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Caesarian Conflict: Portrayals of Julius Caesar in narratives of civil war

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**Abstract**

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This dissertation investigates the poignancy of civil war for Rome in the late Republican through early Imperial period, as focalized through depictions of Julius Caesar and, to a more limited degree, the Caesar-like Catiline. My comparative examination of Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, Velleius Paterculus' *Historiae*, and Lucan's *Pharsalia* centers on how each author treats qualities and catchwords found in Caesar's self-portrait in the *Bellum Civile*. By reading each portrayal of Caesar against the general's own account of civil war, I contend that one finds shifts in issues and traits according to their relevance to an author's own times, aims, and view of the relationship between Republic and Principate. Moreover, I suggest that whether an author portrays Julius Caesar in a positive or negative light is likely a consequence of his view of the current "Caesar" (i.e., Octavian, Tiberius, or Nero).

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## **DEDICATION**

For Joshua “Jicks” Hicks, taken away too soon.

## **Introduction: Caesar on Caesar and Civil War**

The idea for this study grew out of two related realizations: first, that, from the late Republic through at least the early Imperial period, civil war preoccupied the Roman mind and played a significant role in how Romans viewed themselves as a people and how they viewed their history; second, that Julius Caesar (and his civil war) was a poignant figure for authors of the late Republic and early Principate. Despite claims by scholars that Caesar faded into the background in Augustus' reign, he did not completely disappear from Rome's consciousness during the early Imperial period, particularly the Julio-Claudian era.<sup>1</sup> Investigations of the significance of civil war for Rome and studies of several aspects of Julius Caesar—as a writer, the founder of the imperial line, and a figure whose impact has resounded throughout western culture, for example—have experienced a renaissance in scholarship.<sup>2</sup> Though both topics have enjoyed increased attention recently, studies focusing on how Caesar is portrayed in the context of civil war—an event he is closely associated with—are lacking. Neglect of this topic is surprising, particularly because Caesar's own writing on the civil war he fought has been shown to be an exercise in self-fashioning; Caesar's *Bellum Civile* does not merely report the events of the civil war, it also presents a carefully constructed picture of Caesar as embodying and fighting for Rome and its values.<sup>3</sup>

### **0.1 Julius Caesar, the man himself?**

Because Caesar's self-fashioning in the *Bellum Civile* raises several key issues and characteristics which will reappear in this study as future authors respond to and remold Caesar

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<sup>1</sup> For the debate on Caesar's role (or lack thereof) in the reign of Augustus, see White (1988), responding primarily to Syme (1939, 317-18); (1958, 432-34); (1978, 190-91); (1986, 443).

<sup>2</sup> Henderson (1998) and Breed, Damon, & Rossi (2010) have published collections addressing Rome and civil war, while Welch and Powell (1998), Cairns and Fantham (2003), Wyke (2006), Griffin (2009), and Grillo (2012) are representative of the recent attention paid to Julius Caesar in his various guises.

<sup>3</sup> Grillo (2008 and 2012) illuminates key facets of Caesar's self-representation as well as Caesar's method of communicating these characteristics to his reader.

in accordance with their own aims, it is not unsuitable—to take a phrase from Caesar—to begin with a discussion of Caesar’s self-depiction in his account of the civil war. For now it will suffice to simply introduce and summarize the issues at hand; I feature more exhaustive discussions of Caesar’s self-portrayal in the principal chapters.

Luca Grillo (2008 and 2012) in particular has illustrated how Caesar creates a sense of objectivity in his self-presentation by not asserting any qualities but by “letting...facts speak for themselves (2008, 2)” as he reports the events of the civil war. Grillo analyzes key terms and themes in Caesar’s *Bellum Civile*, such as *celeritas*, clemency, virtues such as *constantia*, *innocentia*, and *pudor*, loyalty, and Caesar’s barbarization of the Pompeians, which complements his Romanization of his own troops to create two communities, one which aims to protect the Republic (Caesar’s army) and another which aims to ruin it (Pompey’s army).

Speed (*celeritas*) is an integral characteristic assigned to Caesar and his army. Caesar himself illustrates his and his men’s speed as an outcome of rational calculation, while any speed shown by the Pompeians reflects a lack of rationality and planning.<sup>4</sup> In some cases, such as at Ilerda and Gomphi, Caesar’s superior speed is related to his superior planning, while the Pompeians’ inferior swiftness likewise indicates inferior planning. Other cases, such as Vibullius’ speed when Caesar dispatches him to Pompey, show that speed can indicate high energy but a lack of rationality, bringing about undesirable effects; in the case of this Pompeian, energy alone is inadequate for carrying out his assignment of approaching Pompey to negotiate peace terms. Furthermore, Vibullius, for all of his celerity, is repeatedly portrayed by Caesar as subject to someone or something; Grillo notes the passivity assigned to Vibullius—and, by extension, his swiftness—as he is repeatedly dispatched (*missus*, *dimissus*) by Pompey or

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<sup>4</sup> Grillo (2008, 25-26, 39-40).

Caesar.<sup>5</sup> In the *Bellum Civile* and other sources speed prompted by an outside force—even if that force is another person—does not reflect positively on he who possesses it. In short, Caesar shows that his *celeritas* is superior to the Pompeians'. Even if other Pompeians, such as Vibullius, are swift, Caesar's speed differs because it reflects his rationality and planning and therefore produces desirable results. Pompeian speed (or lack thereof), however, reflects acting without thinking (e.g., Vibullius) or not thinking quickly enough (e.g., the episodes at Ilerda and Gomphi).

Like *celeritas*, Caesar's clemency (*clementia*) is another key component of his self-fashioning. After analyzing how Caesar exercises clemency in the *Bellum Gallicum*, Grillo determines that the general presents his mildness as stemming from considerations of "justice and convenience" rather than reflecting pity, which accords with Roman standards for granting leniency.<sup>6</sup> In the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar grants clemency to his enemy regardless of whether they deserve to receive mercy, but, as in his commentaries on the Gallic war, the clemency stems not from an emotional reaction but from Caesar's desire for peace.<sup>7</sup> The calculation behind Caesar's clemency resounds in future texts, though each author will have his own judgement of how positive Caesar's calculating nature is.

In addition to well-known traits, Caesar also presents himself as embodying virtues which, in other authors, tend to not appear together in the same person, for they are considered to be semantic opposites. Grillo offers an example of these two semantic fields of virtues:

"For instance, Cicero, Nepos and Caesar himself provide examples to show that the Roman mind grouped in different semantic fields: *gravitas*, *severitas*, *constantia*, *innocentia*, *integritas* and *pudor* on the one hand and *celeritas*, *levitas*, *facilitas*,

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<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, 42-43.

<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, 103-113.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, 113-129. Though Caesar admits to starting the war to defend his *dignitas* and, at first, frames the war as a contest against his personal enemies gone out of control, the scope of what he represents and is fighting for quickly expands to include defending the tribunes and then defending and regaining peace for Rome. For Caesar's personal motivation to defend his *dignitas*, see Raaflaub (1974, 149-52) and (2003, 59-60).

*humanitas, mansuetudo, misericordia, and amor* on the other. One may easily possess *gravitas* and *severitas*, or *mansuetudo* and *facilitas*, but virtues from both semantic fields were considered hard to reconcile in the same personality.” (58)

The political charge behind some of these terms cannot be ignored; *gravitas*, for instance, was the slogan of the Optimates, highlighting their devotion to the republic, while *populares* had to fight against being labeled “*leves*”. Caesar, aware of his opponents’ claim on virtues such as *constantia, innocentia, integritas*, refuses to openly claim them for himself; instead, he demonstrates that, although the Pompeians—who are, for all intents and purposes, the same as the Optimates in Caesar’s narrative—lay claim to these traditional virtues, it is Caesar who actually embodies those traits.<sup>8</sup> Thus, Caesar attempts to silently reconcile within his own person already well-known traits, such as *celeritas* and clemency, with the traits claimed by his opponents, making him the ultimate representative of the republic.

When Caesar portrays his and the Pompeian armies, he creates two communities. On the one hand, Caesar’s men represent the ideal army community: they display fierce loyalty to their leader, they have enough shame and honor to fight, they often prefer death to surviving defeat, their discipline and self-restraint keep them from pillaging and allow them to march faster, fight harder, and survive on less than the Pompeians. In short, Caesar’s army possesses not only loyalty to their leader, but also traits which the general himself embodies within the text.<sup>9</sup> Thus, just as Caesar is (as he argues) the ultimate representative of the republic, his army is the ideal republican community. By contrast, Pompey’s side is, to use Grillo’s term, the “anti-community”: the Pompeian army possesses barbaric traits, such as cruelty (*crudelitas*), anger (*iracundia*), extravagance (*luxuria*), arrogance, and a distinct lack of unity.<sup>10</sup> By portraying Pompey and his army in this way, Caesar implies that the Pompeians are non-Roman and,

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<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, 60-69.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, 70ff., 161-165.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, 138-160, 165-171.

because they embody traits which would cause the destruction of a community, threaten Rome's welfare. The Pompeians promote war through their insistent refusal of peace, perhaps most poignantly exemplified by Petreius' break-up of the reconciliation between Caesarian and Pompeian troops at Ilerda, while Caesar and his men promote peace and unity.<sup>11</sup>

## 0.2 The scope of this study

With Caesar's self-portrait in mind, two questions drive my study. First, how do other authors remember Caesar in the context of civil war? In pursuing this question I extend my gaze beyond portrayals of Caesar to also find Caesar-like figures in civil war narratives; that is, I examine individuals who possess characteristics and voice slogans which Caesar himself uses in his self-portrayal in the *Bellum Civile*. Second, I ask: how does an author's portrait of Caesar, particularly his choice to highlight some characteristics and downplay others, reflect his view of the men who adopt the name "Caesar," namely, the emperors? Though certain qualities are consistently assigned to Caesar, his portrait is by no means monochromatic; in the course of this study I will illuminate how authors continuously fashion and re-fashion Caesar. I contend that, because Caesar is so closely associated with a period of great change at Rome, an author shapes this pivotal figure to align with his particular aims. When considering the question of the significance behind these acts of re-fashioning, I am especially interested in how the characterization of Julius Caesar reflects an author's attitude toward the current Caesar and what place Julius Caesar and his war have within a particular author's view of Rome's history.

In this project I do not intend to cover all portrayals of Caesar. Instead, I focus on comparing a set of representative texts spanning the end of the Republic through the Neronian

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<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, 140-142, 174-187. Grillo labels the Pompeians' insistence on war as part of their cruelty. Later he demonstrates how Caesar the narrator also uses the Pompeians' insistence on war to show that, while Caesar the general takes an "assimilating viewpoint" in the war—he sees both the Pompeian and Caesarian communities as the same people, which drives him to strive for peace,—the Pompeians take an "alienating viewpoint," that is, they do not see the Caesarian army as part of their community but an enemy to be obliterated, which drives them to opt for war. For more on the clash between assimilating and alienating viewpoints, see Roller (2001, 17-63).

period, when the memory and the effects of Caesar and his civil war still resonate strongly in Rome, in order to highlight how authors fashion and re-fashion Caesar. While a more exhaustive comparison of the many sources which mention Caesar between the end of the Republic and the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty would also be a fruitful endeavor, I aim to offer a broad sketch of the themes, issues, and qualities associated with Caesar in order to provide a solid base for future discussion. Such an approach has the advantage of presenting the various shifts in Caesar's portraits without becoming lost in the nuances of presentation if, for example, one were to closely investigate Valerius Maximus' portrayal of Caesar vis-à-vis Velleius Paterculus'.<sup>12</sup>

After the death of Nero, the significance of remembering Rome's Republican period, including Caesar and his civil war, experiences a shift. Alain Gowing (2005) illustrates that, even by the Neronian period, the Republic was used less and less often as a way to reflect on an author's current age:

“With a widening chronological gap between Republic and Principate and as the Principate itself acquired a ‘history’ that warranted memory and memorialization (in effect displacing or at least overshadowing the Republican past) and emerged as a separate entity from the Republic, the ways in which it was remembered, and the value accorded that memory, underwent change.” (68)

As with the overall memory of the Republic, the value of remembering Caesar's civil war after the Neronian period seems to decline as Rome moves further away from the Republican era, particularly as authors recognize that the principate is an entity separate from the republic.<sup>13</sup>

Lucan is in several an exception to this trend; his epic, the *Pharsalia*, focuses on Caesar's civil war with fierce intensity, but his epic marks the end of a trend which uses Caesar and his war to

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<sup>12</sup> Such nuances are indeed important but can quickly become a situation of losing the forest for the trees. Peter Doni's (1996) work on portraits of Caesar in the Imperial period takes into account the nuances between contemporary portraits of Caesar during a particular age (such as the Tiberian period), but he leaves the task of comparing those nuances and their significance to the reader.

<sup>13</sup> Accordingly, in later portrayals of Caesar and the civil war, one finds greater focus on Caesar as proto-*princeps*. There is greater acceptance of the fact that Caesar's war essentially signaled the end of the Republic, and instead Caesar is used as a mirror for current emperors (particularly emperor-generals like Trajan) to show what works and what does not when one is the head of state.

comment on Rome's current affairs, at least in Latin literature.<sup>14</sup> With this point in mind, my study finds its end there.

My examination of Caesar proceeds chronologically, from Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, to Velleius Paterculus' *Historiae*, and ending with Lucan's *Pharsalia*. Caesar's self-portrayal in his *Bellum Civile* serves as a touchstone for these portrayals and I will repeatedly come back to his self-portrait throughout the study. In many ways, each presentation of Caesar appearing in this study is a response—either direct or indirect—to Caesar's own portrayal of the conflict and his role in it as well as way for Imperial writers in particular to create a dialogue with the current Caesar regarding his power and how he should wield it.

In the first chapter, I examine two major figures of Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*: Caesar and Catiline. Sallust's Caesar possesses many traits which Caesar himself promoted in his commentaries. Sallust, however, invites the reader to cast a critical eye on the political expediency of those qualities—and on Caesar's moral goodness—through comparison with Cato, whose disposition is not merely different from Caesar's but also antagonistic to him. Sallust's choice to pair Caesar and Cato in the *Bellum Catiline* presages their future conflict in the civil war, particularly on the ideological front. The debate and *synkrisis* present two different ideas of what would be best for Rome. Strikingly, the traits Sallust highlights in each man reveals that he thought of their conflict in Republican terms; that is, instead of presenting Caesar as a tyrant in training and Cato as defender of the *res publica*, Sallust depicts both as great men of the Republic. He does not anticipate that Caesar has been the catalyst for a radical shift in Rome's socio-political structure, as one can see in Lucan's presentation of Caesar. Though he will not present the civil war general as a precursor to some imperial line, he does use Caesar to

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<sup>14</sup> Greek authors in the Roman empire (e.g., Cassius Dio, Appian, and Plutarch) are a different story. They, by contrast, have a continuing fascination with Caesar and invest him with contemporary meaning long after Latin literature has ceased to use him as a compelling way to reflect on its own age.

comment on the most recent bearer of that name: Octavian. Details in Caesar's speech not only look back at past violence but also anticipate further violence under the Second Triumvirate.

In the second part of the chapter, I argue that Sallust's portrayal of Catiline also contains elements of Caesar's *Bellum Civile*; echoes of Caesar's slogans and concerns are put into the mouth of Catiline and the climactic battle at the end of the monograph contains details which should remind the reader of the recent civil war. When considered together, Caesar's words in his commentaries and the portrait of Catiline in the *Bellum Catilinae* suggest that Catiline's *bellum* is a prequel to Caesar's civil war and, moreover, that Catiline is in many ways a pre-Caesar. Through Sallust's echoes of the *Bellum Civile*, his own references to the Sullan period, and the lack of closure offered at the end of the monograph, Catiline's war becomes an episode within a larger cycle of civil wars and forecasts a future of more civil war, likely involving the new Caesar, Octavian. Sallust, of course, was not the only one who saw a connection between Catiline and Caesar; as I shall argue in the chapter on Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Lucan himself also saw a bit—or perhaps a lot—of one man in the other.

The next chapter focuses on Velleius Paterculus' portrayal of Caesar in the *Historiae*. In the Imperial period we find that, while several key traits from the Republic are still associated with Caesar, other aspects, which were assigned to him after his death, particularly his divinity, his personal *Fortuna*, and his role as the founder of the Imperial line, have also become integral to his portrait. Some concerns prominent in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, such as his assertion of his *dignitas* and his claim to defend the rights of the tribunes, have started to fade into the background. Their declining prominence signals that, though Velleius tries to depict Tiberius' reign as a continuation of the Republic, Caesar's conflict is no longer framed in Republican terms but as a period of transition to a new age, even as the historian tries to present the new age

as an improved Republic. This chapter also refers back to Sallust's portrayal of Caesar and Catiline, as elements of each figure appear in Velleius' Caesar and others, such as Curio. In addition, I explore to what extent Velleius remains faithful to Caesar's narrative in the commentaries, a topic which has received surprisingly little scholarly attention. Finally, in support of Gowing's (2007) argument that Velleius' audience is meant to read the reign of Tiberius as an extension of the Republic, I illustrate how Velleius shapes Caesar and the civil war to create a sense of continuity from Republic to "Better Republic." The civil war, though an unpleasant event, becomes a transitional period in Velleius' view of Rome's history and offers an opportunity for Caesar and his successors to heal and improve the Republic, a process which reaches its climax under the likewise climatic emperor Tiberius.

The third chapter addresses Lucan's portrayal of Caesar in the *Pharsalia*. This portrait of Caesar represents in many ways the culmination of past portrayals. Through his historical epic, Lucan not only responds to Caesar's version of the conflict, he also creates a Caesar who is bigger and badder than the Caesars examined in previous chapters. The Caesar of the *Pharsalia* becomes not just a caricature of the general found in the *Bellum Civile* and Velleius' *Historiae*, he nearly becomes Catiline. Lucan downplays and perverts the virtues found in Velleius' Caesar while exaggerating the vices seen in Sallust's Catiline. Caesar's war in Lucan, like Catiline's in Sallust, is depicted as destructive for the state. However, unlike the *Bellum Catilinae*, all slogans of *libertas* or *dignitas* are thrown out the window in favor of a shameless drive for kingship. As with other portraits of Caesar, Lucan's Caesar informs how the reader should view the current "Caesar," Nero; even in the praise for Nero at the beginning of the poem Lucan hints that his audience should view the emperor as Caesar's heir and perhaps an even crueler embodiment of his forebear, just as Velleius portrayed Tiberius as Caesar's heir and (improved) embodiment of

his namesake and as Sallust used Caesar (and Catiline) to hold a mirror up to the violence occurring under Octavian.

I conclude my study with an overview of Caesar's shifting portrait as it progresses from the end of the Republic to the end of the Neronian period. I note which virtues remained a key part of every portrayal of the general, and which traits were optional—added or ignored depending on each author's aims. I also show how the remembrance of Caesar, Caesar-like figures, and civil war reflects on the current regime. Caesar is always connected to those currently in power; by virtue of taking the name "Caesar" each *princeps* automatically invites comparison with the original Caesar, and authors take up this challenge, shaping and re-shaping Caesar to suit their aims.

### **0.3 Past scholarship**

Recent scholarship on Caesar—as historical figure, author, or character in a text—has made great strides illuminating the artistry of his own writing and how particular presentations of him reflect his importance (or lack thereof) in Imperial ideology. R.E. Wolverson (1964) and Peter Donié (1996) have considered how Caesar is portrayed in various authors of the early Principate. Though both acknowledge Imperial authors' increased attention to Caesar and civil war, the poignancy of civil war as a defining facet of Caesarian portraits, and perhaps even as a key even in Rome's history, has still been left unaddressed. My study overlaps with theirs in several ways, though I give greater emphasis to the centrality of civil war in portraying Caesar through comparing the texts of this study. Furthermore, rather than consider the importance of Caesar to Imperial ideology at a particular time, I aim to reveal how his portrait shifts and develop from the template offered in the *Bellum Civile* and to comment on to what extent these are meant to inform one's view of the current regime. Studies of civil war have discussed several compelling issues and have even taken a look at Caesar as a writer and participant in civil

war, yet, just and Donié and Wolverton have neglected to fully address the centrality of civil war to portrayals of Julius Caesar, these studies have yet to address the issue of Caesar as a firebrand for civil war.<sup>15</sup>

In formulating my approach, Rhiannon Ash's (1999) study of leaders and their armies in Tacitus' *Histories* reveals the advantages of comparing Tacitus' portrayals of each leader and army with other armies and leaders within the text and with other authors' portrayals of those figures. Her study inspires my comparative approach to the various portraits of Caesar in civil war. Alain Gowing's (2005) *Empire and Memory* emphasizes the importance of recollection for Romans, particularly in the Imperial period. Accordingly, rather than being concerned with how accurate each portrait of Caesar may be, I focus on how each author's *recollection* of Caesar not only responds to other portraits of Caesar but also puts forth an alternate view of the general and his war which creates a compelling link between the end of the Republic and that author's current age. The memory of Julius Caesar becomes a vehicle for an author to express his views of the current ruler; all the small deformations, exaggerations, and whitewashing of details of Caesar's life and persona create a mirror whose reflection reveals the current Caesar.

My study of Caesar and the Caesar-like Catiline in the first chapter intersects with ideas found in L.C. Duxbury's (1988) study of how Catullus, Cicero, and Sallust approach Caesar. Duxbury illuminates various attitudes toward Caesar at the end of the Republic and approaches Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* with the goal of finding how Sallust's characterization of Caesar feeds into his aims. Previous to Duxbury, B. Shimron (1967) summarized and added to previous work on the connection between Caesar and Catiline in the *Bellum Catilinae*. William Batstone's studies of Sallust's monograph often strive to reveal how Sallust exposes the cracks in the

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<sup>15</sup> See above, n.2.

Republic by keeping its catchwords constantly in flux.<sup>16</sup> At the very end of his contribution to the collection *Citizens of Discord* (2010), Batstone, like several scholars before him, alludes to a connection between Catiline's war and Caesar's by imagining Caesar watching and learning from Catiline's mistakes. Despite repeated nods toward a connection between Sallust's Catiline and Julius Caesar, no one has yet endeavored to systematically show how Sallust himself acknowledged such a connection. Here I demonstrate how Sallust, as a reader of Caesar, uses Caesar's own writings about the civil war in his portrayal of Catiline's war.

Peter Donié (1996), Ulrich Schmitzer (2000), and Claudia Kuntze (1985) provide much of the foundation for my examination of Caesar in Velleius Paterculus' *Historiae*, supplemented with Bloomer's (1992) comments on Caesar in Velleius vis-à-vis Valerius Maximus' treatment, with commentaries by Tony Woodman (1983) and Maria Elefante (1997) also influencing my approach to and analysis of the text. Donié's overview of Velleius' presentation of Caesar concludes that he enjoys a positive portrayal, though he sees ambivalence in his presentation at the outbreak of the civil war, a suggestion I contend against in my analysis. Schmitzer approaches Caesar in the *Historiae* from the perspective of examining how the pirate episode reveals principal traits which characterize Caesar throughout the rest of the "Caesarian narrative," but his attention to the civil war itself is limited. He also addresses Caesar's special relationship with *fortuna*, showing how Velleius shifts the role of fortune in the *Historiae* from being equated with *tyche* or fate to taking on the role of companion to extraordinary individuals. Kuntze concentrates on Tiberius as the culminating figure of Velleius' history. She finds that Tiberius is praised above all others, though she argues that even Tiberius receives some silent criticism from Velleius; Tiberius is not assigned *clementia* as a virtue, yet it is a prominent virtue

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<sup>16</sup> Batstone (1988) deals with the broken antitheses and shifting terms of debate in the *synkrisis* between Caesar and Cato. His 2010 contribution, "The Word at Word: The Prequel," examines how Catiline and Cato fight over words and their meanings, reflecting the political turmoil in Rome.

in his predecessors, Caesar and Augustus. I offer a different interpretation of Velleius' silence regarding the matter of Tiberius' *clementia*, taking into consideration the *Historiae*'s narrative of Rome's progress from the civil wars fought by Tiberius' predecessors, Caesar and Augustus, to an age of civil peace under Tiberius' reign. My study of Caesar also intersects with ideas in Gowing's (2005, 2007, and 2010) work on Velleius as I apply his suggestion that Velleius aims to show continuity in Rome's history to Caesar and the civil war.

My chapter on Lucan's characterization of Caesar vis-à-vis the Caesars of past chapters builds on several studies, especially Ahl's (1976) study of Caesar in his *Introduction to Lucan*, Johnson's (1987) study of the "heroes" of Lucan's epic, Marti's (1945) examination of Cato and Caesar's good-evil dichotomy, with Pompey playing the man in the middle in Lucan's epic criticism of a world ruled by deified emperors, and Nix's (2005 and 2008) work on Lucan's Caesar as Jupiter, whose investigation of Caesar's divine aspect and its manifestations in the poem builds on the work of Feeney (1991), Hershkowitz (1998), and others.<sup>17</sup> When considering how Lucan's portrayal of Caesar affects the interpretation of his panegyric address to Nero, my own conclusions have aligned with Marti (1945), Feeney (1991), and a host of other scholars who argue against taking Lucan's panegyric at face value. Of particular relevance to my intertextual comparisons between different renditions of Caesar have been Lintott (1971), Brisset (1964), and Masters (1992), who investigated affinities between Lucan's poems and Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. Gärtner (2009) and Ernout (1971) have argued for the Sallustian influence on Lucan's text, which my own work attempts to support and explore in more detail. References to Velleius' account of the civil war in studies of Lucan's epic are scattered, and as of yet no one has embarked on a dedicated comparison of the presentations of Caesar in those narratives; my

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<sup>17</sup> The collection of papers found in Tesoriero (2010) have also influenced my thoughts on and approach to Caesar in Lucan more than the (lacking) frequency of citations would suggest.

own work highlights Velleius' and Lucan's similar aims behind remembering Caesar yet the strong contrast between these two Imperial presentations of him.

With this overview of Caesar's self-presentation in mind, let us turn to how others fashion Caesar and create Caesar-like figures.

## Chapter 1. The *Bellum Civile* in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*: Caesar, Catiline and the conflicts of the Republic

For a long time, scholars have noted, usually in passing, that Sallust's *Catiline* could be seen as a pre-cursor to Caesar.<sup>18</sup> This chapter takes up that observation and investigates it in greater depth by addressing how Sallust portrays Caesar and Catiline in the *Bellum Catilinae*, as focalized through Julius Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. The *Bellum Catilinae*'s various parallels with Caesar's commentaries contribute to turning Sallust's monograph into a miniature *Bellum Civile*. This connection between the *Bellum Catilinae* and the *Bellum Civile* finds its most compelling evidence in the presentation of Caesar and Catiline, so I will center my discussion on these two figures in this chapter. For Caesar, I focus on the portrait Sallust builds through Caesar's speech and in his comparison of Caesar and Cato. For Catiline, I examine the ways in which he is Caesar-like, in relation to Sallust's depiction of Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae* and to Caesar's self-depiction in the *Bellum Civile*. I contend that Catiline is not simply a pre-Caesar, however, for his vices have parallels with Caesar's characterization of Pompeians in the *Bellum Civile*. Before turning to these subjects, it is necessary to outline the context in which Sallust produced his *Bellum Catilinae*, for it will be relevant to my discussion.

The question of exactly when Sallust composed and published his monograph on the conspiracy of Catiline has long been debated. Scholars agree that, at the very least, the monograph was published after the death of Caesar, citing that Sallust uses the perfect *fuere* in

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<sup>18</sup> e.g., Yavetz (1963, 499), Shimron (1967, 337-45), Gruen (1974, 416), Batstone (2010, 72). Yavetz imagines Caesar standing on the sidelines as Catiline attempts his revolution and learning from Catiline's mistakes. Shimron focuses on the links between Sallust's characterization of Catiline and Caesar, though he does not address any connections between the *Bellum Catilinae* and the *Bellum Civile*. William Batstone alludes to the connection between Catiline's war and Caesar's with the title, "Word at War: The prequel," a reference to John Henderson's piece on Lucan's *Pharsalia*. As part of his argument, Batstone suggests that it would be useful to think of Catiline's war as a civil war of sorts, even if Sallust himself never uses the term *bellum civile* to describe Catiline's "war". He glances toward Catiline's connection to civil war, but he does not quite link Catiline and Caesar.

his description of Caesar and Cato the Younger.<sup>19</sup> Beyond this, however, we can only speculate on when in the late 40s BCE Sallust published his monograph. Some postulate that the monograph was completed before the death of Cicero in 43 BCE.<sup>20</sup> Other scholars take Sallust's preoccupation with the rule and proscriptions of Sulla and phrases such as, "A consul with an army," as references inspired by the proscriptions of the second Triumvirate and the Triumvirs' war against Caesar's assassins, placing the publication of the monograph at around 42-41 BCE, which I tend to favor.<sup>21</sup> However, as McGushin (1977, 7) succinctly declares, "Any precise dating remains, ultimately, unattainable." One thing remains clear: whenever Sallust produced the *Bellum Catilinae*, Rome was reeling from the recent civil war and death of Caesar; meanwhile, another war lurked on the horizon as Octavian and Antony set out to avenge the dictator's death. The atmosphere was fraught with uncertainty, tension, and bloodshed.

