

## Haunting the Narrative: Julia, Creusa, and the Uncanny

Scholars of the literature of the early Roman Empire have long examined the intertextuality between Lucan's *Bellum Civile* and Vergil's *Aeneid*, even though the epics are tonal opposites. Many instances in the *Bellum Civile* refer to the *Aeneid*, allowing Lucan's audience to pick up on his many double meanings and allusions. Specifically, Frances Mills (2005) and Kevin Lam (2019) have examined Pompey as an Aeneas figure, as well as Pompey's deceased wife, Julia. Additionally, scholar Elaine Sanderson examines the *Bellum Civile* through the lens of the uncanny, as laid out by psychoanalytical theorists. For the purposes of this paper, the working definition for 'perverted' is an alteration or corruption from a familiar state, and 'uncanny' is a sense of disorientation that stems from a recognition of the perverted familiar.

This paper seeks to examine further the feeling of the uncanny in Lucan's perverted use of the *Aeneid* as elicited by Julia's appearance before Pompey in a dream in Book III lines 9-45 of the *Bellum Civile*. Mills compares Julia to both Creusa and Dido at this point which, by extension of the allusion, also casts Pompey in the role of Aeneas. Julia's appearance as a perverse Creusa figure would have likely been readily apparent to Lucan's contemporary audience, and would have worked to heighten the unsettling feel of the whole encounter. Lucan states in Book VII lines 210-214 that he wants his poem to affect the reader as strongly as the characters have been affected, which is why he fosters a sense of unease. By proving the link between Julia as a perverse allusion and the unsettling feeling they elicit, this paper hopes to prove that Lucan juxtaposes his work with the *Aeneid* to heighten the uncanniness of his works.

## Working Bibliography

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