varro as a coded writer is actually accepted by O'Daly 1999, 103; Fortin 1980, 248–49 and 246; and Barra 1969, 39–41, 52–54, 62.

> When we were journeying and wandering like visitors in our own city, your books brought us home, as it were, so we could at length realise who and where we were. You revealed the age of our fatherland, the chronology of its time periods, the laws of religion and of the priesthoods, domestic and military training, the location of regions and places, and the names, kinds, responsibilities and origins of all divine and human matters.[4]

The final phrase *omnes divinae humaneque res* ("all divine and human matters") clearly alludes to the whole sequence *Antiquitates rerum humanarum divinarumque*, the second part of which, the *Divine Antiquities*, was dedicated to Caesar,[5] and had almost certainly appeared in 46 (or less probably 47) BCE, shortly after the latter's reconciliation with Varro and Cicero following the battle of Pharsalus, and at most a year or two before Cicero's reference to it.[6]

The *ARD* is profoundly important as an early work on the history of Roman religion.[7] Recent discussions have diverged on Varro's aims, as to whether it is primarily a "focused universal" history of Roman religion,[8] a work of philosophical theology,[9] or rather civic theology.[10] Cicero confirms in the passage cited above what we know independently from the scope of Varro's prose writings, including the later *De lingua Latina*, of which two books and some fragments survive, that as an antiquarian he set out informally to theorise the ideal characteristics of Roman political and social culture on the basis of the history of such factors.[11]

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[4] August. *De civ. D.* 6.2.3 reads *publicam* for *bellicam*; translations unless otherwise identified are my own.

[5] Lactant. *Div. inst.* 1.6.7, August. *De civ. D.* 7.35.2; see Cardauns 1976, Vol. 1, 14.

[6] Horsfall 1972, 120–22; Jocelyn 1982, 165–77, 204, dates it to the 50s BCE but this is rejected by all other modern scholarship I have seen; and rebutted in detail by Lehmann 1997, 166–69, cf. 160–66.

[7] For discussion of predecessors and other contemporary Roman works see Rüpke 2005, 112–13; Beard, North and Price 1998, 152–53; Cardauns 1978, 81n7.

[8] Rüpke 2014; for the terminology 263–68; cf. Rüpke 2005, 114–15, 118–19.

[9] Van Nuffelen 2010.

[10] Klauck 2007, 339; cf. Ando 2010, 76–77, "a theology of practice."

[11] Jocelyn 1982, esp. 177–91, 199–200, 203 argues that Varro's motives in the *ARD* were purely antiquarian and involved no significant political-cultural aims, a view rejected by all other scholarship I have seen; cf. Rüpke 2005, 113; O'Daly 1999, 102–3; Baier 1997, 42–46, 59–60; O'Daly 1994, 71; Rawson 1985, 299 n.3, 312–14; Cardauns 1978, 94; Lieberg 1972, 186–87, 190; Weinstock 1971, 32, 181; Hagendahl 1967, 602; Pépin 1956, 266; Boyancé 1955, 83–84.

While the *ARD* was clearly primarily a work of historical research, the research was motivated by contemporary cultural concerns such as the preservation of Roman religion as a social-political influence (fr. 2a = *De civ. D.* 6.2.5), and it employed a philosophical point of view, that of the Greek Academic Antiochus of Ascalon, which was dominated by a Stoicising view of philosophical, or natural, theology.[12] In particular, Varro seems to have hoped Caesar shared his ultra-traditionalist views on religious renovation, and in any case the dedication of this work to him was part of the rapprochement that brought Varro his appointment as director of a project for a Roman library (that was abandoned owing to Caesar's assassination).[13]

The scope and organisation of the *Antiquities* is reported to us by Augustine, *De civ. D.* 6.3 (= *ARD* fr. 4). It was written in two separate parts, *Human Antiquities* in twenty-five ancient books, and *Divine Antiquities* in sixteen. This articulation indicates that the whole is a study of historical human institutions, beliefs and practices, which are both secular and religious; it is a work of cultural history. Most of our fragments of the better known second part, the *Divine Antiquities*, come from Augustine's *City of God*, while there are also a few from earlier Christian apologists, who found Varro's work a useful target, owing to his thoroughness and scholarly reputation, as a result of which there are additionally a few fragments found in late non-Christian authors, such as Servius and Macrobius.

Augustine tells us that the *Divine Antiquities* had the following structure. There was a somewhat politico-philosophical introductory book, from which many of the surviving fragments come, then three books on religious officials (priests, augurs, and other diviners), a second three on sacred places, a third three on religious occasions, including holy days, circus games, and theatrical festivals, and a fourth three on consecrations and rites. A fifth three books are on the gods, from which most of the rest

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[12] Older scholars asserted Varro's source was directly Stoic (e.g., Pépin 1976, 28–32; Pépin 1956, 258 with n.13), but since Boyancé 1955, 74–82, practically all now accept that Antiochus was the conduit, and that Varro's views have demonstrable Academic elements: Van Nuffelen 2010, 164, 173, 181; Clark 2010, 191; Rawson 1985, 313–14; Jocelyn 1982, 201–2; Cardauns 1978, 84; Boyancé 1976, 138–49; Hagendahl 1967, 615–16.
[13] On Varro's connection with Caesar see Baier 1997, 19 with n.13, 46, 59–60; Lehmann 1997, 160–67; Jocelyn 1982, 161–64 (but note his dating of *ARD*); Horsfall 1972, 120–22; Weinstock 1971, 32, 181. The suggestion that Varro aimed to facilitate Caesar's divinisation seems far-fetched, given his interest in philosophical religion (for which see below).

of the fragments come: the first of this set is on what Varro called *dei certi*, and the second on *dei incerti*. The distinction is probably between gods with clearly identifiable functions and those without.[14] The analysis of religion revealed by the organisation of the books, in terms of which official is responsible for what rite, where, and when, and in relation to which appropriate god, implies that the practical import of Varro's work was as a handbook for the correct maintenance of all public cults.[15]

The third and final book is on twenty principal and select gods (*praecipui atque selecti*). They included many major state gods (fr. 229 = August. *De civ. D.* 7.2.1),[16] but the principle of selection has occasioned interpretive debate, since this last book seems to have focused on Varro's use of allegorical and etymological reinterpretation of traditional gods in terms of Antiochus' Stoicising natural theology (see August. *De civ. D.* 6.8–9 and generally Book 7).

According to this doctrine the cosmos as a whole is a living god, whose soul can be identified on the one hand with Jupiter, but also, on the other, in relation to the life of particular elemental parts of the cosmos, with other particular gods, for instance in regard to the sea with Neptune, and so on. Moreover, some gods, such as Saturn and other fertility deities mentioned, seem to have a particular association with seeds, which Varro elucidated allegorically. Plausibly, this is an articulation of the Stoic ontological doctrine whereby what Plato and Aristotle had called the "forms" (*eidê*) of things are explained as *spermatikoi logoi* ("seed reasons").[17] Again, Varro's identification of the Samothracian mystery cult's "great gods" (*megaloi theoi*) with the public *penates* of Rome and also with the Capitoline triad (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva) has an important allegorical role that is subject to scholarly disagreement.[18] Here Minerva

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[14] Fr. 204 = August. *De civ. D.* 7.17.1. On the *di certi* and *incerti* see Rüpke 2005, 119–23; Baier 1997 48, 56–57; Hagendahl 1967, 603.

[15] Fr. 3 = August. *De civ. D.* 4.22, and cf. Lieberg 1972, 190.

[16] On the *di selecti* see Van Nuffelen 2010, 165.

[17] See Clark 2010, 193–4; Van Nuffelen 2010, 165–72.

[18] Frs. 205–6 partly = August. *De civ. D.* 7.28.2. According to Van Nuffelen 2010, 163, 176–79 it is central to Varro's allegorical explanation of Roman religion; this is disputed by Rüpke 2014, 256n45. See earlier Cardauns 1960, 65–66. There are further problems: for the cult see Cole 1984, esp. 100–3 on the context for, and corrections to, Varro's identifications. Varro seems clearly wrong, at the very least in that the *theoi megaloi* (unlike the Capitoline triad) were two male and one female, with a further male attendant (see Cole 1984, 2–3, citing Mnaseas); again, Varro may have confused these gods with those of the Samothracian *polis*, including

represents in some sense forms as ontological principles (fr. 206 = *De civ. D.* 7.28.2), but almost certainly not as transcendent.[19] Overall the method of explanation here seems designed to reconcile philosophically educated members of the Roman aristocracy, who might well otherwise have become alienated from traditional cult, with the claim that it is not just politically necessary, but, after all, even meaningful.[20]

Theologia tripertita *and Augustine's interpretation of Varro*

As an intellectual scaffold for his allegorising interpretation of divinities, Varro makes use of the categorisation of beliefs about gods commonly known as the *theologia tripertita*: a threefold distinction between poetic mythology, cult doctrine, and natural (that is, philosophical) theology. There are many theories concerning the origin of this schema, but it seems clear, given Varro's use of Greek terminology to introduce it[21] and the existence of a version in Ps.-Plutarch *Placita* at 1.6.9 Diels (itself most probably the product of a doxographical tradition originating in Aristotle's school with Hellenistic developments, and perhaps taking the form in which we have it in Alexandria),[22] that Varro derived the tripartite schema from a

Athena; there was also a general Greek confusion of two of the mystery gods with the Dioskouroi, which were also represented in the temple of the Penates in Rome on the Velia as *Di magni* (Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.68), which Varro rejects (*Ling.* 5.58), yet here he claims the Samothracian mystery gods are only two in number.

[19] See Blank 2012, 273–78, arguing that Minerva signifies rather the divine mind (as Jupiter normally does here), but it seems unnecessary to go this far to avoid attributing transcendent forms to Antiochus as Varro's philosophical source, especially when Augustine as our textual source explicitly writes *exempla rerum quas Plato appellat ideas; . . . ideas Minervam vult intellegi; . . . exemplum secundum quod fiat*, and then asserts critically that for Plato the forms transcend the heavens. Here it is clear that the reference to Plato and the term *idea* are Augustine's addition, and Varro used the term *exempla*, and defined it in a way that is consistent with Aristotle's concept of form imminent in nature, as would be expected in Antiochus.

[20] On Varro's readership see Cardauns 1976, Vol. 2, 129, "die gebildeten Kreise Roms," and Brunt 1989, 183–86, 195–98 on the threat of philosophy, and cf. Liebeschuetz 1979, 34–35, 39 and 54 on the Roman aristocracy and religion, and Momigliano 1984.

[21] Fr. 6 = August. *De civ. D.* 6.12.1; cf. fr. 7 = August. *De civ. D.* 6.5.1–2.

[22] See Mansfeld and Runia 2009, 3–31, and Bremmer 1998 arguing for the Alexandrian recension.

Greek source,[23] probably Antiochus or otherwise perhaps either Posidonius or Panaetius; moreover it seems likely that the tripartition of beliefs about gods was first schematised in the early Stoa on the basis of concepts and distinctions from Plato and Aristotle.

Augustine *De civ. D.* 4.27.1–3 refers to a document in which the pontifex Quintus Mucius Scaevola (cos. 95 BCE) is also said to have discussed a tripartition of gods on the same basis, rejecting the poets' depictions of gods engaged in indignities, and those of philosophers as partly irrelevant and partly harmful, in that they claim both that some were men and not gods (Hercules, Asclepius, and the Dioskouroi), and that the real gods (lacking sex, age, and body) are not like the cult images worshipped. Natural theology thus "does not suit political states."

If this comes indirectly from a work by Scaevola himself, or his oral teaching, as Schiavone (1976, 27–28) argues, it would probably date from the 80s BCE. Nevertheless the balance of scholarly opinion is to accept the argument of Cardauns (1960) that the source is one of Varro's works called *Logistorici*, the *Curio de cultu deorum*, and that this was in the form of a dialogue in which Scaevola may have spoken.[24] In that case there is no need to assume that the idea of theological tripartition goes back in the Latin tradition to the historical Scaevola.[25]

This would then be consistent with treating the reference in *alio loco* (August. *De civ. D.* 4.31.2) as to a later stage of the discussion in the

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[23] See Klauck 2007, 335; Lieberg 1982, 39; Schiavone 1976, 21–23; Pépin 1976, 28–29; Lieberg 1973, 106–7; Pépin 1956, 285; Boyancé 1955, 59n3. Rüpke 2005, 108, 118, 124 is clearly incorrect to assert that Varro originated the tripartite schema (see esp. Cardauns 1960, 38 on *tradita*, *De civ. D* 4.27.1, and *appellant*, *De civ. D* 6.5.2).

[24] *Curio* fr. 5 Cardauns = *De civ. D* 4.27.1–3; see Cardauns 1960, 34–38 and 52–53, proposing that the character Curio introduces the tripartition, and Scaevola merely comments upon it. The key considerations are that *relatum est in litteras . . . Scaevolam disputasse* implies Scaevola is not the author of Augustine's immediate source, which is probably Varro (already so Pépin 1956, 269n20); while in *quod dicere etiam in libris rerum divinarum Varro ipse non dubitat*, *etiam* suggests the *ARD* is here referred to as a second work by Varro on religion (thus besides the *Curio*) and *ipse* that by contrast here he writes in his own name, not dialogue form. See Blank 2012, 263–64; Beard, North and Price 1998, 151n104; Rawson 1985, 300 and n.10; Cardauns' arguments are rejected by Laughton 1962 and Hagendahl 1967, 619–20; cf. Boyancé 1955, 59–62, before Cardauns attributed it to the *Curio* in 1960.

[25] Schiavone 1976, 15–26 is not able to cite any independent evidence of a work by Scaevola that would have included such a distinction and doctrine.

Curio,[26] in which the speaker would have developed Scaevola's simple and apparently mutually exclusive alternatives in the tripartition into something like the allegorist theory found in *ARD*, so as both to rehabilitate philosophy politically and reconcile at least some philosophical doctrines with religion by means of the comparison with a mystery cult. Certainly, other fragments of the *Curio* collected in Cardauns (1960) are concerned with the same themes as *ARD*, including prominently the Samothracian mystery cult (*Curio* fr. 1 = Probus *in* Verg. *Ecl*. 6.31).

Augustine's treatment of this report in *De civ. D.* 4.27.2 is instructive for his general method in dealing with Varro's use of the tripartite theology in the *ARD*. He infers here from Scaevola's political opposition to the philosophical claims that some gods were men (a form of Euhemerism)[27] and that the true gods differ from cult representations,

> haec pontifex nosse populos non vult; nam falsa esse non putat. expedire igitur existimat falli in religione civitates. (August. *De civ. D*. 4.27.2)

> The pontiff does not want populaces to be aware of these things (*haec*); assuredly (*nam*) he does not think they are false. Thus, he judges it convenient for states to be misled in religious matters.

The word *haec* is ambiguous, applicable to the doctrines either as putatively true or as merely ideas that the people of a state should not even hear mentioned; the particle *nam* would only mean "for" on the former view, and otherwise it just introduces a second premise.[28] Augustine may here be covering himself, in case a reader had the *Curio* before him, while suggesting to other readers that the text explicitly says something that it in fact did not (that is, that the philosophical doctrines at issue are true).

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[26] This is Cardaun's *ARD* fr. 21, obelised to indicate uncertainty of attribution to *DA*; Cardauns 1976, 23 *ad* fr. 21 interprets *alio loco* (sc. *atque huius libri*, fr. 12), but there is no close connection in thought or language with fr. 12, apart from that which Augustine himself makes as part of his interpretive argument. See further below on the passage (August. *De civ. D.* 4.31.1–2), and Augustine's treatment of Varro here. On the direction of discussion in the *Curio* see Cardauns 1960, 51–68.

[27] See Baier 1997, 58 on the origin of and nature of Euhemerism: it is important to distinguish between the doctrine proper, asserting that all gods are merely dead mortal benefactors, and the Stoic version, which derives some (not all) gods like this, but claims they really are divine, since their reason has returned to the divine reason; Baier identifies Varro with the latter view. On Euhemerism in Rome see Liebeschuetz 1979, 33.

[28] Cf. LS *s.v.* II.A.

In any case, against earlier views, Pépin (1976, 12–18) has argued comprehensively and persuasively that *nam falsa esse non putat* is merely Augustine's interpretive judgment, and moreover must be incorrect, since, in context, Scaevola would have had to give a reason for accepting these philosophical claims, and Augustine would have had to report it.[29] Thus Augustine's conclusion ("he judges it convenient for states to be misled in religious matters") is entirely tendentious. Augustine himself would gladly agree that Hercules was not a real god and that the true god was incorporeal, and so assumes (for the sake of argument?) that Scaevola, as an intelligent and moral man would also have done so. But that is anachronistic.

In a way that is quite similar to the view attributed to Scaevola, Varro observes in fragments of *ARD* that the poetic depiction of the gods is frequently false and unworthy of them (fr. 7 = August. *De civ. D.* 6.5.2), while what philosophers say, "ears can more easily bear in a school behind walls than outside in the forum" (fr. 8 = August. *De civ. D.* 6.5.3). This might well seem to mean that philosophical doctrines can only be understood with quiet and concentration, but Augustine suggests Varro means that this natural theology is to be kept from the knowledge of the general populace, even though Varro himself prefers it, while significantly, Augustine notes, he does not propose that mythological poetry be banished from the theatre (*De civ. D.* 6.5.4–5).

In any case, Augustine infers on these grounds, as he does for Scaevola, that Varro also proposes that the Roman people be systematically misled. Augustine gives further reasons for this interpretation: notwithstanding the threefold distinction, Varro really thinks cultic beliefs are fairly completely integrated with the rejected poetic mythology, particularly in the form of the theatrical shows that are part of state cult (*De civ. D.* 6.5.8, 6.6.2), so that state cult (which he calls civic, or political, theology) itself contains false beliefs. Augustine then argues again for the latter point, that while in one place Varro treats state cult as including elements of both the others (fr. 11, in *De civ. D.* 6.6.6), he implies elsewhere that the philosophical elements would only be there ideally, but in fact the false

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[29] Cf. similarly Cardauns 1960, 55 with n.9. The contrary view is held by Hagendahl 1967, 611–13 and Lieberg 1973, 86, 90–92, 101–2, 104; Fortin 1980, 238–43 provides a good summary and analysis of Pépin, but then (243–46) in defending Augustine's claim ignores Pépin's key consideration that Scaevola's political rejection of natural theology is philosophically unreflective, and motivated by fear of the consequences of any public debate, so that it is irrelevant whether the theories under consideration could have been refuted. For Scaevola's implied attitude, see rather Schiavone 1976, 53–62.

poetic elements alone are actually present (*De civ. D.* 6.6.7). Augustine next supports this with his own arguments that the depictions of gods in myth are congruent with their cult statues (*De civ. D.* 6.7.2), while the stories associated with or enacted in their rites are similar to or worse than those in the theatre (*De civ. D.* 6.7.3–5). This leads to Augustine's overall interpretation of Varro's meaning:

> quoniam acutissimi homines atque doctissimi, a quibus ista conscripta sunt, ambas improbandas intellegabant, et illam scilicet fabulosam et istam civilem, illam vero audebant improbare, hanc non audebant; illam culpandam proposuerunt, hanc eius similem comparandam exposuerunt, non ut haec prae illa tenenda eligeretur, sed ut cum illa respuenda intellegeretur, atque ita sine periculo eorum qui civilem theologian reprehendere metuebant, utraque contempta, ea quam naturalem vocant apud meliores animos inveniret locum. (August. *De civ. D.* 6.8.4)

> Since those insightful and learned men by whom that was written thought both the mythical and the civic theologies should be rejected, they actually dared to reject the one, but not the other, and they attributed blame to the former, but they made clear that the latter, since it was similar to this, needed to be compared with it, not so that it should be selected to be retained in preference to the former, but so that it should be understood that it must be rejected along with the former; and in order that accordingly, without danger to those who were afraid to criticise civic theology, by the dismissal of both, that theology which they call natural should be welcomed by superior minds.[30]

Augustine thereupon launches into a critical account of Varro's allegorical interpretation of gods in the final book of the *Divine Antiquities*, which continues until the end of the following Book 7 of the *City of God.*

I have suggested above that Varro's stoicising interpretation of Roman gods is clearly meant to reconcile the educated reading class with the practice of Roman cult. Undoubtedly at this time the ability to read, or at least to read a recherché theoretical-historical work, in Latin, like the *Divine Antiquities*, was restricted to the small exclusive group of Roman aristocrats who had also held all political power, at least up until Pharsalus, and moreover had in many cases been exposed to Greek philosophy in their

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[30] cf. *hic certe totum consilium prodidit velut sapientium per quos civitates et populi regerentur* (August. *De civ. D.* 4.31.2).

youth, often in Greek schools as Cicero shows, or with Greek teachers in Rome.[31]

These aristocrats undoubtedly form a class already disinclined to a naïve interpretation of Roman cult. Instead they are attuned to the need to *interpret* it, that is to make sense of it in terms of *beliefs*, as a result of their more or less philosophical education, or else to reject it on that basis, as Epicureans for instance did. In other respects, Roman religion was primarily a matter of practice,[32] although inclusive of expectations of divine responses to human religious or sacrilegious actions, and open to a more limited and specific kind of interpretation of signs and events in such terms. It is unclear whether Varro engaged with this kind of belief in the efficacy of prayer, sacrifice, and divination, but he clearly valued religion, probably primarily as part of the cultural fabric of the state and the *mos maiorum* (although he does not use this term in surviving fragments). Certainly, he expressed his aim as to save religion: according to Augustine,

> se timere ne pereant non incursu hostilii sed civium neglegentia, de qua illos velut ruina liberari a se dicit et in memoria bonorum per eius modi libros recondi atque servari utiliore cura quam Metellus de incendio sacra Vestalia et Aeneas de Troiano excidio Penates liberasse praedicatur. (fr. 2a = August. *De civ. D.* 6.2.5)

> (he said) he feared that (the gods) would perish not because of an enemy attack but the citizens' neglect, from which destruction he said they were being saved by him and stored in the memory of good men through books of this kind, and protected with a more beneficial care than that with which Metellus is reported to have saved the ritual utensils of Vesta from fire and Aeneas his Penates from the sack of Troy.[33]

[31] See Harris 1989, esp. ch. 7, esp. 231–32, 259, 266 on literacy in Varro's age, although functional literacy is by no means the same thing as the kind of educated scholarly literacy Varro's book would have demanded, something restricted to a much smaller part of the ten percent (overall) of the Roman Empire, and twenty to thirty percent of men and ten percent of women in Rome and Italy, who Harris, 22 and 266 respectively, estimates may have been literate.

[32] But see, e.g. King 2003, a correction of earlier overstatements with references, and Ando 2010, 76–77. It nevertheless remains true that belief only enters into Roman religion in the same way it enters into all human action, and not as itself a defining feature of religious engagement, as in Christianity.

[33] Cf. 4.31.1.

Augustine's technique for interpreting Varro

By contrast, Augustine's overall motive in the *City of God* is to provide a Christian *apologetic*, and in Books 4 through 7 his particular aim is to show that the defence of traditional Roman religion by earlier Roman writers is deeply flawed. His attack has two main prongs: firstly, he regards Varro's detailed interpretation of traditional beliefs as allegorical symbols for natural philosophical truths as unconvincing and a failure, a topic I shall not discuss further here;[34] his second strategy, my present focus, is to interpret Varro as covertly indicating that he himself admits that traditional Roman religion is nonsense and worse, and as keeping up pretences only for political purposes.

Augustine lived in a different cultural world from earlier antiquity, one in which the written word had comprehensively replaced the spoken word as the means for public debate. At this time there was no overall increase in literacy over the high empire, but if anything, a slight drop, at least in some places,[35] and probably a slight re-arrangement of the social distribution of literacy.[36] Moreover Rome was no longer the unique locus of Latin literate culture, which had spread to other parts of the western empire by the second century CE.

But there was in late antiquity something new: an assumption of universal literacy *as an ideal*, at least in the Christian world.[37] In Augustine's

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[34] On Augustine's criticisms of Varro's allegorical interpretation of gods see Blank 2012, 269; Clark 2010, 192–96; Van Nuffelen 2010, 164, 166–67; Burns 2001, 58–59; Pépin 1976, 314, 367–72 and 375–87; Boyancé 1976, 149–51; Lieberg 1972, 197–99; Hagendahl 1967, 603–8, 616–17.

[35] Harris 1989, 285–90, 297, 312–16, 318, 321–22.

[36] Harris 1989, 290 (bureaucracy open to the literate poor), 298–300 (importance of texts in Christianity from the fourth century), 303 (Christian schools in Egypt), 305 (unsurprisingly, "it is hard to resist the impression that Christianity made particularly heavy use of the written word"), 308 (schools in all significant towns); nevertheless literacy was still generally restricted to the wealthy and socially elevated, although universal among such people (310–14); but in the Latin west (all?) clergy and monks were taught (319). Cf. Horsfall 1991, esp. 73–75 for a more generous estimate of Christian literacy.

[37] Monks in Egypt were required to be literate according to Pachomius' *Praecepta* 139–40; cf. Harris 1989, 303; several Christian writers (including Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Cyprian, and Novatian) encouraged lay reading (Harris 1989, 304n91); Caesarius of Arles (*Serm.* 6.1–2) in the sixth century claimed reading was a general Christian obligation, while admitting country people and businessmen

own case, Brown (1968, 90) writes of "the pressure of the need to extend this religious literacy as widely as possible." Thus, Augustine himself writes to as wide an audience as possible, and assumes that, hypothetically at least, he writes for the whole world to read. Consequently, it is easy for him to presuppose that all previous writers, such as Varro, also expected their texts to be universally accessible and legible. In that case, it would be natural for Augustine to assume that in evaluating traditional Roman religion, Varro might need to write *carefully*, as undoubtedly Christian writers, aware of doctrinal disputes, would need to do, at the very least so as not to create inadvertently a false impression about their beliefs.

Moreover Augustine lived in a Mediterranean-wide empire no longer focused politically on the city of Rome, with a heritage, even when it had been so focused, of emperors stifling free political speech, which consequently prioritised the careful written expression of opinions.[38] As a result, by Augustine's time the written word was assumed to be the key to a man's real thought, and yet perhaps politically coded so that meaning can only be seen by those it is meant to reach (while others would gain a different meaning that the writer wanted them to believe).[39] During the Principate, as rhetorical textbooks make clear, an interest in, and undoubtedly a practice of, "figured" speech developed, involving *emphasis* (leaving things unsaid but implied) and even thus implying the very opposite of what was explicitly stated.[40] I suggest there is no real evidence that such techniques were commonly recognised before the first century CE, which associates them with the political effects of the Principate. Thus, the retrojection of

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might not be able to (Harris 1989, 316). Cf. also Grafton and Williams 2006 on Christian book production.

[38] See Cramer 1945, with full references, for the political circumstances and in particular the burning of politically critical books.

[39] On the general topic of "veiled speech" in antiquity see recently the essays in Balthussen and Davis (eds.) 2015. The classic, although controversial, theoretical discussion is Strauss 1952, but this does not recognise the implications of the changing roles of reading and writing in the different cultural and historical circumstances that I discuss here.

[40] See Ahl 1984, whose evidence for a fifth-century-BCE origin in Athens is weak (178, 180, 189, and cf. 203–4 on the *Iliad*); he does not make a clear or close connection between such evidence and the manifestly political and judicial uses recognised in the imperial period; see esp. Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.64–72, esp. 65, and cf. 9.1.14; Demetr. *Eloc.* 289; and [Dion. Hal.] *Rhet.* 8–9, with Heath 2003, 82–93 and 100–102, dating the latter work to the second century CE.

this art in Pseudo-Dionysius' *Ars Rhetorica* 8–9 to earlier authors and times is analogous to Augustine's treatment of Varro as I identify it here.[41]

The key question now is which world Varro lives in, and whether he deliberately engages in the kind of encoding that Augustine attributes to him. It is important here to note that Varro's scholarly works were not rhetorically sophisticated and were recognised by Augustine and others to lack style.[42]

An illuminating example of Augustine's interpretive technique occurs in Book 4 of the *City of God*. Here he reports Varro as stating in the *Divine Antiquities* that it would have been better ideally if the state cult had been founded in accordance explicitly with natural theology, but that as it is he is bound to support the traditional customs and beliefs of Rome and has written to prevent the people from despising them (fr. 12 = *De civ. D.* 4.31.1). Augustine continues,

> quibus verbis homo acutissimus satis indicat non se aperire omnia quae non sibi tantum contemptui essent sed etiam ipsi vulgo despicienda viderentur, nisi tacerentur. ego ista conicere putari debui, nisi evidenter alio loco ipse diceret de religionibus loquens multa esse vera quae non modo vulgo scire non sit utile, sed etiam, tametsi falsa sunt, aliter existimare populum expediat, et ideo Graecos teletas ac mysteria taciturnitate parietibusque clausisse. hic certe totum consilium prodidit velut sapientium per quos civitates et populi regerentur. (August. *De civ. D.* 4.31.1–2)

> By what he says here, this most insightful man makes clear enough that he does not reveal everything, not only not things he himself considers matters of contempt, but also what would seem worthless to the very populace, if it were not kept secret. Now I would have to be thought to be speculating about this, if he did not himself say explicitly in another place, while talking about religion, that there are many true things that not only it is not useful for the populace to know, and moreover many things that, even though they are false, it is convenient for the people to believe, and for this reason the Greeks have enclosed their mystery rites with silence and walls. Here [Augustine continues] he certainly betrays the whole strategy of these so-called wise men, by whom states and peoples were ruled.[43]

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[41] Demetr. *Eloc.* 287–88, identifying the technique in Pl. *Phd.* 59c (putatively a criticism of those absent at Socrates' death), is not convincing, and in any case clearly non-political—at best urbane delicacy.

[42] *qui tamen etsi minus est suavis elocutio,* . . . (Aug. *De civ. D.* 6.2.1).

