

POMPEY'S VISION OF JULIA IN LUCAN'S BELLVM CIVILE

Frances Mills

Lucan's *Bellum Ciuile* deals with the fall of the Roman republic, the state for which Virgil had written his brilliant foundation myth. Although he alludes to other poets, notably Homer and Ovid, in this paper I will deal only with specific references to the *Aeneid*. Lucan's use of allusion has often been regarded by critics as proof of his ambition to '...outdo his predecessor...' ¹ and as proof both of his questionable taste and lack of originality. This hostility tends to ignore the importance of allusion as a creative tool for classical writers. As Masters notes:

We see the comparability of the two passages...initially we will restrict ourselves only to those likenesses that manifest themselves as verbal correspondences in the text; later we will see the allusion as an invitation to make broader comparisons (as well as, obviously, contrasts)...it seems to me that Lucanian criticism has failed to find a use for the information that such and such an event is (un)like another event in a previous poem. ²

In the *Bellum Ciuile*, Lucan challenges convention while working within conventional compositional boundaries.

In Book 2, the city of Rome is in a state of extreme panic. Caesar and his legions of battle-hardened veterans have stormed across the Rubicon into Italy proper, and Pompey, the defender of the city, withdraws with his army of raw recruits to Brundisium. Despite Caesar's relentless pursuit, he manages to evade all attempts to blockade his fleet within the harbour, and sets sail across the Adriatic Sea, taking his army to Dyrrachium, on the coast of Epirus. At the beginning of Book 3, Pompey's fleet is moving eastwards, away from Italy:

propulit ut classem uelis cedentibus Auster
incumbens mediumque rates mouere profundum,
omnis in Ionios spectabat nauita fluctus:
solus ab Hesperia non flexit lumina terra
Magnus, dum patrios portus, dum litora numquam
ad uisus reditura suos tectumque cacumen
nubibus et dubios cernit uanescere montes.

(BC 3.1-7)

As driving Auster urged the fleet on with yielding sails and the ships stirred the middle of the depths, every sailor was watching the Ionian waves: Magnus alone did not turn his eyes from the Hesperian land while he watched the ports of his homeland, the shores never to return to his sight and the peak, hidden by clouds, and the shadowy mountains melt away.

Here, Lucan has not only echoed a passage in the *Aeneid*, he has placed his account of Pompey's farewell to Italy and Rome so that it corresponds spatially to Virgil's account of

1 Masters (1992), 59.

2 Masters (1992), 59f.

Aeneas' departure from Troy, also at the beginning of a Book 3. Aeneas tells of how he and his followers set sail, aware that they are leaving their home forever, that their lives have been changed irrevocably, and that an uncertain future awaits:

uix prima inceperat aestas,
et pater Anchises dare fatis uela iubebat:
litora cum patriae lacrimans portusque relinquo
et campos, ubi Troia fuit.

(*Aen.* 3.8-11)

Summer had scarcely begun, and Father Anchises was bidding us to spread our sails to the winds of fate: when, weeping, I left the shores and the harbours of my homeland and the plains where Troy had been.

At this stage of his story, Aeneas restricts himself to the role of devoted son. Having rescued his crippled father, Anchises, from the sack of Troy, he defers to his experience and wisdom, and exemplifies the definitive Roman virtue of *pietas*.

By alluding to the *Aeneid* and reflecting on the finality of Pompey's departure from Italy, Lucan focuses on what seem to be essential differences between Aeneas and Pompey. Aeneas is leading a group of survivors away from the wreckage that was Troy, and will ultimately make the foundation of Rome possible. Pompey is deserting Rome, and his desertion leads directly to Caesar's capture of the city (*BC* 1.487-522). He is quite unaware that he will never see his homeland again. While Virgil's passage provides an obvious model for Lucan, his Pompey is reflective, and although the reader is aware of the finality of his departure, there is no echo of the despair that resonates through Aeneas' account of leaving Troy. Indeed, there are echoes of another passage in Book 5 of the *Aeneid* which also deals with departure, and desertion:

interea medium Aeneas iam classe tenebat
certus iter fluctusque atros Aquilone secabat,
moenia respiciens, quae iam infelicis Elissae
conlucent flammis.

(*Aen.* 5.1-4)

Meanwhile, resolute Aeneas was now holding mid-course with his fleet, and, with the North wind, was cutting through the black waves, looking back at the walls, which shone with the flames of unhappy Elissa's pyre.