The *Bellum Catilinae* recounts the unsuccessful attempt at a coup d'état by L. Sergius Catilina, a member of the nobility and veteran of the Sullan regime, whose thirst for kingship (*regnum*) is matched by his thirst for slaughter. His conspiracy to gain power included disaffected nobles, those who had run up large amounts of debt, old Sullan veterans itching for civil war and its rewards, dissolute women whose charms no longer were able to secure the high lifestyle to which they had become accustomed, and youths vulnerable to the allurements of extravagance (*luxuria*), among others (*Cat.* 16.1-4). Sallust peppers his narrative with rumors and conjectures regarding the possibility that certain members of the nobility, such as Crassus and Caesar, were supporters of Catiline's endeavor. Whether or not Caesar was actually part of or supported Catiline's conspiracy is beyond the concerns of this work, yet the insinuation in the monograph is illustrative: when it comes to Caesar, Sallust prefers to simply offer information

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<sup>19</sup> cf. McGushin (1977, 6ff.).

<sup>20</sup> e.g., Büchner (1960), Wohleb (1928).

<sup>21</sup> Syme (1964), in agreement with Boissier (1905), has gently suggested this dating.

and leave it to the reader to connect the dots, as it were.<sup>22</sup> Significantly, the information Sallust presents about Caesar has several parallels with the general's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*; surely the fact that Caesar, one of Sallust's most vivid characters in a tale about civil war, himself wrote about civil war played some role in the historian's choice to portray the general as he does. However, unlike the Caesar found in the *Bellum Civile*, Sallust does not offer an unambiguously positive portrait; comparison with Catiline seems to suggest that Caesar is an improvement upon Catiline's energy and drive, yet Cato provides opposition to and criticism of seemingly positive aspects of Caesar's portrait in the *Bellum Catilinae*. With these points in mind, I begin by examining Sallust's presentation of Caesar.

### 1.1 The Characterization of Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae*

In the sections focusing on Caesar, Sallust highlights several traits and issues which appear in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. In particular, Sallust uses Caesar's speech and a comparison with Cato to bring to the fore Caesar's clemency, his emphasis on self-control and rationality, his generosity, his drive and ability to endure harsh conditions, and his concern with *dignitas*. Looking at each of these qualities in turn, I argue in this section that the speeches and the *synkrisis* shape two slightly different Caesars. Though the speech and qualities of the *synkrisis* overlap in several respects, the differences between them reflect discrepancies between the image Caesar wanted to project during the Republic, represented in his speech and often corroborated in the *synkrisis*, and how others perceived (and presented him), which one can also find in Cato, particularly when Sallust presents his opposing speech and traits.

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<sup>22</sup> John Penwill (2009, 86), though he is discussing Lucretius' method of description, best articulates Sallust's method of portraying Caesar: "[He] puts a series of images before us and leaves us to make the appropriate connections." This somewhat detached method of description might explain why scholarship on Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae* presents so many contending theories regarding Sallust's opinion of Caesar. See Duxbury (1988, 293ff.) and McGushin (1977, 309ff.) for a summary of the range of opinions.

## Clemency

In the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar repeatedly presents himself as clement toward the Pompeians. He emphasizes that his mercy toward his fellow citizens has no limits, despite the fact that they are fighting against him. The Pompeians, by contrast, repeatedly refuse to show mercy to their opponents, though they are fellow citizens. Mercy is one of many ways in which Caesar distinguishes his cause from the Pompeians.<sup>23</sup> He argues that his clemency stems from an interest in Rome's welfare and in restoring peace to the state:

Reliquos enim omnis officium suum praestitisse: se, qui etiam bona condicione et loco et tempore aequo conflare noluerit, ut quam integerrima essent ad pacem omnia; exercitum suum, qui iniuria etiam accepta suisque interfectis quos in sua potestate habuerit conservavit et texerit; illius denique exercitus milites, qui per se de concilianda pace egerint, qua in re omnium suorum vitae consulendum putarint. Sic omnium ordinum partis in misericordia constitisse, ipsos duces a pace abhorruisse; eos neque colloqui neque indutiary iura servasse et homines imperitos et per colloquium deceptos crudelissime interfecisse.<sup>24</sup> (1.85.1-3)

For every other person fulfilled his duty: Caesar, who did not want to do battle in favorable conditions with respect to position and opportunity so that everything would be as undamaged as possible for making peace; his army, who had saved and protected those held under its authority, though it had suffered injury and though his soldiers' comrades had been killed; and finally the soldiers of the Pompeian army, who bargained for obtaining peace on their own, in which matter they thought to consult for the lives of all their men. Thus, parties of all ranks stood firm in their resolve for pity, but the Pompeian leaders themselves recoiled from peace; they neither parleyed nor preserved the conditions of the treaty, and they most cruelly killed men who were inexperienced and deceived by the parley.

In the above response to Afranius' plea for mercy, Caesar notes the various people who desire peace: he himself, his own soldiers, even the Pompeian soldiers under Petreius and Afranius. As proof of his desire for peace, he declares that he did not break the truce, though his position was favorable for fighting. In addition, despite being victims of *iniuria*, his army also stood firm in their desire to show mercy and preserve lives. According to Caesar, Afranius and Petreius do not

<sup>23</sup> Compellingly illustrated in, e.g., the Ilerda episode (*Civ.* 1.71-86) and analyzed by Grillo (2008, 114-124, 130ff.).

<sup>24</sup> Text used for Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* is Reynolds (1991). Text for Caesar's *Bellum Civile* is Du Pontet (1922). Translations are my own unless noted otherwise. Citations for texts other than one which constitutes the focus of a particular chapter will be cited according to abbreviations found in the Oxford Latin Dictionary.

deserve mercy on account of their perfidy toward his troops during the truce and their hesitation to make peace. He, nevertheless, offers clemency on the condition that the Pompeian troops under Afranius and Petreius are relieved of duty and that they leave the province (*Proinde, ut esset dictum, provinciis excederent exercitumque dimitterent; si id sit factum, se nociturum nemini. Hanc unam atque extremam esse pacis condicionem, Civ. 1.85.12*).

Throughout the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar emphasizes that his clemency toward to the Pompeians is based on rational concerns, such as peace, rather than on an irrational feeling of pity. Furthermore, he offers mercy despite the fact that, because of the *iniuria* he and his men have suffered, his opponents do not deserve mercy and he could justifiably exact retribution for his injuries.<sup>25</sup> Thus, he connects *clementia* and rationality; he employs clemency for the calculated end of attaining peace and reconciling the Roman people, rather than granting it based on an emotional response. Mercy becomes a means to an end, a tool for Caesar to advance his own aims.

Sallust's Caesar takes a similar approach to clemency in his speech regarding the punishment of the Catilinarian conspirators. Though he shuns sparing the conspirators based on feelings of pity (*miser cordia*), he nevertheless argues for leniency—not full pardon, but leniency in the sense that the conspirators' lives would be spared. Like Caesar in the *Bellum Civile*, Sallust's Caesar advocates for an alternative to execution based on two rational considerations: first, the consequences of capital punishment for the senators' reputation; second, the dangerous precedent such a decision would set if power were to fall into the wrong hands.

The speech in favor of leniency opens with a warning against allowing emotions to factor into decision-making: “Conscript fathers, it is proper for all men who engage in debate

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<sup>25</sup> Grillo (2008, 129): “Far from the recognition of unjust suffering [of someone wrongly accused], as in court practice, Caesar's *miser cordia* is a feeling of pity for the enemies that expresses his desire for peace and reaches beyond their (de)merits.”

concerning uncertain matters be free from hatred, affection, anger, and pity.” (*Omnis homines, patres conscripti, qui de rebus dubiis consultant, ab odio amicitia, ira atque misericordia vacuos esse decet*, 51.1) Caesar elaborates on the irrational reflexes represented by emotions:

“Haud facile animus verum providet ubi illa officiant, neque quisquam omnium lubidini simul et usui paruit. Ubi intenderis ingenium, valet; si lubido possidet, ea dominatur, animus nihil valet.” (51.2-3)

“One’s mind does not have an easy time of foreseeing the truth when those things [i.e., emotions] block the way, nor has anyone at all obeyed desire and at the same time expediency. When you rely on your intellect, your reasoning is sound; if desire takes possession, it dominates and the mind is powerless.”

At the beginning of the oration we find a plea to use one’s rational faculties (*animus/ingenium*) and for the Senate to shun desire (*lubido*), which is linked to likewise capricious and irrational states, such as anger (*ira*) and pity (*misericordia*). Emotions and *lubido* are dangerous because they prevent the mind from properly consulting in uncertain matters (*in rebus dubiis*) and because decisions which fulfill a personal desire (*lubido*) cannot also be expedient (*usus paruit*).

Caesar as the advocate for cool rationality was not merely a product of Sallust’s imagination. Indeed, as the passages cited above suggest, he seems to be taking a page from Caesar’s self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*, where he bases his decisions, particularly the decision to pardon his enemies, on considerations for the welfare of the state and peace rather than his personal desire for retribution. This call for leniency in the *Bellum Catilinae* is all the more poignant when one considers Caesar’s near-arrest because of Catulus and Piso’s animosity (*inimicitia*) toward him (49.1-5). By placing this episode before the debate over the fate of the conspirators, Sallust invites the reader to remember another time when Caesar advocated for leniency in the face of *iniuria*, namely the civil war.

When Caesar advocates for leniency toward the conspirators, he supports his argument with *exempla* of Rome’s past clemency toward enemies: “I have a great abundance of memory,

conscript fathers, of things which kings and people decided ill-advisedly because they were driven by anger or pity, but I prefer to mention the things our forefathers did properly and in the correct procedure, though it went against their heart's desire." (*Magna mihi copia est memorandi, patres conscripti, quae reges atque populi ira aut misericordia impulsimale consuluerint, sed ea malo dicere quae maiores nostri contra lubidinem animi sui recte atque ordine fecere*, 51.4) He prefaces his examples of clemency by labeling these deeds as acting "properly and in the correct procedure," (*recte atque ordine*) and going against the Senate's desires (*contra lubidinem*). These examples come from the Macedonian war and the Carthaginian wars. In the first example, he describes Rome's treatment of the Rhodians:

Bello Macedonico, quod cum rege Perse gessimus, Rhodiorum civitas magna atque magna, quae populi Romani opibus creverat, infida atque advorsa nobis fuit; sed postquam bello confecto de Rhodiis consultum est, maiores nostri, ne quis divitiarum magis quam iniuriae causa bellum inceptum diceret, inpunitos eos dimiserunt. (51.5)

During the Macedonian war, which we waged with the king Perses, the great and magnificent state of the Rhodians, which the Roman people had increased with riches, turned treacherous and hostile to us; but after the war was over there was a decree concerning the Rhodians and our forefathers sent them off unpunished lest anyone say that they started a war for the sake of riches rather than to avenge the injury done to them.

Despite the *iniuria* Rome suffers from Rhodes' treacherous behavior—particularly after Rhodes enjoyed enrichment from Rome—the *majores* decide to pardon the Rhodians (*inpunitos eos dimiserunt*). Caesar emphasizes that the decision was prompted by levelheaded consideration of the reputation Rome would have if it went to war against a rich state like Rhodes. Despite the *majores'* desire to exact retribution, the more expedient measure—the one which would preserve Rome's reputation—won out. Likewise, in the Punic wars, Caesar notes that even though the Carthaginians "had done many evil deeds both in peacetime and under treaties," (*et in pace et per indutias multa nefaria facinora fecissent*, 51.6) Rome did not avenge the injury but "sought what was worthy of it rather than what, by right, could be inflicted on them." (*magis quid se*

*dignum foret quam quid in illos iure fieri posset quaerebant*, 51.6) In each example, Rome has forgiven the injuries it suffered despite its desire for retribution. This forgiveness depends on consideration of image and worth rather than pity for the Rhodians and Carthaginians or considerations of whether the Rhodians and Carthaginians deserved mercy. Caesar advocates for reason and motives greater than personal desire as the principal factors in decision-making, particularly when one is in the powerful position of being able to offer clemency or inflict punishment, as the Senate is. A remark earlier in the *Bellum Catilinae* supports Caesar's claim that the *maiores* preferred mercy over vengeance: "Indeed, in peace they exercised power by conferring benefits rather than instilling fear and, when they experienced injustice, they preferred to grant pardon rather than take revenge." (*In pace vero quod beneficiis quam metu imperium agitabant et accepta iniuria ignoscere quam persequi malebant*, 9.5)

In addition to these positive *exempla* Caesar raises some negative instances (*mala exempla*) of violence gone awry in the name of justice. These *mala exempla* warn the senators that punishing the conspirators might set a precedent that the unworthy and unsuitable could abuse when power passes to those who are either not acquainted with power or are not as good as their predecessors ("Omnia mala exempla ex rebus bonis orta sunt. Sed ubi imperium ad ignaros eius aut minus bonos pervenit, novum illud exemplum ab dignis et idoneis ad indignos et non idoneos transfertur," 51.27).<sup>26</sup> The *mala exempla* cited, furthermore, arise from civil wars.<sup>27</sup> Caesar describes the proscription of good men (*boni*) when the death of bad men (*mali*) leads to more indiscriminate killing. The example of the Sullan proscriptions is particularly poignant:

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<sup>26</sup> This assertion in Caesar's speech contradicts Sallust's more optimistic remark near the beginning of the work that, because one's fortune changes with one's character, power will always pass from the less good to the best (*fortuna simul cum moribus inmutatur. Ita imperium semper ad optimum quemque a minus bono transfertur*, 2.5-6).

<sup>27</sup> Here *bella civilia* in the sense Cicero gives in his speech on Pompey's command in 66 BCE, namely a war fought on native soil (*Man.* 28).

Nostra memoria victor Sulla quom Damasippum et alios eius modi, qui malo rei publicae creverant, iugulari iussit, quis non factum eius laudabat? Homines scelestos et factiosos, qui seditionibus rem publicam exagitaverant, merito necatos aiebant. Sed ea res magnae initium cladis fuit. Nam uti quisque domum aut villa, postremo vas aut vestimentum aliquoius concupiverat, dabat operam ut in in proscriptorum numero esset. Ita illi quibus Damasippi mors laetitiae fuerat paulo post ipsi trahebantur, neque prius finis iugulandi fuit quam Sulla omnis suos divitiis explevit. (51.32-34)

In our memory the victor Sulla, when he ordered the death of Damasippus and others of that sort who had grown in power due to the corruption of the state, who did not praise his deed? They said that the villainous men of that band, who had stirred up the state with treachery, deserved to be killed. But that proceeding was the beginning of great carnage. Indeed, when each person had desired someone's house or villa, or eventually someone's plate or clothing, he made every effort to add him to the number of the proscribed. Thus, those for whom the death of Damasippus was a source of happiness were themselves carried off a little while later, nor was there an end to the throat-cutting before Sulla glutted all his men with riches.

The example of the Sullan proscriptions demonstrates the dangers of *lubido* and *severitas*.

Coveting (*concupiverat*) someone else's possessions leads to adding them to the proscription list.

Those who had been happy at Damasippus' death (*quibus Damasippi mors laetitiae fuit*) become the victims of the very motion which killed him. The slaughter does not end when it is expedient (i.e., when the evil men have been killed) but when the desires of Sulla's men have been satisfied.<sup>28</sup> As an even greater contrast to his previous examples of the treatment of the Rhodians and Carthaginians, Caesar takes his negative *exemplum* from the realm of civil war, showing that Romans have lacked mercy toward their own citizens before, with disastrous results. Through these sets of *exempla*, Caesar paints two pictures for the Senate: one where they display the prudence of their ancestors and benefit the state by acting in the interest of their reputation and what is worthy of them rather than let emotion control their actions; or, if they allow emotions—particularly *ira*—to rule their decisions, thus choosing a severe punishment, they will establish a

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<sup>28</sup> Even if this example was indeed used by Caesar in his speech, the remark about the Sullan proscriptions could hardly be seen as coincidental; even leaving aside the theory that bringing up the Sullan proscriptions could be a nod to the proscriptions headed up by the current Triumvirs, Sulla is also a nod to Catiline, who was one of Sulla's henchmen, and the conspirators, many of whom were said to be Sullan veterans looking either for more riches or just a renewal of civil strife.

precedent where a harsh punishment like execution could be used “in some other period and under another consul, who, like the present one, may have an army at his command,” (*alio tempore, alio consule, quoi item exercitus in manu sit*, 51.36) with consequences similar to those seen in the Sullan period. The *exempla* show that severity, which Caesar associates with action based on irrational forces like *lubido*, appears to have unintended, disastrous consequences, while leniency is associated with proper actions and yields far more beneficial results. In the *Bellum Civile*, one can see the same dichotomy in Caesar’s account of the events at Ilerda: mercy is based on rational concerns and is aligned with everyone’s desire for peace, while the severity shown by Afranius and especially Petreius (as I will show below, pg. 26) prolongs a war no one seems to want.

The case against execution of the conspirators in the *Bellum Catilinae* corroborates with Sallust’s description of Caesar in the *synkrisis*.<sup>29</sup> Language associated with *clementia* appears multiple times in Sallust’s portrait of Caesar: his mercy and pity made him famous (*mansuetudine et misericordia clarus factus*, 54.2) and he attained glory by giving, supporting, and forgiving (*Caesar dando sublevando ignoscundo....gloriam adeptus est*, 54.3). As shown above, forgiveness is also a mainstay of Sallust’s description of Roman foreign policy in olden times.<sup>30</sup> Sallust echoes the point in Caesar’s speech that the *maiores* preferred to show leniency in their affairs with foreign states rather than use *iniuria* as a reason to go to war. The similar language suggests that Caesar embodies at least one set of *mores* of the old Republic: as Rome used to act toward other states, thus Caesar behaved toward his fellow Romans. It is hardly a

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<sup>29</sup> Batstone (1988, 27-28) sees some irony because the *synkrisis* presents Caesar as a man of action, but his speech advocates careful consideration (“essentially...inaction”) instead of swift action. As the parallels with Caesar’s self-presentation show, however, one area in which Caesar did not prize *celeritas* is when he had to determine whether to preserve or destroy his opponents in the civil war.

<sup>30</sup> 9.5, see pg. 22.

coincidence that Caesar himself also used clemency as part of his attempt to portray himself as embodying key Roman values in the *Bellum Civile*.

Connected to Caesar's clemency are qualities which present him as a generally mild individual. In the *synkrisis*, Caesar is called a refuge for the wretched (*miseris per fugium*, 54.3) and is praised for the ease of his manner (*facilitas*, 54.3). Just as we see Caesar's clemency in both the *Bellum Civile* and the *Bellum Catilinae*, we also find other hints of Caesar's overall mildness in his self-depiction in the *Bellum Civile*. The most striking example of Caesar's accommodating persona is again in Ilerda, when soldiers from Petreius and Afranius' camp seek out Caesar and the two camps intermingle:

Primum agunt gratias omnes omnibus, quod sibi perterritis pridie pepercissent: eorum se beneficio vivere. Deinde imperatoris fidem quaerunt, rectene se illi sint commissuri, et quod non ab initio fecerint armaque quod cum hominibus necessariis et consanguineis contulerint queruntur. His provocati sermonibus fidem ab imperatore de Petrei atque Afrani vita petunt, ne quod in se scelus concepisse neu suos prodidisse videantur. Quibus confirmatis rebus se statim signa translaturus confirmant legatosque de pace primorum ordinum centuriones ad Caesarem mittunt. Interim alii suos in castra invitandi causa adducunt, alii ab suis abducuntur, adeo ut una castra iam facta ex binis viderentur; compluresque tribuni militum et centuriones ad Caesarem veniunt seque ei commendant....Erant plena laetitia et gratulatione omnia eorum qui tanta pericula vitasse et eorum qui sine vulnere tantas res confecisse videbantur, magnumque fructum suae pristinae lenitatis omnium iudicio Caesar ferebat consiliumque eius a cunctis probabatur. (*Civ.*1.74.2-4,7)

First, everyone [in the Pompeian camp] gave thanks to everyone [in the Caesarian camp] because they had spared the terrified soldiers the day before; they were alive thanks to their kindness. Then they inquire as to the trustworthiness of the commander, whether they could rightly commit themselves to him, and they lament that they had not done so from the start and that they had borne arms against their relations and kinsmen. They, motivated by these conversations [with the Caesarian soldiers], seek assurance from Caesar concerning the lives of Petreius and Afranius, lest they seem to have committed any crime and have betrayed their leaders. With such things being sworn upon, they swear that they will immediately hand over their standards and send to Caesar centurions of the first ranks as envoys to discuss peace. Meanwhile, some bring their own men into the camp because they had been invited and others are led out by their fellow-soldiers to the point that one camp seemed to have been made from two. Several tribunes of the soldiers and centurions come to Caesar and commend themselves to him....Everything was full with happiness and the thanksgiving of those who seemed to have avoided such

great danger and of those who seemed to have achieved such great matters without bloodshed, and, by everyone's judgement, Caesar bore a great reward for his previous leniency, and his plan was approved by the whole group.

During the pause in fighting Caesar shows that he and his men are a *perfulgium* for the Pompeian soldiers who no longer want to fight. Moreover, the general is responsible for uniting the two camps and ending the fighting "without a wound."<sup>31</sup> (*sine vulnere*) By contrast, Petreius slaughters the Caesarian soldiers found in his camp:

Improviso ad vallum advolat, colloquia militum interrumpit, nostros repellit a castris, quos deprehendit interficit.

Edicunt, penes quem quisque sit Caesaris miles, ut producat: productos palam in praetorio interficiunt. (*Civ.* 1.75.2, 76.4)

He suddenly flies to the rampart, breaks up the soldiers' conversations, drove our men out of the camp, and killed the ones he caught.

[The officers] demand that each soldier bring out whoever was a Caesarian soldier in his possession; they publicly kill in the praetorium the ones brought forth.

As Grillo suggests, Caesar uses this episode of Petreius' opposite and antagonistic reaction to finding Caesar's men in his camp as a point of comparison to underscore his own *misericordia* (and, one could argue, *facilitas*).<sup>32</sup> A similar antagonistic relationship appears between Caesar and Cato in the debate of the *Bellum Catilinae*; while Caesar suggests holding the conspirators in custody, Cato calls for their execution

Clemency in the *Bellum Catilinae* is not without its issues, however. Though Sallust does not question Caesar's leniency in the narrator's voice, Cato the Younger presents critical opposition to *mansuetudo et misericordia*. In his speech, Cato names and attempts to redefine the mercy Caesar advocates:

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<sup>31</sup> Grillo (2008, 114-17) shows that Caesar creates a sense of completeness in this episode by first expressing his wish to resolve hostilities "*sine vulnere suorum* (*Civ.* 1.72.1)," a plan which many of his men did not support initially (*hoc consilium plerique non probabantur*, *Civ.* 1.72.7). When Caesar achieves his aim, he signals his accomplishment by repeating *sine vulnere* and *consiliumque eius a cunctis probabatur*.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*, 117-20.

Hic mihi quisquam mansuetudinem et misericordiam nominat? Iam pridem equidem nos vera vocabula rerum amisimus: quia bona aliena largiri liberalitas, malarum rerum audacia fortitudo vocatur, eo res publica in extremo sita est. Sint sane, quoniam ita se mores habent, liberales ex sociorum fortunis, sint misericordes in furibus aerari: ne illi sanguinem nostrum largiantur et, dum paucis sceleratis parcunt, bonos omnis perditum eant. (52.11-12)

Is someone here calling out to me for mercy and pity? Indeed, for a long time now we have lost the true names of things: because to hand out the property of another is called “generosity” and the boldness of evil deeds is called “bravery,” thus the state is on the brink of ruin. May they well be generous from the fortunes of our allies, seeing that they are thus disposed, let them be merciful toward thieves of the treasury: let those men not generously offer our blood nor go to destroy all good men while they spare a few wicked ones.

Cato declares that *mansuetudo et misericordia* are being misused. Though Caesar shows clemency to those manifestly guilty of *iniuria* in the *Bellum Civile*, Cato’s lament that pity might be shown to criminals (*sceleratis*) suggests that the former’s conception of leniency is vastly different from what is the norm. According to David Konstan (2001, 5), in the legal sphere, pity “was not something separate and apart from judgements concerning justice and desert, but rather presupposed the innocence [of the recipient].” Cato’s complaints against pity suggests that he does not agree that mercy is not shown to the guilty, for the very act of pardon presumes the innocence of the recipient, which is a striking contrast to Caesar’s suggested application of mercy, which is based not on the desert of the recipient but on other concerns related to expediency. In short, Cato shows that there can be more than one understanding of what mercy means: to him, mercy must be granted when the supposed offender deserves it; for Caesar, however, whether or not one shows mercy depends not on the innocence or desert of the offender but on other considerations, particularly the reputation of he who can offer it. Caesar’s brand of mercy is found in wartime; more importantly, it is found in the *Bellum Civile*.<sup>33</sup> Yet Cato does not merely provide an alternate definition of “mercy”, he questions the claim that the Senate

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<sup>33</sup> Hence Caesar’s *exempla* of mercy shown to the Rhodians and Carthaginians, which show mercy in the context of war. For Caesar’s redefinition of the debate on mercy when he speaks with Afranius, see Grillo (2008, 121-24).

would put themselves (and Rome) at risk with a policy of *severitas*; his response to the argument for leniency is that the Senate would face immediate danger if they adopted a policy of *mansuetudo et misericordia*. Furthermore, his crusade against mercy and his exhortation, “Let them be merciful,” which alienates those who accept Caesar’s view of mercy from the rest of Rome, implies that those who favor pity, i.e., Caesar, are as much a threat to the republic as the conspirators themselves.

The above discussion has uncovered a few points about Caesar and clemency in Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*. First, we find Caesar connects leniency to rational behavior—particularly behavior which goes against one’s desires—and he argues that to show mercy is to act properly. This approach to bestowing clemency, namely that expediency for he who shows mercy rather than the desert of the individual determines when pardon is offered, can also be found in Caesar’s *Bellum Civile*. Second, though Sallust offers Caesar praise for his clement and accomodating disposition, Cato is a vociferous critic of Caesar’s version of mercy and insinuates that showing mercy to the guilty can have bloody consequences. The debate on mercy reflects the same debate in the *Bellum Civile*: Caesar insists on mercy, but the Pompeians refuse to show it to the Caesarians. Moreover, the Pompeians who have been defeated sometimes claim that they deserve mercy from Caesar, which, as Grillo (2008, 120-24) rightly points out, implies that they are claiming innocence from the *iniuria* inflicted on Caesar. Caesar, however, redefines the terms under which mercy is shown, emphasizing that his enemies do not deserve mercy (i.e., that they are guilty of attempting to injure him) but that pardon is an expedient means of attaining peace for Rome. Though in the *Bellum Civile* we are urged to side with Caesar’s notion of mercy, Sallust leaves unresolved the question of which of these competing notions of pity is more correct; the Senate decides in favor of Cato’s proposal and executes the conspirators, yet

the reader who knows his history—or perhaps is keen enough to see what is unfolding with Antony and Octavian—is aware that Caesar’s warning against execution for fear of setting a dangerous precedent was all too accurate.<sup>34</sup>

In Velleius Paterculus and Lucan, by contrast, each author’s opinion of Caesar’s *clementia* will be far easier to read than it is here in the *Bellum Catilinae*. In fact, each author takes a side in the debate about clemency and its appropriate application: one will side with Caesar, the other with Cato. For now let us leave mercy and move on to *dignitas*, which is also a concern for Caesar both in the *Bellum Civile* and in the *Bellum Catilinae*.