[43] The penultimate sentence includes Cardauns' *ARD* fr. 21; see above (with note 26) for my suggested attribution of this rather to the *Curio*.

If, as suggested above, "another place" (*alio loco*) refers to a lost part of Varro's *Curio* (where in any case Scaevola's denunciation of poetry and philosophy must have been revised, given the evidence that the allegorical interpretation of cult was present there too), Augustine's interpretation of fr. 12 is shown to be tendentious. The comparison of the deeper meaning of Roman religion with the secrets of a mystery cult is merely an allusion to the interpretation of the former in terms of the Samothracian mysteries, with its two layers of initiation. It is not a denial of the truth of the public appearance of religion, but merely an indication of its incompleteness without "initiation" into philosophy, and then the allegorical interpretation of Roman cult.[44]

But if that is the case, then it confirms that fr. 8 = *De civ. D.* 6.5.3 (discussed above), in which Varro recommends keeping what philosophers say "in a school behind walls," does not suggest that the populace should be excluded from any understanding, as Augustine claims, but rather that, just like a ritual of initiation, philosophy requires a particular kind of social and physical environment and method of practice, to produce the correct state of mind.[45]

As Varro's *ARD* and works such as Cicero's *On the Nature of the Gods* show, those late Republican Romans already trained in philosophy felt free to publish their views on religion among the small, equally well-educated class of their contemporaries. By contrast, it was assumed that such matters could not be properly explained to the illiterate and intellectually unsophisticated masses, whose lack of literacy and of other propaedeutic education (rhetoric, logic, and mathematics) was assumed to make it impossible for them to understand philosophy, so that untimely exposure to it would be confusing and might undermine their adherence to cult. Similarly, in *On the Nature of the Gods* Cicero too presents Cotta as an Academic Sceptic like himself, asserting that the public should not be told of such things,[46] yet Cicero circulated this very book discussing just

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[44] In the words of an anonymous referee, allegorical interpretation "can go in two directions: it can illuminate the deeper meaning of a belief or a practice while accepting its validity, but it can also undermine such a belief or practice by declaring it mythical and therefore, at least in the perspective of an Augustine, false." The detailed elaboration of Varro's allegorical interpretation of Roman religion, and Augustine's criticisms of particular points of the latter, go beyond the aims of this paper; see references above, notes 8–10, 16–19 and esp. 35.

[45] The comparison of philosophy with ritual initiation is made by Socrates in Pl. *Grg.* 497c; but note also Ar. *Nub.* 254–74, 505–8, 694–706, etc.

[46] Cic. *Nat. D.* 1.61–62, cf. 3.5–6, Lactant. *Div. inst.* 2.3.2.

such issues openly among the literate aristocracy. By contrast, in a world where texts are promoted to all citizens as the source of truth, Augustine thinks Varro is talking about a distinction between explicit and implicit written meanings within a publicly circulated written text. Given this difference in literary culture, the tendentious character of Augustine's interpretation of Varro in relation to late Republican literary norms and the availability of an alternative more straightforward explanation, Augustine seems quite mistaken.

There is good evidence for the misleading character of Augustine's interpretive technique later in the same chapter in Book 4. Here, in discussing Varro's claim that the introduction of images in Roman cult led it into error, Augustine comments,

> quod vero non ait 'errorem tradiderunt' sed 'addiderunt,' iam utique fuisse etiam sine simulacris vult intellegi errorem. (*De civ. D.* 4.31.4)

> Since he actually does not say 'transmitted error' (*errorem tradiderunt*), but rather 'increased error' (*addiderunt*) he quite certainly wants it to be understood that there was error even without images.

Augustine here again presses Varro's words for a coded message in writing that traditional Roman religion is fundamentally false, something Varro certainly does not say or imply, whether he thought it privately or not. *Addo* of course could easily just mean "add" (*viz* something not previously present), as opposed to "increase" (of something already present). Thus, the only falsity Varro is necessarily referring to here is the depiction of gods as having gender and human bodily form. In fact, Varro does not ultimately think this is an insuperable obstacle to meaningful conventional worship, as his account of the true semantics of statues as natural symbols shows (fr. 225 = *De civ. D.* 7.5.1).

Another similar but slightly different inference by Augustine in *City of God* 6.4 involves a long argument that presupposes that true religion must be revealed by God, not founded first by men. Here Augustine picks on the fact that Varro organised his work so that the *Human Antiquities* came before the *Divine*, and on his statement that he would have put the *Divine Antiquities* first only if he had been writing about every aspect of the gods (fr. 5 = *De civ. D.* 6.4.4). Augustine's argument begins with the analysis of possibilities, that Varro could either write about every, or some, or no aspect of the gods.

If any true aspect of the gods is being treated, Augustine argues, Varro ought to have put that first, before what is merely human (*De civ. D.* 6.4.5). Thus, he infers, Varro hints that he is talking about no real aspect of the divine, and that all the aspects of Roman religion he discusses are really just theological nonsense (*De civ. D.* 6.4.6). Of course, this presses Varro's words too far, since Varro was explicitly only concerned in this work with religion as a set of practices and beliefs that form part of human life and society, not with metaphysics for its own sake.[47]

Conclusion

These examples demonstrate that Augustine's interpretation assumes a quite different relationship between a writer, his text and his readership from Varro's own practice and expectations. By the early Empire, admittedly, a rhetorically sophisticated text might make use of the techniques of "figured" speech, but the Roman evidence suggests this would be limited to the context of a judicial case or the imperial court. Writing a scholarly study in the late Republic without much rhetorical finesse, and in a culture where politics was carried on primarily orally, not through texts, it is entirely implausible that Varro engaged in the *ARD* in such "figured" speech.

By contrast, Augustine wrote in an age in which certain texts were treated as authoritative, in which debate was conducted mainly through texts, and in which writers such as Varro were themselves treated as authorities in virtue of their texts, rather than the spoken words and deeds of their own lives. In other words, texts were typically treated, unlike in Varro's own times, as a comprehensive and polysemic representation in some cases of the truth and in others at least of the author's deepest thinking. Thus, the misunderstandings involved in Augustine's interpretation of Varro provide a significant index of how different that world is from Varro's own.

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[47] See especially Voegelin 2000, 159 and his references.

Chapter Five

Reimagining Late-Republican Rome: The Early Reception of Sallust

Andrew Turner

[nobilitas] primo Tiberium, dein paucos post annos eadem ingredientem Gaium, tribunum alterum, alterum triumvirum coloniis deducundis, cum M. Fulvio Flacco ferro necaverat. (Sall. *Iug*. 42.1)

The nobles had first slain Tiberius with their swords, then after a few years, when he was starting out on the same path, Gaius—the one of them a tribunus, and the other a triumvir coloniis deducendis—together with M. Fulvius Flaccus.

The image of the Roman state which emerges from the surviving works of Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae* (from here on, *Catilinae*), *Bellum Iugurthinum* (from here on, *Iugurthinum*), and the fragmentary *Historiae*, is one of a violent and corrupt society, but the state institutions against which this action takes place still belong to the highly evolved and complex system of annual magistracies, *comitia* and *contiones* of the late Roman Republic, with their meticulous framework of checks and balances. Sallust's works were quickly integrated into the Roman curriculum, and he became (alongside Cicero, Virgil, and Terence) one of the four standard Latin authors to be studied in schools, the so-called *quadriga* of Arusianus Messius. But by the time our earliest surviving fragmentary papyri and manuscripts of Sallust emerged, between the third and fifth centuries CE, the whole political landscape they describe had been radically transformed, and indeed most of these institutions would have been perfectly meaningless to contemporary readers.

In the *Iugurthinum*, Sallust recounts the murders of the brothers Tiberius and Gaius Sempronius Gracchus in 133 and 121 BCE respectively,[1]

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[1] See the biographies in Bringmann 2006a and 2006b.

and states that the one of them was a *tribunus* and the other a *triumvir coloniis deducendis*. Both in fact are known to have been appointed tribunes as well as *triumviri* dealing with land redistribution, and although it has been questioned whether either was ever a *triumvir coloniis deducendis* in the precise legal definition,[2] we can assume that the term would have been perfectly comprehensible to Sallust's contemporary audience since it occurs both in Livy and Velleius. But how would later readers have understood it? The obvious place to find an explanation of what a *triumvir coloniis deducendis* is would be in a commentary accompanying the text.

Unlike the other three writers in the *quadriga*, however, Sallust's works are exceptional for the standard curriculum in that there is only fragmentary evidence for full-blown commentary traditions before the eleventh century. This chapter traces the early reception of Sallust's late-Republican Rome, looking at the (extremely sparse) evidence for the early periods and progressing to the re-emergence of detailed commentaries in Northern Europe in the pre-scholastic period, when meticulous research into the scattered references in surviving chronicles competed with highly imaginative but often absurd attempts to recreate the world of the first century CE.

Antiquity

Sallust was always famous throughout antiquity for the individuality of his style,[3] and he had his fanatical admirers as well as fierce detractors. Thus, Quintilian praises *illa Sallustiana brevitas, qua nihil apud aures vacuas atque eruditas potest esse perfectius* ("that Sallustian concision, more perfect to a learned listener at his leisure than anything else could be," Quint. *Inst.* 10.1.32); while Aulus Gellius comments that *elegantia orationis Sallustii verborumque fingendi et novandi studium cum multa prorsus invidia fuit, multique non mediocri ingenio viri conati sunt reprehendere*

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[2] Livy recounts that Tiberius made himself, Gaius, and his father-in-law Appius Claudius *triumviros ad agrum dividendum* (Livy, *Per.* 58), and Velleius that he appointed them *triumviros agris dividendis colonisque deducendis* (Vell. Pat. 2.2.3). However, see Strasburger 1939, 513–14 for doubts on the accuracy of the descriptions in Velleius and Sallust. Dart 2011 argues convincingly that the powers assigned to the triumvirate of Tiberius, Gaius, and Appius Claudius in 133 were in fact quite distinct from those of the *triumviri coloniis deducendis*.

[3] See the discussion of his *Fortuna* in Osmond and Ulery 2003, 187–92. A useful collection of testimonia can also be found in the introduction to Kurfess 1954, xxii–xxxi. See also the comprehensive recent summary of reception during antiquity in La Penna and Funari 2015, 1–34.

pleraque et obtrectare ("The elegance of Sallust's speeches and his zeal for creating and renewing vocabulary encountered much envy from the start, and many men with ingenious minds have attempted to find fault with it and belittle it in many ways," Gell. *NA*. 4.15.1).

By the late fourth century his works were being systematically cited by grammarians, most prominently perhaps in the work of Arusianus Messius, *Exempla elocutionum*, where citations from all three of his major works, the *Iugurthinum*, the *Catilinae*, and his largely lost *Historiae*, are included as recommended models for speakers or writers, alongside excerpts from Virgil, from Cicero and from Terence.[4] This group of four writers as key models to be studied and imitated, even by Christian pupils, seems to have become institutionalised in some parts of the Roman world, so that Cassiodorus could refer to them as the *quadriga*, or four-horsed chariot of Messius.[5] This does not mean of course that other pagan writers were ignored in the educational system at this stage—in particular Horace, Juvenal, Persius and Lucan are distinguished by their great number of manuscript witnesses, which appear from the Carolingian period onwards, suggesting strongly that fully developed teaching traditions were already in existence at the end of the empire.

It could be expected that Sallust's inclusion in a major literary canon would have necessitated the creation of commentary materials to deal with the references to obscure persons, obsolete political institutions and the peculiarities of his literary style, such as his heavy reliance on archaic grammatical forms. The other writers in this group of four attracted such commentaries from an early stage; Augustus' freedman Hyginus seems to have been the author of works on Virgil,[6] while Cicero was already provided with the detailed commentary of Asconius in the first century CE.[7] The real flowering of this work came in the fourth and fifth centuries, when Donatus' (now fragmentary) commentaries on Virgil and Terence, and Servius'

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[4] For Messius, see Schmidt 2006a; Monda 2015, 129.

[5] *Regulas igitur elocutionum Latinorum, id est quadrigam Messii, omnimodis non sequaris, ubi tamen priscorum codicum auctoritate convinceris* (Cassiod. *Inst.* 1.15.7: "and so you should not rigidly follow the rules of speechmaking amongst the Latins, that is, the *quadriga* of Messius, especially when you are convinced by the authority of ancient manuscripts.")

[6] See Schmidt 2006b.

[7] For Asconius, see Kugelmeier 2006.

profoundly influential commentary on Virgil appeared.[8] The poets cited above, particularly Horace, were the beneficiaries of detailed commentary work throughout this period, which undoubtedly transmitted material dating back to very early and relatively reliable sources. Nevertheless, there are so far no substantial fragments from any commentary work on Sallust from this early period—just a handful of interlinear glosses in our extant papyri.[9]

There is just one name definitely associated with commentary on Sallust during antiquity, that of the grammarian Aemilius Asper, who may have flourished in the second or third century CE, and who also seems to have written commentaries on Virgil and Terence.[10] Asper's work definitely dealt with the *Historiae*, but it is uncertain if he also commented on the *Catilinae* or the *Iugurthinum*.[11] His work was certainly popular, since it is mentioned by Jerome in his *Adversus libros Rufini*, which he composed sometime around 400. Referring back to Rufinus' education as a boy, probably in the 350s, Jerome states: *puto quod puer legeris Aspri in Vergilium et Sallustium commentarios* ("I suppose when you were a boy you read the commentaries of Asper on Virgil and Sallust," Hieron. *adv. Rufin.* 1.16). Generally, Asper is cited by grammarians and commentators for his definitions, usually lexical or grammatical. Thus the grammarian Iulius Romanus, who may have been writing during the third century or else early fourth, observes: *recens. Asper commentario Sallustii historiarum I nunc adverbium nunc nomen id esse dicit, <ut> «recens scripsi».* ("*recens*. Asper in his commentary on Sallust's *Historiae* Book 1 says it is sometimes an adverb, sometimes a noun, as in *recens scripsi*," Iulius Romanus *De adverbio* = Charisius *Ars grammatica* [p. 280K]). Nevertheless, there is also one instance where Asper seems to have commented on defunct social institutions. Writing in the sixth century CE in Constantinople, the Roman antiquarian Ioannes Lydus testifies: οἱ δὲ νωμενκουλάτωρες, ὥς φησιν ὁ Αἰμίλιος ἐν τῷ Ὑπομνήματι τῶν Σαλλουστίου Ἱστοριῶν, ὀνομασταὶ καὶ

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[8] See the discussion of the resurgence of interest in Terence in Monda 2015. Works such as the *Scholia Bobiensia* on Cicero probably also date from this period; see Schanz and Hosius 1927, 448.

[9] The fragment of Sall. *Cat*. 10.45 and 11.6–7 contained in Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, inv. 13786 (= *PSI* 1.110) has interlinear glossing in Greek, while that of *Cat*. 6.2–7 in Oxford, Bodleian Library, Lat. Class. e.20 (= *POxy.* 6.884) contains interlinear supplements to the text which may be the work of a glossator (see Grenfell and Hunt 1908, 197nn5–6).

[10] See Schmidt 2006c, Osmond and Ulery 2003, 189 and n. 26, 301–2. La Penna and Funari 2015 18 date him to the second century CE.

[11] See Osmond and Ulery 2003, 301, for the uncertainty surrounding Wessner's fragment XIII, possibly from the *Bellum Catilinae*.

ἀναφωνηταὶ τῶν τογάτων . . . εἰσίν ("But the *nomenculatores*, as Aemilius says in the commentary on the *Historiae* of Sallust, give the names of and announce Roman citizens …," Joannes Lydus, *De magistratibus* [p. 142, line 11]). It is unsurprising that Lydus, writing to explain Roman society to contemporary Greek speakers in Byzantium,[12] would have to explain what a *nomenculator* did, but why would Asper have had to do so, unless by the time he was writing it had already become an archaic institution in Rome itself? We might expect that all archaic institutions, such as the *triumviri coloniis deducendis*, may have been explained in this work. Unfortunately, because most of the works which cite Asper are dealing with lexical issues or case uses,[13] we really have no idea of just how much of his commentary dealt with grammatical usage, and how much with historical points, even just explanations of archaic practices.

Following Asper, our knowledge of individual commentators and commentaries on Sallust's works goes dead, at least until the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries. But if we look at the evidence provided by citations in grammarians, we can see that Sallust was being extensively mined by them, right up to the time of Priscian in the sixth century;[14] and not only both the *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Iugurthinum*, but also the *Historiae*. Sallust's deliberate archaism and attempts to create a compressed style similar to that of Thucydides have led to many important snippets of the *Historiae* being preserved, simply because they contained an ablative absolute formed by an ablative participle in apposition to an indirect statement, just to cite one instance.[15] Study of the methods and frequency of citation in grammarians in the case of Terence has in fact led to an interesting correlation between a sudden growth of citation of his plays and the appearance of commentaries in the fourth century.[16] We might at least expect therefore that observations taken from grammarians began to be

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[12] For discussion of Lydus' career and audience, see Tinnefeld 2006.

[13] Osmond and Ulery 2003, 301.

[14] For the contribution of grammarians, see in particular La Penna and Funari 2015, 16–25, and for that of the scholiasts, eid. 26–35.

[15] *sed et accusatiuis et ablatiuis casibus ad imitationem Graecorum auctores adiungunt infinita verba . . . Sallustius historiarum V: 'at Lucullus audito, Q. Marcium Regem pro consule per Lycaoniam cum tribus legionibus ad Ciliciam tendere'* (Prisc. *gramm.* III [Book 18], p. 225 [Keil] = Sall. *Hist.* frag. 5,14 [Maurenbrecher]: "but authors join infinitive constructions to the accusative and ablative cases in imitation of the Greeks . . . Sallust in book 5 of the *Historiae*, 'but Lucullus, when it had been heard that the proconsul Quintus Marcius Rex was moving towards Cilicia through Lycaonium with three legions'").

[16] See Monda 2015.

written into the margins of manuscripts of Sallust; unfortunately we have no evidence for this from the early period, for which we have such limited evidence, although it appears often enough in mediaeval manuscripts.

Middle Ages

Following the loss of the vast bulk of the *Historiae*, the *Catilinae* and *Iugurthinum* emerged in the Carolingian period as a standard part of the Latin curriculum in monastery schools,[17] and so the questions of what particular phrases actually meant came back into sharp focus. Commentaries began to proliferate,[18] and in the late eleventh or early twelfth century in the border area between modern France and Belgium, probably at the monastery of St Amand, a detailed commentary was written to accompany Sallust's two works. This commentator from St Amand, known as the *Anonymus Amandensis*,[19] seems not to have had access to any earlier commentary traditions, and created what he wrote afresh from the sources immediately available to him. Thus when he discusses the meaning of *triumviri coloniis deducendis* he notes: *triumvirum vocamus qui tres viros habet sub se, alii autem triumvirum trium civitatum procuratorem appellant* ('we call him a *triumvir* who has three men under his command; others, however, call the administrator of three cities a *triumvir*,' transcribed from Valenciennes, BM, 549, f. 29r). In general the commentator's sources for his comments on Roman social and political institutions appear to be either inspired guesswork, based on etymology (as in this instance), or a few facts gleaned from standard reference works, such as the *Origines* of Isidore of Seville, or the Virgil commentary of Servius. Sometimes these comments seem to have been confused because he has misremembered a source, rather than directly consulted it, even though it is what we might consider fundamental historical knowledge. When he comments on Sallust's statement that Cicero and Antonius were elected consuls after *comitia* were held (*Cat.* 24.1), the scholiast from St Amand appears to have confused consuls with dictators when he says: *quandoquidem periculum monuit ut fierent consules declarantur* ("whenever danger advised that they be created, consuls used to be declared," transcribed from Valenciennes, BM, 549, f. 6v; Douai, BM, 747, f. 76r.). However, other examples confirm that

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[17] For discussion of the transmission history, see Reynolds 1983.

[18] See the discussions of commentaries in Germany in Cardelle de Hartmann 2008 and in Flanders in Turner 2014.

[19] Described in Osmond and Ulery 2003, 231–32; see also Turner 2014, 202–7.

the *Anonymus Amandensis* was content to rely on guesswork rather than any detailed research.[20]

      With relatively little source material directly relevant to the text available to them, scholars explicating Sallust's text relied heavily upon standard reference works at this early period. Isidore's work in particular is found cited from the earliest phase of Carolingian production of manuscripts of the *Catilinae* and *Iugurthinum*; thus in one of the earliest extant full copies, Paris, BnF, lat. 16025, which is dated to the second half of the ninth century,[21] a hand which is roughly contemporary with that of the main scribe glosses the concept of *leges ambitus*, or "laws concerning corrupt electioneering" (*Cat.* 18.2) with an excerpt from Isidore.[22] Carmela Cardelle de Hartmann notes that Isidore was also used in manuscripts copied in St Emmeram in Southern Germany to describe the origins of the names for political and military offices in Latin.[23] Another key source which they used was Servius, particularly passages where he directly cites Sallust's works in order to provide examples. In a manuscript written in Belgium or Germany for the monastery of Egmond in Holland in the late eleventh century, now Brussels, Bibliothèque royale, 10057–10062–III,[24] the scholiast, who was probably the main scribe as well or else writing under his direction, begins glossing the *Catilinae* by citing Servius at length in the outer margin for a definition of *animus*.[25] At the bottom of the margin some space was left to him, and he used this to include a short sentence from St Jerome's chronicle describing the treaty concluded between Athens and Sparta, in reference to Sallust's brief account of the expansionist policies of these cities after the defeat of Cyrus.[26] He also uses Jerome as well as Orosius at the end of his commentary on the *Iugurthinum* as a source for the great numbers of

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[20] For further examples of this type of commentary, see my earlier discussion in Turner 2014, 205–7.

[21] See Munk Olsen 1985, 344–45.

[22] *Ambitus iudicium in eum est qui largitione honorem capit et ambit, amissurus dignitatem quam munere invadit* (Isid. *Orig.* 5.26.21: "the judgement of *ambitus* is made against someone who wins office by means of bribery, and canvasses (*ambit*); he is likely to lose the position he gains by graft."

[23] Cardelle de Hartmann 2008, 11, noting that in the witness Munich, BSB, Clm 14515, written around 1100, the various excerpts of Isidore are written in different hands.

[24] Described in Munk Olsen 1985, 319; see also Turner 2014, 219–21.

[25] On f. 86v, in reference to Sall. *Cat.* 1.2 (*sed nostra omnis vis in animo et corpora sita est*), and citing Servius *Aeneid* 5.81.

[26] Sall. *Cat.* 2.2, citing Hier. *Chron.* [s.a. 445].

Romans and Cimbri slain in battle,[27] and his effort to provide additional information from two such generally reliable historical sources (especially for the period), contrasts strongly with the facile attempts of the scholiast from St Amand to explain Sallust based purely on his knowledge of Latin.

With regard to the overall issue of the origin of these commentaries, it therefore appears that many of the manuscripts of Sallust which managed to survive from antiquity into the Carolingian period, and which provided the exempla for the Carolingian scribes, were most probably devoid of any accompanying commentary text, so that these scribes were compelled to resort to such sources as Isidore, or else other widely distributed texts like Jerome and Servius, in order to write their notes. It is still within the bounds of possibility, however, that particular glosses may have survived in some older manuscripts which preserved information dating back to earlier, late-antique commentary traditions, such as that of Asper. An intriguing example occurs in at least three manuscripts from different parts of the German-speaking area dating to the end of the tenth or beginning of the eleventh centuries; Paris, BnF, lat. 10195 (f. 55v), from the monastery of Echternach near Luxembourg,[28] Munich, BSB, Clm 14477 (f. 27r), from St Emmeram in Regensburg,[29] and Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 636 II (p. 130), copied either in Germany or Switzerland.[30] The gloss refers to an incident Sallust recounts in the *Iugurthinum* where a close associate of Jugurtha murders Hiempsal, one of the prince's co-heirs to the throne of Numidia following the death of his uncle King Micipsa: *sed Hiempsal in oppido Thirmida forte eius domo utebatur, qui proxumus lictor Iugurthae carus acceptusque ei semper fuerat* ("But Hiempsal was by chance using the house in the town of Thirmida which belonged to that man who, since he was the closest lictor, had always been dear to Jugurtha and welcome to him," *Iug.* 12.3). Lictors were of course a specifically Roman institution which had its beginnings in

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[27] On f. 146r and 146v, in reference to Sall. *Iug.* 114.1, 3, citing Oros. *Hist.* 5.16.3–4 and Hier. *Chron.* [s.a. 102].

[28] See Munk Olsen 1985, 343–44. A digital facsimile of this manuscript is available at the Gallica website of the BnF (‹gallica/bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b9078229w›).

[29] See Munk Olsen 1985, 332–33; Cardelle de Hartmann 2008, 5–11. The text of this gloss is edited in Lukas Bohny 2014, 244. A digital facsimile of this manuscript is available at the MDZ Digitale Bibliothek (urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00046680-7).

[30] See Munk Olsen 1985, 347; the manuscript is fragmentary, and is now bound with another contemporary fragmentary manuscript of Sallust which was unglossed. A digital facsimile of this manuscript is available at the e-codices website (DOI 10.5076/e-codices-csg-0636).

the regal period,[31] and although the word could very occasionally be used of the bodyguards of foreign monarchs in a transferred sense, Sallust appears to have been the first author to use it in this way.[32] It is possible that its use in Sallust could in fact provide evidence that the Roman allied kings in Numidia consciously modelled their personal guards on those of Roman magistrates,[33] although the little evidence we have for their practices tends rather to suggest that they were influenced by Hellenistic monarchies.[34] In any case, my concern here is with the scholiast, who explains: *lictores fuere qui virgas ferebant ante reges cedendo reos. qui decem fuere, et ex his semper iste proximus incedebat regi* ("the lictors were men who carried rods before kings for striking the guilty. There were ten of them, and out of them it was always that man who used to march closest to the king"). The use of the deictic *iste* and the repetition of *proximus* shows that the scholiast was directly referencing this passage of Sallust, and not copying a general comment he had found in some encyclopaedia. The fact that he needed to explain what a lictor was at all also suggests that he was writing considerably later than Sallust, whose audience could be expected to know what this meant, although this does not necessarily exclude the possibility that he was writing during the later imperial period, given that Asper had to explain what a *nomenculator* was. It is of course possible that this gloss is an uncritical conflation made at some later stage of separate ideas, and that the first part of it may have been taken directly from a source referring to Roman kings, whereby the *virgae* refer to *fasces*. What distinguishes it from Roman antiquarian accounts, however, is the statement that there were ten lictors, since all our classical sources stress that the Roman kings were traditionally preceded by twelve, as were the consuls, and that generally the number of *fasces* permitted for any official under the Republic was either a multiple of this (that is, twenty four for dictators) or a fraction (for example, six for praetors).[35] The specificity of this number suggests that either the scholiast was garbling an ancient source, or that he had access to accurate historical information specific to the Numidian kingdom.

Other forms of commentary may possibly have survived in the drawings associated with these manuscripts. Many Sallust manuscripts famously

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[31] See the discussion of this office in Kübler 1927. I am indebted as well to Dr Frederik Vervaet for advice on this topic.

[32] See the entry in *TLL* 7,2 1377.9–18.

[33] For the difficulty of using the term "client kings" for monarchs such as the Numidian kings, see Kaizer and Facella 2010, 16.

[34] See the discussion in Aoulad Tahar 2004, and for the much later shift from Greek to Roman coin types in Mauretania, Dahmen 2010, 101–2.

[35] See Samter 1909, 2002–4.

contain what is now known as the T-map, in origin a simple diagrammatic depiction of the world dividing it into the three continents of Europe, Asia and Africa, which may first have been drawn to illustrate Isidore, but which is commonly found in association with the text of the *Iugurthinum* cc. 17–19, where Sallust breaks off his narrative to give a geographical and ethnographical excursus regarding Africa.[36] In addition there is at least one early manuscript which shows another cartographic tradition specifically associated with Sallust which goes back at least to the end of the eleventh century, and quite possibly much earlier. Munich, BSB, Clm 4559 was written in Southern Germany at the end of the eleventh century,[37] and contains a detailed sketch in the bottom margin of f. 28r depicting the field of the battle which Sallust describes in the *Iugurthinum* fought between Metellus and Jugurtha at the River Muthul in Numidia:

> Erat in ea parte Numidiae . . . flumen oriens a meridie nomine Muthul, a quo aberat mons ferme milia viginti tractu pari, vastus ab natura et humano cultu. sed ex eo medio quasi collis oriebatur, in inmensum pertingens, vestitus oleastro ac murtetis aliisque generibus arborum . . . Igitur in eo colle, quem transvorso itinere porrectum docuimus, Iugurtha extenuata suorum acie consedit . . . [Metellus] aciem . . . in planum deducit . . . Rutilium legatum cum expeditis cohortibus et parte equitum praemisit ad flumen, uti locum castris antecaperet. (*Iug.* 48.3–50.1)

> There was in that part of Numidia . . . a river arising from the South by the name of Muthul, almost twenty miles from which there was a mountain range running parallel to it, desolate of natural growth and human habitation. But as it were out of its midst there arose a hill, extending a great distance and covered with oleaster and myrtle and other sorts of trees . . . And so Jugurtha made camp on that hill, which as we have explained lay so that it blocked the roadway, and spread out the battle-line of his own troops . . . Metellus led his force into the plain . . . he sent the *legatus* Rutilius ahead to the river with cohorts ready for action and part of the cavalry, so that he might capture a place for the camp ahead of the enemy.

