

Casting the Die: Programmatic Themes in *Bellum Civile* 1.183-2191) Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 1.183-194

<p><u>iam</u> gelidas Caesar cursu <u>superauerat</u> Alpes ingentisque animo motus bellumque futurum ceperat. ut uentum est parui Rubiconis ad undas, ingens uisa duci patriae trepidantis imago clara per obscuram uoltu maestissima noctem turrigero canos effundens uertice crines caesarie lacera nudisque adstare lacertis et gemitu permixta loqui: 'quo tenditis ultra? quo fertis mea signa, uiri? si iure uenitis, si ciues, huc usque licet.' tum perculit horror membra ducis, riguere comae gressumque languor in extrema tenuit uestigia ripa.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">coercens</p>	<p>And now Caesar had hastened across the frozen Alps and had conceived in his heart the great rebellion and the coming war. When he reached the little river Rubicon, the general saw a vision of his distressed country. Her mighty image was clearly seen in the darkness of night; her face expressed deep sorrow, and from her head, crowned with towers, the white hair streamed abroad; she stood beside him with tresses torn and arms bare, and her speech was broken by sobs; "Whither do you march further? and whither do you bear my standards, you warriors? If you come as law-abiding citizens, here must you stop." Then trembling smote the leader's limbs, his hair stood on end, a faintness stopped his motion and fettered his feet on the edge of the river-bank.</p>
---	--

2) Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 1.195-203

<p>mox ait 'o magnae qui moenia prospicis urbis Tarpeia de rupe Tonans Phrygiique penates gentis Iuleae et rapti secreta Quirini et residens celsa Latiaris Iuppiter Alba Vestalesque foci summique o numinis instar Roma, faue coeptis. non te furialibus armis persequor: en, adsum uictor terraque marique Caesar, ubique tuus (liceat modo, nunc quoque) miles. ille erit ille nocens, qui me tibi fecerit hostem.'</p>	<p>But soon he spoke : "O God of thunder, who from the Tarpeian rock looks out over the walls of the great city; O ye Trojan gods of the house of Iulus, and mysteries of Quirinus snatched from earth; O Jupiter of Latium, who dwells on Alba's height, and ye fires of Vesta; and thou, O Rome, as sacred a name as any, smile on my enterprise; I do not attack thee in frantic warfare; behold me here, me Caesar, a conqueror by land and sea and everywhere thy champion, as I would be now also, were it possible. His, his shall be the guilt, who has made me thine enemy."</p>
---	---

3) Propertius 4.67-74

(trans. Goold)

<p><u>Roma, fave</u>, tibi surgit opus; date candida, cives, omina; et inceptis dextera cantet avis! sacra deosque canam et cognomina prisca locorum: has meus ad metas sudet oportet equus. Quo ruis imprudens? fuge discere fata, Properti! non sunt a dextro condita fila colo. accersis lacrimas: auersus cantat Apollo: poscis ab invita verba pigenda lyra.</p>	<p>Rome, smile on me; my work rises for you; citizens, give me a fair omen, and let a bird on the right augur success for my undertaking. I shall sing of rites and deities and ancient names of places: this is the goal to which my foaming steed must press. Whither do you hurry so thoughtlessly? Seek not to learn your fate, Propertius! From no auspicious distaff have its threads been spun. You are bringing sorrow on yourself: unfavorable is the response of</p>
---	--

	Apollo. You are asking a reluctant lyre for words it is loth to grant.
--	--

4) Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo* 108-112

(trans. Mair)

'Ασσυρίου ποταμοῖο μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλά λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει. Δηοῖ δ' οὐκ ἀπὸ παντὸς ὕδωρ φορέουσι μέλισσαι, ἀλλ' ἦτις καθαρὴ τε καὶ ἀχράαντος ἀνέρπει πίδακος ἐξ ἱερῆς ὀλίγη λιβὰς ἄκρον ἄωτον.	Great is the stream of the Assyrian river, but much filth of earth and much refuse it carries on its waters. And not of every water do the Melissae carry to Deo, but of the trickling stream that springs from a holy fountain, pure and undefiled, the very crown of waters.
---	---

5) Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 1.213-219

fonte cadit modico paruisque inpellitur undis <u>puniceus Rubicon</u> , cum feruida conduit aestas, perque imas serpit ualles et Gallica certus limes ab Ausoniis disterminat arua colonis. tum uires praebebat hiemps atque auxerat undas tertia iam grauido pluuiialis Cynthia cornu et madidis Euri resolutae flatibus Alpes.	The ruddy river Rubicon glides through the bottom of the valleys and serves as a fixed landmark to divide the land of Gaul from the farms of Italy. Issuing from a modest spring, it runs with scanty stream in the heat of burning summer; but now it was swollen by winter; and its waters were increased by the third rising of a rainy moon with moisture laden horn and by Alpine snows which damp blasts of wind had melted.
--	--

6) Lucan, *Bellum Civile* 1.205-212

sicut squalentibus aruis aestiferae Libyes uiso leo comminus hoste subsedit dubius, totam dum colligit iram; mox, ubi se saeuae stimulauit uerbere caudae erexitque iubam et uasto graue murmur hiatu infremuit, tum torta leuis si lancea Mauri haereat aut latum subeant uenabula pectus, per ferrum tanti securus uolneris exit.	So on the untilled fields of sultry Libya, when the lion sees his foe at hand, he crouches down at first uncertain till he gathers all his rage; but soon, when he has maddened himself with the cruel lash of his tail, and made his mane stand up, and sent forth a roar from his cavernous jaws, then, if the brandished lance of the nimble Moor stick in his flesh or a spear pierce his great chest, he passes along the length of the weapon, careless of so sore a wound.
--	--

Select Bibliography

- Ahl, F. 1993. "Form Empowered: Lucan's *Pharsalia*." In A. J. Boyle ed. *Roman Epic*. (London).
- Barchiesi, A. 2006. "Voices and Narrative 'Instances' in the *Metamorphoses*." In P. Knox, ed. *Oxford Readings in Ovid*, 274-319. (Oxford).
- Bexley, E. M. 2009. "Replacing Rome: Geographic and Political Centrality in Lucan's *Pharsalia*." *Classical Philology* 104.4:459-475.
- Getty, R. J. 1979. *M. Annaei Lucani: De Bello Civili, Liber I*. (New York).
- Hutchinson, G. 2006. *Propertius: Elegies, Book IV*. (Cambridge).
- Masters, J. 1992. *Poetry and Civil War in Lucan's Bellum Civile*. (Cambridge).
- Roche, P. 2009. *Lucan: De Bello Civili, Book 1*. (Oxford).