Perhaps Aeneas and Pompey, in their inclination to flee in the face of difficult circumstances, are not so different after all. For Pompey, the prospect of facing Caesar was as uncomfortable as the anticipation of more of Dido's frantic accusations had been for Aeneas (*Aen.* 4.305-30, 365-87). They both cut and run.

POMPEY'S VISION OF JULIA IN LUCAN'S BELLVM CIVILE

Caesar had ostensibly conquered all of Italy and Rome itself.³ The city, and all that it stood for, was doomed to fall to him because of Pompey's flight and that of the senators who supported him. Aeneas and his followers sail into a future that will involve the founding of the state that will become Rome. Pompey and his supporters, secure in their self-interest, are sailing into a future which will encompass his death, and the death of the state founded by Aeneas. Later, in Book 5, we will see these same senators trying to justify their desertion of the city, as Lentulus addresses their meeting in Epirus:

... non qua tellure coacti
quamque procul tectis captae sedeamus ab urbis,
cernite, sed uestrae faciem cognoscite turbae,
cunctaque iussuri primum hoc decernite, patres,
quod regnis populisque liquet, nos esse senatum...
... Tarpeia sede perusta
Gallorum facibus Veiosque habitante Camillo
illic Roma fuit. non umquam perdidit ordo
mutato sua iura solo.

(*BC* 5.18-22, 27-30)

...look not at the land where we are come together or see how far from the dwellings of captive Rome we sit, but understand the appearance of your assembly, and, having power to command all things, Fathers, first decide this, which is clear to all kingdoms and peoples, *that we are the Senate*...when Gallic torches burnt the Tarpeian sanctuary, and Camillus lived at Veii, Rome was *there*. Our order has never lost its authority by shifting its foundation.

For the blustering Lentulus, with his desperate appeal to history and tradition⁴, the very concept of Rome has already become abstract. It has grown and developed so that:

Everywhere, then, is Rome, Brundisium, or Massilia, Ilerda or the *castra Cornelia*, Dyrrachium or Alexandria...for the centre, the narrative focus, the *scene* in the epic of *Bellum Civile*, is always a political construct, the construction of a political contestation...⁵

But Rome itself *is* the centre. Aeneas, like Odysseus before him, approaches his centre, his fate, his true home. Pompey flees to the periphery:

...a Virgilian Aeneas in reverse, *driven* like him, but Eastwards and never to be refashioned into the subject, the agent whose *decisions* weld the epic action

3 Caesar did not allow his legions to sack Rome. Instead, Lucan tells of his measures to threaten the corn supplies (*BC* 3.59-67), and his entry into the city: *urbemlattonitam terrore subit* ('He approached a city stupefied by terror', *BC* 3.97f.)

4 The sack of Rome by the Gauls in 391 BCE was a far different situation, and the Senate behaved very differently.

5 Henderson (1987), 152.

around his focality: to end as a decapitated Priam at the end of the Roman world.⁶

Caesar, too, will move inexorably eastwards, and then he will retrace Aeneas' journey westwards from Troy to North Africa, where he will see Pompey face to face for the first and only time in the epic.⁷

Years before the events recounted in the poem, Caesar and Pompey, with Crassus, had formed the political alliance notorious in history as the First Triumvirate. This unlikely group, formed with the intention of manipulating the Senate, was one set of nails being hammered into the coffin of the Roman Republic. The alliance was formalised when Pompey married Caesar's only surviving child, his very young daughter Julia. The First Triumvirate collapsed after Julia's death in childbirth in 54 BCE and Crassus' defeat and death at the hands of the Parthians at Carrhae in 53. In the increasing turmoil that enveloped Rome in the ensuing years, enmity grew between father- and son-in-law, Caesar and Pompey.

Now let us return to Pompey as he takes his rest after watching Italy fade into the distance:

inde soporifero cesserunt languida somno
membra ducis; diri tum plena horroris imago
uisa caput maestum per hiantes Julia terras
tollere et accenso furialis stare sepulchro.

(*BC* 3.8-11)

Then the limbs of the leader yielded to drowsy sleep; then an image full of fearful horror was seen, Julia, lifting her sorrowful head through the gaping earth, to stand, like a Fury, on her flaming tomb.