The illustration in this manuscript of the battlefield (accessible on the website of the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek) includes a number of elements which are described by Sallust, most prominently the river and the lone hill covered with trees, as well as a stylised representation of the township of Vaga (mentioned earlier at *Iug.* 47.1). These items are depicted in a style

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[36] See also my comments on this tradition in Turner 2014, 200–1.
[37] See Munk Olsen 1985, 331–32. A digital facsimile of this manuscript is available at the MDZ Digitale Bibliothek (urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb00046680-7).

with some features suggestive of late-antique illustrative techniques,[38] but another noteworthy feature is the scribe's use of labels which relate to the text cited above. Beneath the depiction of the hill the scribe writes *locus Iugurthae*, "the position of Jugurtha," while next to the river he places *castra rutili*, "the camp of Rutilius." It may also be of significance that the place names are spelled differently in the body of the text and in the labels; thus the river Muthul is *Mutula* in the text and *Muthula* in the label, while similarly the name of the town Vaga is *Vacca* in the text and *Vaccha* in the label. The use of alternative spellings could just be a coincidence, but it could also be indicative that the map was copied from another source, such as an illustrated manuscript of Sallust, which has since been since lost.

Conclusions

The attention paid by modern scholarship to the mediaeval Sallust scholia and their possible preservation of ancient material, whether historically accurate or not, has been slight. On the one hand, a justifiable scepticism arises when dealing with the type of commentary found in the *Anonymus Amandensis*, where the mediaeval commentator clearly made a succession of guesses without any regard to such resources as were available to him, and seems to have created a new narrative of the ancient world purely by using his imagination.[39] On the other hand, such scepticism can lead to an uncritical approach to all commentary materials from this period—an unjustified assumption is made that because one commentary tradition is worthless (at least as far as material relevant to the ancient world is concerned), then all others are as well—so that investigations into this area stagnate. In particular, it ignores the fact that the theoretical framework for this type of exegesis of Roman literature has a long history—it goes back to the *Etymologiae* of Isidore, and through him ultimately to Varro, some of whose derivations appear to have been based on superficial similarities

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[38] In particular, the stylised depiction of the hill with its trees is reminiscent of the way wooded hills are depicted in a manuscript of the *Corpus agrimensorum Romanorum* of the early ninth century (Vatican City, BAV, Pal. lat. 1564), a copy of an original which probably dates back to the sixth century. Discussion of this manuscript and selected reproductions of images can be found in Toneatto 1996, 177, while for discussion of its dependence in its iconography on late-antique models, see Haffner 1991. Other relevant images of this manuscript can be viewed in the digital facsimile, available at Heidelberger Historische Bestände—digital (urn:nbn:de:bsz:16-diglit-98605).

[39] The library of the monastery at St Amand contained in fact a rich collection of manuscripts; see Turner 2014, 203.

between words. Apparent blunders may have a much longer history than we think.

An instructive warning against blanket rejection of mediaeval scholarship is offered by work on the commentary traditions on Terence. In 1893 Teubner published the *Scholia Terentiana*, edited by Friedrich Schlee, an edition which unfortunately did not meet Teubner's normal high standards. Schlee attempted to cover what is now known to be a highly dynamic and complex group of traditions spread out over several centuries and found in a large number of manuscripts,[40] in a slim volume, focusing solely on recovering remnants of classical scholarship. The underlying principles of his approach are clearly acknowledged in his introduction, where he states:

> Primus hunc agrum patefeci, in quo nemo adhuc opus fecit, quia messis parum fructuosa videbatur; etenim vilia haec scholia putabantur, opus barbarorum medio aevo factum, in quo antiquitatis frustula delitescerent nulla.[41]

> I have been the first to open up this field, in which no one until now has toiled, since the harvest appeared to be just too unrewarding; for these scholia were thought to be worthless, the work of barbarians made in the Middle Ages, in which no scraps of antiquity were concealed.

Schlee's scholarship was, however, inconsistent to say the least, and his examination of key manuscripts seems to have been highly superficial; his methodology was based on extracting what he thought was genuine ancient material from some manuscripts, reassembling it as a "Commentarius antiquior," then simply discarding all the rest of the material, and thereby destroying any notion of context. This methodology was rightly the subject of severe criticism—one contemporary reviewer went as far as to classify it as "futile and disastrous"[42]—but it appears that no editors or publishers were interested in taking up the topic after this, and for over a century his work provided the sole resource for scholars working in this field. Only recently has this situation improved, and in one of the ironies of scholarship, two separate dissertations on one of the most important of these works, the *Commentum Monacense*, were undertaken in different parts of Europe in the early 2000s, both resulting in publications which came out in 2011 and 2015 respectively.[43] Nevertheless, considerably more work needs to be

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[40] The best recent survey is in Villa 2007.

[41] Schlee 1893, 49–50.

[42] Rand 1909, 366.

[43] Schorsch 2011 (covering only three of the six plays of Terence) and San Juan Manso 2015.

done; at the time of writing the only modern critical edition of the most widely diffused early commentaries of Terence, the *Commentum Brunsianum*, remains the 1811 edition of a single and comparatively late manuscript from Germany by Paul Bruns.[44]

A real change in the scholarly approach to these texts undoubtedly is coming around through the process of the digitisation of manuscripts. Recent technical developments have meant that a substantial body of high-definition manuscript images has suddenly become available for scholars and readers anywhere in the world. In 2006 the Swiss foundation *ecodices* began publishing high definition images of mediaeval manuscripts in Swiss libraries, setting a benchmark for quality and proper documentation. Significant collections which now are available on-line are the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek in Munich, the Plutei collection of the Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana in Florence, and the Bibliothèque nationale de France in Paris, which since 2010 (via the website *Gallica*) has been making some of the most important mediaeval manuscripts available to scholars, together with (at times) comprehensive catalogue entries. Finally, beginning in May 2016, the immense collections of the Vatican Library, the greatest repository of Western manuscripts, have begun to come online. The process is uneven, simply because of the sheer costs of making so much material available, but it has meant that many of the manuscripts containing scholia on Sallust, as well as other Latin authors, are now freely available to any scholars wishing to study them.

Clearly an important further step arising from this will be the production of scholarly editions using these resources, and these editions in turn will permit a far greater focus on the ways in which mediaeval scholarship can distort a core of important information by reimagining ancient Rome in light of contemporary thought. As with Terence, the progress on Sallust has only been very recent and there is so much to do, although the edition of the scholia in Munich, BSB, Clm 14477 by C. Lukas Bohny in 2014 is a very welcome addition to a small corpus of materials. Knowing precisely what materials are available will be a key initial step in determining the real value of these scholia for transmitting useful information from antiquity, and whether comments on Micipsa's ten lictors

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[44] Bruns 1811. Some other important work is, however, continuing on other parts of the Terence tradition. Thus the Danish scholar Peter Bruun Hansen has advised me by email in January 2017 that he has undertaken preliminary work into an edition of the commentary on *Andria* in one of the later traditions known as *Legitur auctor iste*, a branch of what Schlee labelled the *Commentarius recentior* and which, to cite Hansen's communication, he "famously maltreated."

or diagrammatic representations of battles accurately preserve knowledge from a much earlier period than that in which they were written down.

But in a broader sense, the study of the reception of Latin literary texts in later periods is a dynamic new area in classical scholarship, capable of bringing new skills and important new perspectives to the discipline. Even for the purest classicist, interested only in the ancient world *per se*, knowledge of the circumstances of the survival of a text, and of the people who copied it and used it, should be important. The fact that the *Anonymus Amandensis* may not have known what a *triumvir* was, or how frequently consuls were elected, does not mean that he copied the text any less accurately, and the fact that he clearly used it in an educative context gives further insights into the reason why such texts as the Sallustian monographs managed to survive in such numbers. And if nothing else, study of such contexts is also capable of shedding light on our own preoccupations and methodologies, and the ways in which we, as academics, reimagine ancient Rome in ways which might be quite startling to its inhabitants.[45]

CHAPTER SIX

THE ROMAN CONSTRUCTION OF TWO NEW ZEALAND POETS

JOHN DAVIDSON

Many images of ancient Rome have been constructed by successive generations of writers and visual artists right up to our own day, ever since the western empire "fell," or rather was transformed into new political and social identities. Indeed, the very idea of ancient Rome still captivates the popular mind, whether it is seen in terms of architectural and engineering achievements, ruthless military triumphs, and political intrigue, or in terms of institutions such as slavery and gladiatorial games, lavish entertainment and debauchery, and so on. This study looks at the way in which Roman literature is reflected in the work of two twentieth-century New Zealand poets and at what kind of images of Rome they have constructed, both directly and indirectly, for themselves and for their readers.

Beginning with R. A. K. Mason (1905–1971), a number of New Zealand poets with a Classical education, also including James K. Baxter (1926–1972), Alistair Te Ariki Campbell (1925–2009), and Fleur Adcock (born 1934), have turned to Rome as one of their artistic bases and have worked allusions to Roman literature into their writings. There is scope here only for a consideration of Mason and Baxter. The focus in the case of both of these poets will be the relationship between their own poems and the Latin poems which acted as their starting points, along with their ideas about Rome in general and what connections they saw between the ancient city, or rather their vision of it, and the New Zealand that they experienced and critiqued during their own lifetimes.

From time to time, Mason makes comments about Rome in general, the most "charming" of which is found in his notebook: "The Greeks had temple-prostitution, the Romans crucifixion, but neither of them

had newspapers."[1] Mason's Rome is seen primarily through the personae of the poets to whom he is responding so that he is constructing portraits of individual Romans and their feelings as fellow human beings, rather than of the city or society in which they lived, and finding points of contact with his own feelings and philosophy of life.[2] The poets to whom he responds especially are Horace and Catullus, an intermediary in the Reception phenomenon being A. E. Housman whose pessimism, at least partly drawn from Horace, is also echoed by Mason.

An example of Mason's early engagement with Horace, ironically in a poem of sombre mood which bounces off the thought of one of the Roman poet's more optimistic odes, can be found in "The Lesser Stars." This was included in Mason's first significant printed publication *The Beggar* (1924) and is more easily accessible in his *Collected Poems*, which was published in 1962.[3] The poem's opening lines establish the connection with *Odes* 3.30:

> We are they who are doomed to raise up no monuments
> to outlast brass:
> for even as quickly as our bodies' passing hence
> our work shall pass
> of us shall be no more memory left to any sense
> than dew leaves upon grass
> there will not even be the least word of our eloquence
> no one will cry 'Alas
> Alas alas alas for his too-swift passing away
> He of the mighty thought . . .' ("The Lesser Stars," 1–10)

The source poem begins as follows:

> Exegi monumentum aere perennius
> regalique situ pyramidum altius,
> quod non imber edax, non Aquilo impotens
> possit diruere aut innumerabilis
> annorum series et fuga temporum. (Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.1–5)

> I have completed a monument more lasting than bronze [or brass] and higher than the royal structure of the pyramids, which no devouring rain, no raging

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[1] "Notebooks," MS-990/10, quoted by Barrowman 2003, 99. Barrowman's book is the most extensive and wide-ranging discussion available about Mason's life and work. Another significant study is "Asclepius" [John Caselberg] 2004.

[2] For Mason's engagement with politics, see Harley 1980.

[3] Mason 1962.

north wind is able to demolish, or the countless chain of years and the flight of the ages.

There seems to be here also an echo of *Odes* 4.7 with its reminder of the inevitability of death, from which neither the *genus* ("high birth"), nor the *pietas* ("loyalty"), nor the *facundia* ("eloquence") of the poem's dedicatee Torquatus will be able to bring him back to life.

Mason's poem, of course, departs radically from its basic Horatian model. The Roman poet proudly prophesies the "immortality" that his literary achievements will bring him, at least as long as the Roman traditions and rituals known to him survive. Mason predicts the same total annihilation for his poetry that will accompany the death of his body.[4] John Weir finds the mood of Mason's poem to be "anti-Horatian,"[5] which is valid only with regard to the tenor of *Odes* 3.30, because its pessimism echoes that of many of Horace's other odes, including *Odes* 4.7. Weir attributes this pessimism to Mason's youthfulness and temperament, taken in conjunction with the fact that this and other similar poems were written during the economic slump of 1923–24 when he could find no secure employment.

Unlike Horace, Mason had no patron to support him in his poetic career. Rachel Barrowman quotes what he wrote on the back of a rejection letter in 1923 answering his application for one temporary teaching position. The poem ends: "The Virgils . . . starve in our English streets, / But oh, Maecenas, hard you are to find!"[6] "Asclepius" records that as late as the year of his death, being disappointed about the lack of news concerning a "regular grant" from the Department of Internal Affairs, he remarked: "So I guess its [sic] just another case of *virtus laudatur et alget*,[7] as my friend Horace would have it."[8] With regard to his pessimism in general, the premature death of his father when Mason was only eight years old could have been a further contributing factor.

As a sort of counterbalance to any pervasive note of pessimism, one finds in Mason, as in Horace, an equally acute sense of the physical

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[4] The poem was quoted in full as being 'the cry of common humanity' by Curnow 1971, 222–23.

[5] Weir 1977, 11.

[6] Barrowman 2003, 39. Ellipsis in text quoted by Barrowman.

[7] "Merit is praised and left out in the cold."

[8] "Asclepius" 2004, 276. Mason has in fact credited Horace with the common adaptation of Juvenal's *probitas laudatur et alget* ("honesty is praised and left out in the cold," Juv. 1.74).

pleasures of life and regret at the prospect of having to leave them. The title poem of *The Beggar* possibly has an inverted thematic relationship with *Odes* 1.38, whose opening lines are: *Persicos odi, puer, apparatus, / displicent nexae philyra coronae* (Hor. *Carm.* 1.38.1–2: "Persian paraphernalia I detest, my boy, and I'm displeased by garlands woven on linden tree bark membrane"). The beggar of Mason's poem ("Curse the beggar in the street / that he has less joy than I / as at these fine old trees' feet / body-satisfied I lie," 1–4) points to the inevitable loss of simple pleasures such as those preferred by the Horatian poetic persona over a life of luxury (*. . .neque te ministrum / dedecet myrtus neque me sub arta / vite bibentem*, Hor. *Carm.* 1.38.6–8: "Neither for you the servant nor me drinking beneath the thickly packed vine is the simple myrtle tree unbecoming").[9] More certainly linked to Mason's poem is *Odes* 2.3 to Dellius, especially the penultimate stanza (from where Mason's beggar may actually be drawn), which reads,

> divesne, prisco natus ab Inacho,
> nil interest an pauper et infima
>   de gente sub divo moreris;
>   victima nil miserantis Orci (Hor. *Carm.* 2.3.21–24)

> It makes no difference whether you are descended from ancient Inachus or live under heaven as a pauper of the lowest birth. You are still a victim of merciless Orcus.

The persona of Mason's poem knows that he must share the same ultimate destiny as the beggar and is portrayed as resenting him deeply for that very reason.

Mason's two connected sonnets "The Spark's Farewell to its Clay" have been seen as having a possible ironical relationship to *Odes* 3.21.[10] Horace is addressing a "loyal wine jar" (*pia testa*, Hor. *Carm.* 3.21.4) which is identified with its contents, a quality wine whose vintage is the same year as that of Horace's birth. The poet asks it to come down from its storage area in the wine-loft to be drunk by himself and the important guest whom he is to be entertaining. As its "life" began with that of Horace, so at its final

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[9] For Mason's possible use of this Horatian ode and the next one to be discussed, see Doyle 1970, 59–60.

[10] Doyle 1970, 61–62. "Asclepius" 2004, 65 also links these sonnets to *Odes* 2.3. Geoffrey Miles, to whom I am most grateful for a number of helpful comments on this paper, points out to me that Mason, who on occasion mingled classical and English allusions, will also very likely have had in mind Andrew Marvell's poem "A Dialogue between the Soul and Body," the most famous example of this popular seventeenth century mini-genre.

moments it will enter Horace as he becomes filled with its pleasurable essence in a time of ecstasy.

Mason substitutes Horace's tone of easy familiarity with one of regret descending into bitterness. His opening words are:

> Well clay it's strange at last we've come to it:
> after much merriment we must give up
> our ancient friendship . . ." ("Spark's Farewell," 1.1–3).

Sharper readers than I have detected the play that Mason derives from the concept of "clay" applied to the human body and the "clay" used in the manufacture of the wine jar. The reader has been taken through a nostalgic survey of what the spirit has shared with its corporeal companion from their "birth" together. Now that the end has been reached, the spark imagines that the clay will have gained "blank earth walls" (1.13) while "God only knows what I have gained" (1.14). There is a kind of Lucretian take on the inseparable bond during life of body and mind, both to dissolve together into nothingness at death. The spark addresses the clay as "friend" and it looks back ruefully at their "life" together. The second of the two sonnets, while not appearing to have any direct connection with the Horatian poem, continues the theme of pessimism already established. It ends with the sentiment "I recollect and so am desolate" (2.14). In the case of Horace, he also speaks as though to a friend, but looks forward to experience in its company an "end" characterised by enjoyment.

An even more palpable connection with a specific Horatian ode can be seen in "The Young Man Thinks of Sons" (first collected in *No New Thing* 1934).[11] This is *Odes* 3.6, the last of the so-called Roman Odes, in which Horace laments civil strife and the moral laxity of the current age, sees this as the cause of recent Roman military defeats, and predicts recovery only if traditional values are restored and due honour for the gods revived. Its final lines can be translated as: "The age of our parents, worse than that of our grandparents, has produced us morally worthless, soon to bring forth offspring who are more depraved" (Hor. *Carm*. 3.6.46–48).

"Asclepius" offers proof that this ode acted as a springboard for the New Zealand poet: "In Mason's own copy of 'Horace for Schools,'

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[11] Another very close connection exists between Mason's late poem "Vengeance of Venus," first collected in *Recent Poems* 1941, and Horace's *Odes* 4.1, which are both cases of a poet in advancing years still finding himself tormented by the goddess.

entitled *Quintus Horatii Flacci* [sic], London 1818, there is a pencil mark beside the last lines of Ode 6, Book 3."[12] It is clear, then, that Mason begins his poem where Horace leaves the reader in the last lines of his:

> Did my father curse his father for his lust I wonder
>   as I do mine
> and my grand-dad curse his sire for his wickedness his weakness his
>   blunder
>   and so on down the whole line ("The Young
>   Man Thinks of Sons," 1–4)

Mason's solution, however, to the chain of iniquity, is to proclaim that it will cease with him, without further issue. Interestingly, Horace's ode is immediately followed by one with a shift to a significantly lighter tone (3.7), in which the preservation of moral rectitude is portrayed as hanging by a thread. The poem's addressee Asterie is lamenting the absence of her beloved Gyges who is being propositioned through an intermediary by his enamoured foreign hostess, even though he has up to this point resisted her advances. Asterie herself, however, is urged to resist the wooing of her own love-struck neighbour.

        When we turn to Mason, moreover, we find that "Flattering Unction," the poem following "The Young Man Thinks of Sons," is characterised by a similar change of tone and theme, and a similar twist at the end:

> When women pass by me at night and the fragrant
>   whirlpool of perfume left in their wake swirls
>   round my nostrils till I madden—I the old vagrant
>   the useless the unlovable the despised of girls ("Flattering Unction," 1–
>   4)

He goes on to reassure himself that his fame will increase and last when, for the women, "their pride is shame / and all their clay corruption long ago" (7–8). However, in the final two-line stanza, the reader is left with the present rather than this future: "There's balm for flesh, flesh that's alive and raving / to smell and touch these girls, with a fiendish craving" (13–14).

        It seems likely that Mason has juxtaposed these poems to match Horace's pairing, and the parallel can be pushed further when see that Horace's *Ode* 3.7 introduces a series of odes dealing with love and friendship leading up to *O fons Bandusiae* (3.13), just as, in Mason's case,

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[12] "Asclepius" 2004, 122.

"Flattering Unction" introduces a sequence of poems dealing with aspects of love.

In the early poem "In Perpetuum Vale" (first collected in *The Beggar*), Mason signals a response to his other favourite Roman source, Catullus. Apart from the title, however, there is little direct connection with Catullus' lament at the grave of his brother (poem 101), since Mason's poem is more a meditation on human mortality as he visualises his own death. More relevant are two later poems included in the 1934 collection *No New Thing*. The title of the first of these, "Lugete O Veneres," again signals the response to Catullus whose poem with these opening words (poem 3) describes the effect on his lover Lesbia of the death of her pet *passer*. The poem concludes with the words,

> o factum male! o miselle passer!
> tua nunc opera meae puellae
> flendo turgiduli rubent ocelli (Catull. 3.16–18)

> Oh cruel deed! Oh wretched bird!
> Because of what you've gone and done
> my girlfriend's precious eyes are swollen and red with weeping.

In Mason's poem, however, the grief is that of a young man whose girlfriend will have left her home with her family by the next day. Its final words are,

> Mark how dejected tormented he lies poor lad while shivers
>   run and shake his fat arse:
> for a space let us mourn here this tortured boy's slobbering quivers
>   as we laugh at the farce. ("Lugete O Veneres,"
>   17–20)

Interpretation of Mason's poem, and of exactly how he saw its relationship to the Catullan source poem, is difficult. The change of tone from what appears to be initial seriousness to crude mockery suggests that he read the Roman poem in mock-heroic terms and was trying to reproduce this flavour in his own poem, albeit with an added dose of cynicism. At the same time, he has changed the focus of grief from Catullus' love interest Lesbia, for what is perhaps not a really significant loss, to the grief of a young male who has permanently lost what at the time anyway is the female of his desire. Horace is perhaps also part of the literary background. Mason's poem begins,

> With his penis swollen for the girl on the next farm and rigid
>   here he lies on his bed

motionless dumb and his naked corpse goose-fleshed and as frigid
      as if he were dead. ("Lugete O Veneres," 1–4)

One might initially think of Catullus' physical reaction in poem 51 to the
sight of Lesbia in the company of another man. However, in the first stanza
of *Odes* 1.13, Horace's physical anguish, also the result of a combination of
sexual desire and jealousy, includes the symptom described as *meum /
fervens difficili bile tumet iecur* (3–4), which can be translated as "my
body's passion centre is blazing and swells with arousal." It is possible,
though by no means certain, that Mason had this in mind for the swelling
penis of his wretched young man who ends up being mocked so mercilessly.

      There is no mistaking the seriousness, however, of "Nox Perpetua
Dormienda," the other poem with a title evoking Catullus, in this case poem
5. The Roman poet asks his girlfriend to partner him in living life to the full
and making love, irrespective of the criticism of old busybody gossips and
the envious and malicious, reminding her that, while suns may set and rise
again without end, humans are only blessed with a brief time of light, after
which an eternal night of sleep awaits. Mason certainly modifies the Roman
poem, focusing more on the inevitability and unattractiveness of death
rather than on the call to make the most of life and love. The final two
stanzas are sombre in the extreme:

We shall be no good then save to cower and crouch
    naked bone turning green like verdigrised silver or polished
    by the rain blind dumb bone lying cold on its earthy couch
    when all this goodly garment of flesh is demolished.
What will it help us then girl not to have loved,
    chill and exposed to the rain or cramped and deep-sodded
    wet to the bone of a truth and mute and unmoved
    then whom will it help that we loved not when we were bodied?'
    ("Nox Perpetua Dormienda," 13–20)

In the case of both Catullus and Horace, then, Mason is primarily drawn to
their poetic handling of the human awareness of death rather than anything
which might be described as exclusively "Roman."

      There are also echoes of Virgil and Lucretius. In 1923, Mason
produced two handwritten and hardbound copies of a short collection of
poems entitled *In the Manner of Men*, which can be seen, in a sense, as his
first publication. The introductory poem "Lullaby" contains his expression
of *Schadenfreude* at the fate of a capitalist whose body he pretends to be
digging up from his "pomp-girt cemetery." He pulls no punches about the
fate he imagines the man to have been enduring:

Where thin vines untouched by scythe
    leanly thrusting lank and lithe
    like foul snakes around you writhe
Where the stunted dark trees brood
    like black phantoms obscene lewd
    over all the foulness spewed
By the filthy stench-soaked sewer
    pouring out its flood impure
    with offal to the reeking air
Where the pestilential drain
    festers like a madman's brain
    till the very sun is slain ("Lullaby," 16–27)

Charles Doyle refers the imagined afterlife of torment endured by the capitalist to what Aeneas is described as witnessing in the Underworld in *Aeneid* Book 6.[13] Doyle concentrates his attention on a few specific Virgilian lines, but the extended passage 6.268–330 gives a better picture of Mason's probable inspiration with expressions such as *Discordia demens / vipereum crinem vittis innexa cruentis* (280–81: "frenzied Strife with snaky hair entwined with bloody fillets"), *ramos annosaque bracchia pandit / ulmus opaca, ingens* (282–83: "a huge, densely shading elm spreads its branches and age-old arms"), and *turbidus hic caeno vastaque voragine gurges / aestuat, atque omnem Cocyto eructat harenam* (296–97: "here, swollen with slime and bottomless abyss, a whirlpool seethes and belches all its sand into Cocytus"). It is ironical that Mason can exploit in his poetry Virgil's grim vision of afterlife torture, given that he subscribed to the Lucretian doctrine that an afterlife does not exist and that all the stories of punishment are quite untrue.

With regard to Lucretius, it appears likely that the *De Rerum Natura* lies behind Mason's "Sonnet of my Everlasting Hand" (collected in *Penny Broadsheet* 1925). The poem refers to atoms that make up the poet's hand and that have previously travelled the world and "have grown old in change and interchange" (9) before ending up in their present location which is "at once their bier / and womb" (12–13) as they yearn to set out on their journey again after the poet's death. Lucretius' poem is famous for its promulgation of the atomic theory put forward originally by the Greek thinker Democritus and its "mechanistic" view of the universe and human life within it.[14]

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[13] Doyle 1970, 49–50.
[14] Cf. "Asclepius" 2004, 73.

The shadow of Lucretius has also been detected in "Miracle of Life," a sequence of three sonnets originally collected in *The Beggar*. The first is a meditation on the poet's "life-stream," which at any moment could have been so easily cut short, as it flowed through all his forebears right back to "times of cave of flint and bronze and fur" (1.3). This could conceivably relate to Book 5 of the *De Rerum Natura* which includes a section on the evolution of life on earth, and the gradual development of human culture from the primitive stage leading to, among other things, a capacity for metallurgy. In addition, quite apart from the poet's knowledge, expressed in the third sonnet, that trying to forget that he is "nothing but a mote" (3.9) simply reminds him of this very fact, the earlier line "let me forget that any gods are there" (3.4) might lead back to the Lucretian concept of gods who have never had any connection with life on earth and have no interest in this at all.[15] In any case, Mason had a high regard for Lucretius, as can be seen, for example, in an entry in his notebook: "I am prepared to go to a great deal of trouble to win even such a poor & limited appreciation of Lucretius as is possible for me to-day living in a mechanical age among an isolated & only half civilised people."[16]

When one surveys Mason's oeuvre as a whole, along with his own notes, one can clearly see the shadow of Rome. However, it is a Rome fashioned through stereotypes of particular Roman authors, primarily but not exclusively poets. E. M. Blaiklock, who had been a school mate of Mason's at Auckland Grammar School, and who had recently been appointed to a lectureship in Classics at what was then Auckland University College when Mason began part-time study there towards a BA in Latin in 1926,[17] testifies to Mason's passionate love of Latin literature in general.

He notes that Mason focused on what he enjoyed, and that he even became quite an authority on Suetonius, an author not on the university syllabus when he was a student.[18] Mason's personal papers from time to time confirm this passion as well as his critical eye. In one letter of 1930, for example, he can write: "Read a lot of Milton, Plato and Virgil at first, but found my mind was turning a pure snow-white: a little Horace to bring me back to normal, and then some of that black-hearted, calumniating (but

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[15] "Asclepius" 2004, 61–63 points to further Lucretian echoes in "Miracle of Life" as well as in "The Sonnet of Brotherhood."

[16] Barrowman 2003, 51, also quoted with minor differences by "Asclepius" 2004, 61.

[17] Blaiklock was later to become Professor of Classics at Auckland.

[18] Blaiklock 1971, 231.

gloriously powerful) bastard Tacitus to put a bit of malignity in me."[19] He was also reading and/or recommending others to read Suetonius, Petronius, Catullus, Tibullus, the *Pervigilium Veneris* and Apuleius.[20] In notes he made for a lecture many years later, as a comment on the first of his two poems entitled "Prelude" (this one collected in *End of the Day* 1936), he explains that the sword which he mentions as having acquired in Rome was the sword of "Caesar and Tacitus, Lucretius and Catullus," a language of "brevity, precision and an almost colloquial quality" in contrast to the "politicians' Latin" of "that windbag Cicero."[21]

      In summary, it seems reasonable to say that Mason's poetry takes much of its tone and style from Roman writing, while also reflecting a contrast between what he senses as the buoyancy of the Rome of Catullus and Horace in particular (even if these poets were deeply embroiled in the tragic fact of human mortality) and the depressed state of New Zealand in the 1920s and 1930s. Also discernible is a contrast between the simple life (constantly espoused by Horace) for which Mason yearned and the vices of the capitalist system which he despised so much and indeed fought against for almost all of his adult life. In briefly assessing Mason's place in the development of New Zealand writing up till 1949, the young James K. Baxter wrote: "R. A. K. Mason implies in his verse a determinist philosophy. But with him, as with Housman and Thomas Hardy, God is to blame. Our virtues are the Roman ones—fortitude and justice."[22]

      Turning to Baxter now, we find some significant contrasts with Mason. In the first place, although Mason is generally considered to be the first New Zealand poet of any significant originality writing in English, his poetic output was modest and he wrote virtually nothing of importance in the last thirty years of his life. During this time his energies were largely devoted to left wing, Trade Union, and Communist Party activities, so that poetry took a back seat to Agitprop and propagandist People's Theatre. Baxter, on the other hand, was a prolific writer, of prose as well as poetry, from boyhood onwards all the way through to the end of his comparatively short life.[23] In addition, whereas Mason was an accomplished classical

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[19] Barrowman 2003, 100.

[20] See Barrowman 2003, 100.

[21] Barrowman 2003, 216.

[22] Baxter 2015a, 52.