### **Generosity**

Closely related to Caesar’s accommodating and clement nature is his generosity, which plays an important role in Sallust’s characterization of him. In the *synkrisis*, he calls Caesar great on account of his favors and generosity (*beneficiis ac munificentia magnus habebatur*, 54.2), says that he attains glory through giving and offering support in addition to pardon, which I mentioned in the section above (*dando sublevando ignoscundo...gloriam adeptus est*, 54.3), and he gives attention to his friends’ affairs at the neglect of his own why denying nothing if it is a gift worth giving (*negotiis amicorum intentus sua neglegere, nihil denegare quod dono dignum esset*, 54.4). Based on the frequency with which Sallust refers to Caesar’s generous nature, one can infer that it is a key component of his character.

How generosity adds to Caesar’s *gloria* can be found in Sallust’s final lines on him. Just after mentioning that Caesar constantly worked for the benefit of his friends and never denied a gift worth giving, he points out what Caesar hoped for in return: a command, an army, and a new war in which he could display his *virtus* (*sibi magnum imperium, exercitum, bellum novom*

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<sup>34</sup> Syme (1964, 122) gently nudges his reader toward considering that Caesar’s oration decries the actions of his heirs by deprecating anger and bloodshed and with that eerie reference to “a consul with an army”. Of course, even if the *Bellum Catilinae* was written too early to be referring to Antony and Octavian, Caesar’s words still ring true for Cicero, who was exiled for being the consul in charge when the conspirators were executed.

*exoptabat ubi virtus enitescere posset*, 54.4), which he certainly obtained (and more). Caesar's constant giving, in short, is social capital he hopes in to cash in for a powerful position of his own.

Like mercy, Caesar's generosity would not be news to his readers. Caesar himself also highlights his generosity toward others throughout the *Bellum Civile*. He calls several of his kind deeds toward others a *beneficium*, a word also used by Sallust to refer to generosity, as shown above. Much like Sallust, Caesar often leaves the precise nature of the *beneficium* vague. For example, when Lentulus Spinther asks Caesar to spare him, he recounts their old friendship and the favors Caesar has bestowed on him, which are very great (*obsecrat ut sibi parcat veteremque amicitiam commemorat Caesarisque in se beneficia exponit, quae erant maxima, Civ. 1.22.3*), yet the audience does not discover what the *beneficia* are.<sup>35</sup> True to his generous nature, Caesar spares him. In other places, *beneficium* refers explicitly to Caesar sparing the lives of his opponents, such as when the Pompeians at Ilerda thank Caesar's men for sparing their lives (cited above, pg. 25). Likewise, when Caesar chooses Lucius Vibullius Rufus to take his suit for peace to Pompey, he judges him suitable for the task by virtue of the favors bestowed on Rufus (*hunc pro suis beneficiis Caesar idoneum iudicaverat, Civ. 3.10.2*). *Beneficia*, in this case, refer to sparing Vibullius' life twice, which Caesar mentions when introducing him (*bis in potestatem pervenisse Caesaris atque ab eo esse dimissum, Civ. 3.10.1*).

Caesar also advertises his generosity toward his soldiers, which he uses to bind his men to him and to reward them for exceptional service. In Spain, Caesar borrows money from the tribunes and centurions and distributes it among the troops, thereby cementing the loyalty of both

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<sup>35</sup> We see the same vague use of *beneficium* when Caesar meets with some of the senatorial nobility at Corfinium (*Civ. 1.23.3*), when he arrives at Massilia (1.34.3), and at Utica (2.36.1).

his commanders and his soldiers (*Civ.* 1.39.3-4). He also demonstrates that extraordinary service does not go unrewarded by describing the gifts he bestows on Scaeva for his deeds (*Civ.* 3.53).

A critic of Caesar's generosity in the *Bellum Catilinae*, is, of course, Cato. Not only does he question "generosity" as a by-word for bribery with stolen goods (cited above, pg. 27), but insinuations of bribery resurface in the *synkrisis*; Cato counters Caesar's *dando sublevando ignoscundo* with engaging in no bribery (*nihil largiundo*, 54.3). Again, Cato's presence shows that there is more than one way to read a term like generosity. More to the point, if one interprets Cato's presence as antagonistic to Caesar's, then Cato is not being critical of just any definition of generosity, he is casting criticism upon Caesar's generosity. Moreover, as in my discussion of leniency above, Caesar's generosity in the *Bellum Catilinae* has striking parallels—both verbal and thematic—to the generosity found in the *Bellum Civile*.

Caesar's generosity, which goes hand-in-hand with his clemency and mildness, is repeatedly mentioned in the *Bellum Catilinae*, suggesting that it was a key contributor to Caesar's greatness. Sallust's references to Caesar's generosity are not without basis; Caesar himself highlights his generosity in the *Bellum Civile*. In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Caesar's generosity is another way in which he obtained glory, in part by using it as social capital for his own pursuits. The *Bellum Civile* likewise emphasizes that Caesar's generosity—his *beneficia*—aims to create relationships of obligation between himself and those upon whom he bestows this generosity. People like Lentulus Spinther and even towns like Massilia should feel bound to Caesar in return for the favors they have enjoyed. Using generosity to create bonds of loyalty, Caesar is munificent toward soldiers who have proven their loyalty with extraordinary deeds, such as Scaeva, thus binding his men even closer to him. We will revisit the use of gifts to obtain and strengthen loyalty when we turn to Catiline.

As I will discuss in the chapters on Velleius' Caesar and Lucan's Caesar, generosity and the gifts Caesar bestows on others—particularly mercy—will remain a key component of Caesar's portrait. It is a characteristic which authors will play up, play down, or outright twist to suit their version of Caesar and what he represents in the Principate.

### ***Dignitas***

*Dignitas*, a quality which refers to one's internal worth in society and manifests externally in the form of public offices and honors, drives Caesar to confront the Senate in the first book of the *Bellum Civile*. When his demand to stand for office *in absentia* is denied, he suggests in a speech to his troops that his *dignitas* has suffered *iniuria*: "He recalls his enemies' injustices against him; he complains that through them Pompey, whose honor and worthiness for office he always favored and assisted, was led astray and corrupted by envy and disparagement of the praise Caesar received." (*Omniū temporū iniurias inimicorū in se commemorat; a quibus deductum ac depravatum Pompeium queritur invidia atque obtreptione laudis suae, cuius ipse honori et dignitati semper faverit adiutorque fuerit, Civ. 1.7.1*) Though Caesar does not explicitly charge Pompey or the Senate with injuring his *dignitas* here, the implications of his statement are clear: while he supported Pompey's *honor* and *dignitas*, Pompey has not returned the favor. As a result, Caesar has been exposed to his enemies' attempts to harm him (*iniurias inimicorū*).<sup>36</sup> Caesar's charge against Pompey elaborates on a similar comment earlier in the first book, when he says that Pompey abandoned their friendship because he was spurred on by Caesar's enemies and "because he wanted no one to be his equal in *dignitas*," (*quod neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat, Civ. 1.4.4*) a sentiment which will reverberate in other

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<sup>36</sup> Raaflaub (1974, 125-149) discusses injustices inflicted on Caesar by his *inimici* as one of his motives for war, citing Caesar's letter to Pompey (*Civ. 1.9.2*), his reply to Lentulus Spinther (1.22.5), his address to the Senate (1.32.2ff.), and his answer to Afranius at the Pompeians' surrender (1.85.1ff., 5ff., 8ff) in addition to this passage.

portrayals of Caesar's civil war.<sup>37</sup> He also elucidates the value he places on *dignitas* in a letter to Pompey:

Sibi semper primam fuisse dignitatem vitaeque potioem. Doluisse se quod populi Romani beneficium sibi per contumeliam ab inimicis extorqueretur ereptoque semestri imperio in urbem retraheretur, cuius absentis rationem haberi proximis comitiis populus iussisset. Tamen hanc iacturam honoris sui rei publicae causa aequo animo tulisse; cum litteras ad senatum miserit, ut omnes ab exercitibus discederent, ne id quidem impetravisse. Tota Italia dilectus haberi, retineri legiones II, quae ab se simulatione Parthici belli sint abductae, civitatem esse in armis. Quonam haec omnia nisi ad suam perniciem pertinere? Sed tamen ad omnia se descendere paratum atque omnia pati rei publicae causa. (*Civ.* 1.9.2-5)

“For him, *dignitas* has always come first and is more important than his life. He has been pained because the kindness of the Roman people toward him was wrenched away through insult by his enemies and, with the six months of his command having been ripped away, he was being dragged back to the city, though the people had ordered that his suit be considered for the next election, even if he were absent. Yet he bore this insult against his honor with a calm mind for the sake of the republic; when he sent a letter to the Senate asking that everyone relinquish their armies, indeed he did not obtain his wish. Levies were being held in all of Italy, two of his legions are being held back, which were taken away from him under the pretense of the Parthian war, and the state is in arms. Where do all these things lead if not his destruction? Yet he is prepared to yield to everything and endure everything for the sake the republic.”

Of Caesar's reasons for going to war, *dignitas*—particularly his defense of it against the attempts of a few to injure it—ranks among the top. Despite the importance of *dignitas* and his claim that Rome, he declares that defense of his *dignitas* is still subordinate to the good of the state (*rei publicae causa*), for which he is prepared to endure everything. Caesar displays a mix of attitudes: one of self-sacrifice, the other of self-defense. Though these attitudes seem contradictory, in previous and future explications of Caesar's ideology and reasons for fighting in the *Bellum Civile* we find the general linking his struggle for his *dignitas* with fighting on behalf of the republic to make the two causes one and the same.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, 149ff.

<sup>38</sup> Caesar combines his cause with several other causes associated with defending freedom and the republic, including defense of the tribunes (*Civ.* 1.7.1 and 7-8) and defense of *libertas* and the *populus Romanus* (*Civ.* 1.22.5, and, voiced by Crastinus, 3.91.2-3).

The issue of *dignitas* and what one ought to do in the face of *iniuria* is central in Sallust's characterization of Caesar. That this quality is a key point should alone invite the reader to set Sallust's Caesar against Caesar's self-portrait in the *Bellum Civile*. Sallust slightly re-writes Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Catilinae*, not by directly altering his characterization of the general but by giving Cato a voice that is antagonistic to and otherwise critical of the picture Caesar puts forth. As mentioned above, Sallust's Caesar argues that the Senate ought to base its decision regarding their penalty on rational considerations instead of being driven by irrational states, particularly anger (*ira*) or desire (*lubido*). In the example of the Senate's conduct toward Carthage, he raises the issue of *dignitas*, here slightly modified to resonate as a basic call for men to act in a way worthy of their position: "They sought what would be worthy of them rather than what the law allowed to happen to those offenders." (*Quid se dignum foret quam quid in illos iure fieri posset quaerebant*, 51.6) *Dignitas* is hinted at through the use of *dignum*, namely, what would best reflect the ancestral Senate's worth. Caesar finally uses the catchword *dignitas* in an exhortation to the Senate: "You must similarly see to this, namely that among you the crime committed by Publius Lentulus and the rest do not prevail over your sense of worth (*dignitas*) and that you do not consult in the interest of your anger rather than your reputation."<sup>39</sup> (*Hoc item vobis providendum est, patres conscripti, ne plus apud vos valeat P. Lentuli et ceterorum scelus quam vostra dignitas, neu magis irae vestrae quam famae consulatis*, 51.7) The words *dignum/dignitas* connect the senators to their forefathers and emphasize that being lenient would best maintain and reflect their *dignitas* and reputation, just as it did in the past.

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<sup>39</sup> Syme (1964, 118) notes that Caesar is allowed to mention *dignitas* only once, whereas Sallust applies the word to Cato several times and lets Catiline lay claim to *dignitas* several times, as I discuss below. The struggle over *dignitas* is, as I argue below, reminiscent of the *Bellum Civile* and will be a recurring theme in future narratives of Caesar's civil war.

In the examples above, Caesar contrasts *dignitas* not only with *ira*, which falls into the same category of irrational impulses as *lubido*, but also with *ius*, which indicates legality bestowed on an action motivated by *ira/lubido*, particularly retribution, showing that the course of action best reflecting one's station could go against both one's personal desires and what is within one's right to do.<sup>40</sup> In other words, *dignitas* is maintained when the Senate shows control over its passions and does not use *ius* to justify the gratification of personal desires. According to Caesar, the action which would best take the Senate's *dignitas* into consideration would be to show some mercy to the captured conspirators. In short, worth, rationality, and *clementia* are bound together in Caesar's speech, much as they are in the *Bellum Civile*: in his fight against the injustice done to his *dignitas* by his enemies (here *inimici* rather than *hostes*), he chooses to employ a policy of *clementia* when he defeats them, often noting that he does so despite the injuries he has suffered (i.e., the choice does not stem from any assumptions regarding innocence nor from his personal desires, which, one could assume, center on retribution).

The connection between *dignitas* and *clementia* found in Caesar's speech is not left unchallenged, however. In the *synkrisis*, *dignitas* is applied not to Caesar but to Cato: "[Caesar] was made famous through his kindness and pity, severity had added *dignitas* to [Cato]." (*Ille mansuetudine et misericordia clarus factus, huic severitas dignitatem addiderat*, 54.2) The lines are clearly drawn; according to the *synkrisis*, Cato's *severitas*, demonstrated by his insistence that the conspirators be executed, increased his *dignitas*, yet leniency does not have quite the same result for Caesar. That Cato keeps him from laying claim to *dignitas* through clemency is hardly irrelevant to their relationship. In the *Bellum Civile* Caesar names Cato as one of the *inimici* trying to harm him and his *dignitas*: "Long-standing enmity with Caesar and the pain of being denied office urge on Cato." (*Catonem veteres inimicitiae Caesaris incitant et dolor*

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<sup>40</sup> Vretska (1976, 521).

*repulsae*, *Civ.* 1.4.1) Furthermore, Cato's suicide, an act which defines him in future tales of the civil war and illustrates his personal *severitas*, denied Caesar the chance to pardon him. Because Caesar's *dignitas* is so closely tied to his assertion that he fights for Rome and that the mercy he shows to his enemies is a tool used in this fight for Rome and his *dignitas*, it might not be going too far to say that the philosopher-statesman attempted to harm Caesar's *dignitas* not only while alive but also when dead; his suicide denied Caesar the chance to exercise mercy, which was also a means by which he tried to regain *dignitas*. The afterlife of Cato's suicide also served to increase his *dignitas* as he became the symbol of anti-Caesarian republicanism.

In the *Bellum Catilinae* Sallust shows several sides to *dignitas* and how it is appropriated by and assigned to several characters in the narrative. For instance, Caesar and Cato fight over *dignitas* in the speeches and *synkrisis*; in his speech, Caesar links *dignitas* to leniency in his speech while Cato receives *dignitas* for his severity when the men are set side-by-side. The differences in ideology and the struggle over *dignitas* mimic Caesar's fight with the Senate in the *Bellum Civile*. The Senate's *severitas* injures Caesar's *dignitas*. By contrast (or perhaps in response), Caesar adopts a policy of leniency in the course of defending his *dignitas* and the two values become inexorably linked in his text, for clemency becomes a tool in Caesar's fight for his *dignitas* (and for the republic).

In the *Bellum Catilinae*, *dignitas* is a force which leaves its impression on the major characters of the narrative; it is the reason Caesar calls for more lenient measures against the conspirators while Cato's *dignitas* is increased through *severitas*, and, as I discuss below, *dignitas* is central to Catiline's struggle. Future authors will allude to Caesar's *dignitas* as a force driving Caesar and Pompey to civil war, but it will pale in comparison to a more poignant issue, namely whether Caesar's victory sparked a period of improvement or decline by being the

catalyst for the Principate. Looking ahead, Velleius Paterculus and Lucan are more opinionated regarding Caesar's defense of his *dignitas*, though *dignitas* and clemency are not as tightly intertwined later as they are here and in the *Bellum Civile*.

### **Self-restraint**

As the above sections illustrated, one principal aspect of Caesar's characterization in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* and in the *Bellum Civile* is his generous nature, exemplified by gift-giving and clemency. With this in mind, the next quality I am about to discuss, namely self-restraint, might seem difficult to reconcile with Caesar's other traits because it involves abstinence rather than effusiveness. According to ancient thought, virtues tend to be divided into two semantic fields, and it is rare that a man will possess virtues from both fields. Thus, Cato is rarely characterized by generosity and one would be hard-pressed to find Caesar being praised for *severitas*. Sallust's *synkrisis* illustrates this divide, yet Caesar, despite being famed for an effusive quality like generosity, is the one to advise the Senate to exercise self-restraint: "So in greatest fortune there is the least license: it is proper neither to be a partisan nor to hate, and, least of all, to be angry." (*Ita in maxuma fortuna minuma licentia est: neque studere neque odisse, sed minime irasci decet*, 51.13) Though Cato is assigned qualities in the *synkrisis* which relate to self-restraint, such as *constantia* (54.3), *modestia* (54.5), and *innocens abstinentia* (54.6), Caesar's speech advocating control of emotions suggests that Sallust was alert to the fact that the image Caesar wanted to project, particularly during the civil war, was one of moderation and self-control.<sup>41</sup>

Indeed, the value on self-restraint in Caesar's speech corresponds to Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*. One of the first places Caesar raises the issue of self-restraint is in a letter from Pompey to Caesar:

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<sup>41</sup> See Grillo (2008, 58-79).

Caesarem quoque pro sua dignitate debere et studium et iracundiam suam rei publicae dimittere neque adeo graviter irasci inimicis, ut cum illis nocere se speret rei publicae noceat. (*Civ.* 1.8.3)

For his own sense of worth (*dignitas*), Caesar also ought to dismiss both his partisanship and his anger for the benefit of the republic and not be so deeply angry at his enemies that he harms the republic, though he was hoping to harm his enemies.

Caesar sets up Pompey for a fall through this letter; though it is Pompey who advises his former father-in-law against anger lest he harm Rome, Caesar shows throughout the rest of the *Bellum Civile* how the Pompeians do not exactly practice what their leader preaches. By juxtaposing episodes of Caesar's mercy and suits for peace with episodes of the violent consequences of his enemies' *iracundia*, Caesar shows that he can restrain his emotions—particularly *ira*—but his opponents do not. Take, for example, Bibulus' actions when he captures some of Caesar's ships:

Bibulus enim Corcyrae certior factus de adventu Caesaris sperans alicui se parti onustarum navium occurrere posse inanibus occurrit et nactus circiter XXX in eas indiligentiae suae ac doloris iracundia erupit omnisque incendit eodemque igne nautas dominosque navium interfecit magnitudine poenae reliquos deterreri sperans. (*Civ.* 3.8.3)

For Bibulus, informed of Caesar's arrival and hoping that he would be able to confront some part of the cargo-laden ships, encounters empty ones. After he acquired around thirty ships, his anger at his own lack of diligence and resentment burst forth and he set fire to all the ships, and with the same fire he killed the sailors and masters of the ships, hoping that the rest would be scared off by the magnitude of the punishment.

Bibulus, finding that he did not obtain his goal of seizing full ships, sets fire to them and kills the sailors and masters of those ships in a fit of anger. Not long after this episode, Caesar reports his efforts to again contact Pompey to negotiate a peace treaty (*Civ.* 3.10). The contrast between Bibulus' incendiary anger and Caesar's message of peace to Pompey reinforces the point in Pompey's letter that *not* dismissing anger is indeed harmful to the state, yet the Pompeians, not Caesar, are the ones in the *Bellum Civile* who have trouble putting aside their anger. The Pompeians' lack of restraint of their emotions and their lack of control over their appetites, demonstrated by the *luxuria* in the Pompeian camp at Pharsalus (*Civ.* 3.96), casts them as

somewhat barbaric.<sup>42</sup> These barbaric behaviors in the Pompeian camp make up part of Caesar's attempt to portray his enemy as a threat to the state. He, by contrast, portrays himself as exercising self-control and, not coincidentally, as the state's preserver.

Just as Sallust's Caesar connects dismissal of anger to preservation of one *dignitas* in his speech and essentially tells the senators that anything short of cool rationality is not appropriate for men of their station, so too does Pompey reportedly exhort Caesar to put aside *his* anger for the sake of his *dignitas* and the republic. The parallel between Caesar's speech and this letter suggests that Sallust was aware of Caesar's self-portrayal as a man who displays self-restraint and who does not let anger drive his actions, whether in the 60s BCE or in the *Bellum Civile*.

In conclusion, though Cato was assigned qualities in the *synkrisis* which suggest he was the one who possessed self-control, Caesar's advocacy in the *Bellum Catilinae* of curbing one's emotions, particularly anger, suggests that he wished to present himself as a man who keeps his emotions in check. This suggestion is supported by Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile* as one who exercises control over his emotions. In fact, I would suggest that the emphasis on keeping emotions in check in Caesar's speech is a nod to Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*.

Sallust does not let this presentation go uncriticized, however. Caesar's advocacy of self-control in the *Bellum Catilinae* has a shadow of ambiguity cast over it by Cato's presence, particularly in the *synkrisis*. Perhaps the shadow cast by Cato in the *Bellum Catilinae* could extend to Caesar's similar self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*; in the war of words fought

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<sup>42</sup> Grillo (2008, 139-41, 158-72, 181-87) addresses *iracundia* among the Pompeians as part of Caesar's strategy of barbarization of the enemy, which feeds into Caesar's larger strategy of casting the Pompeian side as an "anti-community" whose "anti-values" are a threat to the state.

during the civil war, Caesar could have received the same criticism as seen in Sallust, namely that he was a man who was as out of control as Catiline.<sup>43</sup>

The relationship between Caesar and self-control remains an issue in later portrayals of Caesar. As in the *Bellum Civile* and the *Bellum Catilinae*, self-restraint is closely connected to whether an author portrays Caesar as beneficial or a threat to Rome. Sallust himself gives no outright judgement; he prefers to lay out for his audience the debate and offer them a chance to judge. Sallust's lack of judgement as narrator, particular when compared to the more openly opinionated narrative voices of Velleius and Lucan, suggests that the debate over what is best for the Republic was still going on, if not also hinting at Sallust's own indecision regarding Caesar's effect on Rome.

Thus far we have seen that several major traits found in Sallust's characterization of Caesar—both via his speech and in the *synkrisis*—are also found in Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*. The traits which appear in this section reflect how Caesar wanted to be seen by his peers, though whether he truly possessed those traits or whether those traits, as embodied by Caesar, were beneficial to the state was an issue of debate, as Cato's presence shows. Well known traits, such as clemency and generosity, are central to the description of Caesar in the *synkrisis* and can show up in the speeches. By contrast, traits which Caesar promotes in his self-fashioning, such as *dignitas* and restraint over one's emotions, are key issues which Caesar and the Senate fought over toward the end of the Republic and tend to appear via Caesar's speech in the *Bellum Catilinae* but are not assigned to him in the *synkrisis*. The conflict between Caesar and Cato over terms like clemency and generosity in the *Bellum Catilinae* not only presages their future conflicts, particularly during the civil war, but also recreates the struggle between

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<sup>43</sup> Cicero (*Fam.* 16.2) recalls Caesar's "threatening and bitter letter" to the Senate, suggesting that not everyone saw the general as in control of his emotions.

competing ideologies at the end of the Republic. Furthermore, by choosing to compare Caesar and Cato, Sallust frames the struggle in Republican terms with a contention over Republican values. This point will be worth keeping in mind as I move on to examine Imperial portrayals of Caesar; in the Imperial period the terms of the debate (and the comparisons between Caesar and other characters) will shift and, as I will illustrate, Caesar's qualities as a leader or as a representative of the emperors will come to the fore, while his value as a Republican figure diminishes.

With Sallust's portrait of Caesar in mind, I turn to Catiline, whose characterization blends some of Caesar's qualities with vices that look like corrupted forms of Caesar's virtues.

## **1.2 The Caesar in Catiline**

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, Catiline presents several links with Caesar within the *Bellum Catilinae*. B. Shimron (1967, 341-42) in particular has catalogued instances in the *Bellum Catilinae* where Catiline possesses perverted parallels of Caesar's virtues in the *synkrisis*. In this section, I will look at the ways in which Catiline is similar to Sallust's Caesar and the connections he has to elements of Caesar as presented in the *Bellum Civile*. In particular I will examine several qualities reviewed in the previous section, such as *dignitas*, generosity, and self-restraint (or a lack thereof), along with other qualities which join Catiline closely to Caesar's self-depiction in the *Bellum Civile*, such as slogans of *libertas* and the characterization of their respective armies. As in the examination of Caesar, one will sometimes find a striking difference between how Sallust characterizes Catiline via description of his character and actions and how the revolutionary is depicted via speeches.

### **“Generosity”**

As the previous section demonstrated, generosity is integral to Sallust's characterization of Caesar, but he is not the only generous figure in the *Bellum Catilinae*. Catiline also shows

largess, but he exemplifies corrupted *beneficia* and gift-giving. He uses gift-giving to corrupt youths and entice them to join his plot: “Indeed, as each one’s enthusiasm burned because of his age, to some he offered prostitutes, for others he bought dogs and horses. Overall he spared neither expense nor his modesty, provided that he made them indebted and loyal to him.” (*Nam ut quousque studium ex aetate flagrabat, aliis scorta praeberere, aliis canes atque equos mercari, postremo neque sumptui neque modestiae suae parcere dum illos obnoxios fidosque sibi faceret*, 14.6) That gifts are being used to secure loyalty is not bad per se, but the gifts offered seek to further corrupt the recipient. Catiline twists Rome’s culture of gift-giving by offering gifts which pander to the particular vices of those he is trying to woo to his side, thus rewarding men for their moral failings rather than encouraging them to virtue. He also uses the promise of spoils of war to secure his followers: “Then Catiline promised them forgiveness of debts, proscription of the rich, magistracies, priesthoods, plunder, and everything else which war and the desire of the victors bring.” (*Tum Catilina polliceri tabulas novas, proscriptionem locupletium, magistratus sacerdotia rapinas, alia omnia quae bellum atque libido victorum fert*, 21.2) These spoils are a prime example of what Cato refers to as “bribery using another’s goods,” (*bona aliena largiri*, 52.11) yet they are also reminiscent of the description of the spoils the Pompeians anticipated enjoying once they had defeated Caesar’s army in the *Bellum Civile*:

Iamque inter se palam de praemiis ac de sacerdotiis contendebant in annosque consulatum definiebant, alii domos bonaque eorum qui in castris erant Caesaris petebant...

Et L. Domitius in consilio dixit placere sibi bello confecto ternas tabellas dari ad iudicandum eis qui ordinis essent senatorii belloque una cum ipsis interfuissent, sententiasque de singulis ferrent, qui Romae remansissent quique intra praesidia Pompei fuissent neque operam in re militari praestitissent: unam fore tabellam, qui liberandos omni periculo censerent, alteram, qui capitis damnarent, tertiam, qui pecunia multarent. Postremo omnes aut de honoribus suis aut de praemiis pecuniae aut de persequendis inimicitiis agebant, nec quibus ratione superare possent sed quem ad modum uti victoria deberent cogitabant. (*Civ.*, 3.82.3, 83.3-4)

Already they were openly arguing among themselves about rewards and priesthoods, and they were assigning the consulship every year, and some were staking claims for the homes and property of those who were in Caesar's camp...

And Lucius Domitius said in the war council that it was pleasing to him that, after the war was over, three-fold tablets be given to those of the senatorial class who had been involved in the war along with them for passing judgement, and they should pass judgement concerning the individuals who had remained in Rome or who had been within Pompey's bulwarks but had not offered help in military operations: they would have one tablet for those they deemed to be free from all punishment, a second for those they would execute, and a third for those they would punish with a fine. Overall everyone went on about their office or monetary rewards or prosecuting their enemies, and they were not thinking about how they would defeat the enemy but how they ought to enjoy their victory.

The Pompeians' pre-battle plans of what to take and who to punish with death or confiscation of goods is strikingly similar to Catiline's promises of riches, offices, and proscriptions. Both passages suggest that the Pompeians and the Catilinarians are greedy, vengeful, and that what brings these men to fight is not the welfare of the republic but their own base interests.<sup>44</sup> The self-interested mentality shared by the Pompeians and the Catilinarians causes disunity, abandonment of the cause, and, ultimately, defeat.<sup>45</sup> Many of the men who joined Catiline's plot abandon him after they receive news that the captured conspirators have been executed (57.1). Likewise, Caesar makes the Pompeians' disunity shine through as leaders abandon their soldiers (or vice versa) and Pompeian soldiers lack trust in their leaders.<sup>46</sup>

While Catiline promises his men spoils from others, he is also prodigal with his own riches (*sui profusus*, 5.4). His tendency to waste his own fortune goes beyond Caesar's habit of giving and aiding his friends' affairs.<sup>47</sup> He exemplifies Caesar's generous nature in a corrupted form; instead of "neglect" of one's own affairs one finds waste, instead of using gifts to help friends, gifts are, as Cato suggested in his speech, a means of bribery and entrapment. Catiline

<sup>44</sup> Grillo (2008, 165-67) highlights the Pompeians' self-interest as part of their "anti-values".