Lucan's portrayal of Julia's apparition as one of *diri...horroris* immediately connects her appearance with that of the Fury, Allecto, who is summoned by Juno *dirarum ab sede dearum* ('from the home of the fearful goddesses', *Aen.* 7.324) in order to precipitate conflict between Aeneas' Trojans and the Rutulians led by Turnus. His use of *furialis* also looks forward to his own creation in Book 6, the Thessalian witch, Erichtho, who deliberately assumes the trappings of a Fury, modelled on the appearance of Virgil's Allecto.⁸

Pompey's dream⁹ echoes two significant apparitions in the *Aeneid*. Lucan built the 'framework' for Julia's apparition on Anchises' appearance to Aeneas in a dream in Book 5:

et Nox atra polum bigis subuecta tenebat:
uisa dehinc caelo facies delapsa parentis

⁶ Henderson (1987), 149.

⁷ When he is handed Pompey's head by Ptolemy's servant as he arrives in Alexandria (*BC* 9.1012)

⁸ *discolor et uario furialis cultus amictulinduitur, uoltusque aperitur crine remoto, let coma uipereis substringitur horrida sertis* ('The multi-coloured trappings of a fury with a motley cloak is put on, and, with her hair pulled back, her face is exposed, and the unkempt hair of her head is drawn tight with garlands of vipers', *BC* 6.654-56). Allecto flings vipers snatched from her hair in order to inflame the heart of Amata (*Aen.* 7.346) and the vipers themselves threaten Turnus (7.450). Erichtho's costume certainly seems to have been inspired by the appearance of Virgil's horrific Fury.

⁹ This is one of two dreams in the *Bellum Ciuile*. The other is also dreamt by Pompey, on the eve of Pharsalus, when he recalls all that he is about to lose (*BC* 7.7-24).

POMPEY'S VISION OF JULIA IN LUCAN'S BELLVM CIVILE

Anchisae subito talis effundere uoces:

(*Aen.* 5.721-23)

And dark Night, lifted upwards in her chariot, was holding the sky: an apparition of his father, Anchises seemed to slip down from heaven suddenly, and to utter these words...

There is no doubt that Pompey and Aeneas are experiencing dreams. Anchises' shade *seems (uisa)* to descend from heaven. Even though Pompey is on board a ship, Julia's ghost *seems (uisa)* to rise from hell through gaping earth to confront her errant husband. Yet, while Anchises is a simple *facies*, an uncomplicated likeness, which will give Aeneas comprehensive instruction concerning his course towards Italy, Julia is *plena horroris imago*, an image full of fearful horror, whose message to her husband is full of foreboding. Why should Julia appear in the guise of a Fury? Throughout the *Bellum Ciuile*, Lucan exclaims at the horrors of civil war, at the pitting of brother against brother, father against son, and this is exemplified in the enmity between the father-in-law, Caesar, and son-in-law, Pompey. Morford points out that the duty of a Fury is to avenge *impietas*:

...and it is suitable that his former wife, Caesar's daughter, should remind Pompey of his share in the guilt of bringing about (by his new marriage) the supreme *impietas* of the Civil War.¹⁰

In Book 2 of the *Aeneid*, Aeneas describes the destruction of Troy. During the flight of his family from the city, Aeneas' wife, Creusa, is lost, and he rushes back into the burning ruins, desperately trying to find her:

quaerenti et tectis urbis sine fine furenti
infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae
visa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago.

(*Aen.* 2.771-73)

Even as I searched and raged endlessly among the dwellings of the city, a likeness, a phantom of Creusa herself appeared before my eyes, a figure larger than the one I had known.

Although Julia appears to Pompey in a dream, and Creusa appears to the frantic Aeneas as a larger-than-life phantom, both Virgil and Lucan use *imago* to describe these visions. The contrast between the two apparitions could not be greater, but the essential parallels here are the ghostly appearance of one who is, or has been, loved, as one's home is lost forever, and the prophetic messages that they convey. Creusa has no role in Aeneas' future. She must disappear from the epic, and she is prevented from leaving Troy by those gods who will be responsible ultimately for the founding of Rome. She is the means by which he learns of his long exile, his ultimate goal in Italy, and his future marriage to Lavinia (*Aen.* 2.780-84). Her disappearance is also an escape from 'a fate worse than death'. She is not raped, nor is she en-

10 Morford (1996), 33.

slaved like Andromache.¹¹ She dies in Troy, and so remains the ideal of a chaste wife, a figure of perfection, a wife and mother of whom Aeneas and Iulus need never be ashamed.