[23] The complete prose works have recently been published. However, the *Collected Poems* of 1979, a volume containing more than 600 pages, represents only a fraction of the poetry he actually wrote. There are plans to collect at least most of the other

scholar, Baxter despised formal learning, even if ultimately he did with difficulty complete a BA degree, with two stages of Latin included. Baxter too, although like Mason having strong anti-establishment and anti-materialistic views, was a pacifist and Christian, and his religious views are prominent in his writing, especially after he became a Roman Catholic in 1958.

On the other hand, like Mason, Baxter had a very strong personal interest in classical literature and the ancient world in general, introducing a wealth of classical allusion into both his poetry and prose writings. The richest vein of this consists of his use of mythological figures such as Ulysses/Odysseus, Venus/Aphrodite, and Bacchus/Dionysus as a means of exploring aspects of himself and his perceptions of social and gender issues.[24] Rome and Roman literature is not neglected, however, and like Mason he turned to Horace and especially Catullus for poetic stimulus.

The opening words of Horace, *Odes* 3.13, *O Fons Bandusiae*, appear as the opening words of Baxter's early poem "The First Forgotten," which he chose as the first poem of his first collection *Beyond the Palisade* (1944). There is a link with Mason here, since the older poet had written a lively, free translation of this ode of Horace when he was still at school, and it had been included in his 1924 collection *The Beggar*, which received critical praise. The most significant Horatian ode as far as Baxter is concerned, however, is 1.5, because it is from there that he took the name Pyrrha for the girlfriend of his early student days in Dunedin who features in a number of his poems. We shall consider this in more detail shortly.

Baxter had the highest regard for Catullus whom he chose as representative of Roman poetry in a discussion of the possible emergence of a "legend" with which New Zealand writers could identify: "Not until a poet, walking up Queen Street or down Lambton Quay, can feel part of a complex spiritual identity, as Catullus did in Rome, Baudelaire in Paris, George Barker in London, can that legend begin to live."[25]

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material, a large proportion of which is in Baxter's meticulously kept notebooks, housed in the Hocken Library in Dunedin.

[24] See in particular Miles, Davidson, and Millar 2011. The admirable assistant for this project, Stefanie Head, identified and arranged in the course of her research much material that I have been able to draw on for this paper.

[25] Baxter 2015b, 178.

Already in 1946, Baxter had written a free version of Catullus' poem 101, entitled "Catullus at the Grave of his Brother."[26] Then, in the 1950s, he wrote in his MS notebooks a number of poems again modelled on Catullan originals. [27] Two of these as yet unpublished poems are free versions of poem 8. To the first he gave the title of "The Brush Off," which he then crossed out and substituted "The Crackup," writing underneath the text the opening words of the Latin, *Miser Catulle, desinas* (Catull. 8.1). The second version, which used shorter lines, was clearly an attempt to improve on this, and was given the title "Catullus on Clodia," then emended to "Catullus to Clodia," this time with the opening Latin words immediately under the title. Three other poems were given titles taken from the opening lines of the Latin, "Lugete, O Veneres" (poem 3), "Vivamus, mea Lesbia" (poem 5), and "Quaeris, quot mihi basiationes" (poem 7). These poems are again free versions of the Catullan models, couched in colloquial New Zealand language, but following the Latin train of thought very closely, quite unlike any of Mason's poems with Catullan titles. A sixth poem, entitled "The Inscription," refers to the sentiment expressed in poem 5 by "Rome's best poet," that our brief light is followed by everlasting sleep, a sentiment that "I must deny."[28]

All of this material is a foretaste of what was to follow in 1966 when he returned to Dunedin after being awarded the Robert Burns Fellowship for creative writing at the University of Otago. There are a number of poems written at this time that recall his love affair of two decades previously, some of which were edited and published in the year after his death under the title of "Words to Lay a Strong Ghost (after Catullus)."[29] Unlike the earlier free translations of Catullus, this sequence consists of entirely new poems in a contemporary setting that yet incorporate many aspects taken from a range of Catullan poems, primarily the Lesbia ones. Baxter does not use the name Lesbia for his love interest, however. Instead, he keeps the name Pyrrha which he had already used for her in a poem published in 1957.[30]

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[26] Baxter 1979, 47.
[27] MS 704/17.
[28] MS 704/17, 36.4.
[29] Baxter 1979, 356–64.
[30] Baxter 1979, 62. He has an uncomplimentary reference to Lesbia in the fourth stanza of his poem "Defence of Romantic Love," written in 1951 and published in Baxter 1979, 100:

Let none in stained sheets
Cry down the heart's voice.

      Among the so far unpublished poems from this time, there are also several that engage directly with Horace *Odes* 1.5, the Pyrrha ode.[31] The first of these follows the Horatian poem quite closely, though departing in sense from it more than is the case with the Catullan versions of the 1950s. Its opening lines are:

> What lad now woos
> you, Pyrrha, with an armful
> of roses while you gaze
> back at him. (1–4)

The concluding lines are:

> I take another path,
> hang my coat up to dry
> in Poseidon's
> temple where hardy[?] sailors
> whom the storm does not drown
> offer up their oars. (23–28)

This is followed by a shorter, freer rendition of the same ode, and then two modernised versions of it entitled "The Flirt,"[32] with the encounter taking place in a coffee bar described as a "grotto,"[33] and the disillusioned poet hanging up his bathing togs to dry.

      In the "Words to Lay a Strong Ghost" sequence, Horace and Catullus meet head on in the sixth poem, which is given the title of "The Change-Over." The creaking bed with which Baxter begins is one of the tell-tale signs in Catullus poem 6. However, we then find ourselves in yet another version of *Odes* 1.5, with the displaced lover poet predicting that his rival will find out soon enough what it will be like to be ditched in his turn. Baxter pictures his rival as "He looks down on / A rough sea of storm-black curls . . ." ("The Change-Over," 11–12) which reworks Horace's *aspera / nigris aequora ventis / emirabitur* ("he will marvel at the smooth

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> Lesbia was a trull;
> Beatrice picked her nose—
> But Love, leavening all,
> Proves the impossible. (19–24)

[31] MS 704/26, 89–92.

[32] This title suggests to me that Baxter had the C. E. Bennett Loeb translation in front of him, since Bennet adds "To a Flirt" as a title for his translation of *Odes* 1.5.

[33] Horace imagines the encounter between Pyrrha and her latest lover as taking place in a grotto.

sea made rough with black winds," *Carm*. 1.5.6–8). Baxter's final prediction ("He'll hang, like me, / An old coat on your clothesline / Pegged up to dry!" 13–15) is another amusing adaptation of the Horatian hanging up of dripping clothes as a dedication to Neptune. It is fascinating to see how Baxter moves further and further away from Horace's wording over the course of the five poems based on *Odes* 1.5, while at the same time keeping to the basic development of ideas. He also works Catullus again in this fifth poem, with two sun images, one of them "appropriately" obscene.

The other thirteen poems in the sequence are almost exclusively "Catullan," though only number three follows the thought sequence of a particular poem by Catullus, and this one is a mix of poems 2 and 3. Baxter's technique is rather to draw on elements from a wide range of different poems and rework them in new contexts.[34] Thus in the first poem "The Party," for example, he has a rival for his girlfriend's affections given the name of Egnatius. Catullus mocks the man of this name in a poem where he attributes the whiteness of his teeth to the fact that, being a Spaniard, he cleans them with urine. Baxter rather lamely makes his equivalent use "Ajax," a cleaning agent commonly found in New Zealand at the time. The poem as a whole is loosely based on Catullus poem 51 (the "imitation" of a poem by Sappho), in which the poet is obliged to look on helplessly as he watches his lover engrossed in interaction with another man. Baxter cleverly substitutes Catullus' description of the physical symptoms that stem from his love and jealously with a very disjointed train of thought, which clearly stems from the fact that he is "still on the brandy" ("The Party," 1) and "the booze rolls back, madam" (11).[35]

Although Baxter clearly admires Roman poetry, and Catullus in particular, the image of Rome in general that he constructs is overwhelmingly negative,[36] apart from neutral references to aspects of Roman religion, for example, including the occasional touch of humour:

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[34] For a detailed discussion, see Davidson 1976. Cf. Harrison 2009, 296–310.

[35] In a letter to me dated 23 February 1977, the Catullan scholar Kenneth Quinn, who was Professor of Classics at the University of Otago at the time when Baxter returned there in the 1960s, and who had discussed Catullus with Baxter, said that "The Party" was "more obviously inspired" by Catullus 37 (which of course also refers to Egnatius and his dental practices). He also noted, and this was a point which had escaped my attention, that the poem's opening phrase that set the scene of the occasion—"A kind of cave"—showed the original connection of this poem as well with Horace's Pyrrha ode.

[36] On this, see Davidson 1975, 456–58.

I've often thought that when
I finally flake, or a minute after, the gate will open
On this damned ferry. Very likely they won't have heard
Of Good Pope John. They will ask me why
I have no obol under my tongue . . . ("Reflections at Lowburn Ferry," 7–
11)[37]

Most of the time, however, he uses images such as that describing Delhi—
"As cold as Rome and twice as foreign"[38]—or he makes references to
phenomena such as cutting the veins in a bath to commit suicide[39] or "the
whip of a Roman father."[40]

Given that Baxter is staunchly opposed to anything in the nature of
militarism, it is not surprising to find him very conscious of the shadow of
the Roman army and its remorseless progress. On one occasion this is
positive when, in the role of literary critic, he likens the verse of one of his
poet friends to the drive of a Roman legion on the march.[41] In connection
with a recently published collection by another poet he writes: "This legion
of poems, marching to the attack in (I think) the Roman tortoise formation."[42]
However, it is the ruthlessness of Roman militarism that is normally on
show, as symbolised in his poem "The Return," which features "Rigid Mars,
/ Demon of the middle earth, leprous / Chewer of continents" (6–8)[43] or as
in a reference such as "You are the spear that murdered Archimedes / Where
he sat charting the world's face on sand" ("From Winter Vials," 13–14).[44]

Baxter was always the champion of the underdog, of the
revolutionary, of prisoners, of the underprivileged and dispossessed, and
with regard to Rome he finds such a figure in the gladiator Spartacus to
whom he makes reference in both prose and poetry. In one prose context,
he links Spartacus with the prison escaper and "folk hero" George Wilder,[45]
and in another with the Māori leader Te Whiti who provided the rallying
point for "the broken tribes."[46] Among his as yet unpublished poetry there

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[37] Baxter 1979, 391.
[38] "Night in Delhi," 3, at Baxter 1979, 198.
[39] Baxter 1979, 199–200.
[40] "Family Matters," MS 704/25, 20.
[41] Baxter 2015c, 341.
[42] Baxter 2015d, 117–18.
[43] Baxter 1979, 179.
[44] "From Winter Vials," published in *First Year Book of the Arts in New Zealand*,
1945, 129.
[45] Baxter 2015e, 135.
[46] Baxter 2015f, 330.

are three almost identical versions of an image involving the famous gladiator in three separate poems. The wording is "From your bed I go," "In your bed I am reborn," or "Today I rose from your bed, and then each time "like Spartacus/Wakening among the vines/Below the double cone of Vesuvius."[47] The idea seems to be that the poet feels a new freedom, as he imagines Spartacus must have felt after escaping from his gladiatorial cage. A later poem describes a man at a picnic: "The old, red, crumpled gladiator's face / Reminded me of Spartacus."[48]

Perhaps the strongest condemnation of Roman brutality can be seen in Baxter's poetic use of the wanton destruction of Carthage in 146 BCE. This occurs most famously in one of his best-known early poems "Wild Bees," written over the period 1941–49 and first published in 1953,[49] which describes and reflects upon a botched attempt to smoke out a hive: "O it was Carthage under Roman torches, / Or loud with flames and falling timber, Troy!" (19–20). The same act of destruction is recalled too in "The Cherry Tree (*for John Weir*)": "and like the // clods of ruined Carthage thrown / into time's trench, lay sod walls / built by an Irishman" (12–15).[50]

Individual Roman rulers do not escape Baxter's sting either. Thus, we find, for example, uncomplimentary phrases such as "The water of Octavius' veins"[51] and "Franey, Nero of the dormitory."[52] It is against Caesar, however, that most of Baxter's ire is directed. Throughout his writing, both prose and poetry, the word Caesar appears frequently, standing for everything that he finds distasteful—militarism, the oppressive establishment, secularisation, materialism. This is Caesar not only representing Rome of the Principate and Empire in general, but also the adversary of Christianity and the Roman Catholic church. The two strands, even if in this example the name Caesar is not used, come together in the first of three sonnets that evoke an Easter weekend.[53] In "Good Friday" (Baxter changed this simply

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[47] MS 704/22, 62; 704/23,3; 704/24, 59.

[48] MS 704/27, 27. All of these references to Spartacus occur well after the appearance of Howard Fast's 1951 novel of this title. Given Baxter's prodigious reading, it is quite possible that the book may have inspired him. Alternatively, his impetus may have been the 1960 Stanley Kubrick film.

[49] Baxter 1979, 82–83.

[50] Baxter 1979, 317.

[51] "Letter to Bob Lowry," MS 704/18, 39.

[52] "School Days," Baxter 1979, 194–95.

[53] Baxter's original title was "Holy Sonnets," which he changed to "Early Sonnets." Only the third sonnet in the sequence has been published, under Baxter's original

to "Friday"), we find the ultimate presentation of Roman brutality in the poet's thoughts about the family's mundane activities: "The Roman scourge, nailed wristbones, / Are out of sight."

Baxter's Rome, then, is not exactly a pleasant one. At least he did find some saving grace in concepts such as *fraternitas*, which he links with the Māori *aroha*, and what he describes as "the later Roman virtues, / *Gravitas, simplicatas* [sic]."[54] But such a negative idea of what Rome really was, once all the idealisation is stripped away, has in the last fifty years or so not exactly been confined to James K. Baxter. And at least he, like R. A. K. Mason, responded positively to the highs and lows of personal human experience as reflected in the significant contribution made to western literature by Roman poets such as Horace and Catullus.

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title of "Easter Sunday," in Baxter 1979, 249–50. The full sequence can be found in MS 704/23, 1.
[54] "Poem on a Clay Tile," MS 704/20, 76.

CHAPTER SEVEN

FROM ETRURIA TO EMPIRE: VIRGIL, GEORGIC AND COLONIAL REPRESENTATIONS OF THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE

SARAH MIDFORD

When Captain Cook claimed *Terra Australis* for the British Empire in 1770, the continent was understood to be an empty land, devoid of history, culture, and civilisation. In place of built environments and written histories, or what was thought of as recognisable cultural and historical heritage, the new settlers emphasised Australia's great potential: Australia was a sleeping continent brought to life by European settlement.[1] The idea that Australia would eventually succeed Britain and Rome as the next great empire was popular in the late-eighteenth and early- to mid-nineteenth-centuries.[2] According to the first governor of New South Wales, Admiral Arthur Phillip, "[f]rom smaller, and not more respectable beginnings, powerful empires have frequently arisen."[3] To present Australia's great potential, writers drew parallels between Etruria and New South Wales, imagining an antipodean Arcadia that would eventually prosper into a great empire through diligent agricultural labour. Accordingly, this chapter argues that

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[1] An example of Australia being represented as a sleeping continent waiting to be awakened by Captain Cook is the Sydney University Prize Poem "Captain Cook Meditating on Australia's Future" printed in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 25 February 1879, 7. Much of this chapter will focus not on Australia as a nation, but on the Australian colonies. The colony of New South Wales was the only mainland Australian colony until 1825 and the colony from which most of the sources discussed originate. The colonies of Western Australia (Swan River Colony), South Australia, and Queensland are also discussed in this chapter, founded in 1829, 1834 and 1859 respectively.

[2] O'Brien 1999, 160–63.

[3] Phillip 1789, 54.

the idealised Roman past, represented in Virgil's poetry, particularly *Georgics* and *Eclogues*, was utilised in colonial Australian literature to characterise an early rural Golden Age that mitigated the perceived lack of cultural heritage.[4] The chapter connects the ancient Roman conception that prosperity is founded on hard work in a humble rural setting to the presentation of rural Australia as an empty but idealised landscape similar to the Italian rural ideal presented in Virgil's poems. Further, the chapter follows Richard Feingold's contention that Virgil's *Georgics* were employed to articulate the great potential of the young Roman Empire, which, too, could claim humble agricultural origins, while defining the natural boundaries that constrained it, and argues that georgic and pastoral poetry were used in the antipodes to declare the potential of the infant Australian empire, which would rise from the cultivation of a harsh and unfamiliar landscape.[5]

It was common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries for colonists to write in the georgic and pastoral tradition when describing the cultivation of Australian and other colonial landscapes.[6] Drawing on Virgil's *Georgics* and *Eclogues* allowed poets to present the current agricultural state of the Australian colonies as an idealised past for a great future empire. Virgil's *Georgics* provide instructions on agriculture and their invocation when describing the Australian landscape and praising the agricultural prowess of those who worked it drew on the instructional nature of the text. Although frugal and simple, Virgil's farmers lived in harmony with their natural environment and worked hard to maintain the balance between cultivation and nature.[7] This ensured ongoing prosperity and instilled the farmer with moral good that assured the land long-term peace. The Australian historian Richard White interprets the use of Virgil's *Georgics* in Australia as more than a mere "failure of imagination [or] an

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[4] Virgil's Fourth *Eclogue* discusses a new age emerging that would result in a peaceful golden age. This chapter is not claiming that Virgil is the only influence on the construction of an Australian pastoral ideal. However, other influences will not be discussed here so the influence of Virgil's *Georgics* on the colonial understanding of the Australian landscape can be achieved in reasonable depth.

[5] Feingold 1978, 21. According to Mathilde Skoie 2006, 103, pastoral poetry is a form of reception because each new use of the genre re-writes the pastoral world for a new purpose. Australian pastoral poetry owes a debt to Virgil as well as all pastoral poetry that was written in the time that intervened. Each time the pastoral genre is utilised, the re-working contributes to the history of the genre. On the reworking of pastoral narratives see also, Iser 1993, 25 and Shankman 1994, 198.

[6] See Baker 2019; Kerrigan 2018; O'Brien 1999.

[7] Feingold 1978, 21.

imitation of Europe by cultural cringers" and contends that they "were intended", rather, "to enhance the colonial condition."[8] The landscape was not simply being romanticised, it was being constructed as the foundation upon which a new and prosperous civilisation would be built by those who worked it. Writers represented the Australian colonies progressing towards becoming a great new empire: if only they could work hard, these morally upright farmers would enjoy great prosperity.[9] By taking instruction from Virgil's poetry, Australian georgic poetry could imagine Australia as a new Rome in the antipodes.

Investigation into the use of pastoral and georgic has been undertaken in Britain, Canada and America.[10] In Australia, little work has been published on the topic since the 1970s and 1980s when Coral Lansbury and Robert Dixon were working on the reception of Roman literature in colonial Australia. Although not in an Australian context, there has been a recent resurgence in the investigation of receptions of Virgil's poetry in a British imperial context, and the PhD theses by Jennifer Baker (2019) and Charlie Kerrigan (2018) have been useful to understand Australian receptions.[11] This chapter builds on existing scholarship to demonstrate the importance of Roman literature to the development of a colonial Australian identity in the late-eighteenth and early- to mid-nineteenth centuries. It does this by examining late-eighteenth- and early- to mid-nineteenth-century Australian literature that connects Virgilian georgic and pastoral poetry to the Australian landscape, focusing on the writers William Woolls, Charles Harpur, Charles Wentworth and the reports of Governor Arthur Phillip published by John Stockdale. These works have been selected because they demonstrate that Australian georgic and pastoral poetry drew on the Virgilian tradition to present the colonies experiencing a rural Golden Age that would precede the rise of an Australian empire.[12]

A land without classical ruins

Australia was not officially established as a nation until the Commonwealth was inaugurated on 1 January 1901, although the name existed prior to the nation itself. The idea of "Australia" was a European invention and any

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[8] White 1986, 18.
[9] Wright 1965, xii.
[10] See Feingold (1978) on Britain, Baker (2019) on Canada, and Gentilcore (1995) on America.
[11] Kerrigan 2018; Baker 2019.
[12] Iser 1993, 25; Shankman 1994, 198.

Australian identity during the colonial period was a product of cultural baggage brought from Europe.[13] The name "Australia" came from *Terra Australis Incognita* ("the unknown southern land"). This was the name given to the imagined great southern continent by Europeans before its existence had even been discovered.[14] The use of the rare and poetic *australis*, rather than the more common *meridies*, is indicative of the long-romanticised understanding of the Australian continent and demonstrates that it has always been situated in terms of its geographical relationship to Europe. When Europeans settled on the Australian continent, Britain's connections to the Graeco-Roman classical tradition were being actively promoted as an inherent component of Britain's cultural heritage.[15] According to Phiroze Vasunia, "British writers legitimised their own empire through the turn to ancient Rome," often resulting in "elaborate comparisons of the Roman and British empires."[16] The Greek and Roman classics were well understood by the educated classes in Britain, Europe, and the new world and even the less educated would have been familiar with aspects of classical myth, literature, art, and architecture through the pervasive influence of neo-classicism.[17]

Faced with the burden of having no recognisable European history, those who first settled Australia set about the task of constructing their own. The widely understood "language" of the classics was utilised to provide the new civilisation with a connection to Britain and Europe, compensating for the apparent lack of cultural heritage. The misguided notion that the Australian continent lacked any cultural heritage was linked to anxieties over a lack of civilisation as it was perceived at the time. During the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries, the beauty of a landscape was underpinned by classical ideals of monumentality, and the Australian landscape, with its lack of monuments, was disturbing to European

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[13] On the influence of European culture on the development of Australia, see Atkinson 1997; Griffiths 1996; Macintyre 1987; and White 1981.

[14] On the European understanding of *Terra Australis Incognita* from the early fifteenth-century, see Welsh 2004, 1–4. On the ancient European imagination of the antipodean continent, see Romm 1992, 128–35. Obviously, the Australian continent was already known to Indigenous Australians and others in the geographical region. Its "discovery" in the context of this chapter only refers to the perception of contemporary Europeans.

[15] Vlassopoulos 2010, 29–31.

[16] Vasunia 2005, 39.

[17] For an overview of how the classics were understood in Europe, Britain and the British Empire during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, see Bradley 2010; Panourgiá 2004, Richards 2009; Sachs 2009; Vance 1997.

sensibilities.[18] The Australian continent exhibited no relics of Europe's past. It was not host to ancient buildings, there were no history books, and other icons emblematic of European civilisation were completely absent. Members of the Dawn and Dusk Literary Club, founded in 1898, were so keen to populate the Australian landscape with relics that they (in jest) included among the club's objectives: "to establish a society for the erection of ancient ruins in Australia."[19] This sentiment had a long history. In the 1840s the explorer James Calder expressed the same lament:

> The country we describe is as yet without history, without traditions . . . Its past is a veritable blank, and we look back into it only to discover that it has nothing to reveal . . . There is no such thing as classical soil here.[20]

In 1850 the engineer and artist Edward Snell, after arriving from England, also articulated his disappointment about a lack of recognisable cultural heritage, saying of South Australia: "I miss the picture galleries, statues, and fine buildings of England, there are no fine old churches, or cathedrals, no antiquities here except the sea and the hills."[21] In order for the new settlement to be considered "civilised" in the eyes of Snell, Calder, and those like them, a connection to Europe's ancient past was necessary. However, this connection would have to be forged without monumental remains of a European past, and, as Snell suggested, Australians would have to look to the natural environment for their antiquities.

The British-born teacher, clergyman, classicist and botanist, William Woolls, shared the general feeling that Australia lacked monumental markers of cultural heritage and civilisation, claiming the landscape was "devoid of any venerable remains of antiquity," which, for him, meant that it was "deficient in those interesting scenes which contribute so much to enliven and dignify the histories of other countries."[22] Woolls emigrated to Australia at the age of sixteen and was keenly interested in the Australian landscape and local plant life, so much so that the University of Göttingen awarded him a PhD in 1871 for his research into the botany of the Parramatta region.[23] In 1838, he commented on Australia's lack of recognisable heritage in "Beauties of Australia":

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[18] Griffiths 1996, 103.
[19] Quoted in White 1981, 94–95.
[20] Quoted in Flanagan 1985, 67.
[21] Griffiths and Platt 1988, 79.
[22] Woolls 1838, 86.
[23] Cable 1976.

> We are not famous for the gigantic pyramids which have been reared by
> kings whose names are now unknown. The huge column and the lengthened
> aisle do not grace our shores. We have no plains of Marathon, no pass of
> Thermopylae, on which we might feel an honest pride; nor are our towns
> decorated with the trophies of ancient victories, and the headless busts of
> heroes long forgotten.[24]

Here, Woolls makes a point of Australia's lack of great historical events,
drawing on ancient examples for emphasis. The Australian continent's lack
of pyramids, columns, famous battlefields, and statuary did not discourage
Woolls, who spent his life promoting his knowledge of Australian native
flora to the public through lectures, poetry, prose, and correspondence and
looked to the beauty and cultivation of the Australian landscape to make up
for man-made markers of civilisation. His utilisation of ancient georgic and
pastoral poetic style to idealise Australian nature is evident in "Beauties of
Australia":

> Australia is not uninteresting to the lover of antiquity, for we may truly say
> that many of its scenes are calculated to awaken the most pleasing
> recollections. Can the admirer of classic lore survey the numerous flocks,
> which now are seen sporting over our plains, and be forgetful of those
> primitive ages when kings and queens tended to their flocks, and valued
> them as their chief possessions? Can he behold the vine and fig spreading
> luxuriantly over the land, and be unmindful of the beautiful passages in
> ancient writings which speak of them as the attendants of peace and plenty?
> And can he traverse the wide-spreading plain, climb the summit of the lofty
> range, or wander 'by gushing fount, wild wood, and shadowy dell,' without
> calling to mind the inimitable descriptions of the ancient poets? . . . Homer
> affords new beauties to him, and he appreciates many of those excellencies
> and eastern allusions, which are almost unintelligible in the cold and
> ungenial regions of the north. Nor is the Roman bard lost upon him, for the
> Eclogues and the Georgics, in sweet melodious numbers, instil into his
> breast a fondness for rural pleasures and agricultural pursuits.[25]

In this section, Woolls makes references to Homer and Virgil and
encourages those looking at the Australian landscape to be reminded of
Virgil's presentation of rural virtues while imagining those working in the
fields to be like kings and queens of antiquity. Woolls constructs the
Australian landscape in the image of Virgil's Italian landscapes and the
Australian people as heirs to an idealised Roman past. The luxuriant vines

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[24] This was first printed as "Australia" under the by-line "From a Correspondent" in
the Literature and Science Section of *The Colonist*, 9 February 1837, 6; See also,
Woolls 1993, 16–17.
[25] Woolls 1993, 16–17.

and figs that spread over the landscape are not native to Australia but represent the cultural connections between the ancient and new worlds. This connection is made explicit when Woolls quotes Virgil's *Georgics*: "by gushing fount, wild wood, and shadowy dell."[26] By drawing on Virgilian georgic imagery, Woolls idealises the Australian landscape while emphasising the need to work the land to further the advance of Australian prosperity. Drawing attention to Australia's natural beauty and agricultural viability also emphasised the lack of industrial development in the new colony as something that should be celebrated.

Woolls concludes "Beauties of Australia" by assuring his reader that Australia's lack of history is mitigated by the implication that the colony is enjoying a Golden Age, reminiscent of that enjoyed in Italy and Greece before the rise of their respective empires, and free from the corruption of industry evident in contemporary England:

> Thus it is manifest that Australia is by no means deficient in objects of interest to persons of a refined taste. She may, indeed, be poor in works of art, but she is rich in those of nature. Instead of splendid piles and victorious triumphs, she can boast of her clear Italian sky, her woolly flocks, her vine and fig; while her stupendous mountains and awful glens are far superior to all the paltry works of human skill.[27]

Here Woolls asserts that those who are unable to see the natural beauties of Australia are simply forgetting the lessons of "classical lore," which impart that hard work is the foundation of a strong civilisation.[28] To Romans, the land of Saturn discussed in Virgil's *Georgics* was the foundation for the empire that would be "rich in fruits, and men of mighty name!"[29] Equally, the Australian landscape described by Woolls would eventually breed the inhabitants who would raise the great antipodean cities of the future. By drawing on the *Georgics*, "Beauties of Australia" connected Australia to Europe through shared landscape features, the cycle of crops and seasons, as well as the general constant cycle of nature, birth, death, growth, and decay. This connection instructed readers to view the natural beauty of Australia as Saturnian, and to embrace the lack of recognisable cultural heritage as indicative of the Golden Age they were experiencing before

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[26] Verg. *G.* 2.566. Translation by Sotheby 1808, 54.
[27] Woolls 1993, 17.
[28] Imperial georgic presents farming as an idealised pursuit, Baker 2019, 7.
[29] Verg. *G.* 2.172–73. In the previous lines, Virgil lists the achievements of Rome from the building of cities and harbours, to the mining of precious metals and the cultivation of great warriors including the Scipios and Caesars (2.147–69).

progressing into a more complex and prosperous society, like ancient Rome had experienced before them.