<sup>45</sup> For disunity in the Pompeian camp, cf. *ibid.* (167-70). Most of Catiline's followers abandon him after the execution of Lentulus, Cethegus, and the other captured conspirators (57.1). Cethegus stands out as an example of dissent and disunity in the cause when he complains of a lack of action (43.3).

<sup>46</sup> Grillo (2008, 166-70).

<sup>47</sup> Shimron (1967, 341).

not only squanders his own resources but also promises his conspirators goods belonging to others. Finally, though Caesar's giving in the *Bellum Catilinae* aims at obtaining command of an army and a war (54.4), Catiline is generous in order to satisfy a more dangerous desire: capturing the republic (*lubido maxuma...rei publicae capiundae*, 5.6).

Catiline's brand of generosity, particularly when compared to Caesar's generosity and Cato's warnings about so-called "generosity," reflects in part how Catiline is a product of a general decline in Rome's *mores*.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, Catiline's promises of offices and base rewards in order to entice his followers parallel Caesar's description of the Pompeians, who are likewise led to war out of a desire for riches, vengeance, or to satisfy an already bellicose nature. Such greed among Sallust's Catilinarians and Caesar's Pompeians signifies two things: first, that both parties are meant to be seen as not fighting to safeguard the republic but represent threats to Rome and its values; second, the self-interested greed found in both the Pompeian and Catilinarian camps underlies the disunity of both groups and forecasts their failure.

### **(Lack of) Self-Restraint**

Closely related to Catiline's brand of generosity is his lack of self-restraint. As I mentioned above in my discussion of Caesar's self-control, particularly in light of his generous nature, the Pompeians' inability to check their emotions in the *Bellum Civile* and contributes to Caesar's characterization of them as threats to the state.<sup>49</sup> Catiline likewise embodies Caesar's warning (both in the *Bellum Catilinae* and the *Bellum Civile*!) that men lacking self-restraint are harmful to Rome. Sallust paints Catiline's portrait in the *Bellum Catilinae* with barbarizing colors similar to the picture of the Pompeians in the *Bellum Civile*, emphasizing Catiline's uncontrollable appetite with terms signaling desire, such as *cupiditas*, *cupere*, *lubido*, and using terms like "savage (*ferox*)" to more explicitly characterize Catiline and his men as barbaric or, at

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<sup>48</sup> *Cat.* 5.9; 6-13.

<sup>49</sup> See above, pg. 37ff.

the very least, as examples of Rome's departure from its traditional values and habits.<sup>50</sup> In addition to and lacking control over desires, Catiline also experiences ever-increasing rage (*furor*); *furor* indicates not just violent anger but a complete lack of control over one's impulses.<sup>51</sup> For example, Catiline loses control when he is driven out of the Senate: "Then he says in a fury, 'Since I truly am surrounded and am driven headlong by my enemies, I will extinguish my fire with ruin.'" (*Tum ille furibundus, "Quoniam quidem circumventus," inquit "ab inimicis praeceps agor, incendium meum ruina restinguam,"* 31.9) Though Sallust shuns words like *ira*, *iratus*, and *irasci* around Catiline and his conspirators, the emotional vocabulary he does use indicates emotions already out of control. As men without self-control, Catiline and his conspirators present a danger to Rome: their plot is called a crime (*scelus*, 4.4), just as the *Bellum Civile* employs a characterization of the Pompeians lacking control over their emotions in order to present them as a threat to Rome.

In short, Caesar and Sallust appeal to similar tropes by linking a lack of self-control with being a threat to the republic. Sallust characterizes Catiline as lacking control over his emotions and appetite and, accordingly, Catiline's plans for revolution are cast as harmful to state. Moreover, his lack of self-restraint, seen in part by profligate waste of his fortune and encouragement of his followers similarly indulging (rather than shunning) their vices, presages the failure of his plot. Similarly, Caesar characterizes the Pompeians as lacking control over their emotions and appetites with, for example, episodes showing enemies like Bibulus being driven by rage or descriptions of greed and *luxuria* in the Pompeian camp. Also like Catiline,

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<sup>50</sup> Catiline "burns with desire (*ardens in cupiditatibus*, 5.4)," and "his destructive mind always desired unreasonable, incredible things out of his reach (*vastus animus immoderata incredibilia nimis alta semper cupiebat*, 5.5)." For *ferox*: *animus ferox*, 5.7, 38.1; *ferocia animi*, 61.4, *ferox*, 52.18. cf. Grillo (2008, 132-35) for an overview of terms indicating barbaric behavior in Cicero, Sallust, and Catullus deployed to denigrate a target and suggest that a person with such qualities is harmful to Rome.

<sup>51</sup> *OLD furor* 2. *Furor* will reappear as a key term in Lucan's *Pharsalia* (chapter 3).

the Pompeians' lack of restraint indicate that they do not possess traditional Roman values and are thus a threat to the state, despite their own claims of fighting on the state's behalf.

### ***Dignitas***

As I discussed above, *dignitas* was a key issue in Caesar's *Bellum Civile* and was a principal component of Caesar's argument against execution of the conspirators in the *Bellum Catilinae*, yet the *synkrisis* awarded *dignitas* not to Caesar for his clemency but to Cato for his *severitas*. The choice to award *dignitas* to Cato suggests that Caesar's concept of what increases *dignitas*, particularly as found in the *Bellum Civile*, is debatable. Sallust's ambivalence toward Caesar's *dignitas*—particularly its importance vis-à-vis the welfare of the state—becomes clearer when one takes a look at another character in the text associated *dignitas*: Catiline. Catiline's preoccupation with his self-worth is reminiscent of Caesar's in the *Bellum Civile*, particularly because the former professes in a letter to the Senate that it is one of his principal reasons for taking up the "public cause of the wretched" (*publicam miserorum causam*, 35.3): "Having been spurred on by injuries and insults and because I have been deprived of the reward for my toil and industry, I could not take hold of the position befitting my standing." (*Iniuriis contumeliisque concitatus, quod fructu laboris industriaeque meae privatus statum dignitatis non obtinebam*, 35.3) At the end of the letter Catiline repeats the slogan of *dignitas* when he explains why he is leaving Rome: "I have pursued the hopes of maintaining what is left of my *dignitas*." (*Spes relicuae dignitatis conservandae sum secutus*, 35.4)

Strikingly, Catiline also receives the final association with *dignitas* at the end of the monograph when he, realizing that the battle is lost, rushes into the enemy "mindful of his class and of his previous *dignitas*." (*memor generis atque pristinae suae dignitatis*, 60.7) His headlong rush into battle as he remains mindful of his *dignitas* shows that he was serious about preserving his sense of worth. Moreover, this preoccupation with *dignitas* is similar to Caesar's

treatment of it in the *Bellum Civile*, where he claims in a letter to Pompey that his *dignitas* is more important than his life (cited above, pg. 33). In fact, the above excerpts from Catiline's letter to Catulus as well as Sallust's description of Catiline's other letters to his fellow aristocrats, wherein he complains of falling prey to a faction of his enemies (*factioni inimicorum resistere nequiverit*, 34.2), echo several other catchwords and ideas related to Caesar's defense of his *dignitas*.<sup>52</sup> For example, Catiline complains that he is kept from success by a *factio inimicorum*, which Caesar also asserts: "He has been grieved that the kindness of the Roman people has been wrenched away from him through abuse by his personal enemies." (*Doluisse se quod populi Romani beneficium sibi per contumeliam ab inimicis extorqueretur*, *Civ.* 1.9.2) A cadre of men is also blamed for inflicting injustices and insults (*iniuriis contumeliisque*) on Catiline and Caesar, keeping them from office. Likewise, both Catiline and Caesar consider the office denied to them to be deserved: Catiline says that he was deprived the reward for his effort (*fructu laboris industriaeque meae privatus*), while Caesar claims that the right to stand for office which has been ripped away (*extorqueretur*) was bestowed upon him by the people (*populi Romani beneficium*). Earlier, in Caesar's speech to the thirteenth legion, what he had done that would justify such a favor from the Roman people; in addition to working to support Pompey's *dignitas* (*Civ.* 1.7.1, cited above), he and his men "had successfully supported the republic, had fought very many successful battles, and had subdued all of Gaul and Germany." (*rem publicam felicissime gesserint plurimaque proelia secunda fecerint, omnem Galliam Germaniamque pacaverint*, *Civ.* 1.7.7) Caesar's list of achievements as general justifies his claim that he has been done wrong by Pompey and his other enemies.

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<sup>52</sup> A high concentration of these catchwords and ideas can be found in Caesar's letter to Pompey, 1.9.2-5, cited above.

*Dignitas* reigns supreme as Catiline's personal motive for revolution and it ranks among Caesar's primary personal motivations, as well. The importance of *dignitas* is brought to the fore because each man claims to be the victim of injury to his sense of worth by a powerful group of a few men who insist on denying him of a deserved position. That *dignitas* remains a pervasive slogan and motive throughout both the *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Civile* is remarkable, particularly when compared to the comparatively smaller role *dignitas* plays in Imperial presentations of Caesar.

The sections above reveal the qualities in Catiline which recall not only characteristics of Sallust's Caesar but also Caesar's *Bellum Civile* through parallels with either Caesar or the Pompeians. For example, Catiline and Caesar share a preoccupation with *dignitas*. The sense of self-worth represents Catiline's personal motive for the plot, much like Caesar's defense of his *dignitas* in his commentaries gives him a personal reason to lead his army into Italy. In contrast to Catiline's appeal to *dignitas* as a reason to fight, Sallust's Caesar appeals to *dignitas* in order to prevent future violence and the *Bellum Civile* shows Caesar attempting to prevent war despite the injury done to his *dignitas*. However, unlike either Sallust's Caesar or the Caesar of the *Bellum Civile*, Catiline and his men lack self-restraint; Catiline's own profligate nature, along with his promises of various offices and forgiveness of debts and gifts which appeal to the vices of his men, adds a shade of barbarization to the conspirators, showing that the Catilinarians lack the Roman-ness needed to succeed. In fact, the desires of Catiline's men together with Catiline's lack of control over his emotions liken them to the Pompeians in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, whom Caesar also characterizes as lacking Romanness. These qualities which cast both the Catilinarians and the Pompeians as somehow other also forecast each party's lack of success.

It is striking that much of the evidence for Catiline's more barbaric qualities comes from Sallust's narrative voice; when one looks at how Sallust's Catiline presents himself *in propria persona*, so to speak, the portrait found is closer to Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile* than to Caesar's presentation of the barbaric Pompeians. Two characteristics in particular are worth exploring: first, Catiline's self-presentation as a defender of the state, and, second, the depiction of Catiline's soldiers.

### **Catiline and Caesar as defenders of the state**

In addition to being defenders of their own *dignitas*, Caesar and Catiline present themselves as defenders of the state against a faction of a few (*factio paucorum*). One such slogan used in connection with defending the state is freedom (*libertas*). Catiline's first speech to his fellow conspirators mentions *libertas* as one justification for the conspiracy: "Every day my mind is enflamed when I think about what our state of life will be unless we ourselves assert our liberty." (*Mihi in dies magis animus accenditur, quom considero quae condicio vitae futura sit, nisi nosmet ipsi vindicamus in libertatem*, 20.6) It has been recognized that the phrase *vindicare in libertatem* is commonly used as a slogan when one acts against the established government of Rome.<sup>53</sup> This revolutionary commonplace, however, also puts Catiline in the company of Caesar, who recently employed the phrase in the *Bellum Civile*. Caesar explains to Lentulus Spinther (and his audience) that he brought his army into Italy "so that he might defend himself from outrages by his personal enemies, so that he might restore to their office the tribunes of the plebs, who were driven out of the state in the aforementioned matter, and so that he might assert his and the Roman people's liberty, which has been oppressed by a faction of a few." (*uti se a contumeliis inimicorum defenderet, ut tribunos plebis in ea re ex civitate expulsos in suam dignitatem restitueret, ut se et populum Romanum factione paucorum oppressum in*

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<sup>53</sup> See Vretska (1976, 309-10).

*libertatem vindicaret*, Civ. 1.22.5) As Caesar lists the reasons why he has come to Italy, the scope of his concern widens: he starts at the level of personal defense against outrages (*contumeliae*), then he moves on to defending the tribunes of the plebs, and he caps his list with a mission of freeing the Roman people (and himself) from oppression by a few (*in libertatem vindicaret*). Caesar joins his personal mission with a much larger mission, namely, restoring freedom to the Roman people. What is particularly poignant about his presentation as the Roman people's defender is how he links himself to them by saying that he asserts liberty for them and for himself, pitting him and the Roman people against a particular—though unnamed—group of men who threaten their freedom (i.e., the Pompeians); their mission is his and—Caesar likely wants his reader to infer—vice versa.

Catiline similarly connects his personal goals with benefit to the Republic and, like Caesar, aligns himself with the people of Rome, pitting his side against a few powerful men. Just after he calls for his men to assert their liberty, he laments, “The republic has submitted to the power and jurisdiction of a few powerful men,” (*Res publica in paucorum potentium ius atque dicionem concessit*, 20.7) while “the rest of us, vigorous, good men, both nobles and common, we are the rabble, without esteem, without influence.” (*Ceteri omnes, strenui boni nobiles atque ignobiles, volgus fuimus sine gratia, sine auctoritate*, 20.7) Casting himself and his men as the “good men” (*boni*), Catiline implies that the order of things has been perverted and, furthermore, that he and his men are being wrongfully deprived of offices, power, and money (20.6-8). Caesar, too, portrays the Pompeians as throwing everything into disorder (*omnia divina humanaque iura permiscentur*, Civ. 1.6.8)

In short, Catiline, like Caesar, uses the slogan *in libertatem vindicare* to justify defying the Senate, whom both Catiline and Caesar depict as a cadre of oppressive men. In fact, Catiline

echoes Caesar's *factio paucorum*, who are also Caesar's *inimici*, in the expressions "the power of a few," (*potentia paucorum*, 58.11) "a few powerful men," (*paucorum potentium*, cited above) and "a faction of personal enemies." (*factio inimicorum*, 34.2) In addition, Catiline connects personal benefit with benefit to the republic, because he, as he implies in his first speech, will restore the proper order of things (*si res publica valeret, formidini essemus*, 20.7). Caesar also suggests that he is restoring order, both by associating himself with *libertas* and by calling the actions of Pompey and his supporters unprecedented (*quod ante id tempus accidit numquam*, *Civ.* 1.6.7) and generally disruptive (*aguntur omnia raptim atque turbate*, *Civ.* 1.5.1).<sup>54</sup>

Connected to Catiline's slogan of *libertas* and his fight against the power of a few (*potentia paucorum*) is his claim to defend those who are defenseless. In a letter to Catulus Catiline declares that, "I have taken up the public cause of the wretched." (*publicam miserorum causam...suscepi*, 35.3) Catiline presents himself as the advocate for the people of Rome, those whom, as Caesar might say, have been oppressed by a faction of a few (*factione paucorum oppressum*, *Civ.* 1.22.5).<sup>55</sup> He attributes his choice to take up this cause to his habit (*pro mea consuetudine*) and because he has been deprived the rewards of his diligence (*industria*) and toil (*labor*); in other words, his *dignitas* has been injured by being denied office.<sup>56</sup> Here again

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<sup>54</sup> Cicero suggests, by contrast, that Caesar "perverted all rights, human and divine," (*omnia iura divina atque humana pervertit*) while the *boni* upheld justice (*Off.* 1.26). Grillo (2008, 60-61) shows how Caesar attempts to make the opposite case. Regardless, Cicero's remark shows that claiming to be the *boni* not only casts the claimant as the restorer or maintainer of the proper order but also casts the opponent as a threat to that order. Such is the story Sallust's Catiline weaves in his speech when he claims the title of *boni* for himself and his men.

<sup>55</sup> In Cicero's summary of Catiline's speech during a "domestic meeting," (*contione domestica*, *Mur.* 50) Catiline pits the "injured and unfortunate" (*saucios et miseros*) against the "unimpaired and wealthy" (*integrorum et fortunatorum*) and claims that he, not at all afraid and suffering great loss, would be suitable as the leader and standard-bearer of the wretched (*minime timidum et valde calamitosum esse oportere eum qui esset futurus dux et signifer calamitosorum*). Catiline similarly pits the "Haves" against the "Have-nots" in his speech and the above letter in the *Bellum Catilinae*, but in this case the "Haves" are also a faction of the few. For similar remarks see Vretska (1976, 416) and Ramsey (2007, 117).

<sup>56</sup> In deploying *industria* and *labor*, Catiline also presents himself as embodying some of the principal *mores* of the old Romans (7.4). See also Vretska (1976, 415).

Catiline links the personal affront he has suffered with the larger problem of the many being oppressed by a few, just as Caesar does in the *Bellum Civile*.

Near the end of the monograph Catiline combines personal interest with the slogan of *libertas*—that is, defending the people’s interest—in his pre-battle exhortation to his band of soldiers. He first pairs the two slogans when he says, “Be mindful that you carry in your right hands riches, honor, glory, and beyond these freedom and the fatherland.” (*Memineritis vos divitias decus gloriam, praeterea libertatem atque patriam in dextris vestris portare*, 58.8)

These slogans reappear when Catiline contrasts his cause with his opponents’: “Furthermore, soldiers, different necessity hangs over us and them: we fight for our homeland, for liberty, for life; fighting on behalf of the power of a few is unnecessary for them.” (*Praeterea, milities, non eadem nobis et illis necessitudo inpendet: nos pro patria, pro libertate, pro vita certamus, illis supervacuaneum est pugnare pro potentia paucorum*, 58.11) Catiline and his men represent *libertas* and Rome (*patria*), but his opponents fight not for themselves or a cause they identify with but for the power of a few.

As the above examples show, when Catiline is given a voice, he deploys several key slogans and themes which have parallels in Caesar’s account of the civil war. The basic message behind these slogans is the same: both men present themselves as fighting against a few (*factio paucorum/potentia paucorum*) in order to restore order, which benefits them and restores to Rome (*populus Romanus/miseri/patria*) its freedom (*libertas*).

### **Catiline’s and Caesar’s soldiers**

Though Catiline voices slogans of *libertas* and presents himself as the defender of people who, like him, are being oppressed by the power of a few, I showed above that his men do not seem to share this ideology; Catiline’s men desire offices, priesthoods, proscriptions, and riches. They are not interested in *libertas* or the *causa miserorum*. Their selfish interests result in many

conspirators abandoning Catiline when the conspiracy is revealed and those who had been arrested are executed (57.1). Though Catiline's slogans have much in common with Caesar's self-presentation, the self-interested motives of Catiline's band along with their ultimate disloyalty have more in common with Caesar's presentation of the Pompeians in the *Bellum Civile* than his presentation of his own men.<sup>57</sup> Thus, it might seem odd that I am about to discuss similarities between Catiline's men in the *Bellum Catilinae* and Caesar's description of his own troops in the commentaries, but those who abandon Catiline differ greatly from those who stay with him to fight the climactic battle. When it is time to fight, Catiline's remaining men display fierce loyalty to their leader and are courageous in battle:

Sed confecto proelio, tum vero cerneres quanta audacia quantaque animi vis fuisset in exercitu Catilinae. Nam fere quem quisque vivos pugnando locum ceperat, eum amissa anima corpore tegebat. Pauci autem, quos medios cohors praetoria disiecerat, paulo divorsius, sed omnes tamen advorsis vulneribus considerant. (61.1-3)

But after the battle had ended, in truth you could then see how much daring and how great a force of spirit had been in Catiline's army. For, in general, the spot every man had taken up for fighting when alive, that is the place he was covering with his corpse after he had lost his life. A few, however, whom the praetorian cohort had scattered in the middle, had fallen a little further out of the way, but everyone nevertheless had fallen with wounds in front.

Catiline's men stood their ground in battle and, even if they were moved from their original position, they died with their wounds in front, evidence that they had fought bravely and to the death. When Sallust points out that Catiline's army displayed great daring (*audacia*) in battle, he triggers two references: first, he picks up on Catiline's remark that whatever daring exists in men becomes manifest in war (*Quanta quousque animo audacia natura aut moribus inest, tanta in bello patere solet*, 58.2) and that, keeping their previous excellence in mind, his men ought to attack all the more daringly (*Quo audacius adgredimini memores pristinae virtutis*, 58.12); second, Sallust suggests that, to a certain extent, Catiline and his men were emulating their

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<sup>57</sup> See above, pg. 41ff. for the comparison of the Catilinarians' motives for war and the Pompeians'.

ancestors, who also displayed daring (*audacia*) in war (9.3). Though Catiline and his men display *audacia* while fighting against fellow Romans, which means their bravery will not earn them glory or prove their *virtus*, keep in mind that Catiline told his men in his pre-battle oration that they are fighting on behalf of the republic and neglected to mention that the men they would be killing are fellow kinsmen. If one trusts that Catiline's men believed their general's claim that they were fighting for *libertas* and their homeland (*patria*), then they likely believed that, despite the fact that they were fighting against the state's army, they were caring for themselves and for the state (*seque remque publicam curabant*, 9.3), just like their ancestors.

The devotion of Catiline's followers and their courage in fighting is similar to Caesar's presentation of his soldiers, who also fight bravely and relentlessly for him. At Pharsalus, Caesar demonstrates his men's relentless loyalty and bravery through the centurion Gaius Crastinus:

Hic signo dato "Sequimini me," inquit, "manipulares mei qui fuistis, et vestro imperatori quam constituistis operam date. Unum hoc proelium superest; quo confecto et ille suam dignitatem et nos nostram libertatem recuperabimus." Simul respiciens Caesarem, "Faciam," inquit, "hodie, imperator, ut aut vivo mihi aut mortuo gratias agas." (*Civ.* 3.91.2-3)

When the signal had been given he said, "Follow me, you who have been my fellow-soldiers, and give the effort you agreed to give for your general. This one battle remains: when it is done he will recover his dignity and we will recover our freedom." At the same time he looked back at Caesar and said, "Today, general, I will make sure that you give me thanks, whether I am alive or dead."

Crastinus not only pledges his life to Caesar, but he also shows that the army's purpose is the same as its general's by echoing Caesar's slogans of *libertas* and *dignitas* before rushing into battle.<sup>58</sup> As it turns out, Crastinus did give his life (3.99.2), and Caesar singles him out for praise: "Indeed Caesar thought the following, that Crastinus' bravery had been most remarkable in that battle and he rated him very highly, as he deserved." (*Sic enim Caesar existimabat eo proelio excellentissimam virtutem Crastini fuisse optimeque eum de se meritum iudicabat,*

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<sup>58</sup> See also Grillo (2008, 161-165).

3.99.3) Like the Catilinarians, Crastinus died with a wound in front: he took a sword to the face (*Civ.* 3.99.2). Such devotion to Caesar until death is not exceptional in the *Bellum Civile*; Grillo (2008, 163) points out that Caesar's men often prefer to die in battle over suffering the shame of retreat or surrender. Sallust's post-battle review suggests that the Catilinarians displayed similarly fierce loyalty to their general.

To conclude: though many of the conspirators in the *Bellum Catilinae* display behavior more reminiscent of Pompeian self-interest (and concomitant lack of loyalty) than Caesarian discipline and fidelity to the commander's cause, those who stayed to fight alongside Catiline show qualities also seen in Caesar's depiction of his own men. In the battle scene, the Catilinarians display bravery and loyalty comparable to the bravery and loyalty of Caesar's men in the *Bellum Civile*. Furthermore, if Catiline's soldiers believed his slogans of *libertas* and *patria*, they were fighting to preserve the republic rather than to overthrow it—to their own minds, at least.

### **A Common Enemy**

Before I conclude, I would like to mention one more similarity between Catiline and Caesar which, when considered alone, does not seem significant but carries more weight when considered along with the other parallels between Catiline and Caesar. In addition to voicing similar concerns and slogans, along with having men similar to what we find in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, Catiline and Caesar have a common enemy. When Sallust recounts the battle in the *Bellum Catilinae*, he notes that Gaius Antonius, the consul in charge of the army fighting against Catiline, was supposed to lead the state's army against Catiline but was absent due to a problem in his feet (*pedibus aeger*, 59.4). In his stead, one of his lieutenant took charge of the army. That lieutenant was Marcus Petreius, the same Petreius who, along with Lucius Afranius, was administering Pompey's province in Ilerda at the time of the civil war and fought against Caesar

during his first Spanish campaign in the civil war. As Petreius stands in for Gaius Antonius in the *Bellum Catilinae*, he likewise stands in for Pompey in the *Bellum Civile*. Such a parallel would mean less if Petreius received as little attention in the *Bellum Civile* as, say, Cato, but Caesar makes Petreius (in)famous; at Ilerda Petreius embodies the antithesis of Caesar's values of *clementia* and reconciliation, breaking up the reconciliation between the two camps and slaughtering the Caesarians he found in his camp (*Civ.* 1.75-76).<sup>59</sup>

The way in which Sallust introduces Petreius is striking, because it emphasizes that Petreius is replacing the general Catiline should have faced, just like he substitutes for Pompey in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. Sallust does not portray Petreius as the antithesis of a good general but heightens the horrific effect of Romans battling Romans by making Catiline and Petreius similar in respect to their hands-on commanding style; like Catiline, Petreius exhorts his men with slogans similar to the ones voiced by Catiline (59.5-6) and, also like Catiline, he goes into the thick of battle to fight instead of hanging back (60.5). In the end, however, one major difference separates Catiline and Caesar: Catiline was defeated by Petreius, but he was defeated by Caesar. The point should not be overlooked. If mentioning Marcus Petreius was intentional, the battle between Catiline and Petreius shows that, while Catiline may be Caesar-like, he is not quite Caesar.

Though Catiline is by no means a carbon-copy of Caesar, Sallust creates several connections between Catiline's fight against the state and Caesar's own struggle. On one hand, Catiline displays faults similar to ones found in Caesar's portrayal of the Pompeians. On the other hand, Catiline and Caesar share slogans suggesting that each man fights not only for himself but also for the state. Their men show similar levels of bravery and loyalty in battle, though Catiline's men are not quite Caesar's cohesive army-community until the battle against

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<sup>59</sup> Grillo (*ibid.*, 118) calls Petreius the "anti-Caesar" of the *Bellum Civile*.

the army led by Petreius. Finally, Catiline and Caesar face Marcus Petreius in the course of their struggles; though Catiline loses to Petreius, Caesar shows his superiority to Catiline by defeating Petreius at Ilerda.

This is not the last time Catiline appears in connection with Caesar. Though this link grows stronger or weaker in accordance with an author's own aims, the two men are hard to keep separate. As members of the nobility who display extraordinary drive and who brought an army against the Senate, Caesar and Catiline are easy to connect in the Roman mind. Velleius' characterization of Caesar will be faintly reminiscent of Catiline through expressions which echo descriptions of Catiline's force of body and spirit, though the force of Catiline's depravity will transfer to trouble-makers, such as Curio. Lucan, on the other hand, will treat Caesar as an inheritor of the worst of Catiline; Catiline even makes a cameo from beyond the grave to show his approval of Caesar's war.

### **Conclusion**

Catiline shares many qualities with Caesar—both Sallust's Caesar and the portrait of Caesar in the *Bellum Civile*—and there are uncanny parallels between each man's war with the Senate. This investigation confirms past scholarly musings that Catiline could be seen as a precursor to Caesar. Taking the analysis a bit farther, one could also say that Catiline's *bellum* is a prequel to—or even a miniature staging of—Caesar's civil war; one finds similar slogans, similar opponents, and competing claims of representing the republic in both narratives.