Like Creusa, Julia has no role in Pompey's future. Her message is very different, although it, too, is prophetic. She can claim to have been a chaste wife, yet she rejects Creusa's role of lost love. Instead, she is Julia *furens*:

‘sedibus Elysiis campoque expulsa piorum
ad Stygias’ inquit ‘tenebras manesque nocentes
post bellum ciuile trahor. uidi ipsa tenentes
Eumenidas, quaterent quas uestris lampadas armis;
praeparat innumeras puppes Acherontis adusti
portitor; in multas laxantur Tartara poenas;
uix operi cunctae dextra properante sorores
sufficiunt, lassant rumpentes stamina Parcas.
coniuge me laetos duxisti, Magne, triumphos:
fortuna est mutata toris, semperque potentes
detrahere in cladem fato damnata maritos
innupsit tepido paelex Cornelia busto.
haereat illa tuis per bella, per aequora, signis,
dum non securos liceat mihi rumpere somnos
et nullum uestro uacuum sit tempus amori,
sed teneat Caesar dies et Iulia noctes.
me non Lethaeae, coniunx, obliuia ripae
inmemorem fecere tui, regesque silentum
permisere sequi. ueniam te bella gerente
in medias acies. numquam tibi, Magne, per umbras
perque meos manes genero non esse licebit;
abscidis frustra ferro tua pignora: bellum
te faciet ciuile meum.’

(*BC* 3.12-34)

‘I have been banished from the Elysian halls and the fields of the just,’ she said, ‘dragged towards Stygian darkness and the shades of the guilty since this civil war began. I myself saw the Furies holding their torches, which they are brandishing at your weapons; the ferryman of scorched Acheron is preparing countless boats; Tartarus is being expanded to deal with so many punishments; the sisters together, with their busy hands, scarcely have sufficient strength for the task, and the threads weary the Parcae from breaking them. When I was your wife, Magnus, you led joyful triumphs: fortune has been changed with your marriage, and your mistress, Cornelia, damned by fate always to drag her powerful husbands down to disaster, has become your wife while my funeral pyre is still warm. Let her cling to your standards, through the war, across the seas, while I am allowed to destroy your untroubled slumbers, and let there be no time free for your love, but let Caesar occupy your days, and Julia your nights. Husband, the

11 She leaves the field open, for Dido, who, like her, is not part of the plan, and for Lavinia, who is.

forgetfulness of Lethe's bank did not make me unmindful of you, and the kings of the dead have allowed me to follow you. I will come into the midst of the battle-lines when you are waging your wars. By the shades, and by my ghost, Magnus, you will never be allowed to stop being his son-in-law; you cut those bonds with your sword in vain: civil war will make you mine.'

Lucan's narrator has already linked Julia's death to the rift between Caesar and Pompey in Book 1: *morte tua discussa fides, bellumque mouere/permisum ducibus* ('their allegiance was shattered by your death, and the leaders were given full scope to provoke war', *BC* 1.119f.). As a loving and pious wife of distinguished rank, she could dwell in the Elysian Fields and anticipate a return to the upper world after drinking the waters of the river Lethe.¹² Now, the guilt attached to her death by the narrator propels her back to the upper world, circumventing Lethe and ensuring that she retains her memories of her role as Pompey's wife. Her reaction to his remarriage, and her dismay at the outbreak of civil war, propel her away from the home of the blessed as she becomes *furialis* and enters the Furies' environment. Orpheus was able to persuade the kings of the dead of the strength of his love for Eurydice, and they allowed him to lead her back towards the light of day. For Julia, the ties of her marriage bear a similar power. As Pompey leaves his homeland, she is able to follow him, but unlike Eurydice, she does not recede as he turns his face to her. She is determined to remain, and Pompey will not be able to dismiss her.