Wooll's use of georgic and pastoral poetry in his writing was part of a contemporary trend to draw on Virgil when writing about contemporary rural ideals. English georgic poetry was popular between approximately 1710 and 1770.[30] Its popularity followed the publication of John Dryden's translation of Virgil's works in 1697, which made the ancient poems accessible to a much larger English-reading audience. English georgic flourished throughout the British Empire during this period because it was an adaptable genre that, according to Karen O'Brien, had the ability to "communicate the elation of empire, the moral dangers it could bring and the mechanics of its implementation."[31] Although derived from the Virgilian tradition, English georgic deviated from its namesake and was conflated with Virgil's pastoral poetry, the two different poetic genres merging to promote an idealised vision of rural society in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain and the British Empire.[32] True to Virgil's *Georgics,* the main function of English georgic was to provide agricultural instruction, but because it was set in the same landscape as the more idealised pastoral poetry from the same era, its purpose extended beyond instruction.[33]

In ancient Roman literature georgic and pastoral poetry were distinct genres; Virgil's georgic poetry placed an emphasis on work and the virtues of agriculture while his pastoral poetry emphasised the pleasure and tranquillity of nature, representing human labour in mythical terms.[34] Georgic poetry operated on the understanding that human progress was linear—that from humble origins, through the mastery of agriculture, civilisation and cultural sophistication could be achieved, and that expansion and therefore empire came from agricultural success.[35] A farmer's labour was performed for the sake of imperial progress and prosperity in English georgic. The reason for this has been attributed to Dryden's translation, which reorients georgic to imperial concerns and promotes the idea that the farmer is responsible for cultivating civilisation through labour that is expended for the sake of imperial progress.[36] Georgic

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[30] Landry 2001, 57; Barrell 1980, 37. The pastoral genre was also flourishing at the time, see Shankman 1994, 180.
[31] O'Brien 1999, 163.
[32] Heinzelman 1991, 194.
[33] Short 2006, 134; Curran 1986, 86; Addison 1697, 1.
[34] See Feingold 1978, 17.
[35] Baker 2019, xx–xxi; Landry 2001, 57.
[36] O'Brien 1999, 163.

poetry written about Australia is indebted to the English georgic tradition and is similarly conflated with the pastoral genre. Virgil's *Georgics* were drawn upon to promote the beauty and functionality of the Australian landscape, and colonial settings were reimagined to recall Virgil's Italian landscapes. However, unlike most English georgic, which is focused on an idealised past, that written about Australia also focuses on the future prosperity of the young colonies, characterising the present as an ideal past for an imagined future.

The style of English georgic that emerged after Dryden's translation has also been called "imperial georgic". According to Jennifer Baker, imperial georgic presents the human mastery of nature as central to the progress of empire and the development of a nation.[37] Over time, romanticism became entangled in imperial georgic and this led to representations of productive labour becoming combined with those of pastoral landscapes. Because of this conflation of poetic styles, O'Brien argues that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century "[g]eorgic presented poets with an adaptive middle style that could rise to national prophecy and rapture or descend to technical detail without breaching generic decorum."[38] The presentation of agricultural instruction in an idealised landscape served a number of purposes for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century audiences. At its simplest, it made dry technical topics more entertaining.[39] On a more complex level, it offered an antidote to an increasingly industrial society through the idealised representation of rural landscapes and their inhabitants experiencing an enviable Golden Age.[40] When the continent of Australia was settled by the British, there was an anxiety in England that morality was in decline because the virtue of hard work in a rural setting was something lost to the past, and that advances in technology and the growth of empire were causing corruption.[41]

The rise of English and imperial georgic coincided with the rise of agrarian capitalism in the British Empire and contributed to a sense of connected colonial experiences across the empire.[42] The commonality of colonial agricultural experiences was in stark contrast to the vices and

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[37] Baker 2019, xv, xix. Although Baker's focus is on the centrality of imperial georgic to the Canadian literary tradition, her argument is easily applicable in the colonial Australian context.

[38] O'Brien 1999, 163.

[39] Goodridge 1995, 4–5.

[40] Short 2006, 134; Goodman 2004, 12.

[41] Goodman 2004, 12.

[42] O'Brien 1999, 160–62.

corruption of European industrialisation; the rural landscapes of georgic and pastoral poetry instilled morality and goodness in their inhabitants, and those who worked hard were rewarded with prosperity.[43] The settlement of the Australian continent offered an opportunity to reclaim the virtues lost to progress because, being devoid of recognisable European culture, it was also free from the corruption of modern industry. By the mid-eighteenth century, georgic about the Australian colonies presented narratives of progress achieved through expansion and agricultural accomplishments[44] that exaggerated imperial prosperity to prophesise a future Augustan-like peace for a future Australian empire, which would arise from the present humble rural origins of the colony.[45]

Imagining an Etruria in New South Wales

The idea that Australia was an infant Rome, enjoying a rural Golden Age can be traced back to the first years of European settlement. The conflation of the young antipodean colony and the pre-Roman Etruscan settlement of Italy can first be seen when the word "Etruria" was printed on the Sydney Cove Medallion in 1789. This medal was crafted by Josiah Wedgwood at his "Etruria Works" workshop in Stoke-on-Trent.[46] Designed to commemorate the arrival of the First Fleet, this medallion depicted "Hope encouraging Art and Labour under the influence of Peace, to pursue the employments necessary to give security and happiness to an infant colony"—in other words, the great potential of the colony of New South Wales, should it commit itself to hard work.[47] The inclusion of the word Etruria referenced the location of the medallion's manufacture and that the "Arts of Etruria" were reinvigorated in Wedgwood's factories, which operated under the motto *Artes Etruriae Renascuntur* ("the arts of Etruria are reborn"). But, furthermore, the reference to Etruria also proudly declares the agricultural origins of Rome and celebrates that from modest beginnings great empires can grow.[48] The medallion's message was reinforced to a wider audience when an engraving of it was printed at the beginning *The Voyage of*

[43] Goodridge 1995, 1.
[44] Baker 2019, xiii; O'Brien 1999, 161.
[45] O'Brien 1999, 152.
[46] Bernard and Yallop 2008, 5.
[47] Bernard and Yallop 2008, 5. On the imagery of this medallion, see Johnson 2014, 403. Although the imagery is Greek more than Roman, this should be interpreted as a generic classical style utilized to present ancient Greek and Roman subject matter. On the generic classicism of Wedgwood's iconography see, Robinson 1963.
[48] Frayn 1974, 11; Ramage 2011, 192.

Governor Phillip to Botany Bay (1789).[49] The book, as its original longer title suggests, was compiled by the publisher John Stockdale of Piccadilly from various reports and numerous sources, including some written by Governor Phillip. Stockdale embellished the accounts from the colony "for an educated readership and to meet the standards of taste."[50] Marguerite Johnson argues that Stockdale was influenced by Adam Ferguson's 1767 *Essay on the History of Civil Society*, which promoted the understanding that progress was linear and moved from the primitive towards the culturally sophisticated.[51]

The narrative that Australia was an antipodean Etruria destined to be a great empire was reinforced by the accompanying poem, "The Visit of Hope to Sydney Cove" by Erasmus Darwin. Darwin's poem presents visions of the colony's great future, starting with "Time's opening scenes," and progressing to the presentation of the colony's "broad streets," "stately walls," "bright canals," "proud arch[es]," plentiful farms, and orchards. It also presents the progress of peace, art and labour in cities across a "cultur'd land."[52] In a similar way to Virgil's presentation of future Rome to Aeneas, while he is still journeying to Latium in Book 6 of the *Aeneid*, Darwin's poem presents a future Australia to the book's readers.[53] Johnson contends that Stockdale's book has a "classically inspired tenor" and "antique flourishes" and that its references to the classics and ancient texts are indirect so the reader can draw the connections they like.[54] The pairing of Darwin's poem with the medallion in the front matter of his book seeks to connect the Australian and Etrurian landscapes indirectly through allusions to Virgil's *Aeneid*. Furthermore, through the book's presentation of the Australian colonies' future prosperity, Stockdale also equates Phillip's journey to that of Aeneas in a classical flourish. Phillip is cast in the centre of the book's narrative to emphasise the governor's centrality to the colonial

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[49] This book was originally published with the title, "*The Voyage of Governor Phillip to Botany Bay"; with an account of The Establishment of the colonies of Port Jackson and Norfolk Island; Compiled from Authentic Papers, which have been obtained from the several Departments to which are added the Journals of Lieuts. Shortland, Watts, Ball and Capt. Marshall; with an Account of their New Discoveries*.

[50] Auchmuty 1970, ix.

[51] Johnson 2014, 414; Ferguson 1767, part II, section I.

[52] Darwin 1789.

[53] Verg. *Aen.* 6.752–859.

[54] Johnson 2014, 403, 412; Dixon 1986, 9. Johnson (2014, 415–17) further contends that Stockdale encourages his reader to be inspired by the classics, and this results in meaning from the classical past being reinterpreted for contemporary relevance.

exploration narrative, something that is reinforced through the inclusion of Phillip's portrait as the book's frontispiece.[55] To the reader, Phillip, like Aeneas, was presented as having found a new homeland for his people that would be cultivated by hardworking farmers, and, as a result of their labour, would one day prosper into an enviable empire.

The connection between the colony of New South Wales and Etruria was further established in August 1790 when King George III approved the first seal of the Australian colony.[56] The words chosen for the seal, *sic fortis Etruria crevit* ("thus Etruria grew strong"), formally associated Etruria with the newly established British colony. These words are taken from Virgil's *Georgics* and promote the notion that the Australian colony's prosperity would come from farming and associated industries.[57] Coral Lansbury argues that the motto reflects "the belief in a Golden Age which could be recognised by a return to the plough and furrowed field beneath a clear [New South Wales] sky."[58] The words that immediately follow those chosen for the seal indicate that from Etruria grew Rome, "the most beautiful of things" (*scilicet et rerum facta est pulcherrima Roma*).[59] The implication of this phrase being employed as the New South Welsh motto is clear; that from humble pastoral origins, a great Australian empire would rise.

The colony of New South Wales continued to be presented as the successor to great empires throughout the nineteenth century.[60] In 1838, at the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of New South Wales' colonisation, the following poem was read:

> Rome, Carthage, Greece and Troy, all had their day
> Of infant strength—of glory—and decay;
> Their power, like Australia's, first was small;
> They rose in time—but rose, alas, to fall.
> Such is the curse of change that ever clings

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[55] The original portrait reproduced in the book was by the Royal Academy artist Francis Wheatly. Auchmuty 1970, xii.

[56] The seal was not received in the colony of New South Wales until September 1791, Bernard and Yallop 2008, 5.

[57] Verg. *G.* 2.534; Thomas 1991, 214.

[58] Lansbury 1970, 3.

[59] Verg. *G.* 2.533–34.

[60] In 1906, the New South Wales coat of arms was approved, and the state's motto was changed to *Orta recens quam pura nites* ("Newly risen, how brightly you shine"). "Coat of Arms for New South Wales. New Design Approved," *Sydney Morning Herald*, 30 March 1906, 3.

To mighty empires, and all earthly things.
Our land shall rise, like every other clime,
To martial glory, and to power sublime.
May it progress in honours, arts and fame,
And win, like Rome, an everlasting name![61]

Although not specifically connecting New South Wales to Etruria, the association between the colony and infant empires is clear. In 1859 the colony's motto was engraved on the shovel that broke ground on Australia's first railway line, connecting the progression of the colony to its pastoral origins.[62] The motto was also strongly associated with the New South Wales postal service during the nineteenth century. In 1850 it was used on the colony's first postage stamps and later it was inscribed into Sydney's General Post Office building, completed in 1888.[63] The use of this motto in relation to the colony's postal service, particularly on postage stamps, which were sent back to Britain and across the world, boldly communicated the message that Australia was an infant empire which would eventually rise to great heights.

The use of Virgil to define the course of an infant Australian empire can best be seen in the work of the Australian author, explorer, journalist, barrister and statesman, William Charles Wentworth. Wentworth published *Descriptions of the Colony of New South Wales* (1819), in which he presents the colony as a "wilderness, becoming the smiling seat of industry and the social arts."[64] He goes on to describe an idealised agricultural landscape where "joyful" shepherds tend to "hills and dales covered with bleating flocks, lowing herds, and waving corn."[65] His presentation of Australia as such was designed to attract potential immigrants to the antipodes and away from the United States, which he presents as an inferior prospect. For Wentworth, it was Australia, Britain's youngest colonial settlement, that would inherit the greatness of empire through the taming of a harsh but magnificent landscape.

In 1822 Wentworth wrote the epic poem *Australasia*, which he entered in the Cambridge Chancellor's Gold Medal competition. This poem is a philosophical epic on the course of empire in New South Wales that draws extensively on the *Eclogues* and the *Georgics* to describe the

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[61] Macdonald 1838, 156.
[62] Sutton 1879, 3.
[63] Bernard and Yallop 2008, 5.
[64] Wentworth 1819, 88.
[65] Wentworth 1819, 88–89.

Australian landscape. Wentworth describes the rise of agriculture occurring after a pastoral state and links pastoralism with industry.[66] In *Australasia*, Wentworth clearly states that Australia would take on the mantle of the world's next great empire:

> And, oh Britannia! shouldst thou cease to ride
> Despotic Empress of old Ocean's tide;
> …
> Should e'er arrive that dark disastrous hour
> When bow'd by luxury, thou yield'st to pow'r;
> …
> May all thy glories in another sphere
> Relume, and shine more brightly still than here;
> May this, thy last born infant,—then arise,
> To glad thy heart, and greet thy parent eyes;
> And Australasia float, with flag unfurl'd,
> A new Britannia in another world. [67]

For Wentworth, the phase in which the Australian colonies then existed was the logical first step toward becoming a great and glorious empire.[68] By drawing on Virgil's georgic poetry, depicting the humble origins of the Roman Empire, Wentworth's future Australian empire could be imagined following the same course. However, it was not possible to inherit the mantle of the Roman Empire immediately because the British Empire (which also claimed descent from Rome) still flourished. As the poem indicates, any future Australian empire would come after the demise of the British. Because of this, the presentation of the colonies as the next empire to rise balanced hope for a great Australian future with the realities of Britain's current imperial power and authority over the Australasian colonies. It was by emphasising Australia's connections to early Rome and their shared agricultural merits, that the great potential of the young civilisation could be celebrated, the colonies' present state of dominion be overlooked, and the need for ancient ruins obviated. By linking Australia's European settlement to the foundation of Rome, colonial Australia was characterised as being at the beginning of a very long history that, based on historical precedent, would eventually result in a great and esteemed empire, remembered long after its eventual demise.

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[66] White 1986, 19.

[67] Wentworth 1823, 22.

[68] In the poem, although not named, the future prosperity of Australia is due to the endless toil of the New South Wales governor, Lachlan Macquarie, who shaped the moral, agricultural and industrial foundations of the colony.

An antipodean Arcadia

Virgil's idealisation of the Italian countryside was situated squarely within the boundaries of the classical trope of the *locus amoenus*. The construction of a "pleasant place" in literature can be traced back to Homer,[69] and such *loci amoeni* usually took the form of a garden or pastoral landscape that was remote and therefore removed from the urban landscape.[70] This remoteness allowed the *locus amoenus* to function as an imaginary space where one could take respite from the harsh realities of one's normal landscape and climate. For instance, if one came from a particularly hot climate, the *locus amoenus* would provide cool and refreshing shade. Colonial Australian writers used Virgil's works to construct a *locus amoenus*—an antipodean Arcadia—and define the hardworking agricultural character of the Australian people.[71] The conception of the Australian landscape as a *locus amoenus* is evident in the Australian-born poet Charles Harpur's "A Midsummer Noon in the Australian Forest" (1851).[72] This is a lyric poem written in the tradition of pastoral poetry that fashions the Australian forest into an idyllic place of peace and quiet: a *locus amoenus*. The poem opens and closes with an idealisation of Australian nature:

> NOT a sound disturbs the air,
> There is quiet everywhere;
> Over plains and over woods
> What a mighty stillness broods!
> …
> Oh, 'tis easeful here to lie
> Hidden from Noon's scorching eye,
> In this grassy cool recess,
> Musing thus of Quietness![73]

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[69] On the *locus amoenus* in Homer's *Odyssey*, see Edwards 1993, 48.

[70] Russell 1997, 21.

[71] Doing so facilitated an understanding that the Australian landscape was separated from Britain and Europe because of its lack of cultivation and monumental construction, O'Brien 1999, 176; Seddon 2003, 44. For an example of Virgil's poetry being used to establish a division between centre and periphery (i.e. London and colonial New South Wales) in contemporary literature, see "Botany Bay Eclogues" by Robert Southey (1797).

[72] The *locus amoenus* is also evident in the work of Henry Kendall, who was equally as prominent a poet as Harpur in Australia at the time, Indyk 1993, 839.

[73] The poem was published several times over almost fifty years under various names: "Noon in the Forest at Midsummer," *The Empire*, 27 May 1851, 479; "A Mid Summer Noon in the Forest," *The Empire*, 28 January 1858, 4; "A Midsummer

Harpur's poem attempts to overcome the alienation of the Australian
landscape by creating an imaginary oasis, transforming the Australian bush
from a place to be feared to a place that could be enjoyed. Although
Harpur's poetry does not directly reference Virgil's, he was known to
admire the work of John Dryden, who translated Virgil's poetry into
English.[74] As an Australian-born poet, Harpur would have found the
connections between the Australian and European landscape difficult to
imagine, having only ever experienced the former. However, his
interpretation of the bush as a *locus amoenus* demonstrates his engagement
with European poetic traditions and aligns with the tendency of Australian-
born European poets to idealise the peacefulness of the landscape.[75] In
contrast to his construction of an Australian *locus amoenus*, in other works
Harpur promotes his belief that those born in Australia were forged stronger
by the savageness of nature, and were therefore more capable of effectively
working the land:

> I am a man of the woods and mountains … a man made stern and self-reliant,
> and thence plain, and even fierce, by natal nearness (if I may so speak) to
> the *incunabula mundi*.[76]

Incunabula are the swaddling bands that hold an infant in their cradle, so
the phrase *incunabula mundi* refers to the swaddling bands of the earth—
here the connection between the man of the woods and the mountains and
the Australian landscape. The connection between the cultivation of the
Australian landscape and the strength of the Australian colonist is well
established in colonial literature.[77] In his journal chronicling a westward
expedition between 1817 and 1818, the surveyor-general and explorer John
Oxley demonstrates the Australian tendency to laud the virtuous farmer by
characterising him as capable of improving nature through agriculture,
animal husbandry and building works.[78] In 1838, James Martin, later elected
the sixth premier of New South Wales, wrote of seeing Romans working
Australian fields: "while pouring over Virgil's *Georgics*, I might fancy
myself transported back to the Augustan period, and become a contemporary

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Noon in the Australian Forest," Harpur 1883, 118–19; "Noon in the Australian
Forest," *Kiama Independent*, and *Shoalhaven Advertiser*, 26 October 1893, 4.
[74] Kramer 1983, 131.
[75] On Harpur's engagement with European poetic traditions, see Kramer 1983. On
Harpur as an Australian native poet, see Atkinson 1988, 13.
[76] Harpur 1973, 126, cited in Atkinson 1988, 14.
[77] On the construction of an Australian pastoral ideal that promoted the strength of
the colonist, see Midford 2016, 140–42.
[78] Oxley 1820, 2.

of the poet; I might people in imagination the lands around with hardy Romans, and fancy my own fields part of the genial soil of Italy."[79] Here, Martin is imagining himself as a Virgil in the antipodes, writing about the agricultural origins of a great and prosperous Australian empire that would reach the heights of Augustan Rome, about which his imagined contemporary, Virgil, once wrote. This vision is confirmed later in his book, when he writes of New South Wales as "the infant germ" of "the splendid empire," which the colony would become.[80]

Central to the conception of hard work in an Australian landscape was overcoming its harsh and erratic climate, and comparisons to Virgil's Italian landscapes were used to mitigate settler anxieties that came from the environmental alienation of Europeans.[81] In Western Australia, the Irish farmer, George Moore, frequently referenced Virgil in his diary, published in 1884 to make sense of his new home. For example, after hearing the sounds of frogs while walking through his property after a day of intermittent rain, Moore quotes Virgil's *Georgics*: *et veterem in limo Ranae cecinere querellam* ("in the mud the frogs croaked their old complaint").[82] Virgil's frogs croak as they endure a storm. Their croak is a natural response to the events occurring around them, as are the actions of the ants, crows and seabirds also described.[83] Despite the fierceness of the storm, the animals instinctually know how to behave and that it will pass, which it inevitably does, giving way to sunny days and clear skies.[84] The frogs in the Western Australian mud, like those in Virgil's *Georgics* are representations of nature itself, and should be looked to by humans for instruction.[85] Moore's employment of Virgil's frogs to describe his experience of a storm drastically removed from ancient Italy geographically and chronologically indicates his desire to understand the nature of his new home and interprets Virgil's lesson to understand the ferocity of the Australian environment as part of nature; it suggests that if its idiosyncrasies are understood as the animals understand them, then it is possible to work with the land and bring about prosperity. The Latin used in this phrase imitates the sound of croaking frogs and is designed to be humorous, recalling Aristophanes'

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[79] Martin 1838, 90.
[80] Martin 1838, 135.
[81] Rigby 2011, 148. On Australia as a utopia, see Wright 1965, xii.
[82] Moore 1884, 111; Verg. *G.* 1.378.
[83] Verg. *G.* 1.379–89.
[84] Verg. *G.* 1.394–95.
[85] Nelson 1998, 95.

fifth-century-BCE comedy *Frogs*.[86] So, by evoking this passage in his diary, Moore may well be drawing on its humour to diminish the harshness of Australian nature and acknowledge his ability to cooperate with the land, as the native animals do.

Martin and Moore, writing in two very different landscapes, spread across the enormous Australian continent, each looked to Virgil to interpret their experiences of the Australian landscape. By looking to nature to soften the difficulties of frontier life, and by interpreting the strength required from those undertaking hard work in rural settings as that needed to establish a strong and enduring empire, Australian writers were constructing *loci amoeni* suitable for their experiences. Woolls, Harpur, Phillip, Stockdale and the other nineteenth-century colonial writers discussed in this chapter, similarly looked to ancient Italy so that their experiences could be understood as more than mundane and difficult realities of colonial life. It was through the construction of *loci amoeni* that Australian prose and verse from the late-eighteenth and early- to mid-nineteenth centuries could be used by Europeans missing home to make sense of their new environment and elevate their experience. By drawing on Virgil's depiction of early Rome to imagine a prosperous Australian future, European settlers cast themselves as the agents of Australia's future prosperity.

This chapter has demonstrated that after European settlement Australian colonies were thought to be devoid of a recognisable cultural heritage. To remedy this, colonial writers set about connecting the beauties of Australia's nature to an Italian rural Golden Age. The connection between the underdeveloped Australian landscape and an Italian rural ideal was extended when the colony of New South Wales was officially cast as an antipodean Etruria, enjoying an idealised agricultural state that would precede the construction of a prosperous future empire. Because of the harsh realities of the Australian landscape, which did not resemble familiar European landscapes, a *locus amoenus* was imagined that connected Australia to an idealised classical past—this situated projections of a prosperous Australian future in a well-established discourse from ancient Rome, where hard work was the foundation of good fortune. To establish Australia as heir to the Roman Empire, colonial Australian authors drew on Virgil's georgic and pastoral poetry. Doing so emphasised the birth of Australian rural arts and lauded the colonies' agricultural merits, declaring the young civilisation's great potential by representing it as the consummation

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[86] Ar. *Ran.* 225–67. On the humorous nature of these lines in Virgil, see Dutton 1931, 186.

of the British Empire on antipodean shores.[87] By linking Australia's European settlement to the foundation of both Rome and Britain, colonial Australia was characterised as being at the beginning of a very long history that, based on historical precedent, would eventually result in a great and esteemed empire. Australia's future prosperity would come from the toil of the Australian people who would work together with nature to build a great empire. In the eyes of the colonial writers discussed in this chapter, Australia was populated by people who would work to bring about a great civilisation. Their writing drew on the classical tradition and brought the past into the new world where, as heirs to the classical tradition, the Australian people would continue to prosper for centuries to come.

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[87] Dixon 1986, 36.

Chapter Eight

Rome Away from Home

Rhiannon Evans

This chapter deals with the perspectives of two late Republican urbanites—one born in the city, the other a naturalised city-dweller—when both were *absent* from Rome in the 50s BCE. These absences resulted from entirely different circumstances: Julius Caesar was famously carving up and conquering a new Gaul, while Cicero was driven into exile by the tribune, Clodius.[1] Caesar did not return to the city for more than a decade, and his writings during this period contain few overt references to the city or its momentous events. However, the ethnography of Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* explores a range of peoples, who are implicitly contextualised against Rome's own social framework, as well as being offered up as potential subjects, even future Romans. Cicero was away for a mere seventeen months, and his letters during this period are filled with thoughts of Rome, requests for information and a strong sense of longing to return. Thus, the absent writers construct a version of Rome and Romanness from a distance, giving them the recontextualised perspective of an absentee. Both idealise aspects of Rome. Caesar does this largely by demonstrating his troops' *virtus* ("bravery" or "manliness"); it is a Rome demonstrably embodied in the present, and firmly lead by Caesar. Cicero romanticises Rome's past and potential future, theorising it as a city in need of civic values and a different kind of *virtus*. As this chapter discusses, both absent writers construct a solipsistic vision of Rome as a city and a state in need of the author.

On leaving Rome

Cicero's absence from Rome from March 58 to September 57 BCE is usually termed an "exile" although Cicero would later deny that it was

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[1] Dio Cass. 38.12 suggests that Clodius acted as Caesar's proxy, but see Gruen 1966 for the widely accepted counter-argument.

exilium at all (*Dom*. 72, *QFr*. 3.2.2, *Parad*. 31).[2] Ironically Cicero might have avoided exile had he accompanied Caesar to Gaul, as he had been offered the post of *legatus* and, in June 59, had bullishly claimed that he would rather confront his enemies in Rome, imagining that he was popular enough to survive the attack: *non libet fugere; aveo pugnare* ("I don't want to flee; I am eager to fight," Cic. *Att*. 2.18.3).[3] By November 58 he writes to Terentia claiming that he regrets not taking the *legatio* coupling this with suicide as a better alternative to exile (*Fam*. 14.3.10). However, writers of an alternate history would be forced to admit that Gaul was not the place for Cicero to win the glory which he had achieved in the 60s; unfortunately for him, neither was Rome in the 50s. This is an existential problem for Cicero, as his identity is intimately connected to his abilities to influence the city's political and legal institutions. His epic poem on his own consulship, *De consulatu suo*, begins *cedant arma togae*, "let weapons give way to the toga" (*Cons*. fr. 11), signalling the degree to which he privileges civic and political success over military conquest.[4]

A similar spin is placed on Cicero's exile, later recast not only as "not exile," but as a victory. In the *In Pisonem* Cicero appears as a resurgent hero, his arrival back in Rome more glorious than Piso's triumph (*Pis*. 32–33, 52.6; Claassen 1999, 134–37). This refashioning, which Kaster calls the "standard version," involves "silence, misdirection, and occasionally outright falsehood."[5] It is also probable that his exile was subject of the second book of Cicero's poem *De Temporibus Suis* (*QFr*. 2.7.1, *Fam*. 1.9.23).[6] This book included an epic-style council of the gods, which seems to have conferred divine auspices upon Cicero's return from exile (*QFr*. 3.1.24). Here Cicero performs a clever redirection from shame to glory. In Ciceronian terms, his *domestic* achievements and his return to Rome parallel an imperator's victory *outside* of Rome. Thus, he inverts Roman tradition, as he must return and remain *within* the city in order to achieve renown. But the glory which Cicero claims in 55 BCE as an element of his homecoming is only made possible by his enforced departure from Rome.

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[2] See Robinson 1994 for a fuller exploration of the terminology used by Cicero to refer to his exile, in particular post-*reditum*.

[3] See also *Att*. 2.19.5 and cf. the conspiracy theories of Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 30.2–3; Dio Cass. 38.15.1–2.

[4] On *De consulatu suo* see Volk and Zetzel 2015; Volk 2013.

[5] Kaster 2006, 12, referring particularly to Cicero's version of the Catilinarian Conspiracy and his exile at *Pro Sestio* 32–54.

[6] Harrison 1990, 456–57, concludes that the first book dealt with the events leading up to the exile and Cicero's departure, while the third book covered Cicero's "triumphant return" to Rome.

The implication here is that Rome has to be deprived of Cicero to realise what it has lost.

It is fitting then that Cicero rejected Caesar's invitation to a more traditional career-defining path of conquest *outside* of Rome, for, by his standards, his greatest achievement had already been accomplished during his consulship. Throughout his writings, Cicero is keen to reallocate *gloria* from the military to the political sphere.[7] Nevertheless, Cicero's absence from Rome was involuntary, contrasting strongly with Caesar's departure. The relationship of their absences to Roman institutions is similarly polarised. Caesar's position implicitly emanated from his status as a magistrate entrusted with *imperium* by the Roman senate. Even though Suetonius claims that it was fear of the people which forced the senate to expand Caesar's remit so that it included Provincia (*Iul.* 22.1), his position was officially sanctioned by Rome and the extent of his proconsular territory was confirmed by the senate, whatever outside pressure had been applied. The *commentarii* might viably be read as a commander's reports back to the senate and people of Rome, while Cicero can only resort to private correspondence. Although Cicero would later claim that his exile was extrajudicial, and therefore no exile at all, this claim has the appearance of special pleading: it rewrites history. During his absence from Italy, Cicero had necessarily become an outsider with little to no influence at Rome. Thus, his writing during this period offers a view of Rome from the perspective of a former insider now cut off from power. The texts which remain from 58–57 BCE are his letters back (mostly) to Rome, giving a unique view of Republican Rome as constructed by an exile.