The two men are not entirely the same, however. Whatever positive traits Catiline possesses, they are overshadowed by his negative ones. Meanwhile, Sallust presents Caesar's *mores* in terms of praise, though these qualities come under scrutiny when Caesar is set beside Cato. Furthermore, when Caesar's positively depicted traits are placed next to Catiline's negative qualities, one sees that many of Catiline's *mores* are the sinister versions of Caesar's

*mores*, e.g., Caesar's generosity versus Catiline's profligate largess. These differences between the men may explain why Catiline's attempt to take control of the republic failed, yet Caesar's attempt will succeed. The different versions of these basic traits, with one presented as a virtue and the other presented as a vice, also highlight the contentiousness of terms in the late Republic and illustrate the "war of words," as Henderson put it, which accompanies civil war.

The examination of Sallust's Caesar has revealed a few interesting points. First, several elements of Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile* also appear in Sallust's characterization of Caesar. Caesar's speech in particular is fraught with key elements employed by Caesar in the *Bellum Civile*, particularly regarding clemency, *dignitas*, self-restraint, and self-sacrifice for the benefit of the state. His speech in favor of more lenient treatment of the conspirators is not rejected by the Senate until Cato speaks in response to Caesar. Similarly, his *mores* in the *synkrisis* refer to several traits he was famous for (e.g., *mansuetudo et misericordia*) and depict a man who embodies and upholds many of the traditional practices and pursuits of a Roman aristocrat. Caesar does not stand on his own, however; in the monograph he is constantly set beside other characters and Sallust encourages his audience to use these comparisons—both explicit and implicit—in order to draw one's own conclusions about Caesar.

In mentioning comparison I come to my second point: though Sallust does not explicitly criticize Caesar, he invites suspicion about Caesar's goodness and moral rectitude by setting up a series of episodes which invite intratextual and intertextual comparison. For example, he mentions that Catulus and Piso attempted to frame Caesar as a member of the conspiracy and that some knights, spurred on by suspicion of Caesar, threatened him outside of the temple of Concord (49.4). Sallust does not confirm whether Caesar was indeed part of the plot, but to mention the incident plants the seed of doubt in the mind of the audience. Suspicion regarding

Caesar's innocence and his general moral integrity is also raised by Cato, who provides a counterpoint to Caesar in the debate and *synkrisis*. Cato's presence casts a critical eye on the praise of Caesar and gives the audience opportunity to question whether Caesar is as altruistic as his *mores* and speech might make him appear.

Cato, however, is not the reader's only point of comparison when judging Caesar, which brings me to my third point: Sallust builds an association between Catiline and Caesar, essentially turning Catiline into a precursor to the future dictator. Many of Catiline's words and actions are reminiscent of Caesar's in the *Bellum Civile*. Their connection, however, does not end at similarities in rhetoric and military valor. Catiline possesses vices alluded to by both Caesar and Cato during the debate as each man warns the Senate of the dangers of lacking control over one's desires and emotion or of the perils of words like "pity" and "generosity". These vices connect Catiline to Caesar because they represent Caesar's virtues gone wrong. Catiline's faults also connect to Caesar indirectly through the *Bellum Civile* by being connected to the Pompeians, who are also shown in a barbaric light. In short, in addition to showing several positive qualities emphasized in Caesar's self-presentation, Catiline shows many qualities which Caesar attributes to his opponents. In this way, Catiline embodies both sides of the fight for Rome, or he illustrates what such a fight would look like if Caesar were as barbaric as the Pompeians he describes.

The complex connection between Catiline and Caesar suggests that, even before the onset of the Principate, Romans not only associated both men with civil war but could also use one man as a lens through which to examine the other. In this case, Catiline plays the role of the anti-hero in this civil war narrative—Caesar takes center stage in Velleius Paterculus and Lucan—but Sallust characterizes him in such a way that one cannot look at Catiline's war

without thinking about Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. Caesar's appearance in the narrative assists the reader in making the Catiline-Caesar connection.<sup>60</sup> In Sallust's eyes, Caesar is a man whose achievements are undeniably impressive yet, despite his *ingens virtus*, the praise allotted to him is constantly qualified and questioned by comparing him to other poignant figures of the Republic, namely Cato and Catiline. Even in a narrative that, on the surface at least, is not about Caesar's war, Caesar engages in an ideological struggle with Cato, who represents the Senate's mindset in this text. That the praise of Caesar is not quite as fulsome in this monograph as it will be in Velleius' compendium could reflect that Sallust, as he looked at the state of affairs at Rome and perhaps even saw more slaughter on the horizon, was not confident that Caesar's pursuit of *gloria*, as impressive as it was, rehabilitated the republic so much as furthered its decline.

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<sup>60</sup> As Velleius' account of the Catilinarian conspiracy shows, one can talk about the plot without mentioning Caesar (2.34-35).

## Chapter 2. Another Version of the Truth: Julius Caesar in Velleius Paterculus' *Historiae*

The previous chapter focused on how Sallust shaped not only Caesar but also Catiline in the *Bellum Catilinae*, yet the preoccupation with Caesar and his civil war did not end in the Triumviral period. Even after the civil war between Antony and Octavian concluded and Octavian took on the title Augustus, Julius Caesar did not fade from Rome's memory.<sup>61</sup> Though Augustus placed greater emphasis on Caesar's new form as Divus Julius, Caesar's extraordinary accomplishments as a military leader were still celebrated, and references to—if not full accounts of—Caesar's exploits appeared in Augustan literature.<sup>62</sup> Caesar's life and deeds, particularly his deeds in the civil war, continue to be a subject pursued by authors in the Tiberian period.<sup>63</sup> Two of our most substantial texts from that period, Velleius Paterculus' *Historiae* and Valerius Maximus' *Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*, represent resurging interest in Caesar's civil war during the reign of Tiberius. Furthermore, these two authors present a relatively united front when it comes to Julius Caesar: his virtues and military exploits are praised, his divinity is acknowledged, albeit to varying degrees, and civil war, though it is an uncomfortable topic for both authors, becomes a venue for displaying Caesar's greatness.<sup>64</sup> Valerius Maximus, for example, uses selections from the civil war between Caesar and Pompey as *exempla* of particular virtues.<sup>65</sup> By choosing snippets of the civil war, Valerius has the advantage of focusing on extraordinary deeds without calling attention to the problematic context in which these deeds were done. Unlike Valerius Maximus, Velleius Paterculus faced the problem of how to approach

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<sup>61</sup> As powerfully argued by White (1988).

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, 340-51.

<sup>63</sup> See Gowing (2010, 251) for a summary of Tiberian literature that covered civil war.

<sup>64</sup> Gowing (2005, 28-66) illustrates that, when it comes to overall memory of the Republic, Valerius Maximus and Velleius Paterculus seem to be on the same page.

<sup>65</sup> cf. Bloomer (1992, 207-226).

narrating Caesar's civil war from beginning to end and how to fit this episode of Rome's history into Rome's overall trajectory.<sup>66</sup>

Velleius' history aims to summarily cover Rome's history up through the first fifteen years of Tiberius' reign. Because he sought to create a compendium of Roman history, he repeatedly expresses concern for keeping his accounts short (*brevitas*) and completing his history quickly (*festinatio*). The employment of *brevitas* or *festinatio*, regardless of whether Velleius is truly in a rush or these are merely rhetorical ploys, allows him to be very selective in his accounts and, more importantly, allows him to gloss over accounts that might be less than flattering to the imperial family.<sup>67</sup>

Another key component of Velleius' history—especially his narrative of the late Republic through Tiberius' reign—is that he shapes the events of Rome's history with an eye toward making Tiberius' accession seem natural and seamless.<sup>68</sup> An example of the historian's desire for continuity appears in his treatment of the civil war between Caesar and Pompey and Octavian's civil war as one long event.<sup>69</sup> Rather than representing a break between Republic and Principate, the civil war in Velleius becomes a transitional period in the Republic's history and Caesar, rather than representing its end, embodies the first step toward a revitalized Rome, a process which will be fully realized under Augustus and Tiberius.

In this chapter, I suggest that Velleius uses the potentially dangerous subject of civil war as a stage upon which to display Caesar's virtues. Many of the virtues the general displays in Velleius' civil war narrative will pass on to the future emperors. Because Caesar is the first in a

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<sup>66</sup> Wardle (1997) discusses Julius Caesar in Valerius Maximus, including how Valerius presents Caesar in the civil war.

<sup>67</sup> For the question of whether Velleius' *brevitas* and *festinatio* are merely rhetorical figures, see Lobur (2007), who suggests that Velleius' employment of brevity and haste gives the historian control over what is and what is not worth mentioning. See Woodman (1977, 37-38) for the problem Imperial historians faced when recounting figures of the Principate.

<sup>68</sup> Kuntze (1985, 35-36), Gowing (2005, 37).

<sup>69</sup> 2.48.3 and again at 89.3.

line of Caesars, Velleius whitewashes aspects of his character and deeds in the civil war which would hinder his aim of creating a sense of continuity in the Republic as Rome progresses from Julius Caesar to Tiberius.<sup>70</sup> In support of this argument I examine several key aspects of Velleius' portrayal of Caesar, such as: his divinity, his clemency, his concern for the welfare of citizens and the state, and how he compares to his main rival, Pompey. Many aspects of Velleius' Caesar first appear in the introduction of the dictator in the year of his first consulship (59 BCE), but we will find their fullest development in the civil war narrative. First, let us look at how Velleius presents Caesar's divine nature.

### **2.1 Superhuman Caesar: Velleius' depiction of Caesar's divine status**

Though Velleius does not ignore Caesar's divine status, his approach to acknowledging Caesar's divinity is different from what is found in Valerius Maximus. Valerius presents Caesar as a god on earth by describing him as, e.g., *divinus*, *caelestis*, and by referring to Caesar by his cult title, *Divus Julius*.<sup>71</sup> Velleius prefers to suggest rather than assert that Julius Caesar and his exploits were divine. Throughout the Caesarian narrative (2.41-56), Velleius hints at Caesar's divinity—which I also refer to as his “superhuman” status—starting with his introduction of Caesar.<sup>72</sup> When he mentions Caesar's consulship, he seems to invoke the *divus* himself:

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<sup>70</sup> Gowing (2005, 43) discusses Velleius' history as presenting continuity between Republic and Principate; Woodman (1977, 37ff.) summarizes the challenge facing historians writing contemporary history under the empire, especially when that contemporary history involves controversial material.

<sup>71</sup> Wardle (1997, 336-345) outlines Valerius Maximus' treatment of Caesar's divinity, which is underscored by Valerius' treatment of Caesar as the gods' chosen one.

<sup>72</sup> What it means to be “divine” as an emperor and how that divinity compares to the divinity of, say, Jupiter, has been debated for decades. Whether Romans believed that the emperor was a god, or whether his *Genius* was the focus of worship, and whether *Divus* indicates the same status as *Deus* are questions that plague scholars of Imperial cult. Gradel (2002), who discusses this debate and cites several seminal discussions, e.g., Taylor ([1931] 1975) and Weinstock (1971), has the most stimulating suggestion for what “divinity” means in Roman Imperial cult. He suggests that, in the deification of emperors, we should see an acknowledgement of the emperor's divine *status* relative to his worshippers rather than *divinity* in an absolute sense; that is, bestowing on an emperor honors which are similar to honors given to other gods (e.g., Jupiter) was “ultimately an aspect of the honours-for-benefactions structure found in all relationships between parties of vastly unequal power and social standing in Roman society (26).” In such a case, Gradel argues, it does not matter whether or not the Romans believed that figures like Julius Caesar or Augustus were divine in an absolute sense, for “divine honors” simply acknowledged an emperor's superior status. Such a suggestion ignores the importance between divinity and humanity in literature, especially the almost unimpeachable license accorded to the divine which is not allowed for humans. Gradel, however, highlights

Secutus deinde est consulatus C. Caesaris, qui scribenti manum iniicit et quamlibet festinantem in se morari cogit.<sup>73</sup> (2.41.1)

Then followed the consulate of Gaius Caesar, who thrusts his hand upon me as I write and forces me, however much I may be rushing, to linger upon him.

Velleius tends to structure periods of his history around central figures, yet no other person enters his narrative with such power and authority; Caesar suddenly appears out of the page and grabs hold of Velleius, forcing him to temporarily abandon his rush. The phrase *manum iniicit* suggests that Caesar has claimed the historian—and, by extension, the narrative—as his own.<sup>74</sup> Moreover, Velleius never mentions being released by Caesar. Perhaps Caesar never does let go of the author; from this point on, Velleius lingers not only on Caesar but also his descendants, whom he also calls by the name Caesar.

Though Velleius does not formally introduce Caesar into his history until the year of his consulship, Caesar has likely been on the reader's mind for a while. In the sections preceding his appearance, Velleius repeatedly alludes to the general as he describes Pompey and his achievements. For example, when Pompey returns to Rome to take up his consulship, Velleius remarks, "What man does not wonder that this man, who was raised to the highest position through so many extraordinary commands, bore it ill that the Senate and the Roman people took into consideration Gaius Julius Caesar's bid for another consulship, <though he was running *in absentia*>?" (*Quem virum quis non miretur per tot extraordinaria imperia in summum fastigium*

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a point that, I think, is key to understanding how Velleius depicts Julius Caesar. Velleius' Caesar is superior relative to other Romans and even to other humans, though that does not necessarily mean he finds him unimpeachable. This gap between Caesar and "everyone else" allows him to start the process of bringing Rome out of its trajectory of decline and to found the line of illustrious *principes*. I bring up this point because, as I mention below, Velleius readily attaches words which invoke divine associations, such as *caelestis*, to Augustus and Tiberius, whom the historian strives to keep free from blame or blemish.

<sup>73</sup> Text used for Velleius' narrative from 2.41 on is Woodman (1977 and 1983). Text for Velleius' narrative before 2.41 is Elefante (1997). Translations are my own unless noted otherwise.

<sup>74</sup> See *OLD inicio* 6b for the legal formula *manum inicere alicui*. What is also noteworthy about the phrase is that in Ovid *Am.* 3.9.20 he writes of death: "*Omnibus obscuras inicet illa manus*," and Vergil uses the same language of the fates at *Aen.* 10.419. Valerius Maximus introduces Bibulus with a similar expression at 4.1.15.

<e>vectum iniquo tulisse animo, C. Caesaris <absentis>, in altero consulatu petendo senatum populumque Romanum rationem habere, 2.30.3) Velleius' anachronistic side comment is one of several examples where he has Caesar on the brain, though Pompey is supposed to be the central figure.<sup>75</sup> Caesar lingers in the background for a while, but once he lays his hand on the historian he marks the beginning of a new phase in the *Historiae*, essentially demanding that Velleius stop merely alluding to his achievements and finally tell his story.<sup>76</sup> Only extraordinary figures have the power to take control of an author who faces a story he may not want to tell. It is a testament to Caesar's power that he can force Velleius to abandon his rush.

When Velleius lingers on Caesar, he describes his remarkable nature in greater depth with the following profile:

Hic nobilissima Iuliorum genitus familia et (quod inter omnes antiquissimos constabat) ab Anchise ac Venere deducens genus, forma omnium civium excellentissimus, vigore animi acerrimus, munificentia effusissimus, animo super humanam et naturam et fidem evectus, magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patientia periculorum Magno illi Alexandro (sed sobrio neque iracundo) simillimus, qui denique semper et somno et cibo in vitam non in voluptatem uteretur.... (2.41.1-2)

This man, born to the most noble household of the Julii and (a fact that's been agreed upon among all of the most important authors) who could trace his lineage from Anchises and Venus, a man most distinguished of all citizens in appearance, keenest in the energy of his mind, most lavish in his generosity; his spirit raised him above human nature and what is possible for man. In the greatness of his ambitions, the speed with which he makes war, and his endurance of dangers he was very similar to the Great—I mean the famous Alexander (but only when Alexander was clear-headed and not in a foul temper). Above all, he was the sort always enjoy sleep and food for life and not for pleasure...

Velleius begins by bringing up Caesar's divine lineage, which goes back to Anchises and Venus (*ab Anchise ac Venere deducens genus*). Caesar's personal qualities are no less extraordinary:

<sup>75</sup> I discuss in a later section (2.6) how Velleius implicitly and explicitly compares Caesar and Pompey in Pompey's section of the *Historiae*.

<sup>76</sup> Gowing (2010, 255) mentions that authors depict themselves as wrestling with their subject matter when they encounter a story that they are hesitant to tell. In the case of civil war, Velleius might not want to tell the story, but history—here represented by Caesar—demands that the story be told. I would take this point even further and say that, within Velleius' selectivity of events told in the civil war, Caesar's "control" over Velleius might also explain why Velleius' account remains so close to Caesar's version of the civil war and even fudges certain aspects of that account to make Caesar appear even greater than Caesar made himself appear.

his excellent appearance (*forma...excellentissimus*), the sharp vitality of his mind (*vigore animi acerrimus*), and his generosity (*munificentia effusissimus*) are superior to all other citizens; his superiority to other Romans justifies his future position as a ruler.<sup>77</sup> Velleius then puts Caesar above humans in general; his very being raises him above the constraints associated with being human (*animo super humanam et naturam et fidem evectus*), expanding the reaches of Caesar's superior nature to include not only a non-Roman but also one who was acknowledged as a living god: Alexander the Great. Caesar is comparable to him only "when Alexander was sober and not hot-tempered (*sed sobrio neque iracundo*)."<sup>78</sup> This qualification, namely that the two generals are comparable only when Alexander is in top form emphasizes Caesar's self-control (discussed below) at the expense of the Macedonian, who falls prey to his passions and appetites. In essence, Caesar equals Alexander's military virtues while surpassing him in self-control. Through these comparisons, Velleius clearly indicates that Julius Caesar is an extraordinary individual; he outshines his fellow citizens, humans in general, and the man who conquered most of the known world and who was recognized as a living god, though the historian passes over this point.<sup>78</sup> As I discuss in the next chapter, Lucan does not neglect bringing up Alexander's divinity in connection with Caesar, though in that text the comparison is not to Caesar's advantage, as it is here.

Before moving on to the significance of attributing self-control to Caesar, let us pause for a moment on the comparison between Caesar and Alexander, particularly how Velleius names Alexander. Velleius' introduction of Alexander in this passage as *Magno illi Alexandro* is

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<sup>77</sup> Spencer (2002, 86-88) also notices that, as Velleius praises Caesar, the scope of people to whom he is superior widens from all Roman citizens, to all humans, to the living-god/"Ur-king" Alexander.

<sup>78</sup> For more on Velleius' profile hinting at Julius Caesar as a god, see Schmitzer (2000, 156ff). Taylor ([1931] 1975, 25-27) recounts the recognition of Alexander as a god. That Velleius does not mention other similarities between Alexander and Caesar—see, e.g., Green (1978) for a list of similarities noted between the two men—does not mean that he was not aware of them. The very presence of a comparison of Alexander and Caesar invites the reader to consider other ways in which they are similar, which surely would have included their shared divine status.

peculiar.<sup>79</sup> Few have commented on the wording Velleius uses; Diana Spencer (2002, 87) suggests that the *illi* separates Alexander from his greatness (*Magno*) and brings him closer to his anger and drunkenness. Her interpretation is tempting: by moving Alexander closer to *sobrio neque iracundo*, Velleius intensifies Caesar's superiority to the Macedonian. However, I think that there are more nuances behind the wording. Caesar's consulship, which has sparked this character sketch, is mentioned just after Velleius has recounted the exploits of another *Magnus*: Pompey. The reader is not so far from that narrative to forget Pompey. By beginning with *Magno*, Velleius triggers an expectation that Pompey will be mentioned again, especially because the virtues being compared are military virtues. Velleius foils that expectation with *illi Alexandro*. But why? True, Velleius might only be emphasizing that he is referring to "The" Alexander, but perhaps the wording implies more than initially meets the eye. Cicero's *Pro Archia* might offer insight into this perplexing problem.

In the *Pro Archia*, Cicero illustrates the value of *scriptores*, who immortalize great men like Alexander the Great and Pompey:

Quam multos scriptores rerum suarum Magnus ille Alexander secum habuisse dicitur! Atque is tamen, cum in Sigeo ad Achillis tumulum astisset: "O fortunate," inquit, "adulescens, qui tuae virtutis Homerum praeconem inveneris!" Et vere, nam, nisi Ilias illa exstitisset, idem tumulus qui corpus eius contexerat nomen etiam obruisset. Quid? Noster hic Magnus qui cum virtute fortunam adaequavit, nonne Theophanem Mytilenaeum, scriptorem rerum suarum, in contione militum civitate donavit, et nostri illi fortes viri, sed rustici ac milites, dulcedine quadam gloriae commoti quasi participes eiusdem laudis magno illud clamore approbaverunt? (*Arch.* 24.1)

How many writers of his deeds that Great one, Alexander, is said to have had with him! And yet, when he had stood at the tomb of Achilles in Sigeus, he said: "Oh fortunate youth, you who found Homer as the herald of your manliness!" Truly said, too, for, had the Iliad not existed, the same tomb which had covered his body also would have obscured his name. What? Did not our own Great one [Pompey], who made his fortune equal to his manliness, give citizenship to Theophanes of Mytilene, the writer of his deeds, in a meeting of his soldiers, and did not those brave men of ours, though country

<sup>79</sup> All other instances in Velleius which refer to Alexander use some form of *Magnus Alexander*, without *ille* (1.6.5, 11.4).

boys and soldiers, moved by a certain pleasantness of Theophanes' glory—as if they were the ones taking part in that same honor!—approve of the action with a great shout?

Cicero connects Alexander the Great and Pompey not only through their *virtus* and use of *scriptores* to record and bring fame to their deeds but also through that famed moniker, *Magnus*. Cicero establishes this connection through corresponding demonstratives: *Magnus ille* and *hic Magnus*. Even more striking is that Cicero's *Pro Archia* and Velleius' *Historiae* are the only extant passages where Alexander the Great is called *Magnus ille Alexander*, making it all the more likely that Velleius is pointing to Cicero when he refers to Alexander as *Magnus ille Alexander*. Turning back to Velleius, we find that *ille Alexander* is not compared to *hic Magnus* but to Caesar. Velleius does not mention Pompey at all, and, for those who catch the reference to Cicero, his silence speaks volumes. Velleius employs a reference which is unique enough to recall Cicero's comparison of Alexander and Pompey, yet he rewrites Cicero's comparison by substituting Caesar for Pompey. By replacing Pompey with Caesar, Velleius "corrects" Cicero. According to Velleius, Caesar, not Pompey, should be linked to Alexander.

### **Self-restraint as an extraordinary trait**

Another aspect of Caesar's extraordinary nature, which I briefly mentioned above, is his self-control. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Caesar's ability to exercise self-control is a key characteristic in his self-portrayal in the *Bellum Civile* and appears as an issue in the *Bellum Catilinae*. Combined with other qualities, the ability to restrain one's emotions and appetites indicates whether an individual or group has a disposition that will help or harm the state. In Velleius, food and sleep were simply a means to live and not for pleasure for Caesar (*semper et somno et cibo in vitam non in voluptatem uteretur*). This quality comes on the heels of Velleius' claim that Caesar was similar to Alexander only when the latter did not fall prey to the delights of *luxuria*, such as drinking, and was not prey to anger. Velleius illustrates that Alexander did

not possess the self-control exercised by Caesar, but he is not only comparing Caesar and Alexander. Rome is full of citizens who have succumbed to *luxuria*. Like Sallust, Velleius attributes Rome's decline to an indulgence in *luxuria*<sup>80</sup>:

Quippe remoto Carthaginis metu sublataque imperii aemula, non gradu, sed praecipiti cursu a virtute descitum, ad vitia transcursum; vetus disciplina deserta, nova inducta; in somnum a vigiliis, ab armis ad voluptates, a negotiis in otium conversa civitas.  
...publicamque magnificentiam secuta privata luxuria est. (2.1.1-2)

Since the fear of Carthage had been removed and the rivalry for supreme power had been destroyed, there was a departure from virtue, not gradual but on a headlong course, and Rome moved toward vices; old discipline was deserted and new habits were brought in; the state turned from wakefulness to sleep, from arms to pleasures, from business into leisure....and private luxury followed public splendor.

As an example of Rome's fall from virtue, Velleius characterizes some of Caesar's contemporaries, such as Clodius, as the result of Rome's indulgence in the *nova disciplina* acquired after the fall of Carthage<sup>81</sup>:

...P. Clodius, homo nobilis, disertus, audax, qui <ne>que dicendi neque faciendi ullum nisi quem vellet nosset modum, malorum propositorum executor acerrimus, infamis etiam sororis stupro et actus incesti reus ob initum inter religiosissima populi Romani sacra adulterium... (2.45.1)

Publius Clodius, a man of noble birth, eloquent, daring, who did not know any limit for speech or action except his own caprice, was a very fierce executor of his evil projects, who even had the ill-repute of debauching his sister, and he stood as a defendant for acts of indecency on account of attempting adultery during the most sacred rites of the Roman people...

Clodius knows no limits aside from his own desire, which manifests as behaviors dangerous to the republic. Velleius' sketches of contemporaries who are out of control highlights the self-control he attributes to Caesar. Through encounters with such out of control men who damage the state, Velleius' reader is invited to infer that the general's self-control, aside from indicating

<sup>80</sup> cf. *Cat.* 10.1; *Jug.* 41.1; *Hist.* 1.11.12.

<sup>81</sup> Curio, whom I discuss below, section 2.5, also lacks self-control in the *Historiae*.

his overall superiority to his contemporaries, means he is unlikely to bring harm to the republic for the sake of his own desires.

In the commentaries, Caesar highlights self-restraint as a quality which separates him and his men from the Pompeians. To drive home the difference between his austerity and the Pompeians' indulgence, he describes what was found in the Pompeian camp at Pharsalus:

In castris Pompei videre licuit trichilas structas, magnum argenti pondus expositum, recentibus caespitibus tabernacula constrata, L. etiam Lentuli et non nullorum tabernacula protecta hedera multaque praeterea quae nimiam luxuriam et victoriae fiduciam designarent, ut facile existimari posset nihil eos de eventu eius diei timuisse qui non necessarias conquirerent voluptates. (*Civ.* 3.96.1)

In Pompey's camp one could see arbors set up, a great mass of silver set out, and tents built over new lawns, as well as the covered tents of Lucius Lentulus and some others, which had thrones and many other things, which signified excessive luxury and confidence in victory, that one could easily reckon that those who had procured unnecessary pleasures had not been worried about the outcome of the day.

The portrait of the camp illustrates that the Pompeians have succumbed to Eastern luxury and softness. Like succumbing to *ira*, *luxuria* in the Pompeian camp contribute to Caesar's presentation of the Pompeians as barbaric, that is, anti-Roman.<sup>82</sup> The presence of so much luxury in the camp casts the Pompeians as the other and corresponds to the Pompeians' inability to be a cohesive, trustworthy, disciplined community.<sup>83</sup> Caesar and his men, by contrast, live and fight in far more austere conditions. Their austerity is a sign of their self-control and makes up part of the foundation upon which Caesar builds his self-characterization.<sup>84</sup>

Taking this cue from the commentaries, Velleius highlights Caesar's self-restraint and austerity as a contrast to Alexander the Great's lack of self-control, suggesting barbarian behavior similar to what Caesar attributes to the Pompeians. When compared to other Romans

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<sup>82</sup> cf. Grillo (2008, 153).

<sup>83</sup> Grillo (2008, 171) comes to the same conclusion: "The characterization of the Caesarian army as the ideal community and the Pompeian as the anti-community coheres...with the strategy to represent the enemy as the barbarian Other and to describes the two sides as fundamentally different societies."

<sup>84</sup> *ibid.*, 164.

in the text, Caesar's self-control also places him above other aristocrats of his day, many of whom are characterized by an indulgence in luxury.

This initial portrait of Caesar establishes the basic traits that will contribute to his greatness. Velleius repeatedly describes the general in ways which suggest godhead, stemming, in part, from his superior status. The first hint of divinity comes when the historian mentions Caesar's divine ancestress, Venus. He builds upon his suggestion of Caesar's superhuman status by describing his *animus* as raising him beyond what is natural or believable for a human. At neither point is Caesar called divine, as Augustus and Tiberius are later, yet the author makes it clear that Caesar is no ordinary Roman.<sup>85</sup> In short, Velleius' character sketch repeatedly gestures toward Caesar's godlike nature in several ways: he points out the general's divine lineage; he places Caesar beyond other Roman; he shows that Caesar's own spirit takes him beyond the human realm; and he favorably compares Caesar to Alexander the Great, who, as the keen reader would know, had been recognized as a living god and whose power and recognition as a king and god came from his extraordinary skills as a general.