Creusa's reference to a 'royal bride' for Aeneas dealt with the necessity for him to establish an unbreakable alliance with the Latin tribes that he would encounter in Italy. Pompey's new wife, Cornelia, had been married to P. Crassus, the son of the third triumvir, who perished with his father at Carrhae.¹³ This marriage was, for Pompey, a complete and irrevocable rejection of the political alliance that he had shared with Caesar and a declaration of his implacable opposition to his erstwhile father-in-law. He was announcing his availability for the position of supreme leader to the Senate. Julia makes it very clear that she sees this transference of allegiance as inappropriate and *impius*. Her concern does not reflect mere sexual jealousy. The issues are far more elemental, the ties between them more sacrosanct.¹⁴ She sees the new marriage as symbol of the complete breakdown of Pompey's relationship with Caesar, and the motivation for the conflict between them, the cause of the *impietas* of civil war which was engulfing not only Rome, but the whole universe, to such an extent that the souls of the dead were in turmoil. She lays the blame for the rift between her husband and father, and the turmoil engulfing the universe, wholly at Pompey's feet.

The tone of her attack echoes Dido's confrontation with Aeneas as he prepares to leave Carthage at the end of their love-affair, and strengthens an association of Pompey's journey to the east with Aeneas' flight from Carthage:

12 Lucan's version of the underworld allows Julia to have inhabited the Elysian Fields, although there are no shades of women to be seen there in Virgil's account in *Aeneid* 6.

13 And this is the basis of Julia's remark: *semperque potentes/detrahere in cladem fato damnata maritos/... paelex Cornelia...* ('and your mistress, Cornelia, damned by fate always to drag her powerful husbands down to disaster ...', *BC* 3.21-23)

14 Her rage at Pompey's remarriage has to do with a lack of *fides*. It is closer to that of Clytemnestra for Agamemnon's role in the sacrifice of Iphigenia, than to his arrival back at Argos with Cassandra.

sequar atris ignibus absens
 et, cum frigida mors anima seduxerit artus,
 omnibus umbra locis adero. dabis, improbe, poenas.

(*Aen.* 4.384-86)

I will follow you with black fires from afar and, when cold death separates my soul from my limbs, as a shade I will haunt you in all places. You will pay the penalties, shameless man.

Julia's description of Tartarus is built up of fleeting, concise echoes of *Aeneid* Book 6, when Aeneas, accompanied by the Sibyl, and in the footsteps of Odysseus, descends to the underworld to consult with Anchises. Julia's *Acherontis...portitor* calls to mind Virgil's description of Charon as Aeneas first sees him (*Aen.* 6.295-304). Her sight of the Furies, *uidi ipsa tenentes/Eumenidas, quaterent quas uestris lampadas armis* calls to mind the iron cells that they inhabit (*Aen.* 6.280) and the image of Tisiphone and the others scourging the guilty souls and administering horrific punishments in Tartarus (*Aen.* 570-72, 605-07). She complains that she has been expelled from *sedibus Elysiis campoque...piorum* even after having drunk the waters of the River Lethe, so that, according to Anchises' explanation to Aeneas, Julia had been one of those, *quibus altera fato/corpora debentur* ('to whom other bodies are owed by Fate', *Aen.* 6.713f.). Even as she was preparing for reincarnation, like the souls whom Anchises points out to Aeneas in his great foreshadowing of Roman history (*Aen.* 6.756-885)¹⁵, the turmoil of civil war has penetrated as far as the very shores where Romans await their rebirth. She has been denied her new life, and dragged back to Tartarus, which is being readied to receive the souls of so many of those about whom Aeneas questioned his father. Being dragged away from the river bank has negated the effects of drinking its waters, and Julia is not *inmemor*. She remembers life with Pompey very well, and refuses to allow that death has separated them. She declares that severing of the ties that bind him to the Julian family is impossible (*BC* 3.31-33).

For Julia, Cornelia is *paelix*, a mistress installed as a rival to a wife, a whore. She is to Pompey what Dido is to Aeneas, a lover who can never truly be a wife. Lucan's narrator sees the relationship very differently. When Pompey takes Cornelia to safety on Lesbos, much is made of the affection that he holds for her:

'non nunc uita mihi dulcior,' inquit,
 'cum taedet uitae, laeto sed tempore, coniunx.'

(*BC* 5.739f.)

'Wife, sweeter to me than life,' he said, 'not now, when I am tired of life, but in the happy time.'

Their affection and loyalty for each other is obvious in the moving scene at the end of Book 5 when Cornelia is so deeply affected by her husband's absence (*BC* 5.802-15), and later, when they are reunited after the disaster of Pharsalus. Cornelia bemoans his defeat, and blames herself in words which contain an ominous echo of Julia's diatribe:

15 Prominent among those whom Anchises points out is Caesar, alone (*Aen.* 6.789f.) and in Pompey's company (*Aen.* 6.826-35).