Cicero and Caesar's accounts of departure stand devoid of contextual information: in both cases it would be difficult to reconstruct how they reached this stage—that is, the stage at which they are about to leave Rome—in the absence of information from other sources.[8] It is a stage entirely omitted in Cicero's surviving correspondence. Although his letters build a vivid picture of factionalism and discord at Rome, he is already mid-flight when it becomes apparent, in a letter written to Atticus *in exsilium*

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[7] As *Cons*. fr. 11, quoted above; see also footnote 23 below.
[8] Plutarch (*Vit. Caes*. 14.6–7), Suetonius (*Iul.* 22.1) and Dio Cassius (38.8.5) relate the means by which Caesar attained the proconsulship of Gaul. Plutarch credits the appointment to Pompey's strong-arm tactics, while Suetonius and Dio mention the influence of the people, albeit with slightly different emphases. For Cicero we are dependent upon Plutarch (*Vit. Cic.* 30.4–31.5; *Vit. Caes.* 14.17), who makes the outlandish claim that Caesar instigated the exile as revenge after Cicero refused to come to Gaul; and Dio Cass. 38.14.4–17.7.

proficiscens, "on the way into exile," that Clodius' machinations have driven him out (*Att.* 3.1).[9] While it is possible that lost letters or other Ciceronian texts might have dealt with the earlier events of 58 BCE, Cicero clearly relies on his recipient's knowledge of his current situation. The targeted nature of the personal letter generates a text capable of assuming a much greater degree of prior knowledge than Caesar's *commentarii*, whose audience is unknown, but must have been considerably wider.[10] Nevertheless, Caesar provides little Roman context, and from the outset his current situation is marked by a notable *lack* of narrative: there is no exploration of Caesar's consulship of 59, nor his appointment as proconsul; for, when the *Bellum Gallicum* begins, Caesar is already installed in this position. No knowledge of Gaul, or at least Caesar's version of Gaul[11] is assumed on the part of the reader (hence *BGal.* 1.1.1); but the text assumes total knowledge of Caesar's past and current situation, which fits the argument that the *commentarii* are a proconsul's reports to the senate.[12]

Caesar remains physically in the city of Rome until the seventh chapter of Book 1, when the events he has related in chapters 2–6—the migration of the Helvetii—spur his speedy departure. Thus, Caesar's first action in this text is to leave Rome at breakneck speed: *maturat ab urbe proficisci* ("he makes speed to leave the city," *BGall.* 1.7.1). The text shows that his motivation is to protect Provincia, which would "soon be in great danger" (*magno cum periculo provinciae futurum*) from "warlike men, hostile to the Roman people" (*homines bellicosos, populi Romani inimicos*, *BGall.* 1.10.2). This is a departure with a clear message that Caesar is both saviour and hero, and the text conveys the urgency of the situation, as well as the adroit actions of the general by accumulating phrases involving haste, the dash for more troops, and the forced marches. The clear Latin and

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[9] The letter begins abruptly: *ut legi rogationem,* "when I read the bill" [of Clodius]; this is not the bill condemning those who had executed Roman citizens, which instigated Cicero's flight; but instead the later bill which named Cicero and denied him "water and fire," as well as allowing Clodius to usurp Cicero's property (Shackleton Bailey 1998, 127).

[10] See Krebs 2018, 41–42, for Caesar's likely means of communication with the *populus*.

[11] Caesar reconfigures Gaul as a single, tripartite entity (*Gallia . . . omnis*); yet the three parts do not include the "Gauls," Cisalpine and Transalpine, assigned to Caesar, instead referring entirely to Gaul beyond Provincia (Riggsby 2006, 30 and 2018, 73–74), that is the Gaul which Caesar will conquer.

[12] For an analysis of the debate over the nature of Caesar's text and whether it represents a sequential or a single publication, see Wiseman 2009.

paratactic statements for which Caesar is famous[13] mirror his straightforward response: *maturat . . . contendit . . . pervenit* ("he makes speed . . . he presses forward . . . he arrives," *BGall.* 1.7.1); *magnis itineribus contendit* ("he presses forward with forced marches," *BGall.* 1.10.3); *qua proximum iter . . . ire contendit* ("he presses forward to march by the shortest route," *BGall.* 1.10.3); *pervenit* ("he arrives," *BGall.* 1.10.5). Leaving Rome, and leaving his allotted province, is couched as a duty to defend that province, and ultimately to defend Rome. By the end of 57 BCE these actions confer on him a vast amount of unprecedented honour, as Caesar himself tells us:

> ob easque res ex litteris Caesaris dies quindecim supplicatio decreta est, quod ante id tempus accidit nulli. (*BGall.* 2.35.4)

> And, on the basis of Caesar's reports, fifteen days of thanksgiving were decreed for his successes: something which had previously been granted to no one.[14]

News from Rome

While Caesar journeys to glory, Cicero most regularly equates absence with death, repeatedly invoking the language of mourning and grief: *lacrimae, maeror* and *dolor* ("tears," "mourning" and "sorrow") are frequent terms, along with claims that suicide would have been the more honourable option, [15] as he inveighs against those who prevented it, particularly Atticus.[16] For Cicero, states Jo-Marie Claassen, "life away from Rome is not really living" (1999, 107). Despite this longing for the city, circumstances dictate that Cicero should depict Rome in his absence as a location of conspiracy and deceit, especially in the letters to Quintus.[17] Here he writes of longstanding enemies alongside the friends who deserted him

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[13] Fraenkel 1956; Gotoff 1984, 1–5; Kraus 2005, 108–12; Krebs 2018, 118–20.

[14] This is then exceeded by the twenty days of *supplicatio* reported after the defeat of Vercingetorix in 52 BCE (*BGall.* 7.90.8).

[15] Numerous examples include *QFr.* 1.3, 1.4.4; *Fam.* 14.2.1–2, 14.2.1, 14.3.1–2, 14.4.1–2; *Att.* 3.2.1, 3.4.1, 3.7.1, 3.9.1, 3.10.3, 3.11.2. Wilcox 2012, 43 comments that Cicero did not invent the idea of death as a refuge from the failure of the Republic, as Servius Sulpicius Rufus had suggested it to Cicero himself (*Fam.* 4.5.3).

[16] See Hutchinson 1998, 33–35, on the dynamic between Cicero and Atticus and the theme of suicide.

[17] This is part of a wider discourse of Rome's moral decline, a theme to which Cicero returns throughout his career, frequently claiming that he will save Rome: e.g. *Rep.* 5.1–2, *Leg.* 3.29–30, *Verr.* 2.2.7, *Cat.* 2.11, *Cael.* 40, *Leg. Man.* 37–38, *Off.* 2.27, 2.75–76. See Mitchell 1984 for further discussion.

(*QFr*. 1.3.5), particularly the treachery of Hortensius and Arrius (*QFr.* 1.3.8). Terentia's life back in Rome is depicted as sordid and desperate, as she is forcibly removed from the Temple of Vesta, where she was under the protection of her Vestal half-sister, Fabia, and taken to the Curia, apparently over a matter of debt (*Fam.* 14.2.2). The implication is that Cicero's political enemies had moved against his wife.[18] Cicero's actions have also made Rome dangerous to Quintus, leading him to express guilt and fear for his brother (*Att.* 3.8.2, *QFr.* 1.3.9). There is a disjunction between Cicero's nostalgia for Rome and his contention that the city is broken. Rome is a place of paradox in this correspondence, although this dichotomy is perhaps resolved in Cicero's mind by the potential for a return to an ideal republic which might accompany his return to Rome. This is congruent with depictions of his return as a triumphal parade (*Pis*. 32–33, 52.6).

He constantly seeks news from Rome, insisting that Atticus, Quintus, and Terentia be his eyes and ears in the city, for example, *velim scribas, ut prorsus ne quid ignorem* ("Please write to me, so that there may be nothing of which I am not informed," *Att.* 3.11.3). A letter to Atticus begins with the word *acta*, referring to the official transactions related to him in a previous letter and to the additional news of this sort that he expects to receive from his friend (*Att.* 3.10.1). Indeed, Cicero repeatedly urges Quintus to return to Rome from Asia, partly to defend himself (*Att.* 3.8.2, 3.9.1), but more often to provide Cicero with *information* (*QFr.* 1.3.4, 1.3.5 [*mihi declares*, "tell me!"], 1.4.5). To accomplish this, the trajectories of Cicero and Quintus are artfully reversed: Quintus travels back *towards* Rome as Cicero goes east (*Att.* 3.7.3). If Cicero cannot be in the city, he must have proxies.

Throughout, Cicero struggles to be in control of the flow of information, placing informants in Rome, and insisting that others should be writing, while implying that (surely against the grain!) he prefers to suppress his own words. As he tells Atticus,

> ad te minus multa scribo quod et maerore impedior et quod exspectem istinc magis habeo quam quod ipse scribam. (*Att.* 3.10.3)

> I do not write more, since I am prevented by grief; and also I should wait for news from there [Rome] rather than having anything to write myself.

Reports should flow from Rome and not the other way around (similarly *Att.* 3.11.1). This is because Cicero is quite literally "out of it"—out of Rome

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[18] Shackleton Bailey 1977 ad loc.; Dixon 1984; Grebe 2003, 129.

and out of the loop—and all of his movements are dictated by whatever information he can glean from Rome, as a series of dependent clauses make clear: *quae si erunt adlata, faciam te consili nostri certiorem* ("when your news is brought to me, I shall let you know my plans," *Att.* 3.10.3); *si accepero litteras quas exspecto, si spes erit ea quae rumoribus adferebatur, ad te me conferam* ("Once I receive the letters I'm waiting for, if the hope which the rumours promise is borne out, I shall come to you," *Att.* 3.11.2). In these letters it appears that Cicero maintains his association with Rome through his reporters. They represent a lifeline, a virtual presence in the city for the exile, in addition to being the probable means for ensuring his return.

Despite the hunger for information, Cicero is doubtful that there *can* be any positive information from or about Rome. He complains of the city's *discordia* ("dissention"), reported by Atticus, as proof that his correspondent should not urge him to be optimistic (*Att.* 3.10.1). And the tension between viewing Rome with hope and despair is visible in the pairing of two letters to Atticus: in the first from late March 58,[19] Atticus is collecting everything *de re publica* which could give hope of change (*Att.* 3.7.3); in the second, two months later, Cicero is actively doubtful of good news (*Att.* 3.8.3). This is because in both letters he claims that Rome needs radical change—*mutandum rerum* (*Att.* 3.7.3) or *motum in re publica* (*Att.* 3.8.3), both broadly "a shift in the state"—in order to make return possible or palatable, for Rome is both a city to which Cicero is desperate to return *and* a place of degenerate treachery.

Rome without me

Indeed, the Cicero who is forced out of Rome is full of such contradictions. When Atticus tells him about the *discordia* at Rome, Cicero complains that this is about everything except him: *de omnibus potius rebus . . . quam de me!* (*Att.* 3.10.1). His solipsism is such that he encourages his correspondents to filter information: they should include only the aspects of life at Rome that affect his prospects of return. Yet, Rome's civil conflict led to his exile, and navigating its factions is necessary to assure his restitution. Similarly the physical reality of Cicero's Rome is manifested most materially in his Palatine house, now razed by Clodius.[20] In a letter to Terentia, Cicero insists that he must possess the house, or at least land, once more, before he can

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[19] I follow the dates ascribed by Shackleton Bailey 2004.
[20] Cic. *Dom.* 62, 116; App. *B Civ.* 2.15; Vell. Pat. 2.45; Plut. *Vit. Cic.* 33.1; Dio Cass. 38.17.6.

feel *restitutus* ("restored," *Fam*. 14.2.3).[21] Six months before, towards the beginning of the exile, he had insisted to Atticus that there was a firm distinction between property and Cicero's sense of self: *inimici mei mea mihi, non me ipsum ademerunt* ("my enemies have robbed me of my property, but they have not taken me myself," *Att*. 3.5.1). At this point in April 58, his property at Rome was mere possessions, and possessions did not amount to his identity. Ironically this short letter also expresses the hope that Atticus remain constant and insists that Cicero absolutely will not change: "I only beg of you . . . that you should continue the same in your affection; for I am the same man" (*tantum te oro ut . . . eodem amore <u>sis</u>; ego enim idem <u>sum</u>*)—the shift from subjunctive to indicative showing where Cicero's certainties lie. There is a suggestion here that loyalties at Rome (even Atticus') might vacillate; and there is no conception yet that both exile *from* Rome and events back *at* Rome might shift Cicero's own view of himself and his priorities.

The exile letters are extreme in their solipsism and dominated by the first person singular, in contrast with Caesar's famous avoidance of this form. This comes to its apex in a letter of self-blame to Quintus from June 58:

> **mi** frater, **mi** frater, **mi** frater, tune id veritus es, ne **ego** iracundia aliqua adductus pueros ad te sine litteris miser**im**? aut etiam ne te videre noluer**im**? **Ego** tibi irascer**er**? tibi **ego** poss**em** irasci? Scilicet, tu enim **me** afflixisti; tui **me** inimici, tua **me** invidia, ac non **ego** te misere perdid**i**. (*QFr*. 1.3.1)

> My brother! My brother! My brother! Did you really fear that I had been induced by some angry feeling to send slaves to you without a letter? Or even that I did not wish to see you? I to be angry with you! Is it possible for me to be angry with you? Why, one would think that it was you that brought me low! Your enemies, your unpopularity, that miserably ruined me, and not I that unhappily ruined you!

Even as Cicero claims to be empathising with Quintus, and scatters nine forms of *tu* or *tuus* ("you", "your") in the opening to this letter, he proceeds to move the emphasis back to himself.[22] Superficially this self-obsession appears to stem from the urgency of Cicero's situation and his perception of his own and others' peril. He is desolate, cast adrift and resourceless,

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[21] Also *Att*. 3.2.3 with Claasen 1999, 110.
[22] See also *Fam*. 14.2, 14.4.3, *Att*. 3.2.1, 3.4.1 3.5, 3.7.1, 3.8.4, 3.9.1. See Claasen 1999, 28, on the comparison between Cicero's helpless self-pity in the letters and depiction of himself as self-sufficient during his exile in *post reditum* works.

leaving disgrace and ruin for Terentia and Marcus; there is real danger for those who shelter him.

The emphasis on self is arguably ubiquitous in Cicero and not unexpected in personal letters. Cicero had typically depicted himself as Rome's saviour, its civilian warrior, particularly in relation to the Catilinarian conspiracy.[23] But his exile letters demonstrate only his impotence in the face of his enemies' political manoeuvring, and the constant references to himself in exile are linked to his depiction of Rome in the 50s, a Rome without Cicero. Thus, the letters serve to question his own position at Rome. Exile—the disaster for Cicero—is intimately connected to the city's disaster, to Rome's descent into anarchy. And Cicero had foreseen the calamity: back in July 59 he had exclaimed "we are sure that everything is finished" (*certi sumus perisse omnia, Att.* 2.19.5).[24] In these circumstances, his exile becomes a symptom of Rome's malaise and his absence takes Rome further from a cure.

The fantasy of an alternate reality: Athens

The idea of what it would take to be "restored," indeed of being *restitutus* at all, is engaging in the realms of unreality (*Fam.* 14.2.3). Cicero resorts to such imaginings, creating an "AR," an augmented reality, or an augmented Rome; in this case, it is a Rome with an overlay of qualities which could make it Cicero's home again.[25] More often though, Rome is superimposed with more sinister possibilities as Cicero attempts to read the city from afar: Quintus might be prosecuted (*Att.* 3.8.2), Crassus is probably dangerous (*Fam*. 14.1.2–3, 14.2.2), Pompey might be a hypocrite (*QFr.* 1.3.9), Cicero's enemies are in control (*QFr.* 1.4.1), and there is widespread treachery (*QFr.* 1.3.5, 1.3.8). These would be implicitly absent from the Rome which he wills into being, a Rome in which he can feel at home.

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[23] He claims the title *togatus dux et imperator* ("civilian general and leader," *Cat.* 3.23), and post-exile, but with reference to his consulship, *parens patriae* ("father of the fatherland," *Pis.* 6). See Hall 2013, 216–17, 223–24.

[24] This dramatic turn of phrase is similar to his writings of April 44, as another major figure has been made permanently absent from Rome (at least in mortal form) and Cicero declares that all will be lost if Caesar receives a public burial (*Att.* 14.14.1, 14.14.3; *Ad Brut.* 9.1.8, 9.1.9).

[25] As Alan Craig explains, augmented reality in its modern technological context is an extension of historical attempts to alter surroundings, landscape and circumstances (2013, 3–4).

Cicero theorises these polarised versions of Rome—the one to which he can happily return, and the one which threatens to engulf his family and obstruct his restoration. Simultaneously he reimagines his exile as a voluntary trip, one which could only occur were circumstances more propitious at Rome. Under these conditions, he could travel to Athens, and indicates that this was his intention before Clodius moved against him: *quod si auderem, Athenas peterem. sane ita cadebat ut vellem. nunc et nostri hostes ibi sunt et te non habemus . . .* ("if I dared, I would seek out Athens. Certainly, as circumstances were falling out, I was intending to do so. But now my enemies are there, and I don't have you with me . . .," *Att.* 3.7.1). Cicero lives in an alternative universe, where leaving Rome would have been his *choice* and his destination would have been determined by free will (*ut vellem*). This is leaving without the shame of exile as Cicero was already thinking about it; hence the tense of *cadebat*—"as circumstances were falling out"). It is again a rewriting of history—Cicero has in fact *not* left by his own volition—and one which paints Rome as an unbearable location for an honourable man.

Avoiding Rome

Caesar begins his text on the Gallic War emphatically with "not-Rome," in classic ethnographic fashion, by describing what is *not* known to his Roman reader—that is, Gaul—all of it: *Gallia . . . omnis* (*BGall.* 1.1.1).[26] On the face of it, this is the focus of his text throughout, for Caesar seems to exclude the momentous events of the 50s from the work—quite deliberately and pointedly so in fact. For during Caesar's seven-year absence there had, more than once, been riots and unrest at Rome (App. *B Civ.* 2.21–22, Dio Cass. 40.48–55); Clodius had driven Cicero into exile (App. *B Civ.* 2.15, Dio Cass. 38.9–30); and Julia had died (App. *B Civ.* 2.19, Dio Cass. 39.64). Outside of the city, but a heavy blow to the Roman psyche, Crassus had lost twenty thousand men at Carrhae (App. *B Civ.* 18, Dio Cass. 40.12–30). None of this is even suggested in the books of the *Bellum Gallicum*, although Caesar had apparently written to Crassus giving his backing to the war in Parthia (Plut. *Vit. Crass.* 16.3).[27] He was, not surprisingly, very much engaged with events throughout the Roman world—but not in this text, which directs the author's and the audience's gaze firmly towards Gaul. This focus is so strict that even when Caesar ventures into the provinces

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[26] Krebs 2006, 114 describes Gaul in Caesar's opening chapter as "intellectually mastered." See Riggsby 2006, 28–31; Johnston 2018, 87–89.

[27] On Caesar's means of ensuring that he maintains power during his absence, see Krebs 2018, 31–35.

actually allotted to him—that is Cisalpine Gaul, Provincia and Illyria— these locations serve only as bookends in an almost literal sense, as they merely open or close the books of the text: Caesar goes off at the end of the campaigning season to deal with law cases there, and then he comes back to deal with Gaul, which he reconfigures as "what is beyond Provincia."

The major exception to this exclusion of Rome is Clodius' murder in 52 BCE. In an unparalleled reference to Roman political life, we are finally told of a dramatic event with widespread political consequences:

> quieta Gallia Caesar, ut constituerat, in Italiam ad conventus agendos proficiscitur. ibi cognoscit de Clodii caede <de> senatusque consulto certior factus, ut omnes iuniores Italiae coniurarent, delectum tota provincia habere instituit. (Caes. *BGall*. 7.1.1)

> As Gaul was peaceful, Caesar set out for Italy, as he had decided to hold the assizes.[28] There he learned about the murder of Clodius and, informed of the senatorial decree that all the younger men should be sworn in, he decided to hold a levy throughout the province.

This is the opening to Book 7: late in the work, Caesar finally allows Rome to intervene, although in fact the last Caesarian book, like the first, begins with Gaul, not Rome: *quietā Galliā*. But Clodius' death features very prominently and is highlighted by the alliteration which draws attention to the murder (*cognoscit de Clodii caede*). Why is the chaos at Rome allowed into the text here? Caesar quickly explains:

> eae res in Galliam Transalpinam celeriter perferuntur. addunt ipsi et adfingunt rumoribus Galli, quod res poscere videbatur, retineri urbano motu Caesarem neque in tantis dissensionibus ad exercitum venire posse. hac impulsi occasione, qui iam ante se populi Romani imperio subiectos dolerent liberius atque audacius de bello consilia inire incipiunt. (Caes. *BGall*. 7.1.2–3)

> These events were quickly reported to Transalpine Gaul. The Gauls added to and embellished the reports with something which the occasion seemed to require, that Caesar was detained by the commotion in the city and that he could not come to the army as the conflict was so serious. Spurred on by this opportunity, Gauls who were already bemoaning their submission to Roman sovereignty began to make plans for war more freely and boldly.

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[28] Caesar means Cisalpine Gaul: it is clear throughout that he has already conceptually merged this province into Italy, something which would not actually happen until 48 BCE. Just as he redesignates "Gaul," he extends "Italy."

Clearly Clodius' murder would not be in the text at all, were it not for the use which Caesar can make of it here. It is not the death itself, but the effect that this news has on the Gauls which matters. The account allows Caesar to denounce the Gauls as prone to spouting and believing idle rumour.[29] The Gauls build a strategy upon a false assumption: that Caesar's attention is distracted. Had they read the first six books, they would not make this mistake—this text implies that Caesar never takes his gaze off Gaul.

So, in one sense, what seems here to be about Rome is actually about Gaul. But, equally, this is a work about Romans *in* Gaul, Romans away from home. Early in Book 1, Caesar delves into Rome's history in Gaul, as his own narrative of the Helvetii reminds him of a Roman defeat at the hands of a Helvetian subgroup, the Tigurini, in 107 BCE (*BGall.* 1.7.4, 1.12.4–5). The subjugation of past Romans—they literally walked *sub iugum* ("below the yoke")—spurs Caesar on to seek vengeance (*iniurias ultus est*: "he avenged injuries," *BGall.* 1.12.7). The invocation of the past is rare in the *Bellum Gallicum*, and is significant, in that it touches upon Roman honour and pride. Throughout, this text allows Caesar to demonstrate Roman fortitude—through the actions of his army and through his own actions as commander (Hall 1998). Elsewhere Caesar suggests that success comes from a combination of his own leadership and his troops' bravery (e.g. *BGall.* 2.25–26). But the ideal Roman scenario can be more complex, presenting a dynamic relationship, not simply a formula of "Caesar plus the army equals success." There may also be other inspirational figures, intermediaries whose participation means that Caesar's plans come to fruition. In Book 4, as Caesar narrates the first encounter with the Britons on the beaches of Kent, the Roman army is initially out of its depth, as their ships are too large to land; the Romans are shocked to the core (*perterriti*) and alienated (*imperiti*) by British fighting techniques (*BGall.* 4.24.4). The scene encapsulates the fact that this is the most extreme, the most "unRoman" situation into which Caesar forces his troops. It takes a firm decision maker to block the unfolding disaster, and Caesar's behaviour in turn inspires the lower order troops to transform terror into confidence and fervour:

> quod ubi Caesar animadvertit, naves longas, quarum et species erat barbaris inusitatior et motus ad usum expeditior, paulum removeri ab onerariis navibus et remis incitari et ad latus apertum hostium constitui atque inde fundis, sagittis, tormentis hostes propelli ac submoveri iussit; quae res magno usui nostris fuit. (2) nam et navium figura et remorum motu et inusitato genere tormentorum permoti barbari constiterunt ac paulum modo

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[29] Also, at *BGall.* 4.5.1–3.

pedem rettulerunt. (3) atque nostris militibus cunctantibus, maxime propter altitudinem maris, qui X legionis aquilam gerebat, obtestatus deos, ut ea res legioni feliciter eveniret, 'desilite,' inquit, 'milites, nisi vultis aquilam hostibus prodere; ego certe meum rei publicae atque imperatori officium praestitero.' (4) hoc cum voce magna dixisset, se ex navi proiecit atque in hostes aquilam ferre coepit. (5) tum nostri cohortati inter se, ne tantum dedecus admitteretur, universi ex navi desiluerunt. (Caes. *BGall.* 4.25.1–6)

When Caesar noticed this, he ordered the long ships, to be set aside from the transport ships and to be rowed at speed and to be drawn up at the exposed flank of the enemy, as their appearance was less well known to the barbarians and their movement was freer. There the enemy should be driven away and cleared off with slings, arrows and artillery: this was very useful to our troops. (2) For the barbarians, alarmed by the shape of the ships and the motion of the oars and the unfamiliar type of artillery, stopped and retreated just a little way. (3) Then, while our troops still hung back, mainly on account of the depth of the sea, the eagle bearer of the tenth legion after calling the gods to witness, so that it might turn out well for the legion, said 'Jump down, soldiers, unless you want to betray your eagle to the enemy: I at least will have carried out my duty to the state and my commander.' (4) When he had shouted this out, he threw himself from the ship and bore the eagle into the enemy. (5) Then our troops incited one another not to allow such a disgrace and jumped down from the ship.

Here Caesar reverses the situation by transferring the feeling of alienation to the Britons, who have never seen Roman ships or arms. And after Caesar then deals with a further problem caused by unfamiliarity with the landscape, the Romans hit dry land and have no problem driving off the Britons (*BGall.* 4.26). It is quick, efficient, and rationally managed.[30] This, suggests Caesar, is what *nostri* ("our soldiers") do well. But Rome's success depends on the layers of proficiency: the clear headed and competent commander, the motivated underling and the soldiers who can be spurred on by both. Competency is more rarely attributed to commanders directly subordinate to Caesar, for, as Kathryn Welch has argued, that they are rarely given the limelight.[31]

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[30] A similar turnaround had been affected in Book 1, when the troops, intimidated by the fearsome reputation of the Germani (*BGall.* 1.39) are spurred on by Caesar's rousing speech (*BGall.* 1.40–41.1). Throughout the work Caesar represents himself as a commander who identifies weakness, in his own troops or the enemy, and rectifies or makes use of the situation, in conjunction with his troops' bravery (e.g. *BGall.* 1.52, 2.25, 5.50–51, 7.52).

[31] Welch 1998.

In this passage, and many others on the behaviour of Roman troops, Caesar presents us with the ideals of Roman heroism, masculinity, and leadership. The very existence of traits such as fear and hesitancy in the Roman camp takes this text out of the realm of idealism; and these characteristics also leave us in no doubt about the state of affairs which will arise if Caesar is not present to reshape a negative situation. From the perspective of presenting a positive image of Rome in action, the narratives of Roman actions are not particularly complex; and this text would be rather insipid if it were simply a catalogue of Roman successes, even if, like this one, they involve a reversal of an initially precarious situation. However, the positive light shone upon Caesar and his troops is significant as a framework for viewing the perspectives on Rome that Caesar constructs, and then refracts, through the narratives of non-Romans.

Diviciacus: the case for Rome in Gaul

Caesar cleverly makes Diviciacus, a pro-Roman Aeduan, multi-task for him within the space of a chapter (*BGall.* 1.31). Here he is given the role of exposition, as, through indirect speech, he informs Caesar, and the reader, of the movements of the Germani and the consequences for Gauls who are being driven from their land. This speech also characterises the Germani for the first time,[32] and it sets up a wholly positive picture of Rome's place in Europe. Significantly this is a Gallic view of Rome as saviour and defender against tyranny, and it is based on a barely veiled comparison between Rome and Germania, between Caesar and Ariovistus, the Germanic king, who had initially been invited over the Rhine to aid in sectarian Gallic power-struggles. Diviciacus argues for Roman intervention in five clearly delineated points:

1. The Germani are out of control and their *imperium* ("rule") brings devastation to Gaul (*BGall.* 1.31.5–7).
2. Rome is desperately needed to retain the status quo. The Germani force movement; but Rome can preserve the current situation, with Gallic peoples in their appropriate places (*BGall.* 1.31.9).
3. A Germano-Gallic pact actually transforms reality, as this is a topsy-turvy world where "victory" is negated when the Germani seize the land of those they came to help (*BGall.* 1.31.5, 10–11).

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[32] On Caesar's probable invention of Germania as a geographical zone and the Germani as an ethnographic group see Johnston 2018, 89–90; Krebs 2011, 203–5.

4. Germani and Gauls are not compatible: their traditions, lands and ways of life are entirely different; the implication here is that Gauls and Roman *are* compatible (*BGall.* 1.31.5, 11).
5. Ariovistus is dangerous: a passionate, reckless savage (*barbarum, iracundum, temerarium, BGall.* 1.31.13) and, if Rome does not intervene, there will be another Helvetian situation (*BGall.* 1.31.14).

One important facet of this speech is that Rome's authority protects Gaul: a Roman victory will be truly valid, as opposed to the charade of Gallic victory, which only invited a Germanic invasion. In addition, this speech demonstrates that the Germani drive a rhetoric of sameness and difference which propels Rome into action:

> nisi quid in Caesare populoque Romano sit auxilii, omnibus Gallis idem esse faciendum quod Helvetii fecerint, ut domo emigrent, aliud domicilium, alias sedes, remotas a Germanis, petant. (Caes. *BGall*. 1.31.14)

> Unless they found some help in Caesar and Rome, all the Gauls would have to do the same as the Helvetii had done—emigrate, to find another dwelling, another home, far from the Germani.

The sameness will be history repeating itself, as population pressures mean that other Gauls will replicate the actions of the Helvetii (*idem . . . faciendum*) and migrate. The difference is emphasised by the anaphora of *aliud . . . alias*—forced by the Germani, the Gauls will act uncharacteristically and seek another homeland. All of this involves change, as the very act they will repeat is one of movement and alteration, and the Roman role (Diviciacus/Caesar implies) is to establish *sameness*.

The plea for help from Diviciacus is met not out of any sense of empathy with the desperate Aedui, but because denying a relationship of *amicitia* and *hospitium* would be dishonourable:

> in primis quod Haeduos, fratres consanguineosque saepe numero a senatu appellatos, in servitute atque [in] dicione videbat Germanorum teneri eorumque obsides esse apud Ariovistum ac Sequanos intellegebat; quod in tanto imperio populi Romani turpissimum sibi et rei publicae esse arbitrabatur. (Caes. *BGall*. 1.33.2)

> First of all, he saw that the Aedui, often hailed by the senate as brothers and kin, were bound in slavery and subjection to the Germani and he knew that their hostages were with Ariovistus and the Sequani. He considered this to

be utterly shameful to himself and the state, taking into account the great power of Rome.