### **Velleius' initial sketch and Sallust**

Certain aspects of Caesar's extraordinary nature listed in this character sketch recall Sallust's description of him in his *Bellum Catilinae*. For instance, when describing the general's generosity, Velleius' "*munificentia effusissimus*" recalls Sallust's "*beneficiis ac munificentia magnus habebatur* (*Cat.* 54.2)." As I discussed in the previous chapter, generosity was well-publicized by Caesar, who goes out of his way to display his generosity to his men in the commentaries (e.g., *Civ.* 3.53 and 3.91).<sup>86</sup> Sallust, by contrasting Caesar's *munificentia* with Cato's *integritas*, shows that generosity is not necessarily an unproblematic virtue; without

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<sup>85</sup> Velleius repeatedly calls Augustus and Tiberius *caelestis* (heavenly). e.g. 2.60.1, 94.1, 104.3, 123.2.

<sup>86</sup> Cicero also reports Caesar's intention to make generosity a cornerstone of his campaign to win hearts and minds in his letters near the beginning of the civil war, see *Att.* 9.7c.1 (March 49 B.C.), cf. *Att.* 9.10.6 and 11.6.6.

*integritas*, generosity could be a by-word for bribery. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Sallust's separation of these qualities exemplifies the view that most people possess virtues from one of two semantic fields: Caesar embodies one field, Cato the other. To the Roman mind, he who possesses virtues from both fields, by possessing generosity and *integritas* or *constantia*, for example, is a truly exceptional person.

Caesar subtly contends in his commentaries that he possesses qualities from both fields, e.g., generosity and Optimate (or "Catonian") virtues such as *integritas*, *constantia*, and *innocentia*.<sup>87</sup> Following Caesar, Velleius illustrates throughout his narrative that Caesar displays a mix of virtues from both fields: he shows generosity and mercy to his fellow Romans and, as a reflection of *constantia*, remains true to his generous nature, even at the cost of his life. For example, just before Caesar's assassination, Velleius recounts a moment when Pansa and Hirtius advise Caesar that he must use violence in order to hold his power, yet Caesar refuses and remains true to his policy of *clementia*:

Laudandum experientia consilium est Pansae atque Hirtii, qui semper praedixerant Caesari ut principatum armis quaesitum armis teneret; ille dictitans mori se quam timere malle dum clementiam, quam praestiterat, exspectat, incautus ab ingratis occupatus est. (2.57.1)

In the light of experience, one must praise the advice of Pansa and Hirtius, who had always warned Caesar to hold with arms the dominion that he had sought with arms; Caesar kept saying that he preferred to die than be afraid while he awaited the clemency which he had shown, and he was overtaken while not on his guard by those ungrateful for his mercy.

Pansa and Hirtius give Caesar advice which Velleius, who enjoys the benefits of hindsight, praises "in the light of experience." This "experience," namely that, as far as Pansa and Hirtius could tell, the only way to maintain sole rule was through violence, invites the reader to recall Velleius' account of a previous time during the Republic when one man was the head of Rome,

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<sup>87</sup> Grillo (2008, 58-66) demonstrates how Caesar suggests that he, not the Optimates (i.e., the Pompeians) possesses *constantia*, *integritas*, etc.

Sulla's bloody reign: "So different was Sulla the warrior from Sulla the victor that, while his victory was in progress he was more lenient than even a very just man, but after his victory he was crueller than had been heard." (*Adeo enim Sulla dissimilis fuit bellator ac victor, ut dum vincit, [ac] iustissimo lenior, post victoriam audito fuerit crudelior*, 2.25.3) Sulla, was merciful in war, like Caesar, but he changed after attaining power. Though cruel in the way he wielded power, he survived. Caesar's response to Pansa and Hirtius shows that he refuses to follow Sulla's strategy for keeping power: he prefers giving up his life (*mori*) over hiding behind arms, which he calls "being afraid" (*timere*). Caesar is consistent in his generous policy of *clementia* toward his fellow Romans, even after he won power over Rome. Caesar's generosity and *constantia* in Velleius echoes the general's self-styling in the era of the civil wars and counters Sallust's depiction, which, as seen in the previous chapter, granted Caesar virtues related to generosity and action but left in doubt whether he also possessed qualities related to constancy.

Velleius' emphasis on generosity has another function which I discussed in the previous chapter, though it resonates even more strongly in the Tiberian period. Caesar's *munificentia* embodies the ideals and practices of Republican *amicitia* and exchange culture, which provide a template of practices which emperors like Augustus and Tiberius will use to secure the loyalty of the aristocracy and to legitimate their authority.<sup>88</sup> As the predecessor for and founder of the imperial line, Caesar's hope that his *clementia* will be repaid in accordance with the rules of Rome's culture of exchange (*clementiam, quam praestiterat, exspectat*) provides a template for his successors' interaction with the aristocracy.

Though Velleius parallels Sallust in attributing generosity to Caesar, other traits in Velleius' initial sketch are reminiscent Sallust's Catiline, particularly his energy and physical

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<sup>88</sup> See Roller (2001, 174-212) for an analysis of the practice of gift-giving by Julio-Claudian emperors as a way to secure power, especially 176-182 for his discussion of how Velleius repeatedly asserts the connection between giving and the establishment of legitimate, imperial authority.

prowess. For example, Velleius calls Caesar “*vigore animi acerrimus* (2.41.1),” which is similar in sense to Catiline’s “*magna vi animi* (*Cat.* 5.1).” When Velleius describes Caesar as able to endure dangers (*patientia periculorum*) and using food and sleep to sustain him rather than for pleasure (*semper et somno et cibo in vitam non in voluptatem uteretur*), these traits recall Catiline’s “*corpus patiens inediae algoris vigiliae supra quam quouquam credibile est* (*Cat.* 5.3).” Why Velleius would use terms reminiscent of Sallust’s Catiline to describe Caesar requires explanation. Though Catiline has some positive qualities, he is a destructive villain in Sallust’s narrative, yet Velleius certainly does not cast Caesar as a villain. As I argued above, Sallust added to his portrayal of Catiline Caesarian qualities like slogans of *libertas* and a preoccupation with *dignitas* because both Caesar and Catiline are revolutionary figures. A certain amount of drive and endurance is required for any man—good or bad—to change the structure of Rome’s government; Caesar and Catiline share this potential to create change in Rome, and these are the traits belonging to Catiline which Velleius references. The negative aspects of Sallust’s depiction of Catiline reveal the insincerity behind Catiline’s use of the watchword “*libertas*” and his preoccupation with *dignitas*. It serves as a warning to reader to be wary of who is leading change, for not everyone is motivated by sincere concern for Rome. Velleius encapsulates the same idea; change can be good, as long as the right individual is effecting it. Caesar’s role in the *Historiae* is to set in motion a revolution in the Republic which allows the “right” men—Augustus and Tiberius—to be in power. Velleius’ Caesar, while sharing Catiline’s revolutionary force of spirit and physical prowess, is not maligned, as Catiline was by Sallust; he can change the course of the ever-worsening republic for the better, whereas change brought by Sallust’s Catiline would have hastened Rome’s decline.

### **Evidence for Caesar's divine nature following the initial sketch**

After the initial sketch, Velleius continues to suggest Caesar's divine nature in several ways. First, he depicts Caesar as godlike by describing his actions in terms that suggest a divine presence. This suggestion appears in the reactions Caesar inspires (e.g., 2.41.3, discussed below) and through the historian's comments that Caesar's deeds are akin to a god's (2.47.1, also discussed below). In addition his deeds suggesting his divinity, Velleius's second way of hinting at Caesar's divine status is to elevate specific traits—like his *fortuna* and *celeritas*—to superhuman status. These traits are also crucial aspects of Caesar's self-fashioning in his commentaries. As I will discuss in later sections, Velleius upgrades these traits from characteristics which merely explain Caesar's successes or failures to traits which supply additional evidence for his godlike nature. Let us begin, however, by investigating the historian's method of revealing Caesar's divinity through his deeds.

Velleius' account of Caesar's capture by pirates illustrates several traits which contribute to his greatness (2.42.1). One component of that greatness, which appears in this episode, is his godlike nature. As Schmitzer (2000) discusses, Velleius' version of the story is like a realistic retelling of Homeric Hymn 7, wherein Dionysus is captured by pirates, who, except for one, end up victims of Dionysus' divine wrath.<sup>89</sup> The historian's parallels to the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus already suggest that Caesar, who is our Dionysus in this episode, is divine. In addition to the parallel plot line, Velleius' language in the story further emphasizes his god-like nature. For instance, when the young Caesar was among the pirates, he excited their respect and fear (*pariter his terrori venerationique esset*, 2.41.3). *Veneratio* is often used to describe the relationship between a mortal and a god, or generally any relationship between superior and inferior figures; when combined with *terror* Velleius creates a scenario wherein the pirates, who

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<sup>89</sup> See 164ff. for his detailed account of the connections between Velleius' description of the pirate episode and Homeric Hymn 7.

should inspire terror in Caesar, react to him as if they face a fearsome god like Dionysus.<sup>90</sup>

Velleius' use of *veneratio* is even more poignant when used in reference to the young Caesar; its etymological link to the goddess Venus recalls his divine ancestry, which had recently been highlighted in his introductory character sketch.<sup>91</sup>

Velleius further develops Caesar's superhuman nature when he recounts Caesar's military exploits. When summarizing Caesar's campaigns in Gaul he says the following:

Per haec insequentiaque et quae praediximus tempora amplius CCCC milia hostium a C. Caesare caesa sunt, plura capta; pugnatum saepe directa acie, saepe in agminibus, saepe eruptionibus; bis penetrata Britannia; <e> novem denique aestatibus vix ulla non iustissimus triumphus emeritus, circa Alesiam vero tantae res gestae quantas audere vix hominis, perficere paene nullius nisi dei fuerit. (2.47.1)

Over 400,000 of the enemy were killed by Caesar, and even more captured during these times, the following ones, and the ones I talked about before; battle was often fought with the battle-line drawn up, but it was also often fought on the march, and often through sorties. Twice he invaded Britain; on top of that, out of nine campaigns, scarcely any would not have made him most duly deserving of a triumph, and near Alesia he dared feats as great as those scarcely dared by human, and he accomplished that which could be done by scarcely anyone but a god.

Velleius again suggests that Caesar is godlike, this time through his military deeds. At Alesia, which represents the crowning victory during Caesar's campaigns in Gaul, Caesar's exploits were scarcely within the abilities of mortals but were nearly the acts of gods.<sup>92</sup> Calling Caesar's deeds at Alesia godlike adds another layer of significance to Velleius' assertion that Caesar deserved a triumph. It is generally agreed that, in the ritual of the triumph, the triumphator

<sup>90</sup> For more on the *terror* that Caesar can inspire, see my discussion of the *synkrisis* below, section 2.6.

<sup>91</sup> Hinds (2006) shows that etymologizing wordplay on Venus was rampant in poetry, especially during the Late Republican and Augustan periods, when connections to Venus were used as political capital. Velleius is obviously not a poet, but, judging by his vast knowledge of literature (such as his review of literature from the late Republican and early Augustan ages, 2.36.2-3), he was certainly aware of the various ways one could play on the name of Venus.

<sup>92</sup> Valerius Maximus also recounts some of Caesar's exploits while in Gaul and Britain as if they were the acts of a god, e.g. 3.2.23. See Weinstock (1971, 186-188) regarding the connection between Caesar's divinity and his conquests in Gaul.

played the role of a god.<sup>93</sup> By claiming that Caesar deserved a triumph and that he accomplished feats which were possible for nearly no one but a divinity, Velleius uses the ritual of the triumph as another link to Caesar's divine status. In essence, Caesar deserves the godlike honors accorded to a triumphant *imperator* because he is godlike; celebrating a triumph would simply acknowledge Caesar's divine nature.

As the above section has illustrated, Velleius repeatedly nudges his reader to think of Julius Caesar as divine. What Velleius does not do, however, is call Caesar "divine" or "heavenly", but he does attribute divinity directly to Augustus and Tiberius. Does this mean that Caesar is not "divine" but Augustus and Tiberius are? Certainly not; as in other respects, Caesar is the trailblazer of the Julio-Claudian line; Velleius *shows* how Caesar is divine then simply *asserts* that Caesar's successors, who inherit Caesar's divinity along with his name, are divine. As the next sections show, Velleius continues to develop Caesar's superhuman status through emphasis on some of Caesar's other incredible traits, such as his *celeritas*, his personal *Fortuna*, and his *clementia*.

## 2.2 *Celeritas Caesaris*

Speed is one of Caesar's best-known traits. Caesar ascribes it to himself multiple times in his commentaries; it reflects his superiority as a general, for it reflects his quick thinking.<sup>94</sup> In the *Bellum Civile* in particular, speed can be a double-edged sword: to be too slow implies inferior planning, but Caesar also depicts others who possess reckless speed, reflecting an equally dangerous lack of rationality and planning.<sup>95</sup> As I mentioned in the previous chapter, Sallust's Catiline and his follower Cethegus also value haste, though Catiline's haste stems from

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<sup>93</sup> See Beard (2007, esp. 219-256), Weinstock (1971, 60-75), and Taylor ([1931] 1975) for perspectives on the Roman triumph and the triumphator's likeness to a living god during the procession.

<sup>94</sup> Grillo (2008, 34): "Caesar wins because he is quicker and he is quicker because he is smarter."

<sup>95</sup> See the introductory chapter for an overview of Caesar's use of *celeritas* in his *Bellum Civile*.

restlessness. It is closer to the reckless haste which Caesar ascribes to his opponents than the *celeritas* which characterizes Caesar and his army.

In Velleius, too, *celeritas* is ascribed to Caesar early and often. We have already seen him attribute speed to the general in his initial portrait, where he claims that his speed in war is similar to Alexander's. Just as Caesar demonstrates in the commentaries that his speed is the key several of his successes, Velleius also portrays his speed as a key factor in accomplishing many feats.

Caesar's decisive speed first appears near the end of the pirate episode. Upon his escape from the pirates, he contracts a private army to exact revenge on them (2.42.2).<sup>96</sup> After he captures some of the pirates, he goes to Bithynia to ask that he be allowed to punish the pirates.

... in Bithyniam perrexit ad proconsulem Iunium <Iun>cum (idem enim Asiam eamque obtinebat), petens ut auctor fieret sumendi de captivis supplicii. Quod cum ille se facturum negasset venditurumque captivos dixisset (quippe sequebatur invidia inertiam), incredibili celeritate revectus ad mare, priusquam de ea re ulli proconsulis redderetur epistula, omnes, quos ceperat, suffixit cruci. (2.42.3)

[Caesar] went straight to Bithynia to the proconsul Junius Juncus (for that very man held Asia and Bithynia as his province), and he asked to be the one to punish the captives. When Junius said that Caesar would do no such thing and that he would sell the captives (since jealousy followed his own inactivity), Caesar sailed back with incredible speed and he crucified all whom he had captured before the proconsul's letter concerning the matter could be dispatched.

When the proconsul, Junius Juncus, refuses to grant Caesar permission to punish the pirates, Caesar takes matters into his own hands and crucifies the pirates himself. This episode anticipates Caesar's swiftness in war. His extraordinary speed in the passage above has a parallel in his own account of the civil war: when crossing the Adriatic to Greece, he was so

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<sup>96</sup> Caesar's private army would of course remind one of Augustus' own claim in the *Res Gestae* that he gathered a private army in order to avenge the death of his adoptive father, Julius Caesar. Velleius anticipates a connection between the two men and recounts similar stories about both men in their youth to display characteristics that Octavian has "inherited" from Caesar. Velleius also narrates Octavian's raising of an army in the face of inaction from the state (2.61.1), another deed reminiscent of his adoptive father. See also Elefante (1997, 315) concerning Julius Caesar – Octavian parallels.

quick that there were reports of seeing him on land before anyone was able to report his approach (*Civ.* 3.7.2). Velleius also alludes to Caesar's description of his speedy journey across the Adriatic later in the civil war narrative (2.51.2, discussed below). His speed continues as he hurries (*festinans*) back to Italy to stand for the office of *pontifex maximus* and to avoid the reprisals of the pirates he didn't capture (2.43.1). Haste not only saves him from a run-in with pirates but also allows him to seize the opportunity to stand for office.

As I mentioned in the previous section, Velleius' account of the pirate episode illustrates aspects of Caesar's greatness which existed from his youth, so it comes as little surprise that *celeritas* would appear beside references to Caesar's godlike nature in that episode, though the historian does not explicitly link speed to his divinity. In the narrative of civil war, Velleius takes *celeritas* a step farther and links it with Caesar's divine status. The account of Ilerda shows Caesar's famous speed in full force; Velleius describes the general's sudden arrival and the reaction of the Pompeian army in the following way: "Then the army, struck by the energy of his arrival as by a lightning bolt, handed itself over to Caesar." (*Exercitus deinde...ipsius adventus vigore ac fulgore occupatus se Caesari tradidit*, 2.50.4) Caesar's epiphany at Ilerda gives a vivid account of Caesar's energy and speed in war. Velleius also adds a divine dimension to Caesar's speed by likening his arrival to a lightning bolt (*fulgore*), the principal symbol of Jupiter's power and itself a fearsome force of nature.<sup>97</sup>

### ***Celeritas and Velleius' Festinatio***

The above examples illustrate how Caesar's *celeritas* accentuates his mighty and impressive nature in the civil war, but *celeritas* also functions as a narrative strategy in the text.

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<sup>97</sup> Elefante (1997, 333) notes that the profound effect of a general's arrival is commonly found in panegyric, but one ought not discount the fact that again Velleius appeals to divine imagery as he describes Caesar's feats. As I discuss in the next chapter, Lucan will also use lightning imagery to illustrate Caesar's divine nature and speed, an image often used to praise generals but, as I argue, is more likely appropriated by the poet to highlight Caesar's lack of self-control and destructive disposition.

Velleius often cites *celeritas* to mask his own *festinatio*; that is, Caesar's speed helps Velleius sprint over sections of the civil war in which Caesar faces a challenge or he is presented in a less than favorable light. One example of speed being used to gloss over an episode in the civil war can be found when Velleius recounts the general's journey from Brundisium to Dyrrachium, which I briefly mentioned above: "Caesar considered nothing worth delay as he relied on his speed and his *fortuna*." (*Sua et celeritate et fortuna C. Caesar usus nihil in mora habuit*, 2.51.2) By briefly referring to *celeritas* and *fortuna*, Velleius compressed the episode in which Caesar and his army sail to Greece. In Caesar's own version of events, he gets across the Adriatic and lands safely in Palaeste (or Pharsalia) thanks to his *celeritas*, but the bulk of his legions cannot cross for weeks; when they eventually make the journey, Caesar attributes their successful crossing to *fortuna*.<sup>98</sup> Instead of explaining the difficulties the Caesarian troops had faced, Velleius locates both "*celeritas*" and "*fortuna*" in their general and cuts out any mention of his men. This compression disguises Velleius' narrative speed and makes what was actually a rather troublesome journey across the sea sound easy for Caesar, who then seems that much more impressive.

Another instance during the civil war which uses haste to gloss over a difficult episode comes when Caesar has stopped at Massilia on his way to Spain: "Massilia delayed the rush of his journey for some time." (*Festinationem itineris eius aliquamdiu morata Massilia est*, 2.50.3) Velleius devotes little more than a few words to this episode before moving on to Ilerda, yet comparison with Caesar's account of the civil war suggests that more attention should have been paid to the campaign, for the siege of Massilia takes up a large portion of Caesar's first and second books in the *Bellum Civile*. Velleius does not want to tell the story of this siege, so it

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<sup>98</sup> The bulk of Caesar's men "used fortune's kindness (*usi fortunae beneficio*, *Civ.* 3.26.4)." See also Woodman's note (1983, 91) on this episode.

becomes a hiccup on Caesar's journey to Ilerda. It is understandable that the historian would not want to linger on Massilia; the siege of the city was not brief and Caesar's justification for the siege is questionable. In fact, Velleius' only reference to the general's reason for besieging Massilia comes in the form of a pithy *sententia*: one needs might (which the Massilians do not have, but Caesar does) in order to instill right (*fide melior quam consilio prudentior, intempestive principalium armorum arbitria captans, quibus hi se debent interponere qui non parentem coercere possunt*, 2.50.3). Velleius depicts Massilia as well-intentioned for trying to intervene in the war, but foolish for doing so when the town did not have enough clout to force Caesar, who was set on going to Spain, to stop. In his commentaries, the siege of Massilia is justified by depicting the Massiliots as inconstant in their neutrality: first, Massilia's representatives deny Caesar entry into the city, saying that they intend to remain neutral, yet they allow the Pompeian, Domitius, into the city when he arrives (*Civ.* 1.35-36). Caesar, dismayed by this perfidity, sets on the city, though the bulk of the siege is entrusted to Trebonius. I return to the Massilian episode in the next chapter to discuss Lucan's lingering narration of the siege of Massilia. The moral behind his version of the siege—as well as its implications for how he depicts Caesar—will be far different from Velleius' treatment.

In the treatment of Ilerda, too, Velleius uses *celeritas* to hide his own *festinatio*. As I mentioned above, Caesar's lightning-swift arrival at Ilerda prompts the opposing army to surrender. Behind all of the flashing and power, however, hides Velleius, who has again used Caesar's speed in order to pass over the protracted stand-off between Caesar's troops and those under the command of Afranius and Petreius. Caesar's own account of his campaign at Ilerda, from his arrival through the final capitulation of the Pompeian troops, takes up 44 chapters (*Civ.* 1.41-55, 59-87) and narrates the events of spring and summer, 49 BCE. In the *Bellum Civile*,

*celeritas* certainly plays an important role not only in the general's timely arrival at Ilerda but also in his attempt to out-manuever the troops led by Afranius and Petreius; in fact, when maneuvering to seize a favorable position on the hills, Caesar notes that "the whole contest depended on speed."<sup>99</sup> (*erat in celeritate omne positum certamen*, *Civ.* 1.70.1) As important as speed is to that campaign, to say that Caesar's mere arrival caused the opposition to lay down arms, as Velleius does, stretches the truth. Again we see Caesar's *festinatio* masking the historian's omission of a particularly dicey episode, even passing over the poignant scene of brief reconciliation between the Caesarian and Pompeian forces, which Petreius breaks up in a bloody renewal of hostilities (*Civ.* 1.74-76). Where Velleius rushes, however, Lucan lingers; the next chapter discusses his detailed account of the campaign at Ilerda, which presents Caesar's might and clemency in a darker light.

Caesar's *celeritas* reflects his greatness as a general. As in the commentaries, Velleius shows that speed plays a large role in Caesar's success in war, yet the historian hints that this speed might also come with occasional, albeit youthful, recklessness. Caesar's swift execution of the pirates he had caught forced him to hasten back to Italy in order to avoid other brigands. Speed's potential dark side, recklessness, as well as its limited utility—it is a military rather than political virtue—might explain why the quality does not appear as often in Caesar's successors as it does in Julius Caesar himself. Velleius assigns *celeritas* to Octavian soon after he has returned to Rome and taken up his adoptive father's name; the youth takes Caesarian initiative by raising a private army while the rest of the state is listless (2.61.1).<sup>100</sup> Tiberius also inherits Caesar's *celeritas*, but speed's potential for recklessness is tempered by Tiberius' *cura* and

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<sup>99</sup> For Caesar's *celeritas* in this episode, see especially Stadter (1993) and Grillo (2008, 27-35).

<sup>100</sup> Velleius also says that Gaius Maecenas used "wondrous speed"—the same phrase used of Tiberius when he puts down an attempted revolt—when he put down Marcus Lepidus' plot to assassinate Augustus (*mira celeritate*, 2.88.3).

*providentia*.<sup>101</sup> In fact, what *celeritas* reflects regarding an individual's character in Velleius follows Caesar's own dichotomy in the *Bellum Civile*: it can be characteristic of dangerous, reckless individuals, exemplified by Sextus Pompey (2.73.1) and Arminius (2.118.2), or it can demonstrate readiness to take action, which better suits the *celeritas* applied to Tiberius.<sup>102</sup> For example, Tiberius uses *celeritas* to quickly put down a potential revolution: "How swiftly he overwhelmed the ingrate...the one attempting revolution!"<sup>103</sup> (*Quam celeriter ingratum \* et nova molientem oppressit*, 2.129.2) In general, however, when Velleius attributes speed to Tiberius, he often prefers to illustrate his swiftness rather than deploy the Caesarian term *celeritas*. For example, after the *clades Variana*, Tiberius "flies back" (*revolat*, 2.120.1) to Augustus and, when he is sent out to Germany, Tiberius' deeds in Germany are recounted in a continuous catalog recalling the efficacy of Caesar's swiftness:

Mittitur ad Germaniam, Gallias confirmat, disponit exercitus, praesidia munit, se magnitudine sua non fiducia hostium metiens qui Cimbricam Teutonicamque militiam Italiae minabantur. Ultra Rhenum cum exercitu transgreditur <et> arma infert...penetrat interius, aperit limites, vastat agros, urit domos, fundit obvios, maximaque cum gloria (incolumni omnium, quos transduxerat, numero) in hiberna revertitur. (2.120.1-2)

He is sent to Germany, he secures Gaul, he stations his armies, he builds up the defenses, estimating himself by his own greatness and not the trustworthiness of the enemy who threatens Italy's Cimbric and Teutonic military matters. He crosses beyond the Rhine with his army <and> brings in war...he worked his way into the interior of the land, breaks through the frontier lines, lays waste to fields, burns homes, routs enemies, and returns to wintering with the greatest glory (and with the number of everyone he had led across safe and sound).

*Celeritas* meets *cura* in Tiberius, resulting in speed without recklessness. Furthermore, as the previous example showed, Tiberius finds an appropriate use for speed in his reign, namely, to

<sup>101</sup> For an example of Tiberius' *providentia*, see 2.115.5; for *cura* see 114.1.

<sup>102</sup> The *celeritas* applied to Sextus Pompey and Arminius is qualified by *cogitatu* or *sensu*, which lends a sense that they are impetuous rather than just swift. The Sallustian influence on their characterization cannot be ignored, either; they are figures who threaten the republic, and their dangerous impetuosity is effectively neutralized when each man faces either Augustus or Tiberius.

<sup>103</sup> Another example of Tiberius' speed appears when he hastened back to Rome after a campaign (2.107.3). Again, his speed reflects a readiness for action.

face sudden opposition in the form of conspiracies against his life, the very context in which Caesar failed to employ his speed.

A second benefit of Caesar's speed is that Velleius uses it to hide his own *festinatio*. Whenever Caesar encounters difficulties during the civil war, Velleius rushes him through that part. Speed gives the historian a way to avoid some of the stickier issues associated with civil war, such as the reality that civil war involved Romans killing fellow Romans, without diminishing Caesar's remarkable deeds during that time. In this way, Velleius mimics Valerius Maximus' method of selecting episodes from the civil war which highlight a particular quality while still being able to pass over the more difficult aspects of narrating civil war.

Caesar's famous speed persists beyond Tiberian depictions of the famed general. As I discuss in the next chapter, Lucan also emphasizes Caesar's *celeritas*. Contrary to what we have seen in the commentaries and in Velleius history, the speed seen in the *Pharsalia* reflects Caesar's utter lack of self-control and harms the republic. For now, let us turn to another Caesarian trait that is as famous as his speed: his luck.

### **2.3 *Fortuna Caesaris***

Caesar's fortune is a well known component of his portraits, though its role and relationship with Caesar shifts from work to work. In the *Bellum Civile*, *fortuna* is "a composite of good luck and Caesar's ability to overcome adversity."<sup>104</sup> Caesar does not treat fortune as an attendant goddess in his commentaries; in fact, he points to *fortuna* more often when he faces setbacks than when things are going well, portraying himself as a man who, in essence, makes his own good luck rather than assumes that some outside force creates his success. One of Caesar's *sententiae*, which comes after the defeat at Dyrrachium, encapsulates his view: "If everything were not coming out favorably, then fortune must be assisted by hard work." (*Si non*

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<sup>104</sup> Grillo (2008, 203).

*omnia caderent secunda, fortunam esse industria sublevandam, Civ. 3.73.4*) In Sallust, *fortuna* depends on character; a bad character will yield bad luck or a lack of success, while a good character will yield good luck. The direct relationship between character and *fortuna* explains why power always shifts to whoever is *optimus* from those who are less good. (*fortuna simul cum moribus inmutatur. Ita imperium semper ad optimum quemque a minus bono, Cat. 2.5-6*) Sallust's view of fortune plays out in the *Bellum Catilinae* through Catiline's failed attempt at revolution and through the larger context of Rome's deterioration, leaving Rome prey to the attempts of some, such as Catiline, to overthrow its institutions for personal gain. In Velleius, also *fortuna* plays an important role, particularly in his depiction of Caesar and the civil war.