POMPEY'S VISION OF JULIA IN LUCAN'S BELLVM CIVILE

malle[m] felicibus armis
dependisse caput: nunc clades denique lustra,
Magne, tuas. ubicumque iaces ciuilibus armis
nostros ultra toros, ades huc atque exige poenas,
Iulia crudelis, placataque paelice caesa
Magno parce tuo.

(BC 8.100-05)

I would choose rather to have paid with my head for your successful wars: now, at last, expiate your defeat, Magnus. Cruel Julia, wherever you are lying, now that you have avenged our marriage bed with civil war, come hither and exact your punishment, and, appeased by the fall of your rival, spare your Magnus.

Julia's tragedy is that, although she was innocent, and dutifully supported both her husband and father, her death has made her a party to the outbreak of war between them, and because of this, she has been expelled from the Elysian Fields. No wonder she curses Pompey and his new wife.

Pompey's flight marks a watershed. As he has deserted Rome, so he will be deserted by Fortuna, the pre-eminent deity of Lucan's epic. His vision of Julia marks Fortuna's departure from his cause, and the beginning of his downfall.¹⁶ Ahl argues that, by his marriage to Julia, Pompey was able to call upon the patronage of Venus, the divine ancestor of the Julian clan. He forfeits this by marrying Cornelia:

But Lucan studiously avoids saying that the goddess Venus changed sides as a result. On the contrary, what occurs is a change of *Fortuna*...¹⁷

This view is not sustainable when it becomes obvious that Venus actively opposes Pompey by ensuring that his passionate love for his young wife becomes his overriding weakness:

heu quantum mentes dominatur in aequas
iusta Venus! dubium trepidumque ad proelia, Magne,
te quoque fecit amor; quod nolles stare sub ictu
Fortunae, quo mundus erat Romanaque fata,
coniunx sola fuit.

(BC 5.727-31)

Oh, how greatly lawful Venus rules over tranquil minds! Love makes even you uncertain and anxious about battles to come, Magnus; the only thing that you were unwilling to trust beneath the blows of Fortune by which the whole world, and Roman destiny, were threatened, was your wife.

There is no doubt that their marriage was legitimate, yet Julia hints at a tragedy of coincidence when she says of Cornelia that she is *semperque potentes/detrahere in cladem fato damnata maritos* ('damned by fate always to drag her powerful husbands down to disaster')

16 Morford (1996), 79.

17 Ahl (1976), 292.

BC 3.21f.). Cornelia was fated, not only to lose her first husband in a pointless war, but to watch in despair as Pompey is murdered, to blame herself for his death (*BC* 8.637-61), and to be denied the right to ensure that he is accorded proper funeral rites. All she can do, in the end, is to burn his armour, his weapons and his triumphal toga (*BC* 9.174-79), in a ceremony which recalls both the sad, pointless rites which Andromache performs at the empty tomb she has built for Hector at Buthrotum (*Aen.* 3.302-05), and, significantly, the pyre on which Dido places Aeneas' clothing and sword as she prepares for her death (*Aen.* 4.507f.).

Julia's diatribe ends with her reminding Pompey that he is bound to Caesar by the indissoluble ties (*BC* 3.31-33), ties which exacerbate the *nefas* of the conflict between them. Pompey has tried to break his links with Caesar (and Julia), but Lucan's narrator continues to stress their enduring strength throughout the *Bellum Ciuile*, constantly referring to Caesar as *socer* (father-in-law), and to Pompey, even though he is the older of the two men, as *gener* (son-in-law). Her final, prophetic words, *bellum/te faciet ciuile meum* ('civil war will make you mine', *BC* 3.33f.), call to mind the very beginning of the epic. War between these two men becomes truly *plus quam ciuile* (*BC* 1.1)

In his dream, Pompey, although he is described as *trepidus* (alarmed, anxious or trembling) tries to embrace her shade as it flees. Here, he emulates Aeneas, who tries to embrace both Creusa as she begins to fade, and his father Anchises as he meets him again in the Elysian Fields:

ter conatus ibi collo dare bracchia circum;
ter frustra comprehensa manus effugit imago,
par leuibus uentis uolucrique simillima somno.