It is "most shameful" to both Caesar and to the state—again the phrase could be read as an equivalence or a firm reminder that Caesar is taking the reputation of Rome seriously. And Caesar makes special pleading for this first foray beyond his province. The relationship with the Aedui is expressed in exceptional terms: elsewhere *in fide atque amicitia*, *amicii*, or *socii* represent the regular language of alliance (*BGall.* 1.43.4, 1.43.8, 1.44.5, 2.14.2, 3.9.10, 6.4.2). The only other occurrence of this term denotes two Gallic peoples who probably are related by blood, as they inhabit adjoining territory (the Remi and Suessiones, *BGall.* 2.3.5). Thus, the moral imperative to defend the Aedui is compellingly conveyed: Caesar is not defending a generic Gallic people but a blood brother of Rome; his language persuades us that he has ensured that the reputation of Rome itself remains unsullied.

Caesar's Gauls themselves are not unaware of Rome's power: their first action is to send a delegation to ask permission to pass through Provincia (the Helvetii, *BGall.* 1.7). So, the first interaction between Gaul and Rome is by nature one of near supplication, a request made to a greater power. But the pattern of pro- and also *anti*-Roman Gauls is established quickly: the classic division is amongst the Aedui, who have asked Rome for help against the marauding Helvetii but refuse to provide corn. While the Aedui's request represents Rome as a protector and benefactor, their reluctance to feed Roman troops is motivated by a subdivision of Aedui who see Rome as voracious imperialists. Liscus, the Aeduan, tells Caesar:

> esse non nullos, quorum auctoritas apud plebem plurimum valeat, qui privatim plus possint quam ipsi magistratus . . . . (3) praestare, si iam principatum Galliae obtinere non possint, Gallorum quam Romanorum imperia perferre, (4) neque dubitare [debeant] quin, si Helvetios superaverint Romani, una cum reliqua Gallia Haeduis libertatem sint erepturi. (Caes. *BGall*. 1.17.1, 3–4)

> There were some who had strong influence among the people, and who, in the private sphere, had more say than the magistrates themselves . . . . (3) They thought that it was better, if they could not at the present win control of Gaul, to submit to Gallic rather than Roman rule, (4) and they were certain that, if the Romans overcame the Helvetii, freedom would be torn from the Aedui, along with the rest of Gaul.

This view therefore sees Rome as the depriver of *libertas*, and it is associated, in this text with the Aeduan Dumnorix, who opposes his brother,

Diviciacus, the leader of the pro-Roman camp. Early in the work Rome is established in antithetical terms, in both cases focalised through Gallic lenses. It is typical of the way that non-Romans are used to deconstruct Roman identity in Caesar. Similarly, Ariovistus claims that Rome should stay in its "own Gaul," that is Provincia, and he will stay in "his"—the rest of Transalpine Gaul—implying that Rome is overstepping the boundaries of its own imperialist reach (*BGall.* 1.44.7–8). This is surely a startling reminder for the reader that Caesar *has* stepped outside his mandated province. And at the opposite end of the text and the war, the Arvernian Gaul Critognatus is given a famous speech, as he and others are besieged by Caesar at Alesia (*BGall.* 7.77.13). Here he claims that Romans offer Gaul only slavery (*servitus*) and that cannibalism is preferable to surrender to Rome. These dissenting voices seem to construct Rome as a voracious, insatiable, expansionist power, which will not acknowledge the "rights" of any other expansionist power and then deprives Gaul of its autonomy. But in the text of Rome's apex conqueror they are surely an unlikely critique of Rome.

While Caesar allows us to see other possible interpretations of Rome, it is important that Diviciacus' glowing reference is positioned first and that it in fact answers the questions raised by the other voices: without Rome, Gaul is vulnerable to Germanic tyranny,[33] and Ariovistus is clearly the more destructive choice. The Gauls may fight back to avoid a perceived future of slavery, but Caesar shows us a Rome which will in fact stand by allies and defend them against this fate: this is why it is particularly important to put this view into the mouth of a Gallic character.

Vercingetorix: the mirror of Rome and Gaul

The final narrative in Caesar's text focuses firmly on Vercingetorix, another Arvernian, and the leader of the last concerted rising against the Romans in Gaul. Individual Gauls are not often singled out in this text, and Books 1 and 7 see the main occurrences of named Gauls. Of them all, Vercingetorix is the most sharply drawn, and seems to point to several other figures in the text. Although Roman victory at the close of this book is presented as definitive, Vercingetorix is much more than the final and most dangerous protagonist. The Gallic leader is himself an interesting amalgam of Gallic and Roman figures.

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[33] See Riggsby 2006, 158–89, on the concept of "just war" or *bellum iustum* for a wider discussion of such instances.

Most obviously he is a new and improved version of Orgetorix, the man whose actions brought Caesar into Gaul in Book 1. There are clear conceptual and verbal parallels, as both Vercingetorix and Orgetorix rally an alliance of Gauls, and both are charismatic and persuasive characters. Vercingetorix "summoned his clients and easily roused them. Once his plan became known, there was a general rush to arms" (*convocatis suis clientibus facile incendit. cognito eius consilio ad arma concurritur, BGall.* 7.4.2), while Orgetorix "devised a conspiracy among the nobles and persuaded all the citizens" to leave their land (*coniurationem nobilitatis fecit et civitati persuasit* (*BGall.* 1.2.2). Both harbour ambitions for supreme power: Vercingetorix, whose plot is depicted as more spur of the moment (one of the uprisings which result from Clodius' murder) actually seems to obtain it more openly and easily: "he was proclaimed king by his supporters . . . supreme command was conferred on him by unanimous approval" (*rex ab suis appellatur . . . omnium consensu ad eum defertur imperium, BGall.* 7.4.5 & 7), while Orgetorix "[said] he would be seizing power in his own state . . . . [The conspirators] hope to take power over the whole of Gaul" (*ipse suae civitatis imperium obtenturus esset . . . . totius Galliae sese potiri posse sperant, BGall* 1.3.7). Orgetorix' plan is better-formed, but his demise occurs before he even puts it into action. In the event, both men will die attempting to obtain Gallic *imperium*: Orgetorix seemingly at the hands of his own people (*BGall.* 1.4.3–4); Vercingetorix after being part of Caesar's triumphal display back in Rome, a death which is post-text, and barely foreshadowed by his surrender (*BGall.* 7.89.5).

Vercingetorix also mirrors Caesar: like Caesar he arrives in Book 7 by holding a levy (*BGall.* 7.1.3), and the parallel sets up the epic conflict which is to follow. Book 7 is the longest book by far, and where other books cover two or more major narratives, this book is single-minded in its confrontation between Rome and the last Gallic confederation. Like Caesar, Vercingetorix also works at speed, in contrast to Orgetorix' Helvetii, who plan meticulously, but slowly, then move at glacial pace and are easily kept in place by Caesar. In this respect, as well as a degree of success in rallying the Gauls and ability to engage in battle, Vercingetorix represents a much greater threat to Rome. From 58 to 52 BCE, from Book 1 to Book 7, the enemy has grown in stature: this is more than fitting as a climax to Caesar's Gallic story.

And while Orgetorix was undone from the inside, killed during a trial held by the Helvetii, Vercingetorix faces up to the internal strife which looks likely to derail him. His "back story" is a fall and rise narrative worthy of melodrama:

prohibetur ab Gobannitione, patruo suo, reliquisque principibus, qui hanc temptandam fortunam non existimabant; expellitur ex oppido Gergovia; non destitit tamen atque in agris habet dilectum egentium ac perditorum. hac coacta manu, quoscumque adit ex civitate ad suam sententiam perducit; hortatur ut communis libertatis causa arma capiant, magnisque coactis copiis adversarios suos a quibus paulo ante erat eiectus expellit ex civitate. rex ab suis appellatur. (Caes. *BGall.* 7.4.2–5)

He was restrained by his uncle, Gobannitio, and the other leading men who opposed taking this risk; he is banished from the town of Gergovia; however, he persists and he holds a levy of down-and-outs and desperadoes in the open countryside. After he has mustered this gang, every Arvernian whom Vercingetorix approaches is won over to his point of view. He urges them to take up arms in order to win liberty for all. Once he has assembled a large force, he exiles the opponents who so recently had themselves expelled him. Vercingetorix is now proclaimed king by his supporters.

Vercingetorix is a reverse Orgetorix. It is as though he gets past the suspicion and doubt of those around him early in the piece, then settles down to face the "real" enemy: Rome. But the parallel goes further because his origin story bears some resemblance to that of Rome itself: an uncle (Amulius) who attempts to exclude his nephew, only for him to return and exert revenge, is uncannily close to the myth of Romulus and Remus. Added to this is the fact that he is declared king, and along the way he has surrounded himself with a motley band of outsiders akin to those who flock to Romulus' Asylum. It is ironic that Vercingetorix' story is framed like a potted history of early Rome. Again, though, there is a reversal; here the uncle is the voice of wisdom, rather than the usurper. Besides, Vercingetorix' father had tried something similar—and had failed. Another problem with Gauls is that they have very limited historical awareness, a characteristic which Romans do not lack.

So while Rome makes only fleeting appearances in the *Bellum Gallicum*, Caesar's ethnocentrism inevitably alerts the reader to potential Roman (and un-Roman) qualities in the Gauls and others, and thus reflects back on what it means to be a Roman—specifically a man in late republican Rome.[34] This sliding-scale of ethnic values also allows Caesar to comment on Rome's position as an encroaching imperial force: Caesar addresses the questions about Rome's worth and why Rome is in Gaul head on. In fact he frequently highlights these points by putting them into the mouths of Gauls

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[34] Johnston 2018, 81: "Images of the other are, in fact, a reflection of the self . . . . [A]ll ethnographies are a kind of cultural fiction, determined, in part, by the historical, political, and intellectual contexts of their author-observers."

and other non-Romans, using this debate surrounding Rome's right to be in northern Europe in order to answer a very live question about why he is outside Provincia by presenting this clearly as a "just war." He pre-empts the accusations of attacking friends of the Roman state in Germania, with which Cato would relentlessly pursue him, by showing that Rome has a duty to keep out a sub-civilised and dangerous enemy. And most of all he does this by showing that Gaul is both *more* like Rome and ultimately *dependent on* Rome, while Germania is divided off as an alien community. The importance of defining Rome, for Caesar's purposes, is that it allows him to situate Rome within Europe and to claim the places where Rome should be; and he, as Rome's representative, should be conquering the defined space of Gaul. Cicero's focus is much more clearly Rome and reclaiming his rights there. He imagines a more perfect Rome, arguably an historical Rome which no longer exists, in contrast with the Rome from which he has been ejected and yet which needs him to return to a more moral framework. It is a similar set of Roman ideals, deployed quite differently, which Caesar claims for his own troops.

Conclusion

While Caesar and Cicero leave Rome for entirely different reasons, one willingly and one forced, there is some overlap in how they envision Rome from the outside, despite the widening political distance between them. These two "out of Rome" texts also demonstrate why Caesar was the more powerful figure in the next decade. While Cicero presents a rigid view of what Rome should be, Caesar promotes a much more generalised picture of Rome, one which is malleable and capable of fitting or opposing any number of personal positions. The concept of Rome is seen through his troops' individual and group actions, through the lens of the about-to-be conquered, and through Rome's enemies. And while Cicero openly states that Rome needs him, Caesar apparently sets his focus on the big picture, rather than individual status. Yet, in so doing, he will manage to amass for himself more authority, power and glory than any commander had previously attained, laying the groundwork for an entirely new vision of Rome.[35]

CHAPTER NINE

THEORISING ROMAN DECLINE[1]

SONYA WURSTER

From the time of the Gracchi to the Augustan period, the Roman political and social system underwent a series of fundamental political and social transformations.[2] Modern scholars cite a number of contributing factors, including: Roman expansion, the introduction of coinage, crises between social classes, the failure to pass certain reforms, the inherent conservatism of the Roman ruling elite, and the ambitions of powerful individuals.[3]

[1] The term "decline" has been problematised by Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006, who say that the *res publica* was transformed slowly. They argue (2006, 626) that it was not until the time of Tacitus that the phrase "republic" was used to describe the political system of Rome before the Principate, but that "[e]ven when such a strong demarcation between Republic and Principate as this is imposed by an author looking back on this transformation from the distance of a century, 'the Republic' still turns out to be something defined by experience and behaviour, not the surface facts of political life." They suggest that it is not until Seneca that the Principate is conceived as a monarchy. The title of this chapter is thus overly dramatic, but there is evidence that writers of the late republic saw it as under threat and undergoing some sort of decline. Sallust (*Cat.* 9.1), for example, identifies a breakdown in *concordia* ("harmony"). Many of Cicero's speeches catalogue the problems plaguing the late Republic. For instance, in the *Pro Caelio* (78), he catalogues Clodius' violence against his personal property to highlight the issue. *De oratore*, *De legibus* and *De republica* focus on Roman republican systems, and Cicero frames the texts as necessary because those systems are under threat (Zetzel 2013, 183).

[2] Brunt 1988; Shotter 1994; Tatum 2006; Bringmann 2007; Flower 2010; Hölkeskamp 2010, 42.

[3] For the impact of Roman expansion on society, the economy and politics, see Brunt 1988, 69; Patterson 2006, 616–21; Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006, 630; and Raaflaub 2006, 141. On the impact of Roman expansion on the structure of the Republic, see Hölkeskamp 2010, 129. For the impact of the inception of money, see Pobjoy 2006, 71, and Bringmann 2007, 69. For the effect of internal crises between social classes, see Brunt 1988, 38–39; Rosenstein and Morstein-Marx 2006, 633–

Roman writers of the late Republic who experienced first-hand the tumultuous events of the first century BCE tell a different story. They frame their theories in moral terms, constructing a narrative in which foreign luxury, individuals greedy for extraordinary political powers, and an absence of foreign enemies undermined the social and political traditions of the *mos maiorum*.[4] Writers like Sallust and Cicero argue that returning to the traditional mores of *labor*, *honor*, *gloria*, *pietas* and *pudor* will help revive Roman institutions and society.[5] Contemporary Epicurean authors Lucretius and Philodemus tell a similar story and connect social and political turmoil with ethics. However, they present the very behaviours and concepts prized by Roman writers as the cause of Rome's current problems. They problematise the desires for wealth, power and reputation as well as the traditional role of the gods. Instead, they theorise that the τετραφάρμακος ("four-fold remedy") will cure Rome's ailments.[6]

Lucretius' view that politics and mainstream religion are deeply flawed is relatively familiar to scholars of the late Republic. Less well known are the arguments of Philodemus of Gadara, whose works were found at the Villa of the Papyri in Herculaneum. In this chapter, I argue that his application of Epicurean ethical theory is more nuanced and pragmatic

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35; and Flower 2010, 62–63. With regard to the failure to pass reforms in relation to the military, see Bringmann 2007, 136–46. With regard to an inability to pass reforms to assuage the anger of Italian allies, see Brunt 1988, 81, and Flower 2010, 62–63. For the role of ambitious individuals, see Brunt 1988, 45; Bringmann 2007, 167–294; and Flower 2010, 31.

[4] In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust presents the cause of Rome's turmoil as an absence of external enemies (9.1 and 10.1). He also blames an influx of *luxuria* (10.2 and 11.5), which causes young men to seek wealth (12.1–2) instead of *honor* and *gloria* of *nostri maiores* ("our ancestors", 12.4). Cicero, too, attributes the cause of social and political turmoil to a loss of morals (*Rep.* 5.2).

[5] On the connection between these, see Cic. *Rep.* 1.2.

[6] Phld. *De elect.* 4.9–14. This remedy summarised Epicurean philosophy as: do not fear the gods, do not worry about death, what is good is easy to get, and what is bad is easy to endure. Epicurus says that beliefs affect whether anything is good or bad (*Ep. Hdt.* 50). He also argues that true opinions, i.e. opinions that meet the Epicurean criteria of non-contestation and confirmation, bring certainty to life, while groundless and false ones add anxiety (*Ep. Pyth.* 87). Philodemus discusses the way that beliefs affect the emotion of anger (*De ira* 37.32–39). In a passage dealing with the way that atomic make-up influences an individual's disposition, Lucretius (3.307) notes that someone's underlying disposition can be changed by altering their beliefs. Annas 1989, 148, and Tsouna 2007, 212–13 discuss the way that beliefs affect emotions. O'Keefe 2009, 149 examines the topic in relation to the swerve and free will.

than Lucretius'. In particular, I contend that these two Epicureans offer radically different theories about the role of politicians in fixing Rome's crisis. I will show that Lucretius regards Epicurean withdrawal, most famously summed up by the maxim λάθε βιώσας ("live unnoticed"), as the most effective way to repair society, and he leaves little room for politicians in the process.[7] Although Philodemus idealises Epicurean withdrawal as much as Lucretius, I will demonstrate that he acknowledges the practical reality of the Roman world when he explores the way that ethical self-realisation can enable politicians to bring social stability to those they rule. In short, we have two contemporary Epicurean authors who respond to their environment in slightly different ways. It is possible that Lucretius is more able to criticise Roman practices openly because he is a Roman writing in Latin, while Philodemus, a Greek intellectual, is more dependent on patrons like Lucius Calpurnius Piso for his survival.[8] Yet, as I will indicate, Philodemus does not does simply compromise Epicurus' teachings to suit Roman readers so much as he attempts to show how his argument that politicians can maintain social harmony fits comfortably with both Roman and Epicurean views.[9]

Lucretian theories of Roman decline and restoration

In order to highlight some of the key differences between Lucretius' and Philodemus' theories of Roman rehabilitation, I wish to offer a brief summary of Lucretius' arguments on the topic first. I will show that his view that politicians and political life have no positive influence is underpinned by Epicurean ethics and physics. Firstly, he makes an ethical argument: politicians can never bring social harmony because of their disturbed ethical state. Their disturbed state is the result of striving for unnatural and

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[7] Roskam 2007 offers the best and most detailed diachronic approach to different Epicurean writers' stance on the topic of withdrawal.

[8] Gigante (1985) and (1995, 79), Asmis (1990, 2369), Sider (1997, 5–6 n. 11), Tsouna (2007, 1), and Fish and Sanders (2011, 6) all exemplify the general acceptance of Piso as Philodemus' patron.

[9] Cicero (*Rep.* 1.8) argues that statesmen can create the conditions that make their fellow citizens happy. Philodemus' comments can be seen in the context of his aim of setting himself up as an ethical guide able to steer members of the Roman elite through their political careers. Elizabeth Asmis (1991) has convincingly demonstrated that this is what Philodemus is doing in the *On the Good King according to Homer*. In this work, Philodemus shows that the value of Homer is found only by explaining the poems through an Epicurean ethics. Through his interpretation of Homer, he suggests that the philosopher should be kept on hand to assist and guide laymen in understanding the utility of poetry.

unnecessary desires, which are limitless and therefore impossible to satisfy. Secondly, he applies Epicurean atomism to show that political systems are in a constant state of flux, which makes hypothesising about the best system useless. He presents Epicurean philosophy, specifically the school's views on quietude through withdrawal, as the only viable solution to Rome's troubles.

> In the proem, Lucretius asks for *tranquilla pax* ("quiet peace"):

> hunc tu, diva, tuo recubantem corpore sancto
> circumfusa super, suavis ex ore loquellas
> funde petens placidam Romanis, incluta, pacem;
> nam neque nos agere hoc patriai tempore iniquo
> possumus aequo animo nec Memmi clara propago
> talibus in rebus communi desse saluti. (Lucr. 1.41–43)

> There you, o goddess, as he [i.e. Mars] reclines on your sacred body
> bending around him, pour sweet words from your mouth,
> seeking, o illustrious one, calm peace for the Roman people;
> for during this hostile time for our fatherland, neither can I act with
> a tranquil mind and nor can the illustrious decedent of the Memmii
> in such matters neglect communal safety.

There has been some debate as to whether or not Lucretius is responding directly to contemporary events. Katharina Volk, for example, concludes that the proem does. She suggests that it was probably written in the 50s, "a time of great political uncertainty when internal peace at Rome was certainly endangered."[10] McConnell tempers this interpretation, writing that it "becomes apparent that scholars are wrong to think that the references to civil strife in the *De rerum natura* are all to be explained by a preoccupation with contemporary events. In the light of earlier Democritean and Epicurean treatments of civil strife, there is in fact nothing in the *De rerum natura* itself that compels us to reach immediately for this explanation."[11] Nevertheless, he says that "we can explain Lucretius' concern with civil strife by reference to his general cultural and political context, without the need to look to contemporary history."[12] I interpret the proem as multivalent, and I argue that the peace sought in these lines is of two kinds:

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[10] Farrington (1939, 150–79), Minyard (1985, 33–70), Long and Sedley (1987, 136), Fowler (1989, 22), Volk (2010, 131) are some examples of scholars who perceive the *DRN* as a direct response to its socio-cultural and political environment.
[11] McConnell 2012, 98.
[12] McConnell 2012, 98.

the first is a literal peace for Romans (*placidam Romanis pacem*); the second is an Epicurean peace of mind, which the phrases *aequo animo* and the tautological *placidam pacem* convey.[13] The passage's multivalence serves two purposes: it allows Lucretius to present Epicurean philosophy as a way of dealing with turmoil in the here and now (*hoc tempore*) as well as the imagined turmoil of future audiences. The latter is suggested in the text by the temporary nature of all things.[14] The former is suggested not only by his use of the ablative of time *hoc tempore* but also through the present imperative *funde* and the present indicative *possumus*. The repeated use of the present tense taken, together with the ablative of time, suggests that he has contemporary Roman readers in mind.[15]

Lucretius' solution to *hoc patriai tempore iniquo* is, however, radically different to that of his Roman contemporaries, who regarded political institutions as key to Roman stability. Instead, his overarching message is that politics and political systems will not be able to solve Rome's problems and he never recommends any one political system as best.[16] Clear evidence for his ambivalence towards political systems can be found in Book 5, in which he critiques various stages of political development starting with no government before analysing kingship and

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[13] Gale 1994, 222.

[14] Lucr. 5.235, 2.1150–74 and 3.693–65.

[15] Schiesaro 2007, 41 notes that from the start of the poem Lucretius is interested in the anxieties of his age as well as eternal truths. McConnell 2012, 98, on the other hand, perceives Lucretius as interested in a general Roman cultural and political context but not a specifically contemporary one.

[16] Many scholars have attempted to identify a type of government preferred by Epicureans. Momigliano 1941, 151, for example, said that a republican system was preferred by Epicureans. Griffin's (1989, 29–30) response to Momigliano is that Epicureans had no preference for any particular style of government. In his analysis of *On the Good King*, Murray 1965 proposes that Philodemus advocates for a republican system of government. In direct contrast to Momigliano, Gigante and Dorandi 1980 have contended that the best form of government for an Epicurean was monarchy, because the courts of kings provided the best options for securing economic security. Kennedy 2013 also argues that it is not possible to see the *DRN* as republican, because "the ideology of universal empire" is "that you may knock out one particular princeps, but the rationale of the system will always demand another." Fowler 1989, 130–50 is not convinced that Epicureans promoted kingship more than any other style of government. McConnell 2010 offers a comprehensive and clear discussion of the topic. His conclusion (2010, 195) is that they thought that being king oneself was, generally speaking, bad for one's *ataraxia*; but they also acknowledged that kingly rule could provide subjects with goods conducive to attaining *ataraxia*.

then republicanism. At each point he identifies problems that inhibit true security, which for Epicureans was defined as ἀταραξία ("freedom from anxiety") and ἀπονία ("freedom from pain").[17] One reason why Lucretius does not offer a specific model may lie in the school's atomic theory. Since everything is comprised of atoms and void, then—like any compact between atoms—political systems and nations will not last forever. Lucretius stresses the mortal and thus temporary nature of the world, saying that the current union of atoms is already breaking down.[18] This means that theorising about the best political system is irrelevant to fixing Rome's current crisis because everything is in a constant state of flux.[19]

Atomism, however, is not the sole reason for Lucretius' objection to political life. In addition, Lucretius demonstrates that it does not cohere with Epicurean ethics. Although Epicureans did not find political life problematic *per se*,[20] they did hold that it disturbs the peace of mind required for a truly pleasurable life and that it requires unnecessary labour. On this basis, Lucretius recommends that politics should be avoided.[21] Epicureans also associated political life with wealth and power, desires which they classed as unnatural and unnecessary.[22] They are difficult to attain because they are unlimited; with no clear limit to their attainment,

[17] Schrijvers 1996.

[18] Lucr. 5.235, 2.1150–74 and 3.963–65.

[19] Schiesaro 2007, 42–43 suggests that Lucretius' stress on the fact that nothing survives the dissolution of atoms de-emphasises Roman uniqueness.

[20] The Epicureans were famous in antiquity for their anti-political views, although the apparent extremity of these was in large part a misrepresentation by hostile sources: Armstrong 2011 and Fish 2011. On the basis of Epicurus' apparent disavowal of political life together with an absence of any discussions about the best forms of government, it has been stated that Epicureanism is an apolitical philosophy and that they have no political philosophy. Belliotti 2009, 102, and Bryant 1996, 402–27 perceive Epicureans as apolitical, but Nichols 1972, 15, and Schiesaro 2007 argue that Epicurus, and Epicureanism more generally, is not apolitical, and that the school does have a political philosophy. The lack of a recommendation for a specific type of government is also indicated by the varied reception of Lucretius. As Barbour 2007, 149 shows, the interpretation of Lucretius and Epicurean political philosophy "has rarely proved simple." His political philosophy can be deployed to support different causes: for example, during the English civil war, royalists and non-royalists used Lucretius for different ends (Barbour 2007, 158–61).

[21] This view is epitomised by Lucretius' (2.1–61) statement that it is better to watch the turmoil from the sidelines than be involved in it yourself.

[22] A desire is unnatural when it is based on wrong beliefs about what will bring happiness. It is unnecessary when it causes more pain than pleasure in gaining it.

people seek more and more.[23] Lucretius links wealth and power to political life, and in Book 5 he attributes the root cause of political institutions to these two desires.[24] In Book 2, he depicts political life as the embodiment of Sisyphean torture: politicians toil uselessly and endlessly for power and wealth.[25] In connecting politics with two desires regarded by Epicureans as unnatural and unnecessary to happiness, Lucretius indicates that politics is an inherently unstable way of gaining the security needed for ἀταραξία and ἀπονία. In emphasising the ethical problems of political life, Lucretius stresses the psychological turmoil of politicians, and he initially appears interested mainly in their inner state. However, he also deals with the ramifications of politicians' mental turmoil on society more broadly: *res itaque ad summam faecem turbasque redibat*, / *imperium sibi cum ac summatum quisque petebat* ("So things came to the utter dregs of confusion, when each man for himself sought dominion and exaltation," Lucr. 5.1141–42). Using the purple stripe of the senatorial toga to symbolise Roman political life, he shows that the desire for political power has led to war: *tunc igitur pelles, nunc aurum et purpura curis* / *exercent hominum vitam belloque fatigant* ("then therefore pelts, now gold and purple, trouble men's life with cares and weary it with war," Lucr. 1426–27). His use of *homines* emphasises the way that society in general is affected by the political classes' greed for power and wealth. In addition to a negative presentation of politics and political systems, Lucretius specifically problematises Roman political culture. He shows that concepts like *nobilitas* and *gloria*, ideas central to Roman elite power, are the root cause of the city's current crisis.[26] Other than the throwaway line that Memmius should not neglect the Roman people in their time of need (1.42–43), the persistent message in the *DRN* is that politicians do more harm than good.

Lucretius' *DRN*, then, exclusively presents Epicurean *ratio* ("reasoning") as the only cure to social ills. Only Epicurean philosophy with its focus on *natura* can cure the superstitious beliefs and fear of death that drive people to seek power, wealth and fame:

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[23] Epicurus *RS* 30. Contrast with the idea that everything that is natural is easy to attain (Epicurus *RS* 21).
[24] Lucr. 5.1111–35
[25] Lucr. 3. 995–1002.
[26] Lucr. 2.37–39.

> hunc igitur terrorem animi tenebrasque necessest
> non radii solis neque lucida tela diei
> discutiant, sed naturae species ratioque. (Lucr. 1.146–48)[27]

> Therefore, these people must dispel the terror of their minds
> and the darkness not by the sun's rays nor bright shafts of daylight
> but through the appearance and reason of nature.

Lucretius calls on readers to practice φυσιολογία ("the study of nature"), expressed with the phrase *naturae species ratioque* as the best means of curing one's inner turmoil.[28] Lucretius at no point in the poem argues that politics can fix what ails Rome, and he intimates that Memmius can only help Rome once the city and its inhabitants have internal peace first.[29]

Lucretius' application of Epicurean *ratio* leads him to offer up Epicurean withdrawal as the most effective pathway for Romans to regain peace. In putting forward this solution, he draws on the Epicurean ideal that withdrawal into a circle of friends is a better source of ἀταραξία and ἀπονία than political life. He specifically contrasts Roman values with Epicurean ideals, a technique we see most clearly in the priamel of Book 2. Lucretius draws on epic imagery of the gods looking down on human actions to convey the Epicurean ideal of the sage as living like a god among humans.[30] He describes the Epicurean as finding it pleasurable *magnum alterius spectare laborem . . . belli certamina magna tueri* ("to observe the great distress of others . . . to behold the great battles of warfare").[31] Both *spectare* and *tueri* convey the idea of being a spectator and call to mind the Greek verbs θεάομαι and θεωρεῖν respectively.[32] Like the gods of epic, Epicurean sages watch the "petty play of men."[33] The lives of non-Epicureans are equated to *mari magno turbantibus aequora ventis* ("the winds that stir up

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[27] These exact lines are repeated at: Lucr. 2.60–62, 3.92–94 and 6.40–43. Lucretius repeats the claim that only Epicurean philosophy with its specific emphasis on *natura* can help cure people at 1.1114–17, 2.55–61, 3.91–93 and 6.80–91.