In both the *Bellum Civile* and the *Bellum Catilinae*, fortune is an impersonal force; it does not necessarily "favor" anyone, but is instead an obstacle to overcome or a reflection of one's character. Velleius, though he does mention *fortuna* as an impersonal force, sometimes synonymous with fate, is the first author in this study to depict Caesar with personal fortune (*sua fortuna*). Most of these assignments of personal luck appear in the narrative of the civil war, yet evidence that Caesar enjoys good *fortuna* appears as early as the pirate episode. After he executes the pirates, he rushes back to Italy, but, on the way back, he thinks that he sees pirates. He prepares for "one fortune or the other," (*alterutri...fortunae*) but soon discovers that the "pirates" he thought he saw were only trees (2.43.2).<sup>105</sup> This story offers a glimpse of the Caesar from the *Bellum Civile*, who is prepared to face a setback and to overcome adversity with his skill. The humorous episode also illustrates that, despite the fact that the seas were full of pirates while Caesar made his journey (*ne conspiceretur a praedonibus omnia tunc obtinentibus maria et merito iam infestis sibi, 2.43.1*), fortune smiles on Caesar, whose return to Italy was not plagued by brigands.

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<sup>105</sup> Schmitzer (2000, 168) note that this portion of the episode also underscores Caesar's *vigilantia*.

### ***Fortuna in the civil war***

From this glimmer of *fortuna* in the pirate episode I move to the narrative of the civil war, in which Caesar's personal luck finally appears. Velleius first mentions the general's luck when he sails to Dyrrachium. This episode, which I have discussed above when examining Caesar's speed, compresses the *Bellum Civile*'s account of that crossing by claiming that Caesar used his speed and *fortuna* to sail to Greece (*Sua et celeritate et fortuna*, 2.51.2). The passage represents a turning point in the depiction of Caesar; from this point on Velleius stops emphasizing speed and instead underscores the general's *fortuna*. The frequency with which fortune appears increases as Velleius describes Caesar's later exploits in Africa and at Munda. *Fortuna* appears four times in that section of the narrative. Its first appearance comes after the fated victory at Pharsalus and the tragic death of Pompey; Caesar "follows his fortune (*sequens fortunam suam*, 2.55.1)" into Africa. Variable *fortuna*, which quickly turns to favor Caesar, characterizes the next appearance in the African campaign: "At first an unsteady *fortuna* battled there, but soon Caesar's own *fortuna* fought and the enemy troops were driven back." (*Ibi primo varia fortuna, mox pugnavit sua, inclinataeque hostium copiae*, 2.55.1) Although the fortune of battle was swinging this way and that (*varia*) at first, Caesar's (*sua*) luck prevailed against the Pompeian army.

After Caesar's victorious African campaign, fortune accompanies Caesar to Spain, where we find the final two mentions of *fortuna*:

*Sua* Caesarem in Hispaniam comitata *fortuna* est, sed nullum unquam atrocius periculsoiusque ab eo initum proelium, adeo ut plus quam dubio Marte descenderet equo consistensque ante recedentem suorum aciem, increpita prius fortuna quod se in eum servasset exitum, denuntiaret militibus vesitigio se non recessurum: proinde viderent quem et quo loco imperatorem deserturi forent. Verecundia magis quam virtute acies restituta, et a duce quam a milite fortius. (2.55.3)

Caesar's fortune attended him into Spain, but he had never entered into a battle so frightful or so dangerous that, when the outcome of the battle was more than uncertain,

he descended from his horse and, standing before the retreating line of his men, announced to his soldiers (after he had upbraided Fortune because it had reserved him for this demise) that he would not retreat a step: accordingly the soldiers realized who their general was and in what place they were about to desert him. The battle line was reformed through shame more than bravery, and the general showed more courage than his men.

Though Velleius reassures the reader of fortune's attendance upon Caesar at the beginning of the Spanish campaign of 46 BCE, he describes the critical battle at Munda as uncertain enough that even Caesar for a moment declares that *fortuna* has abandoned him. Instead of despairing at his loss of fortune, however, the heroic general displays *virtus*; he says to his men, who are attempting to retreat, that he will not budge and that they ought to consider who they are leaving behind. Such a display of courage, despite seeming to have been abandoned by fortune, shames his men back into formation.<sup>106</sup> Velleius illustrates that Caesar is worthy of fortune's favor and his men's loyalty by standing his ground, even when he might lose the battle. Caesar's courage and readiness to face defeat at Munda is similar to his behavior in the pirate episode (cited above) in that he does not run in the face of a setback, and Velleius emphasizes that both *fortuna* and Caesar's compelling *virtus* win the day. To possess both *virtus* and *fortuna* is rare and is a testament to Caesar's greatness; Scipio Africanus, Augustus, and Tiberius are the only other figures who are assigned both *virtus* and *fortuna*.<sup>107</sup>

### Caesar, Pompey, and Personal Luck

Caesar's greatness as a leader and his role as fortune's favorite stands in further relief when one sets his behavior at Munda beside Pompey's actions in the face of defeat at Pharsalus: "Pompey, running away along with the two Lentuli, who had been consuls, his son Sextus, and

<sup>106</sup> Woodman (1983, 108) and Elefante (1997, 345) agree that the scene, wherein Caesar stands his ground and confronts his soldiers, illustrates his *virtus*. The episode also illustrates the influence Caesar had over his men, by shaming them into returning to formation. Grillo (2008, 70-78) discusses how, in both the *De Bello Gallico* and the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar shows how his men resist the temptation to flee out of fear (*timor*) through a sense of shame (*pudor*), namely, knowing that standing and fighting is the proper thing to do.

<sup>107</sup> For Augustus' personal *fortuna* see 74.4 (paired with *virtus*) and 87.2 (paired with *clementia*); for Tiberius' *fortuna* see 2.97.4 (paired with *virtus*). Scipio Africanus displays his *fortuna* and *virtus* at Numantia (2.4.2). For more on *fortuna* in Velleius see, e.g., Kuntze (1985, 69f.) and Schmitzer (2000, 192-225).

the former praetor Favonius, whom *fortuna* had gathered around him as companions...”  
 (*Pompeius profugiens cum duobus Lentulis consularibus Sextoque filio et Favonio praetorio, quo comites ei fortuna adgregaverat*, 2.53.1) Pompey, unlike Caesar, flees in the face of adversity. Fortune forms a retinue (*comites*) around Pompey, yet, strikingly, *fortuna* itself is not one of his *comes*. By leaving fortune out of the retinue Velleius subtly suggests that Pompey has been denied its favor. Moreover, when he describes Caesar’s attending fortune in Spain with *comitata est* (2.55.3), the historian invites the reader to think back to Pompey’s *comites*, particularly the fact that fortune is not one of them. Caesar’s courageous conduct in the face of a potential loss justifies fortune’s favor, whereas Pompey’s flight results in fortune replacing its company with that of mere fellow citizens.

Fortune’s support for Caesar and the language which Velleius uses to describe it suggests a level of interaction between Fortune and Caesar often found in epic. When *fortuna* fights (*pugnavit*) for Caesar, it recalls the gods of the *Iliad*, who aid their favorites in battle. In the civil war narrative fortune does not sound like an abstract, supervisory divinity, influencing but not participating in mortal events but a god who enters the battlefield to aid her favorites and ruin those who have fallen out of her favor.<sup>108</sup> Fortune’s active participation elevates Caesar’s *gloria*, reinforces his extraordinary nature, and perhaps even helps justify the cult worship Caesar received after his death. As the next chapter shows, Lucan treats the relationship between Caesar and *fortuna* in a similar manner; *fortuna* is Caesar’s companion and, in Lucan, Caesar is not merely aware of fortune’s favor but boasts about it.

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<sup>108</sup> Feeney (1991) reviews the debate over whether receiving divine help was sign of a hero’s outstanding nature or took away from the glory of the hero’s deeds. Velleius uses fortune as a sign of one’s outstanding nature, judging that the three most prominent figures in his text, Caesar, Augustus, and Tiberius, possess it.

### ***Fortuna* and future generations**

As I mentioned above, Caesar is not the only one ascribed personal *fortuna*. Velleius also assigns personal luck to Augustus and Tiberius. When this personal *fortuna* is attached to Caesar's successors, Velleius always pairs the *fortuna* with another virtue—usually *virtus* (cited above, n.46). Woodman (1977, 113) finds the pair of *virtus* and *fortuna* particularly striking; he notes that these two qualities were traditionally opposed to one another, though, much like men who can possess virtues from different semantic fields, such generosity and *integritas*, extraordinary individuals seem to have been able to possess both simultaneously, especially when ascribed a personal *fortuna*. In Velleius the combination of *virtus* and *fortuna* in a person is a recipe for success. Both qualities appear in the narrative of Caesar's final battles in Spain; fortune accompanies the general on his campaign, though he shows *virtus* even when he believes that fortune has abandoned him. Just as the historian does not overtly call Caesar divine—as he does with Augustus and Tiberius—but shows his divine status, likewise he does not explicitly pair *virtus* and *fortuna* in Caesar, he simply makes both qualities appear at the battle of Munda and invites the reader to make the connection. After showing his audience that Caesar possesses both fortune and *virtus*, Velleius finds it sufficient to simply tag the general's successors with both traits.

Similar to Pompey's demise, the end of Caesar's life comes about with a change in fortune. Velleius explains that the force of fate changed Caesar's *fortuna* (*sed profecto ineluctabilis fatorum vis, cuiuscum<que> fortunam mutare constituit, consilia corrumpit*, 2.57.3); that is, fortune was forced to abandon Caesar. The loss of luck turns Caesar's assassination into a tragedy, perhaps explaining Caesar's lack of *vigilantia* despite various warnings from Pansa and Hirtius together with omens (2.57.1-2). One could infer from Caesar's

change in fortune that Augustus and Tiberius, whom fortune never abandons, are superior to their predecessor.

Fortune plays an important role in the rise and fall of Caesar. Its presence is key to his success in the civil war, and its abandonment brings about his death. The narrative also shows that *fortuna*, though a personal, attending force in Caesar's exploits, must be earned through courageous action. Pompey's flight from Pharsalus results in a lack of *fortuna* and his demise. Though a change in *fortuna* leads to Caesar's death, too, Velleius attributes the change to *fatum*, making his death a predestined tragedy, though only a temporary tragedy, for his death offers an opportunity for his successor, Octavian, to take his place. Like his adopted father, Octavian enjoys personal fortune. This luck, which does not abandon him, also passes on to Tiberius.

In addition to *fortuna*, Caesar's *clementia* is another trait which makes its first appearance in Velleius' narrative of the civil war. I now turn to that.

#### **2.4 *Clementia Caesaris***

Clemency has appeared in every portrait of Caesar examined thus far. Caesar, though he never uses the term *clementia*, portrays his leniency toward the Pompeians as boundless and as a practical measure designed to attain peace; despite the *iniuriae* he and his men experience at the hands of the opposition, he remains merciful. Sallust also repeatedly highlights Caesar's merciful nature, which is part of his affable disposition and, as Caesar's speech in the monograph claims, stems from rational concerns.

Velleius first shows Caesar's clemency in the civil war. This quality, though it does not appear in his youth, as speed, fortune, and his divine nature did, remains a key part of Caesar's character from the civil war through his death. *Clementia*'s close association with civil war will be relevant to my discussion of how and when Velleius deploys clemency in Caesar's successors.

On several occasions Velleius describes Caesar's clemency toward the Pompeians. At Corfinium, Caesar, "having overtaken Domitius and his legions, dismissed without hesitation the leader and anyone else who wanted to go to Pompey." (*Caesar Domitio legionibusque... potitus, duce aliisque, qui voverant abire ad Pompeium, sine dilatione dimissis*, 2.50.1) Not much later, Velleius recounts the clemency which Caesar shows at Ilerda: "Both of the legates and whoever of every rank who wanted to follow them were sent back to Pompey." (*Uterque legatorum et quisquis cuiusque ordinis sequi eos voverat remissi ad Pompeium*, 2.50.4) In these examples he not only recounts the general's boundless clemency but also says that the men could return to Pompey. This striking detail deviates from Caesar's account; in the *Bellum Civile* Caesar dismisses anyone who does not want to join his side but he does not necessarily grant permission for his opponents to rejoin the Pompeians (1.85.11). Caesar's self-presentation of boundless *clementia* allows the reader to infer that, if an opponent rejoined Pompey's side after being pardoned by Caesar once, Caesar might pardon him a second time. However, even if Caesar did allow the Pompeians to go back to Pompey, Caesar never invites his opponents to continue opposing him in the *Bellum Civile*. To admit that he allowed their return to Pompey would go against his aim of presenting himself as a conciliatory figure, one who is reuniting and restoring order to Rome, not one who allows conflict to persist. For instance, he agrees to grant mercy to the troops under Afranius and Petreius on the condition that they leave Spain and disband the army (*Proinde, ut esset dictum, provinciis excederent exercitumque dimitterent; si id sit factum, se nociturum nemini*, *Civ.* 1.85.12). He does not mention, however, that the troops are free to return to Pompey.

At Pharsalus, Velleius praises Caesar's clemency and laments that some were not as ready to receive Caesar's *munus* as he was to give it:

Pro dii immortales, quod huius voluntatis erga Brutum suae postea vir tam mitis pretium tulit! Nihil illa victoria mirabilius, magnificentius, clarius fuit, quando neminem nisi acie consumptum civem patria desideravit; sed munus misericordiae corrumpit pertinacia, cum libentius vitam victor[iam] daret quam victi acciperent. (2.52.5-6)

By the immortal gods, what a price so lenient a man paid for his goodwill toward Brutus after his victory! Nothing was more amazing, more magnificent, more illustrious than that victory, because Rome lost no one except citizens who died in the battle; but stubbornness ruined the gift of mercy, since the victor gave life more freely than the conquered received it.

At Pharsalus, Velleius celebrates Caesar's clemency and, furthermore, that the bloodshed did not extend beyond the battlefield. At the same time, he laments Caesar's eventual assassination by the very men he pardoned at this battle. In his praise of clemency the historian invites comparison of Caesar's conduct to Sulla's, who, as I cited above, was mild in war, but his cruelty (*crudelitas*) after victory was unprecedented. Caesar, however, remains constant in his clemency after his victory at Pharsalus. Indeed, Velleius writes the following about Caesar's campaign in Africa: "Nor was Caesar's clemency toward the defeated there [in Africa] different than toward those he had defeated before." (*Nec dissimilis ibi adversus victos quam in priores clementia Caesaris fuit*, 2.55.2) Velleius does not dampen this clemency by mentioning Cato's suicide in Africa, a point I will return to toward the end of the chapter.

At the end of the war, Caesar again pardons his opponents: "Caesar, after he returned to the city as the victor over all, did something which surpasses human belief: he offered pardon to all who had borne arms against him." (*Caesar omnium victor regressus in urbem, quod humanam excedat fidem, omnibus, qui contra se arma tulerant, ignovit*, 2.56.1) Again, Caesar goes against expectations set in the Sullan period by remaining constant in his pardon of his opponents; remember, too, Caesar's claim to Hirtius and Pansa that he would prefer death over being feared and would stand by his policy of *clementia*.<sup>109</sup> The historian presents Caesar's

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<sup>109</sup> Cited above, pg. 72.

mercy both during and after the war as truly boundless, even moreso than the clemency encountered in the commentaries, for Velleius' Caesar explicitly permits his opponents to return to Pompey.<sup>110</sup> Although Caesar himself does not say that he allowed his opponents to go as far as to again take up arm against him, permission to return to Pompey appears in other narratives of the civil war; most relevant to this study, Lucan, in depicting Caesar's clemency toward Domitius, invites him to rejoin Pompey's army and continue fighting (Luc. 2.512-515). I discuss this scene from the *Pharsalia* in the next chapter.

### **Clemency and gratitude**

Caesar's clemency during and after the civil war presents a stark contrast to the swift punishment of the pirates found earlier in the Caesarian narrative (cited above, pg.78). That episode proves that he is capable of punishing his adversaries at his own discretion, yet it also illustrates that violence does not make friends: after executing the captured pirates, Caesar had to rush back to Italy lest he be caught again by brigands, who were "deservedly hostile to him." (*merito iam infestis sibi*, 2.43.1) Since, as Schmitzer (2000, 164-184) has shown, the pirate episode sketches out the traits which become integral to Caesar's extraordinary nature, it is just as likely that the pirate episode also invites the reader to compare Caesar's handling of his adversaries as a youth to his more clement treatment of his opponents later in life. What lesson should the reader take away from such a comparison? Caesar could be cruel and violent if he chose, which should have made the recipients of his offer of mercy that much more grateful and, furthermore, heightens the tragedy of Caesar's assassination.

Velleius is more explicit about the gratitude Caesar's opponents should have shown toward him later in the narrative. Caesar perceived his *clementia* as an object of exchange; he expected that those upon whom he bestowed mercy would repay him in kind (*clementiam, quam*

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<sup>110</sup> Appian (*Civ.* 2.7.47), by contrast, believed that Caesar would not spare his adversaries twice.

*praestiterat, exspectat*, 2.57.1), in accordance with the culture of exchange which made up the foundation of socio-political interaction in the Republic.<sup>111</sup> Though Caesar undoubtedly has great power after the civil war, it seems that Velleius refers to this Republican institution to suggest that Caesar did not necessarily aim for kingship but that he was simply taking a firm hold on the shaky state.<sup>112</sup>

As further evidence of Caesar's mercy being a token of his generosity, Velleius calls Caesar's clemency a gift (*munus misericordiae*) at Pharsalus. The use of *munus* at Pharsalus recalls the initial character sketch, in which Velleius called Caesar "most generous in bestowing gifts." (*effusissimus munificentia*, 2.41.1) Just as Caesar himself calls the clemency he shows to others a *beneficium*,<sup>113</sup> Velleius also makes Caesar's *clementia* an aspect of his generosity. The tyrannicides' rejection of this *munus* and their refusal to repay Caesar in kind raises Caesar even higher above his opponents, whose plot to assassinate Caesar does not honor the relationship of exchange that Caesar tried to establish, amounting to ingratitude.

Clemency, far from representing the suppression of freedom under a tyrant—as it will be in Lucan—or being a byword for leniency toward criminals, as Cato insinuates in the *Bellum Catilinae*, represents a positive aspect of Caesar's character in Velleius. Through his repetitive, even insistent offers of clemency to his enemies, the general repudiates the violent tyranny of Sulla and even his own youthful policy of swift, violent punishment.<sup>114</sup> Following Caesar's own

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<sup>111</sup> See n.88 for more on gift-giving as a way to establish authority among the aristocracy in the Imperial period.

<sup>112</sup> Scholars have made much of the fact that, later in his *Historiae*, Velleius calls Caesar's time as dictator a *dominatio*. I am not so sure this word should necessarily carry the negative implications of kingship (or the implication that Caesar was aiming at kingship) which others apply to it. Here *dominatio* could simply imply that Caesar had enough power to act like a king, but the actions Velleius describes show that he stayed true to Republican values by not punishing those who so harshly criticized him.

<sup>113</sup> See above, pg. 3030.

<sup>114</sup> Later in the narrative, Velleius returns to Caesar to supply an anecdote about the dictator feeling trapped by his policy of *clementia* (2.68.5).

presentation of his leniency in the *Bellum Civile*, Velleius emphasizes that he granted clemency regardless of whether his enemies in the civil war merited it.

### *Clementia principis?*

Like Caesar's *celeritas* and divine status, his policy of *clementia* is passed on to his successor Augustus.<sup>115</sup> In fact, as Velleius recounts the proscriptions under the Second Triumvirate, he depicts Octavian protesting against the proscriptions, as one imagines Caesar would have, considering his insistent adherence to a policy of mercy. However, the new Caesar is overwhelmed by Antony and Lepidus, whose policy is far more Sullan: "Though Octavian put up resistance against the two men (but it was in vain), the evil of the Sullan model, proscription, was instated." (*Repugnante Caesare sed frustra adversus duos, instauratum Sullani exempli malum, proscriptio*, 2.66.1) When Octavian takes on the name of Caesar (2.60.1-2), many of his deeds recall his adoptive father, though the new Caesar enjoys greater success than his namesake when it comes to wielding clemency *and* maintaining power.

More notable than Augustus' inheritance of *clementia* is Tiberius' supposed failure to take on that trait.<sup>116</sup> This omission would seem rather odd, especially because *clementia* was among the imperial virtues Tiberius promoted.<sup>117</sup> Kuntze (1985) has suggested that Velleius' silence regarding Tiberius' *clementia* should be interpreted as criticism of the emperor. While historical evidence does support the theory that Velleius does not mention Tiberius' clemency despite the emperor's own promotion of it because the emperor was, in reality, not particularly

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<sup>115</sup> e.g., 2.74.3; 86.

<sup>116</sup> Kuntze (1985, 129) noticed that Velleius never ascribes *clementia* or its synonyms to Tiberius. Velleius ascribes *clementia* to Scipio Africanus, Caesar, Augustus, even Brutus. Of the four men, only Scipio's *clementia* is not associated with civil war, yet his clemency achieves the same purpose as the clemency shown by other great leaders, namely that it preserves Rome. Scipio's clemency appears when Velleius calls Carthage as a monument to Scipio's *clementia*, which sets up a contrast with Scipio's grandson, who destroys Carthage (1.12.5). For Velleius, the fall of Carthage is the point at which the Republic begins its decline, a decline which hits rock bottom in the civil wars. Carthage's ruin is also Rome's ruin; the same effect appears in a civil war. Thus, one can imply that Scipio's *clementia* preserved not only Carthage but also Rome and its pristine values.

<sup>117</sup> Wardle (1997, 333), citing Levick (1975, 131-33).

merciful, I would like to suggest a different possibility. Part of Velleius' object in writing his history is to present Tiberius' reign as a time safe from the renewal of civil war. As I mentioned near the beginning of this section, *clementia* is intimately tied to civil war in Velleius' *Historiae*. When Velleius refrains from ascribing *clementia* and its associated terms to Tiberius, he is not denying that virtue to the emperor out of criticism but because *clementia* is a virtue of civil war, which no longer exists in the Tiberian period. Thus, Velleius does not need to ascribe a civil war virtue to the emperor Tiberius. In short, denying *clementia* to Tiberius is not necessarily silent criticism, rather it can be interpreted as silent reassurance that civil war will not renew.<sup>118</sup>

### **2.5 *Studium Pacis* in Velleius**

Closely related to Caesar's *clementia* is his repeated effort to maintain and restore peace when Rome is on the brink of civil war. In Velleius, as in Caesar's own commentaries, Caesar does not take pleasure in participating in civil war. Throughout his narrative of the civil war Velleius recounts Caesar's reluctance to fight his fellow citizens and shows his concern for the welfare of citizens and the state. One way Velleius does this is through repeated emphasis on Caesar's *clementia*, which I discussed in the section above. Through his clemency Caesar reduces the chance of causing more bloodshed than is necessary during the civil war; for instance, Velleius marvels that, at Pharsalus, no one outside of those killed in the heat of battle lost their lives under Caesar's watch (cited above, pg. 92). This section examines Caesar's desire for peace throughout the civil war. Before I discuss Caesar's *studium pacis*, however, I must address Velleius' account of how civil war broke out in the first place.

### **Curio, Catiline, and civil war**

Before Velleius relates Caesar's attempts at peace before civil war breaks out, he reveals that Caesar is set up for failure from the beginning: "But fortune broke up everything between

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<sup>118</sup> Gowing (2010, 257): "Tiberius, at least, could rightly claim that he had never shed Roman blood in a civil war, the first Roman leader to be able to make that claim in some time."

the leaders destined for so great a conflict.” (*Atque omnia inter destinatos tanto discrimini duces dirimente fortuna*, 2.47.2) In addition to *fortuna*, other agents within the state are urging on civil war. Among them is Curio, labeled by Velleius as the war’s firebrand: “No other placed a greater burning torch to these evils than Gaius Curio, tribune of the plebs.” (*Malis non alius maiorem flagrantio remque quam C. Curio tribunus plebis subiecit facem*, 2.48.3) Velleius finds a convenient scapegoat in Curio; he depicts the tribune as the sort of man who would want civil war. In fact, Curio shares several characteristics with another group which incited civil violence: Catiline and his men. Velleius describes Curio in the following way:

Vir nobilis, eloquens, audax, suae alienaeque et fortunae et pudicitiae prodigus, homo ingeniosissime nequam et facundus malo publico cuius †animo voluptatibus vel libidinibus neque opes ullae neque cupiditates† sufficere possent. (2.48.3-4)

A man of noble birth, eloquent, daring, prodigal of his own fortune and chastity along with that belonging to others, a most talented good for nothing, and an eloquent man when it came to harming the state. †Neither riches nor desires could provide enough diversion or pleasures for his mind.†

Many of these qualities show up throughout the *Bellum Catilinae* when Sallust describes Catiline:

L. Catilina, nobili genere natus...ingenio malo pravoque. ...Animus audax subdolos varius, quouis rei lubet simulator ac dissimulator, alieni adpetens sui profusus...satis eloquentiae sapientiae parum. Vastus animus inmoderata incredibilia nimis alta semper cupiebat.

Iam primum adulescens Catilina multa nefanda stupra fecerat...alia huiusce modi contra ius fasque. (*Cat.* 5.1,4-5; 15.1)

Lucius Catiline was born into a noble clan...but his nature was evil and depraved. His mind was daring, wily, and untrustworthy. He was pleased to pretend or hide his emotions as the situation called for. He sought out the wealth of others while spending through his own. He was pretty eloquent, but he did not possess enough common sense. His vast mind always wanted things beyond the mean, things beyond belief, and anything beyond his reach.

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To begin with, when Catiline was a youth he had done many unspeakable, immoral things...and other things of this sort against both human and divine law.

Velleius' Curio bears a striking resemblance to Sallust's Catiline.<sup>119</sup> What has greater relevance to the discussion at hand is the similarity between Curio's and Catiline's negative traits; this similarity depicts Curio as the *type* of man who would cause harm to the republic, much like Catiline's negative traits led him to harm rather than help Rome.<sup>120</sup> As I mentioned above, echoes of Sallust's Catiline appear in Velleius' sketch of Caesar, too, but he shares Catiline's admirable traits, the ones which made both men capable of effecting change in Rome in the first place. Velleius does not assign to Caesar the traits which made Catiline an unsavory figure, one who was unfit to take control of the state. Instead, those negative traits are assigned to Curio. By unloading all of the mischievous traits onto him, Velleius offers a figure of blame for why, despite Caesar's attempts at a peaceful settlement with the Pompeians, Rome still fell into civil war. This scapegoat keeps Pompey and Caesar free from blame for beginning the civil war.

When Caesar tries to reach an accord, Curio breaks down negotiations:

Ad ultimum saluberrimas [et] coalescentis condiciones pacis, quas et Caesar iustissimo animo postulabat et Pompeius aequo recipiebat, discussit ac rupit, unice cavente Cicerone concordiae publicae. (2.48.5)

Finally when Caesar most fair-mindedly set out very beneficial terms for a peace which would unify the state and Pompey was going to accept it with a fair mind, [Curio] broke down and shattered the negotiations while Cicero alone was looking out for harmony in the state.

Velleius' treatment of Curio focuses on making him bear the blame for the civil war. Beyond this function, Velleius has very little to say about him.<sup>121</sup> Just after he blames Curio for instigating civil war, he comments on his duplicity and his possible venality:

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<sup>119</sup> The resemblance might not mean that Sallust is Velleius' source (though I think he might be). One possible alternative source is Cicero, whom Woodman (1983, 78-79) suggests as a source of inspiration for at least some of the description of Catiline.

<sup>120</sup> *ibid.*, 65: "Velleius' whole sketch of Clodius is adapted from that of the troublesome Q. Curius at Sall. *C.* 23.1-3."

<sup>121</sup> Doni  (1996, 86ff.) suggests that, though Curio is a scapegoat, Velleius criticizes Caesar *ex silentio* by mentioning that Curio might have taken bribes from Caesar, but he, like Sallust, leaves it up to his reader to cast judgement.