(*Aen.* 3.792-94; 6.700-02)

Three times there I tried to throw my arms around her/his neck; three times my hands grasped in vain, her/his image escaped like light breezes, most like a winged dream.

These are singularly beautiful moments in the *Aeneid*, but there is a weight of tradition behind this image of ghosts fleeing the embrace of the living. Achilles, for example, is distraught as his dream of Patroclus fades away, after accusing him of cruelty, begging for his proper funeral rites, begging to be allowed to be dead (*Iliad* 23.79-101). Odysseus tries three times to embrace the shade of his mother when he meets her in the underworld (*Odyssey* 11.205-08). Pompey, in his dream, despite his dismay, despite her fury-like appearance, still attempts to embrace Julia. In his dream, he is shocked by her appearance, and by her accusations, yet he cannot forget the closeness of their ties. His attempt to hold her demonstrates the truth of her statement: *numquam tibi, Magne, per umbras/perque meos manes genero non esse licebit* ('By the shades, and by my ghost, Magnus, you will never be allowed to stop being his son-in-law', *BC* 3.31f.)

Aeneas is left, grief-stricken, but with a positive will to carry on, to leave Troy, and to follow his destiny. Lucan used the image of a phantom wife slipping through the arms of her husband to focus on Pompey's very different reaction as he faces his destiny:

POMPEY'S VISION OF JULIA IN LUCAN'S BELLVM CIVILE

ille, dei quamuis cladem manesque minentur,
maior in arma ruit certa cum mente malorum.

(BC 3.36f.)

He, although the gods and the ghosts of the dead threaten him, rushes even more precipitately towards war, with a mind certain of disaster.

As Pompey watched the shores of Italy fade into the distance, he indulged in a little homesickness, a sense of melancholy, but was confident that he would triumph in the end. After this horrific dream, he faces his future, certain that he will not return. He tries to laugh it off:

‘quid’ ait ‘uani terremur imagine uisus?
aut nihil est sensus animis a morte relictum
aut mors ipsa nihil.’

(BC 3.38-40)

‘Why are we terrified at the sight of an empty likeness? Either there is nothing left to be sensed by our minds from death, or death itself is nothing.’

He has passed a watershed. Bereft of *Fortuna*, and now encumbered by a fatalistic certainty that he is hastening to his doom, Pompey meditates on death, trying to convince himself that Julia is wrong, that she could not possibly *feel* what his dream revealed. The dead don't think like that. It was only a dream. She wasn't there. He dismisses the horror of the apparition from his consciousness as the fleet sails on, and they make safe landfall. Yet Julia will haunt Pompey and Cornelia for the rest of his life and beyond. By defining the *nefas* of civil war in such personal terms, she has exacerbated the true horror of the war between her father and her husband. Pompey is reduced to an indecisive figure who is unable to press on to victory when it is offered to him at Dyrrachium (BC 6.299-305), who cannot withstand the arguments of the senators who persuade him to fight at Pharsalus against his better judgment (BC 7.45-125) and, when faced with defeat, turns in flight (BC 7.666-79).¹⁸

Pompey's dream of Julia is of great importance in the *Bellum Ciuile*. It marks the beginning of his downfall. Virgil's visions of Creusa and Anchises initiate great advances for Aeneas and his Trojan followers in the *Aeneid*. Creusa inspires him to seek Italy, and to bear the vicissitudes of Fortune in order to fulfil his destiny. Anchises gives him specific instructions concerning his journey. Lucan uses this framework with great skill to create a figure of Pompey with a dramatic credibility that corresponds to the historical record, yet which also reflects Lucan's own understanding of the essential weakness of the man on whose shoulders the Roman Senate had loaded so much responsibility, and whose failure seemed so great a disaster.

18 And here also, Lucan tells us that love of Cornelia contributes to Pompey's determination to flee the battlefield (BC 7.675-7).

Bibliography

- Ahl, F. (1976), *Lucan: An Introduction*. Ithaca.
Henderson, J. (1987), 'Lucan/The Word at War'. *Ramus* 16, 122-64.
Masters, J. (1992), *Poetry and Civil War in Lucan's 'Bellum Ciuile'*. Cambridge.
Morford, M.P.O. (1996), *The Poet Lucan: Studies in Rhetorical Epic²*. London.