[28] Lucretius' whole poem can be understood as reflecting the process of φυσιολογία. He attempts to convert readers through physics (Gillespie and Hardie 2007, 3).

[29] Lucr. 1.1–49.

[30] Epicurus *Ep. Men.* 135; Long 2006, 10. Fowler 2002, 37 discusses the way that *spectare* with its connotations of being a spectator calls to mind the gods. He says that to be a spectator of real-world events "is to attain the felicity of the gods, who watch from on high the petty play of men."

[31] Lucr. 2.02 and 2.05.

[32] Fowler 2002, 37 and 47.

[33] Fowler 2002, 37.

the waves of the great sea," Lucr. 2.1). In comparison, the Epicurean can observe this from the shore (*e terra*, Lucr. 2.2).

Unlike the gods of epic, however, the Epicurean does not delight in the pain of others so much as feel relief that they are free from it: *non quia vexari quemquamst iucunda voluptas / sed quibus ipse malis careas quia cernere suave est* ("not because delightful pleasure is taken at anyone's distress / but because it is sweet to perceive the evils from which you are free," Lucr. 2.4–5). The contrast between Epicurean quietude and the anxiety and labour-intensive lifestyles of non-Epicureans is reinforced from lines 7 to 14 when Lucretius describes the sage as fortified by a peaceful temple from which they can look down (*despicere*) at those who wander (*errare*) about aimlessly, unsure how to live (*viam . . . quaerere vitae*, "seeking a path for living").[34] He describes these individuals as *certare ingenio, contendere nobilitate, / noctes atque dies niti praestante labore / ad summas emergere opes rerumque potiri* ("doing battle with their intellects, fighting for renown / night and day, striving in extraordinary labour / to rise up to the top and to acquire wealth and possessions," Lucr. 2.11–13). The tricolon references key Roman ideals of *ingenium, nobilitas*, and *labor*. It leads into the allusion to rising the ranks of the *cursus honorum* and all its attendant wealth and power. The individuals who seek these empty desires are, according to Lucretius, unhappy, blind and living as though in darkness.[35]

Lucretius' argument is thus that Epicurean quietude is the most effective way for Rome to achieve peace. He holds no belief in the ability of political structures and politicians to create the conditions necessary for Epicurean happiness. Epicureanism is offered as the only solution to Rome's current social, political and moral crisis. He aims to re-orientate people away from their belief that the wealth, power and reputation of political life will bring security from the gods and death. Instead, he shows that participation in politics does not create ἀταραξία and ἀπονία. Moreover, political life generates envy, greed, fear and anger and is best avoided.

Philodemus: Not all politicians are bad . . .

As I mentioned above, I argue in this chapter that Philodemus applies Epicurean ethics in a more nuanced and pragmatic fashion. Certainly,

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[34] Lucr. 2.7–10. On the way that Epicurean philosophy acts as a conceptual space to withdraw into, see Wurster (*forthcoming*).
[35] Lucr. 2.14–16.

Philodemus makes all the standard Epicurean arguments about withdrawal, he shows a lack of commitment to any particular political structure and he presents Epicurean natural justice as superior. However, in the remainder of this chapter, I will show that in contrast to Lucretius he grants politicians a potentially positive role in creating conditions that allow individuals to gain Epicurean happiness. I will also suggest that he attentively takes into account his Roman audience when he argues that some people are constitutionally inclined towards political involvement. He is equally careful, however, to carve out a place for himself in the Roman social milieu, and in numerous works he suggests that with the assistance of an Epicurean ethical guide politicians can create social stability that enables them to attain ἀταραξία and ἀπονία.

Philodemus adopts the standard Epicurean view that withdrawal is the best means for living a happy life, presenting quietude (and not political institutions) as the best method for fixing Rome's current troubles.[36] We see evidence of this position in *On Rhetoric*, when he directly contrasts the peace and quiet of non-political life with the tumult of a political one:

καὶ πρὸς τῆς | [αὐτῆς] ἐμπνευσθέντες | [ἀνα]φωνῆς, οἱ μὲν ὡσ|τε θαυμαστῶς προβῆ||[ναι] τὴν Ἀπολλοφάνους | [ἐπὶ] τοῦ βήματος τύρ||[β]ην ἐζήλωσαν, οἱ δὲ | καὶ καταπλεύσαντες | εἰς τὸν λιμένα καὶ παρα|{φα}σχόντες ἐλπίδας ὡς | αὐτοὺς "οὐδ᾽ ἂν τὸ σεμ|[νὸν] | πῦρ εἰργάθοι Διὸς τὸ | μὴ οὐ κατ᾽ ἄκρων περ|γάμων ἑ[λ]εῖν" τὸν εὐ|δαίμονα ⌈β⌉ίον, εἶθ᾽ ὑστ[ε]||ρον ἀντ[εμπ]νευ'σ'θέντες . . . (Phld. *De rhet*. fr. 13.01–16 Longo Aurrichio)[37]

and inspired before the same clamour, some have emulated Apollophanes, amazingly striving forward to the turmoil of the podium, but others, having sailed into (philosophy's) harbour and with hopes promised them that "not even the august flames of Zeus would prevent them from taking the highest citadel", (have) a happy life afterwards, in spite of opposing winds . . .

In contrasting Epicurean teachings with those of Apollophanes, a Stoic who acted as a model for politicians, Philodemus argues that Epicureanism offers a surer harbour (λιμήν) than political life. Through the school's teachings, he suggests that people can gain εὐδαιμονία by avoiding the turmoil of politics (τύρβη). Elsewhere in the work he shows the dangers of political life, providing examples of statesmen for whom involvement in politics did

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[36] Roskam 2007, 109.
[37] Longo Auricchio 2004, 38 provides a revised version of this fragment. The translation is my own.

not end well.[38] Further support for the importance placed on quietude is seen in *On Piety*. In this text, he shows that Socrates' public presence led to his unwitting participation in political life and eventually to his downfall.[39]

The arguments Philodemus makes against political life are predominantly ethical, and like Lucretius he shows that people incorrectly believe that the wealth, power and reputation associated with political life will ensure their safety.[40] In *On Choices and Avoidances,* a work which deals with how to distinguish between different desires, pleasures and their sources so as to make good choices and avoid bad ones, Philodemus writes that wealth, power and reputations are ξενοτάτα ("most-alien things") to happiness.[41] He does not perceive politics as inherently problematic, which coheres with Epicurus' and Lucretius' views. The problem according to Philodemus is that most politicians strive extremely hard for very little return.[42] Their character flaws symbolise the inner turmoil of never being able to satisfy their desires, which results in countless misfortunes that undermine their security. According to Philodemus, a further way that politicians upset their security is the harm they do their friendships, which are the greatest source of security for Epicureans.[43] In *On Rhetoric,* Philodemus identifies political life as inimical to friendship because politicians frequently feel jealous of each other. He directly connects the desire for success in politics (φιλόπρωτος) to jealousy (φθόνος), an emotion that connotes envious resentment of someone's else's achievements, possessions or perceived natural advantages. In focusing on the emotion of jealousy, Philodemus shows that he is interested in the inner state of politicians. His interest in the psychological turmoil of politicians relates to his aim of curing individuals, a topic on which Voula Tsouna has written extensively.[44] However, he is not interested in explicating their psychological turmoil and its effects on the lives of politicians. This same passage from *On Rhetoric* also provides evidence for the way that Epicureans connect inner turmoil to a disordered society, when Philodemus comments that the negative emotion of jealousy affects the whole δήμος ("community").

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[38] Phld. *De rhet.* fr. 4.28–38 Sudhaus.
[39] Phld. *De piet.* 59.02–18.
[40] Phld. *De elect.*
[41] Phld. *De elect.* 5.11–18.
[42] Phld. *De rhet.* 1b.39.18–23 Sudhaus.
[43] Phld. *De rhet.* 5. fr.19.6–22 Sudhaus. Epicurus (*RS* 28) states that friends are the greatest source of security.
[44] Tsouna 2007.

Further evidence for the effect of politicians' inner turmoil on society as a whole can be found in *On the Good King*. In this text, Philodemus shows that the psychological turmoil of bad rulers leads to στάσις ("strife"). In column 29, he argues that a good leader does not feel jealousy (τὸ ζηλότυπον) of another ruler's power.[45] By avoiding jealousy, they avoid the warfare necessary to wrest power from a foe. In *On Anger*, he says that anger causes despotic and unjust actions.[46] Given the inherently social aspect of the Epicurean definition of justice, the anger of a ruler has a direct impact on the security of others. What these examples from *On Rhetoric, On the Good King* and *On Anger* show is that Philodemus presents the emotions of rulers as affecting themselves *and* social stability. By arguing that politicians harm their own security as well as those they rule, Philodemus aims to convince readers that withdrawal to an Epicurean lifestyle is the most effective way of fixing contemporary problems. Philodemus' dubiousness about the efficacy of politicians is further highlighted by his lack of commitment to any particular political system. As we saw in the case of Lucretius so too does Philodemus refrain from identifying any one system as better than another.[47]

Earlier in the chapter I identified Epicurean atomism and their view that political life can upset ἀταραξία and ἀπονία as two reasons for the school's reluctance to assign value to particular models of government. I wish now to suggest that a further reason is because they aim to provide a framework that will enable an individual to live happily under any circumstance, even a tumultuous one. The emphasis on the way that individuals can live happily regardless of the conditions in which they live is in line with Epicurus' stance that individuals are responsible for changing their own behaviours.[48] Epicurus' view on the important role of individuals led him to conclude that it was more effective to care for the self in a smaller community of friends, which in turn led to a devaluing of political life and government models. Philodemus shows just how unimportant the type of government is to an Epicurean in *On Death*. In this text, he aims to show how Epicureanism can help cure the fear of death. Throughout he frequently adopts a sympathetic tone towards non-Epicurean fears. In a section dealing with the fear of dying under an unjust ruler, Philodemus observes that this

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[45] Phld. *De bon. reg.* 29.14–17; McConnell 2012, 104 states that Philodemus "identifies envy (τὸ ζηλότυπον) as a cause of stasis and insists that it must be absent for stasis to be absent".

[46] Phd. *De ira* 28.21–30.

[47] Griffin 1989, 29–30.

[48] Garnsey 2000, 403–4; Schofield 2000, 425; Long 2006, 39.

is of no concern to an Epicurean not simply because death is nothing to an Epicurean but also because it has happened to countless people under all types of government:

κα[ὶ] τὸ μόνον αὐ[τὸ]ν ἐνκε|[κ]υ[ρ]νκέναι [το]ύτοις οὐκ ἐνοχλεῖ· καὶ |γὰρ μυρίους οἶδε καὶ τῶν ἐπιφανεστά|των φθόνωι καὶ διαβολῆι περιπεσόν|τας ἔν τε δήμοις καὶ καὶ παρὰ δυνάσταις, | ὑπὸ δὲ τυράννων καὶ τοὺς ἀρίστους | μάλιστα, καὶ βασιλεῖς ὑπὸ βασιλέων (Phld. *De mort.* 34.38–35.5)

And he is not troubled by being the only one to have encountered this: for indeed he knows that even among the most eminent men, countless numbers have fallen in with envy and slander, both in democracies and before rulers, and that under tyrants (it is) actually the best men most of all (who have experienced this), and kings under kings.

In short, he argues that people are equally vulnerable to injustice regardless of the type of government they live under, which means that only philosophical knowledge is important: it alone enables people to deal with injustice.[49] One conclusion to be drawn from this passage is that institutions often fail to bring societal harmony and security but that the individual can bring about their own through peace of mind and correct beliefs about the gods, death and external goods.[50] This passage also shows the Epicurean view that governments frequently fail to protect individuals against harm, a point also made by Lucretius.

In addition to showing that the individual can be happy under any government because they insufficiently protect people, the passage from *On Death* provides a further reason why Philodemus may be reluctant to offer Romans a particular form of government as a solution to their political unrest. In the above passage, Philodemus applies Epicurean natural justice to allay the fear. This theory held that humans could form pacts of mutual non-harm and that the guilt of harming another was worse than any punishment meted out by any human law.[51] He argues that the unjust person will suffer the most because they lead an unjust life. In making this

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[49] Phld. *De mort.* 35.38–39.

[50] Epicurus' views on politics can be understood as dependent on his doctrines about action and responsibility, which derive from the atomic swerve. For a good discussion of Epicurean views on action and responsibility, see O'Keefe 2009. Long 2006, 12 notes that Epicurus seeks to redefine the relationship between the individual and their social-political world through the ideal of ἀταραξία ("freedom from anxiety"). See also Armstrong 1997, 329, and Brown 2009, 193.

[51] Epicurus *RS* 31.

argument, Philodemus offers a comforting message to contemporary Roman audiences, in whose minds the consequence of violent leaders would have been fresh after Sulla's proscriptions.[52] Hermarchus, Epicurus' successor, expanded on Epicurus' formulation of justice, arguing that governments came into being to facilitate the establishment of laws. He contended that if everyone adhered to a pact not to harm each other, then there would be no need for laws.[53] Philodemus and Lucretius both argue that laws (when they work) stop people from committing crimes, but only because they fear punishment.[54] They both think that Epicurean natural justice would ideally replace laws.[55] Like Hermarchus, they argue that an agreement not to harm each other negates the need for laws. The unstated conclusion of this argument is that the political institutions needed to create, implement and maintain them would also no longer be needed. In an ideal Epicurean world, withdrawal would not be necessary because society would be structured around circles of friends and not political institutions.[56] In the current climate, both writers advocate withdrawal into an Epicurean community as the best option for curing Rome's current crisis. This solution was, as noted already, unpalatable to the vast majority of ancient commentators, who generally regarded political institutions as separating humans from animals.[57]

Thus far I have demonstrated that Philodemus and Lucretius share almost identical views. I wish now, however, to provide evidence for the nuance and pragmatism of Philodemus' application of Epicurean ethics to the circumstances of his Roman readers. First, I need to show that he does take into account a Roman context because he does so rather obliquely and never refers to Rome or Romans directly. Citing Tiziano Dorandi, Fowler has already called into question the apparent reference to Mark Antony in *De dis*.[58] After an examination of both the original papyrus in Naples and the multispectral images, I can confirm that there is no such reference.[59]

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[52] Dowling 2000, 305–18 provides a discussion of late-Republican depictions of Sulla along with relevant sources.

[53] Porph. *Abst.* 8.

[54] Phld. *De elect.* 12.4–18; Phld. *De piet.* 77a.7–14. Lucr. 1.102–26, 3.1014–23 and 5.1143–60. They are following Epicurus *RS* 35.

[55] Phld. *De elect.* 12.15–16; Lucr. 1.126.

[56] Epicurus *RS* 14.

[57] Cic. *Rep.* 1.1.

[58] Fowler 1986, 82; Phld. *De dis* 1.25.22.

[59] This is also apparent from Walter Scott's (1885) *Fragmenta Herculanensia*, an edition of the Oxford copies of Philodemus' works. Scott used both the original papyrus housed in Naples together with the disegni in Oxford. The latter were made soon after the opening of *De dis*. His approach was also a conservative reconstruction

Instead, confirmation of Philodemus' engagement with his Roman political present is most clearly seen in his dedications of a number of works to prominent Roman politicians: *De bono rege* is dedicated to Lucius Calpurnius Piso Caesoninus, Caesar's father-in-law and consul of 58 BCE; Book 4 of *De rhetorica* is dedicated to Gaius Vibius Pansa, consul of 43 BCE.[60] In dedicating some of his works to politicians, Philodemus positions his treatises within his socio-political and cultural setting.[61]

Further, albeit indirect, support for Philodemus' desire to appeal to elite Romans readers is found in his distinguishing of politics from philosophy. In a number of texts, Philodemus shows that philosophers fulfil distinctly different roles to other members of society. In *On Frank Criticism*, he indicates that *only* philosophers have the training and skills required to cure character flaws through frank criticism.[62] *On Rhetoric* further exemplifies Philodemus' delineation of roles and aims in life, when he focuses on the differences between sophistic rhetors, philosophers and politicians. The task of sophists is to understand but not to make new judgements.[63] Philosophers contribute towards a truly happy life.[64] Since, politicians should lead and administer the state, he stresses their practical capability.[65] Due to the work's focus on speech, Philodemus is specifically interested in the way that different groups rely on different styles of speaking. Sophistic rhetoric and philosophy use the art of rhetoric while politics uses a practical style of speaking that they learn on the job.[66] This is remarkably similar to Cicero's argument that Roman oratorical skill is natural; he contrasts Roman oratory's supposedly flexible and organic nature to the systemised and theoretical Greek rhetoric.[67] By stressing the practical nature of political rhetoric as distinct from the theoretical character

relatively close to modern papyrologists. His edition is relatively reliable, especially in comparison to Diels. Diels tended to reconstruct heavily. He frequently adds text that is not visible in the papyrus.

[60] Three books of *De vitiis* are dedicated to Virgil, Quintilius Varus, Varius Rufus, and Plotius Tucca.

[61] Anti-Epicurean ancient sources use this stance to depict Epicureans as anti-social (Cic. *Sest.* 10.23; Plut. *Adv. Col.* 1127d–e).

[62] Phld. *De lib. dic.* fr. 22.1–9.

[63] Gaines 1985, 156 and 163.

[64] Phld. *De rhet.* 1.32.32–37 Sudhaus.

[65] Roskam 2007, 104.

[66] Phld. *De rhet.* 2.23.33–24.23 Sudhaus; Phld. *De rhet.* 2.50.11–21 Sudhaus.

[67] Cic. *De or.* 1.15.113–117. Gunderson 2009, 17 examines the organic versus theoretical distinction between Roman oratory and Greek rhetoric.

of epideictic, Philodemus appears to be playing on Roman representations of the difference between Roman oratory and Greek rhetoric.[68]

Philodemus displays a good understanding of his contemporary environment when he separates the speaking style of politicians from that of philosophers. Likewise, his grasp of his cultural milieu is on display when he says that some people are innately inclined towards political life because of natural talent.[69] He argues that it is acceptable to seek fame if it is motivated by nature.[70] For those who are constitutionally devoted to the pursuit of status and reputation, he advises them not to refrain from political life.[71] Elsewhere, Philodemus argues that some people are drawn to political life.[72] In short, Philodemus recognises that not everyone will become wise men because they interpret philosophy in a myriad of ways. As Francesca Longo Auricchio has noted, philosophy

> acts as an inspiration for those to whom it is addressed, but can produce diverse intentions in those who cultivate it, in the sense that some people are impelled to the glory and fame of public life through the practice of rhetoric, while others are driven toward the peace of pure speculation.[73]

Philosophy can guide people even if they do not aspire to living a life of philosophical contemplation.

In taking this position, Philodemus acknowledges, in a way that Lucretius does not, that engagement in politics was an inescapable part of Roman life. He acknowledges that for men like Piso and Pansa, who had obligations to the family, the state and to many others, quietude was an impossibility. In fact, withdrawal would have caused men like these more disturbance than remaining involved.[74] *On the Good King* and *On Rhetoric* implicitly recognise this reality. The latter does so by offering advice on

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[68] Cic. *De or.* 2.84.234.
[69] Armstrong 2011, 123. Belliotti 2009, 108 says that Epicureans do see involvement in political life as natural for some. This is in line with Epicurus' argument that not everyone is able to practice philosophy (Erler 2011, 16).
[70] Phld. *De adul*. 4.4–12. In keeping with Epicurus *RS* 7.
[71] Trapp 2007, 219.
[72] Phld. *De rhet.* fr. 13.1–16 Longo Auricchio.
[73] Longo Auricchio 2004, 38. Asmis 2004, 142 shows that members of the Roman élite did look to Epicureanism for guidance on how to participate in traditional careers. For a comprehensive discussion of members of the Roman élite who are thought to have followed Epicureanism see Ferguson 1990.
[74] Armstrong 2011, 118.

how to be a good ruler, while the former embeds advice on good political oratory within a theoretical discussion of art and rhetoric. Philodemus suggests that some people, even politicians, can display good ethics without being Epicurean sages. As I have already mentioned, Philodemus does regard withdrawal as the best option for those who fully embody the Epicurean worldview. However, for professional politicians he presents political engagement as deriving from a combination of nature and reasoned choice.[75] Some scholars have argued that reasoned choice is a Roman interpretation of Epicurus' original doctrines, and that they referred to a clause in which Epicurus sets aside the prohibition on political involvement in times of crisis.[76] It seems that Philodemus goes a step further and recommends political life for those to whom it is natural. The concession that political involvement is both natural and unavoidable for some is a nuanced application of Epicurean ethics. It is also a pragmatic recommendation for Roman readers who would have found that advice pleasing.[77]

I have shown that, despite Philodemus' orthodox Epicurean stance that withdrawal is the most effective way to gain happiness, he shows a deep awareness of the Roman aristocratic circles in which he moved when he says that some people cannot avoid political life.[78] It is in light of his social awareness that his more positive attitude towards the role of politicians in fixing Rome's troubles can be read.

Lucretius' argument is multivalent in the sense that he offers advice for Romans experiencing inner tumult in the here and now and also for readers in all times and situations. Philodemus' texts are equally

[75] Brown (2009, 181), Sedley (2009, 44) and Trapp (2007, 218–19) all discuss the Epicurean stance on reasoned choice.

[76] Belliotti 2009, 103; Sedley 2009, 44.

[77] Fowler 1989, 126–27.

[78] For further comment on this point, see Fish 2011, 99, who has shown that Philodemus effectively supports political engagement on the basis of inheritance. He suggests that Philodemus disapproves of those who seek to improve their station through politics. Fish's argument makes sense in light of Philodemus' view that political participation was frequently motivated by the desire for greater wealth and power. Those of less established social status would have needed to labour intensely, which Philodemus would have seen as motivated by the desire for greater wealth and power. Such an argument is also seen in *On Wealth*, a text in which Philodemus argues that it is good to maintain the wealth one already has and suggests that is preferable to have some money than none at all. Asmis 2004, 159 says "[w]hereas Philodemus offers a defence of wealth, Epicurus' economic advice appears, on the whole, a consolation for poverty."

multivalent, and he presents advice to appeal to people seeking to become Epicurean sages as well as those whose social and political status prohibits them from abstaining from public life. The passage I cited above from *On Death* exemplifies this nicely: the disenfranchised and the powerful alike can take comfort that the perpetrator of injustice will experience worse mental anguish. So, one of Philodemus' solutions to civil turmoil is purely internal: regardless of what is happening, one can find inner peace. As I have already argued above, Philodemus also thinks that a community of friends who adhere to Epicurean principles is inherently better than one structured around politics. Nevertheless, I also noted that Philodemus dedicated a number of works, which are particularly concerned with politics, to well-known Roman politicians. In these and other works such as *On Anger*, also mentioned above, he shows that the emotions of rulers affect not just their own tranquillity but also the tranquillity of those they rule. Given the cause-and-effect relationship between the psychological health of rulers and the societies they govern, it is no surprise that Philodemus offers a model for Roman rulers by showing how they can behave more like an Epicurean sage. In *On the Good King according to Homer*, he praises rulers who exhibit an emotionally controlled state similar to the Epicurean sage. For example, Nestor and Odysseus conduct themselves with rational self-control and avoid making unnecessarily warlike decisions.[79] These rulers first and foremost exhibit right thinking and reason. They are not depicted as being motivated by the desire for wealth or power, which results in greater social stability for all. Thus, although Philodemus regards Epicurean communities as the ideal, he writes for the Roman social reality in which he lived and worked, one in which politicians have the ability to cure Rome's problems.[80]

As noted above, good rulers are those who have a calm and rational state of mind, and in *On the Good King* Nestor and Odysseus are praised for their calm leadership which avoids causing unnecessary harm to their troops. In a ruler the traits of mildness, forbearance and gentleness—all characteristics of the sage's speech—also help avoid unnecessary violence.[81] In *On Rhetoric* Philodemus is explicit that politicians can become better people

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[79] Phld. *De bon. reg.* 29.23–26.
[80] In Book 5, Lucretius says that the early kings possessed the sage-like qualities of *cor* ("intelligence") and *ingenium* ("disposition"): they rule because *ingenio . . . praestabant et corde vigebant* ("they were outstanding in disposition and strong in intelligence," Lucr. 5.1107). However, unlike Philodemus, he does not credit politicians with much ability to effect positive change.
[81] Phld. *De bon. reg.* 24.6–18.

with the aid of philosophy, saying that when they improve their disposition
they can positively affect society:

κα|λὸν μὲν οὖν γένοιτ᾽ ἄν, | ₍εἰ₎ καὶ φιλοσοφίᾳ₍ι₎ χ]ορε₍ύ]|σειεν ὁ
πολειτικός, | ἵνα καὶ νεανικωτέ|ρως ἀγαθὸς ἦ₍ι₎, καὶ διὰ | τοῦτο λέγομεν,
₍ὃ]₍τₗι₎ φₗι]|λοσοφία{᾽ι} καὶ κοινῶς προσ|τεθεῖσα πολειτικῇ᾽ι᾽ δι₍αθεσέι καὶ
κατὰ μέρος | ὑποθήκας πρ⌈ος⌉εχεῖς | τῇ⟨ι⟩ πολειτικῇ ᾽ι᾽ δ₍ιο₍ι₎|κήσει
παραδο⌈ῦσα]⌉ δι₍αφορὰν οὐρανομ⌈ή⌉κη | ποήσει πρὸς τὸ κ⌈ρε⌉|ιτ|τον. (Phld.
De rhet. 3.15a.16–31 Hammerstaedt)[82]

It would also be a good thing, if the politician is also well-versed in
philosophy, so that he might more actively be a good man, for this reason,
we say that philosophy, both generally when it is imputed to a disposition
for politics and also particularly when it gives suitable suggestions for the
politicians, will make an astronomical difference for the better.

As this passage shows, politicians do not have the same disposition as
philosophers, which means that they require advice from the latter in order
to make a difference. However, as Geert Roskam has argued, by
distinguishing politicians from philosophers, Philodemus contends that
politicians can be ethical within their own sphere of influence even if they
do not meet the rigorous standards of the sage.[83] In line with his Roman
context, his statement that politicians can create stability for their cities
coheres with Roman thinking that politicians could and should use their
position to maintain social and political stability for those with less power.[84]
Torquatus, Cicero's Epicurean spokesman in *On Ends,* expresses a similar
idea, saying that there are communal benefits when politicians have
personal security.[85] Philodemus thus leaves open the possibility that
politicians can create social harmony with the help of Epicurean philosophy.

On Flattery provides further support for the fact that Philodemus
presents politicians as part of the possible solution to Rome's troubles. In
an extant fragment of this work, he argues that good reputation can bring
security if it is pursued in line with natural desires.[86] Although he does not
directly refer to politicians, the passage can easily be applied to a political
context. In which case, he suggests that the reputation gained through

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[82] I use Fish's (2011, 95) translation of οὐρανομήκης as "astronomical". Citations in
Ancient Greek for *De rhetorica* Book 3 are from Hammerstaedt 1992.
[83] Roskam 2007, 105.
[84] See, for example, Cic. *Rep.* 5.8.
[85] Cic. *Fin.* 1.35.
[86] Phld. *De adul.* 4.4–12.

participation in politics can achieve a type of security that is natural.[87] The appropriateness of Philodemus' statement for a Roman audience is hinted at by the fact that Torquatus makes a similar argument in *On Ends*. He says that the pursuit of reputation can be acceptable for an Epicurean who participates in public life because they can guarantee a life without fear.[88] In *On the Good King*, Philodemus claims that reputation can be a consequence of good rule, which suggests a further positive outcome for being a politician. [89] He also states that good politicians can maintain friendships, another important factor in contributing to their security. Philodemus is always clear that a good politician is an ethical one, which hints at the Epicurean concern with the individual. Nevertheless, he explicitly ties the ethical state of politicians to the overall health of society. In so doing, he presents his Roman readers with a possible avenue for fixing Rome's problems: cure yourself and you will help cure Rome.

Conclusion

The central contention of this chapter has been that Philodemus and Lucretius actively engaged in their contemporary contexts by offering solutions to Rome's political crisis. I have suggested that because of the temporary nature of atomic compacts they concurrently offer guidance to readers both in the here and now and the future. The main focus of Epicurean ethics is decidedly inner focused; however, Lucretius and Philodemus perceive that the inner world of political actors affects the security of those they govern. In Lucretius' case, I argued that, aside from a brief comment in Book 1 about Memmius having a moral imperative not to neglect the Roman people, he expresses little confidence that a change to the political system will bring peace and security. Instead, he theorises a world without Roman politics, one structured around Epicurean friendship, justice, physics and ethics. Philodemus, too, theorises Epicurean withdrawal as a possible cure for Rome's socio-political turmoil. In the highly competitive world of ancient philosophy, hostile sources focus on this aspect of Epicurean doctrine. Nevertheless, Philodemus' attitude to politics is far more nuanced than simply banning all participation in it. He also argues that another potential cure is to fix the ethics of Rome's politicians. Although he does not conceive of ethically realised politicians as having the same dispositions as fully fledged Epicurean sages, he does regard them as

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[87] Fish 2011, 85. Torquatus (Cic. *Fin.* 1.34–36) presents an argument that the pursuit of reputation is acceptable because they can guarantee a life without fear.
[88] Cic. *Fin.* 1.34–36.
[89] Phld. *De bon reg.* 42 Asmis.

able to do some good. In putting forward this claim, he offers advice that would have appealed to elite Romans for whom complete withdrawal from familial, political and economic concerns was not an option.

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