

*Nulla Fides: Echoes of Catullus and the Impermanency of Roman Social Values in Lucan's
Bellum Civile 8*

Over the years, the study of intertextuality has produced much valuable discussion of Lucan. However, most critical attention has centered on Lucan's relationship with Vergilian epic (e.g. Pichon 1912; Ahl 1976; Horsefall 1995; Casali, 2011) and has excluded other genres, in particular Roman lyric poetry. Yet Lucan engages with Roman lyric poetry on a profound level, especially the poetry of Catullus, creating a conversation between the personal voices of lyric poetry and the public voices of epic. In this paper, I explore several powerful echoes of Catullus in book 8 of the *Bellum Civile* to demonstrate how Lucan borrows the lyric poet's voice to meditate on the destructive qualities of civil war and its lasting damage to Roman society and values.

I begin by examining connections between the portrayal of Cornelia in book 8 of the *Bellum Civile* and that of Ariadne in Catullus poem 64. Both women are abandoned on an island by their lovers and are depicted similarly in their reactions to this tragic fate. For example, Ariadne looks out from the shore for signs of Theseus, *namque fluentisono prospectans litore Diae* when she awakens (64.52). Cornelia too runs to the furthest shores and highest peaks to look for Pompey, *ruptis in abruptae scopulos extremaque curris litora; prospiciens* (BC 8.45-47). Both Ariadne and Cornelia become distraught almost to the point of death and pour forth laments at their lover's betrayal. The Ariadne figure in Catullus 64 has been shown to have close connections with the personal voice of Catullus that is exhibited in his lyric poems centering on Lesbia and on his brother's death (e.g. Putnam 1961). Ariadne's character in 64 embodies interconnected themes of abandonment, betrayal, and social values that reverberate throughout the Lesbia and brother poems, as well as poem 64. I argue that by drawing connections to

Catullus 64 in *BC* 8 through the character of Cornelia, Lucan relates to Catullus' sentiments in his poetry of loss, mourning, not any personal abandonment, but the destruction of *fides* and Rome's declining values.

I continue with a discussion of Pompey's funeral at the end of *BC* book 8 which contains echoes of Catullus 101, the Lesbia poems, and poem 64. When Pompey's old friend, Cordus, gives him his funeral rights at the end of book 8 (729-767), the description echoes Catullus' for his brother in poem 101. One strong echo is the phrase *postremo munere mortis* in line 741, which calls to mind *ab extremeo munere busti* in line 3 of Catullus 101. Both Cordus and Catullus are paying their last respects to love ones who died and are buried far from home. In poem 64 lines 217-219, Aegeus' lament of Theseus' supposed death also is similar: *in extrema fine* calls to mind *postremo munere* in Catullus 101 and *extremo munere* in *BC* 8. Through these and other connections to the poetry of Catullus, Lucan emphasizes the large-scale impact of Pompey's death, and also civil war more broadly, by its relationship to the small-scale death of Catullus' brother, and he shows that, ultimately, the ethical ramifications are comparable.

Although intertextual studies of Lucan's *Bellum Civile* on the whole have tended to focus mainly on his use of Vergilian epic, recent strides have been made to expand the conversation and include Lucan's adoption of other authors and genres as well, especially Roman elegy (McCune 2014) and Horace (Groß 2013). This paper joins that effort by contributing to it a discussion of another significant intertextual source for Lucan's *BC* thus far neglected, Catullus' poetry.

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