Hic primo pro Pompeii partibus (id est, ut tunc habebatur, pro re publica), mox simulatione contra Pompeium et Caesarem sed animo pro Caesare stetit. (Id gratis an accepto centies HS fecerit, ut accepimus, in medio relinquemus.) (2.48.4)

At first this man [Curio] sided with the Pompeian party (that is, as it was considered at that time, the side of the republic), but soon he pretended to be against both Pompey and Caesar, though in his heart he sided with Caesar. (I will leave unanswered the question whether he sided with Caesar of his own accord or because he had received—as the rumor goes—10,000,000 sesterce.)

Rather than being cast as Caesar's agent, Curio is made out to be a troublemaker. Though he sides with Caesar in the end, his actions run counter to Caesar's intended goal of preventing war. Also note Velleius' skepticism and reserved comment on the issue of whether Curio was bribed; he does not name the source of the bribe nor does he confirm it. Though the option which would be more flattering to Caesar would be to ignore the issue completely, Velleius' mention of the rumor perhaps counts more heavily against Curio than Caesar, who is not named as the source of the bribe.

After breaking down negotiations, Curio goes unmentioned for most of Velleius' narrative of the civil war. When Caesar arrives in Africa, Curio's only appearance in the civil war narrative comes as an off-hand remark, "Caesar follows his fortune and journeys to Africa, which the Pompeian troops held onto after Curio, the leader of the Caesarian party, had been killed." (*Sequens fortunam suam Caesar pervectus in Africam, quam occiso Curione, Iulianarum duce partium, Pompeiani obtinebant exercitus*, 2.55.1) Curio is hidden in the middle of the sentence between Caesar and the Pompeians, and Velleius mentions him only because it was due to his death that the Pompeians held Africa. Thus, Curio becomes a figure of blame again; he broke down peace negotiations and he failed Caesar by losing Africa. Velleius finds little reason to mention Curio beyond criticizing him for hindering Caesar's objective of restoring peace.

In Velleius, Curio is a figure of blame and nothing is mentioned which might rehabilitate his character. He is corrupt and desirous of civil war. He causes problems for Caesar because he

places personal gain over the welfare of the state. During the civil war narrative, Velleius mostly passes over the young lieutenant; he brings up Curio's campaign in Africa only when Caesar must travel there. Even then, Velleius simply notes that Curio had lost control of Africa, which Caesar had assigned to him. In short, when Velleius is not defaming Curio, he ignores him.

Caesar, by contrast, offers a far more sympathetic portrayal of his lieutenant in the *Bellum Civile*:

Tum vero ad summam desperationem nostri perveniunt et partim fugientes ab equitatu interficiuntur, partim integri procumbunt. Hortatur Curionem Cn. Domitius, praefectus equitum, cum paucis equitatibus circumstans, ut fuga salutem petat atque in castra contendat, et se ab eo non discessurum pollicetur. At Curio numquam se amisso exercitu quem a Caesare fidei commissum acceperit in eius conspectum reversurum confirmat atque ita proelians interficitur. Equites ex proelio perpauci se recipiunt; sed ei quos ad novissimum agmen equorum reficiendorum causa substituisse demonstratum est fuga totius exercitus procul animadversa sese incolumes in castra conferunt. Milites ad unum omnes interficiuntur. (*Civ.* 2.42.2-5)

Then, indeed, our men reach the height of despair and some are killed by the enemy cavalry while trying to flee while others fall unwounded. Gnaeus Domitius, prefect of the knights, surrounds Curio with a few horsemen, urges him to seek safety in flight and to head for the camp, and promises that he will not abandon him. But Curio avers that, now that he has lost the army which he received from Caesar after it had been put into his hands in good faith, he is not about to go back and face him, and so he was killed in battle. Very few knights retreat from the battle; but those who, it was said, were positioned in the very rear for the sake of refreshing the horses, make it to camp safely after the flight of the whole army had been seen from far off. All the foot soldiers are killed to a man.

Caesar's report of the rout of Curio's troops depicts Curio as bravely standing with his men after a miscalculation which has brought disaster upon his troops. He shows so much shame and loyalty to Caesar that he prefers to die over living to fight another day. As I highlighted in the introductory chapter, one key quality Caesar ascribes to his men is that, when faced with a dangerous situation, their shame (*pudor*) almost always overcomes their fear, and thus they usually will stay and fight unless told to do otherwise.<sup>122</sup> Caesar illustrates Curio's *pudor* by recounting his declaration that he could not stand to be in his general's sight after losing his

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<sup>122</sup> Grillo (2008, 70-78) discusses in greater depth how Caesar attaches *pudor* to his army vis-à-vis what sort of *pudor* the Pompeian army possesses.

army. When one compares Velleius' depiction of Curio, it becomes much clearer how different this portrait is from Caesar's; the historian denies any loyalty or *pudor* to the man who, at one point or another, sided with the Pompeians, Caesar, and opposed both, all for his own benefit. Velleius' treatment of Curio, particularly the fact that he completely omit the Curio-tragedy which is one of Caesar's more poignant treatments of an officer's devotion to him, is essentially *damnatio memoriae*. Indeed, this treatment of Curio recalls Caesar's similar *damnatio memoriae* of Cato in the *Bellum Civile*; Velleius and Caesar each point to Curio and Cato respectively as figures who incited civil war for personal reasons, and both Curio and Cato are given smaller roles in the civil war; what little mention each man does receive is not flattering.<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, in each case, the man in question is blackened in order to make Caesar look better.

### **Caesar's *Studium Pacis***

While Curio attempts to ruin peace in Velleius, Caesar repeatedly tries to keep civil war at bay. The historian stays true to Caesar's version of events by recounting his continued suits for peace before and after civil war broke out and emphasizes his reluctance to fight against the Pompeians. In the above passage, which described Curio ruining negotiations, Velleius says that Caesar demanded a peace agreement "with the fairest mind." (*iustissimo animo*, cited above, pg. 98) The use of *iustissimo animo* triggers an earlier comment made slightly before Caesar's demand for peace: "All the fairest men wanted Caesar and Pompey to discharge their armies."<sup>124</sup> (*Iustissimus quisque et a Caesare et a Pompeio vellet dimitti exercitus*, 2.48.1) With the echo of *iustissimus*, Velleius aligns Caesar with all those who have the state's best interest at heart. He emphasizes that, even at the dawn of civil war, Caesar did all he could to preserve peace (*nihil relictum a Caesare quod servandae pacis causa temptari posset*, 2.49.3). The general expends

<sup>123</sup> See Grillo (2008, 66-67).

<sup>124</sup> Velleius' use of *iustus* might also be a nod to the *clipeus virtutum* granted to Augustus, which praised, among other things, Augustus' *iustitia*, which Tiberius also advertised via coinage and inscriptions that called him "*iustissimus princeps*." See also Levick (1999, 66).

every effort and exhausts every avenue to save Rome from war, which is exactly what he himself claims at various points in his commentaries.<sup>125</sup>

After the outbreak of civil war Velleius refers to one last attempt at peace negotiations. After defeating Domitius at Corfinium, Caesar pursues Pompey to Brundisium “in such a way that he would be seen to prefer to finish the war with matters and terms unaltered rather than overtake those in flight, but when he had found that the consuls had crossed the sea, he returned to the city.”<sup>126</sup> (*persecutus Brundisium ita ut appareret malle integris rebus et condicionibus finire bellum quam opprimere fugientes, cum transgressos reperisset consules, in urbem revertit*, 2.50.1-2) Velleius’ description of Caesar’s advance to Brundisium is similar to Caesar’s own depiction of his pursuit of Pompey. Both emphasize that, though the general’s offensive has thus far been successful and Corfinium—not to mention other towns like Ariminium—had been taken, he was still willing to offer peace on conciliatory terms.<sup>127</sup> The historian’s account of Caesar’s pursuit of Pompey acknowledges Caesar’s self-fashioning in this episode: he makes his way to Brundisium in a way which suggests that he prefers peace. In the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar also claims to be going to Brundisium with a mission of peace, but his account also reveals some activity which could be construed as hostile. Before arriving at the port, he sends a message to Pompey in Brundisium that he would like to meet and settle matters (*Civ.* 1.24.5). Once he arrives, however, he finds that the consuls have left and he starts working to hem in Pompey (*Civ.* 1.25.5-10). Caesar cites his own uncertainty regarding why Pompey would remain Brundisium as his reason for attempting to block the opposing general in (*Civ.* 1.25.3-4), yet the

<sup>125</sup> e.g., Books one and three open with Caesar suing for peace (1.9.6 and 3.10.9), though both suits fail.

<sup>126</sup> Christopher Pelling (2011a, 163) deliberates over whether Velleius’ *ita ut* triggers a consecutive or final clause to illustrate that “even when Caesar’s intentions seem to be central, we cannot be syntactically clear whether we are being told anything about them.” Such a lack of clarity reflects, I think, Velleius’ acknowledgement that the actions narrated in the *Bellum Civile* and the intention behind those actions do not seem to match.

<sup>127</sup> Caesar himself talks about his failed attempts to meet with Pompey at Brundisium at *Civ.* 1.24.5, and 1.26, discussed below.

fact remains that he undertook actions which could be interpreted as hostile. Pompey interprets Caesar's actions as aggressive and fights back (*Civ.* 1.26.1). At this point, after Caesar has taken action against Pompey, thus sparking a battle, he claims the following: "Caesar was conducting these things in such a way that he did not think that a peace treaty ought to be given up....and even if the oft-attempted matter [of getting in touch with Pompey to secure peace] slowed down his advances and plans, nevertheless he thought that he must continue in that vein by all means."<sup>128</sup> (*Atque haec Caesar ita administrabat, ut condiciones pacis dimittendas non existimaret...atque ea res saepe temptata etsi impetus eius consiliaque tardabat, tamen omnibus rebus in eo perseverandum putabat, Civ.* 1.26.2) Here we find that Caesar sets out the thought process behind his deed to mitigate the aggressive nature of his military actions. Velleius' version of the same episode cleans up Caesar's account by completely passing over his aggression against Pompey at Brundisium; when Caesar finds that the consuls have already crossed, he simply turns around and marches back to Rome. The only hint that Caesar had been at all aggressive comes through Velleius' careful wording of the consecutive clause, which concedes that the general's tactics after arriving at Brundisium could have been (mis)construed as hostile despite his multiple suits for a meeting.

Caesar's frequent suits for peace show his concern for the state, which Velleius suggests by allying him with the *iustissimi* and by inviting the reader to compare him to Curio, whose actions and insatiable nature cause trouble for the state. However, Caesar faces resistance on all fronts, including from *Fortuna*, which has determined that he and Pompey will fight; nevertheless, his attempts to reach an accord raise him above his opponents. The historian seems

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<sup>128</sup> No doubt Caesar is responding to charges that he did not go to Brundisium to seek peace. Cicero in particular doubted Caesar's sincerity in his requests for peace. See *Att.* 9.2A.3, 9.3.2, 9.13A, 9.14.2 for his opinion of the situation. He, having been asked to mediate discussions, thought that the attempt to negotiate was fruitless, for both men seemed unwilling to compromise.

to accept Caesar's claim that he participated in the war with utter reluctance; only after his petitions for negotiations were repeatedly foiled or rejected did he fully enter into the war. As in Caesar's commentaries, the reader is meant to interpret this claim to avoid war as complimentary to the general; he embodies the interests of the state while the activity of those who claim to represent the state threatens to ruin Rome.

As I will discuss in the next chapter, Lucan takes a far different approach to Caesar's relationship to peace. Instead of depicting Caesar as desirous of an accord, he is ever-hungry for war. Peace, it turns out, is the one thing he cannot bear.

## **2.6 Caesar vs. Pompey the Pompeians**

Comparison is a principal part Velleius' work; he repeatedly connects characters through verbal and thematic echoes, if not through direct references to one figure when another is the focus of his narrative.<sup>129</sup> One key set of figures the historian wants his reader to compare is Julius Caesar and Pompey. As he writes his history of the late Republic, Velleius seems preoccupied with the relationship between these two men. Although he structures his narrative in such a way that he shines the limelight on each man individually, focusing on Pompey's exploits first, then moving on to Caesar, one still finds that Velleius cannot refrain from talking about one man without referring to the other. Often the comparisons are subtle, imperceptible until the reader has read the historian's accounts of both Pompey and Caesar. Other times Velleius explicitly sets the men side by side. In this section I examine how Caesar lurks in Pompey's narrative and Velleius' comparison of the men just before they clash in the civil war.

### **Pompey (with Caesar in the background)**

Let us begin by investigating how Caesar lurks in the background of Pompey's section of the narrative. Velleius' initial description of Pompey is as follows:

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<sup>129</sup> See Schmitzer (2000, 81-85) and Gowing (2007, 415-17) for more discussion of comparison in Velleius.

Fuit hic genitus matre Lucilia stirpis senatoriae, forma excellens, non ea, qua flos commendatur aetatis, sed ea dignitate constantiaque <quae> in illam conveniens amplitudinem fortunamque eum ad ultimum vitae comitata est diem, innocentia eximius, sanctitate praecipuus, eloquentia medius, potentiae, quae honoris causa ad eum defferetur, non vi ab eo occuparetur, cupidissimus, dux bello peritissimus, civis in toga, nisi ubi vereretur ne quem haberet parem, modestissimus, amicitiarum tenax, in offensis exorabilis, in reconcilianda gratia fidelissimus, in accipienda satisfactione facillimus potentia sua numquam aut raro ad impotentiam usus, paene omnium vitiorum expers, nisi numeratur inter maxima in civitate libera dominaque gentium indignari, cum omnes cives iure haberet pares, quemquam aequalem dignitate conspicere. (2.29.2-4)

He was of senatorial stock on the side of Lucilia, his mother. He was excellent in appearance, not the sort by which the bloom of youth is esteemed, but a beauty which reflected his dignity and steadfast nature, suited his greatness and fortune, and accompanied him up to the last day of his life; he was distinguished for his integrity, pre-eminent in his purity, average in eloquence, and most desirous of power bestowed upon him as an honor, not power which he seized by force. As a leader he was very resourceful in war, he was a very restrained citizen when he donned the toga, except when he was afraid of someone being considered his equal. He held onto friendships, he was forgiving of offenses, he was most loyal when a relationship had to be repaired, and he was very ready to accept satisfaction. He never—or rarely—used his power to put someone else out of power. In fact, he was nearly free of any vice, unless it is counted among the greatest faults that, in a free state and one which is mistress of nations, one is offended to look upon someone as an equal in standing, when he should, by right, consider all citizens equals.

Velleius' description of Pompey catalogues many admirable qualities. However, twice in this character sketch the historian criticizes him for one vice: that he was unable to bear an equal (*nisi ubi vereretur ne quem haberet parem*, and *paene omnium vitiorum expers, nisi numeratur inter maxima...indignari, cum omnes cives iure haberet pares, quemquam aequalem dignitate conspicere*).<sup>130</sup> Velleius does not explicitly mention Caesar, but he does not have to; the repeated use of *dignitas*—both as a feature of Pompey's handsomeness and his refusal to accept anyone as his equal in *dignitas*—triggers thoughts of Caesar, who mentions the issue of *dignitas* in the *Bellum Civile* when he laments that he supported Pompey's *dignitas*, but now his old ally does not return the favor: "He complains that Pompey had been led astray and corrupted by his enemies through jealousy and disparagement of his glory, while he always favored and was a

<sup>130</sup> Velleius repeats the same criticism of Pompey at 2.33.3, again without naming Caesar.

supporter of Pompey's honor and worthiness." (*A quibus deductum ac depravatum Pompeium queritur invidia atque obtreptione laudis suae, cuius ipse honori et dignitati semper faverit adiutorque fuerit, Civ. 1.7.1*) Velleius casts blame on Pompey alone for being unable to stand having anyone equal to him in *dignitas*. As the next chapter discusses, Lucan is more even-handed in the blame doled out to Pompey and Caesar. Though he agrees with Velleius' assertion that Pompey could not stand an equal, he also claims that Caesar could not endure a superior.<sup>131</sup>

Caesar lingers in the background in other parts of Pompey's sketch. When Velleius addresses Pompey's appearance, he says that he was very handsome (*forma excellens*). Later, the historian uses the same language to describe Caesar's appearance, strongly suggesting that one ought to compare the two men, yet Caesar's appearance is not merely *excellens* but *excellentissimus*; in fact, he surpasses all citizens in looks (*forma omnium civium excellentissimus, 2.41.1*). Pompey is handsome, but Caesar, being the best-looking of all Roman citizens, clearly outdoes him. Though Velleius does not comment on the nature of Caesar's good looks, as he does with Pompey, the verbal echo could also carry an implicit comparison of each man's *dignitas* and *constantia*, which are the sources of Pompey's handsomeness. Namely, Velleius could be implying that, just as Caesar surpasses Pompey in *forma*, he also surpasses his son-in-law in the source of that beauty, namely *dignitas* and *constantia*.

Caesar proves superior to Pompey in military matters, too. Pompey is called a "most resourceful general in war," (*dux bello peritissimus, 2.29.3*) which is certainly high praise. However, as my earlier discussion underscored, Caesar outstrips Pompey by being called "most similar to Alexander the Great" (*Magno illi Alexandro...simillimus, 2.41.1*) in respect to

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<sup>131</sup> Lintott (1971, 494) notes that some authors even criticize Caesar as being the one who was unable to bear an equal. Caesar himself, of course, presents himself in his commentaries in such a way that he might avoid such criticism. As Nix (2008) shows in her discussion of Caesar as Jupiter in the *Pharsalia*, Lucan takes Caesar's inability to bear a superior to an extreme as Caesar behaves in a way that seems to challenge Jupiter himself in the epic.

generalship. Pompey, though *peritissimus*, is denied likeness to Alexander, which is the ultimate compliment one could pay to a military man, especially one who strove to extend Rome's borders and subdued so many nations. Granted, Velleius acknowledges that others have seen comparable qualities between Pompey and Alexander, but he puts such suggestions into the mouths of others, such as King Mithridates. When surrendering himself to Pompey, Mithridates claims that he would not have surrendered to anyone else but him, "whom it is unspeakable to defeat, and...whom *fortuna* had raised above all others." (*quem vincere esset nefas...quem fortuna super omnes extulisset*, 2.37.4) Mithridates essentially calls Pompey undefeatable and fortune's favorite, thus likening him to Alexander. This Alexander-like figure will meet his match in Caesar later in the narrative, however, for Caesar will defeat Pompey in the civil war and will be raised by *fortuna* above all others, showing that he is better suited to be compared to the extraordinary Macedonian general. The closest our narrator comes to reminding his audience of any similarity between Pompey and Alexander *in propria voce* appears in an admonition regarding the type of man who should hold absolute power:

Quo senatus consulto paene totius terrarum orbis imperium uni viro deferebatur. ...Sed interdum persona ut exemplo nocet, ita invidiam auget aut levat...raro enim invidetur eorum honoribus quorum vis non timetur: contra in iis homines extraordinaria reformidant, qui ea suo arbitrio aut deposituri aut retenturi videntur et modum in voluntate habent. Dissuadebant optimates, sed consilia impetu victa sunt. (2.31.3-4)

By that decree of the Senate power over nearly the entire world was assigned to one man...but sometimes the character of the recipient increases or decreases jealousy to the extent to which he creates a harmful precedent. For rarely does one envy the offices of those men whose power is not feared; however, they shun conferring extraordinary powers on those men who seem that they will hold onto or put aside those powers as they see fit and whose limit is their will. The Optimates advised against giving power to Pompey, but good counsel was defeated by impulse.

Pompey is decreed power over nearly the entire world, which is comparable to the extent of Alexander's dominion. However, the report of this decree is accompanied by subtle criticism

against giving so much power to Pompey, for good advice—that he should not receive so much power—was trumped by an impulse. Velleius’ *sententia* asks the reader to infer that Pompey was not the right person to hold such power.<sup>132</sup> The trouble with Pompey, in Velleius’ view, is that he is not the sort of man who can be relied on to exercise power with moderation, nor would concerns beyond his own whims and wishes determine how and how long he would hold that power. In raising this issue, the reader is asked to compare Pompey to Caesar and his descendants, who do not abuse the *imperium* they have obtained.

These few examples illustrate that, even when the limelight is supposed to be on Pompey, Velleius describes Pompey and his exploits—which are remarkable in their own right—with Caesar lurking in the background. Pompey is certainly great, yet Caesar is greater.

### **The *synkrisis***

When Velleius prepares to recount the civil war, he returns to Caesar and Pompey to give an overview of their sides in a *synkrisis*. As the title of this section, “Caesar vs. Pompey the Pompeians,” suggests, however, in the course of this *synkrisis* Velleius shifts his comparison from Caesar and Pompey to Caesar and the Pompeians.<sup>133</sup> Here is the *synkrisis* in full:

Alterius ducis causa melior videbatur, alterius erat firmior: hic omnia speciosa, illic valentia; Pompeium senatus auctoritas, Caesarem militum armavit fiducia. Consules senatusque causae non Pompeio summam imperii detulerunt. Nihil relictum a Caesare quod servandae pacis causa temptari posset, nihil receptum a Pompeianis, cum alter consul iusto esset ferocior, Lentulus vero salva re publica salvus esse non posset, M. autem Cato moriendum antequam ullam condicionem civis accipiendam rei publicae contenderet. Vir antiquus et gravis Pompeii partes laudaret magis, prudens sequeretur Caesaris, et illa gloriosa, haec terribiliora duceret. (2.49.1-3)

The cause of the one leader seemed better, but the cause of the other was stronger: on this

<sup>132</sup> Gowing (2007, 416) suggests that Velleius implies that Tiberius, by contrast, *is* the right person to have *imperium* over the entire world; Tiberius’ reluctance to take over is one sign that he would not be immoderate, for he does not covet power.

<sup>133</sup> No depiction of Caesar in civil war is complete without a *synkrisis*; Lucan also gives a *synkrisis* of the two leaders before he dives into the action of the civil war (Luc. 1.125-157). Velleius shifts from comparing Caesar and Pompey to Caesar and the Pompeians at 2.49.2: *Consules senatusque causae non Pompeio summam imperii detulerunt*.

side, everything was imposing, on the other everything truly had force; the authority of the Senate armed Pompey, the confidence of his soldiers armed Caesar. The consuls and the Senate did not hand supreme command of the cause to Pompey. Caesar left nothing untried to preserve peace, the Pompeians accepted nothing, since one consul was fiercer than was fair, Lentulus, in fact, was not able to be well if the republic were well; Marcus Cato, however, contended that one should die before any treaty from a citizen be accepted by the republic. The old-fashioned and serious man would praise Pompey's party more, but the wise would follow Caesar's, for he thought that Pompey's side was glorious, but Caesar's was more fearsome.

Velleius' brief comparison echoes Caesarian comparisons found in previous authors at several points; some have even suggested that Velleius' *synkrisis* is based in large part on Livy's lost 109<sup>th</sup> book.<sup>134</sup> In addition to Livy's influence, some striking Sallustian elements appear in the comparison of Caesar and Pompey. For example, Velleius', "The cause of one leader seemed better, but the cause of the other was stronger; everything looked appealing on Pompey's side, but on Caesar's everything was truly powerful," (*alterius ducis causa melior videbatur, alterius erat firmior: hic omnia speciosa, illic valentia*, 2.49.1-2) uses the same seeming/being (*videri/esse*) dichotomy from Sallust's comparison of Caesar and Cato.<sup>135</sup> When Velleius employs the dichotomy, however, he redefines who embodies "being" (*esse*) and who embodies "seeming" (*videri*). In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Cato prefers to be good than seem good, implying that Caesar embodies appearance. In the *Historiae*, however, Pompey's cause *seems* better (*melior videbatur*) and on his side everything looks impressive (*speciosa*), though Caesar's side is stronger and powerful (*erat firmior; illic valentia*). Lucan, like Velleius and Sallust, also deploys language that highlights the contrast between seeming and being in his *synkrisis* of Pompey and Caesar. In the *Pharsalia*, Pompey again seems powerful while Caesar is powerful, but Lucan's Caesar cuts a far more threatening figure than Velleius' Caesar. More on that in the

<sup>134</sup> For Livy's influence on Velleius' *synkrisis*, see Lebek (1976, 64-65).

<sup>135</sup> See also Woodman (1983, 83-84) for more on the Sallustian dichotomy.

next chapter. For now, let us look at each side—Caesarian and Pompeian—individually to find out what characteristics Velleius emphasizes in this direct comparison.

Velleius ascribes two principal characteristics to Caesar in the course of the *synkrisis*: a formidable (dis)position and, a trait I discussed above, a desire for peace. In addition to characterizing Caesar and his cause—the man and the cause are one for Velleius—as *firmior* and *valentia*, Velleius emphasizes the confidence and devotion of Caesar’s army (*Caesarem militum armavit fiducia*, 2.49.2), which he contrasts with Pompey’s senatorial *auctoritas* (2.49.2). The lines are drawn: Caesar has the authority of the sword, which is matched up against the authority of the Senate.<sup>136</sup> Velleius’ final comment on Caesar’s formidability is that the keen man (*prudens*) would side with Caesar, whose side is “more fearsome.” (*terribiliora*, 2.49.3) “Fearsome” is, at first glance, not the most flattering adjective to use when describing one’s motive for following Caesar; the word conjures the specter of Sullan proscriptions, a fear which constantly plagued Caesar as he fought the civil war.<sup>137</sup> Though Velleius might be referring to the fear that Caesar’s war would lead to a renewal of proscriptions, he might also be referring to Caesar’s own account of the civil war, namely the reaction that the mere rumor of his approach excited: “When such things had been announced at Rome, such great fear suddenly set in that Lentulus immediately fled the city after opening the inner treasury.”<sup>138</sup> (*Quibus rebus Romam nuntiatis tantus repente terror invasit ut...protinus aperto sanctiore aerario ex urbe profugeret*, *Civ.* 1.14.1) Two aspects of Caesar’s account of the reaction at Rome stand out: first, Caesar does not explain why his approach causes fear, and, second, he confines his description of those

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<sup>136</sup> This split, of course, will be remedied later by Augustus and Tiberius, who have both political and military authority.

<sup>137</sup> Caesar generally does not like to raise Sulla’s ghost in his commentaries, though Grillo (2008, 198-204) illustrates several points when Caesar seems to be responding to the charge that he would be another Sulla by, among other things, making the Pompeians seem Sullan.

<sup>138</sup> As I will discuss in the next chapter, Lucan also picks up on this reaction, though the fear in his account extends beyond the Pompeians to everyone in the city.

who reacted with fear to the Pompeians. Caesar does not cause widespread *terror*; as the self-proclaimed *vindex libertatis* (*ut se et populum Romanum factione paucorum oppressum in libertatem vindicaret*, *Civ.* 1.22.5) and protector of the Roman people, he only strikes fear into the hearts of those who oppose him and, by extension, the people Rome. Though I do not discount the possibility that Velleius' use of *terribiliora* refers to the fear that Caesar's victory would lead to a renewal of proscriptions, he could also be following Caesar's lead, using *terribiliora* to allude to Caesar's account of striking fear into the hearts of the Pompeians.

As a counterbalance to Caesar's might, Velleius highlights his persistence in seeking peace, which I have discussed above. Here I focus on Velleius' comparison of Caesar and the Pompeians regarding peace.<sup>139</sup> In the course of the *synkrisis*, Velleius says that Caesar had tried everything to maintain peace in the state (*nihil relictum a Caesare quod servandae pacis causa temptari posset*, 2.49.3). The Pompeians, however, resist every attempt to avoid war. Caesar's desire for peace tempers his military strength, which could be used to harm rather than help the state.<sup>140</sup> Not only is Caesar more powerful than his opposition, he also directs his power toward the state's best interests, namely peace.

In contrast to Caesar's power and peace-seeking ways, the Pompeian side is characterized by the appearance—but not the reality—of greatness, which I mentioned above, and blind resistance to peace. They accept none of the general's peace proposals (*nihil receptum a Pompeianis*, 2.49.3). Velleius highlights several motives behind their resistance: C. Claudius Marcellus, whom Velleius refers to only as *alter consul*, rejects peace because of his war-mongering disposition (*alter consul iusto esset ferocior*, 2.49.3), Lentulus put his welfare before the state's (*Lentulus vero salva re publica salvus esse non posset*, 2.49.3), and Cato, in a

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<sup>139</sup> This point in the *synkrisis* is one of multiple examples which underscore Caesar's desire to avoid war while his opponents insist on violence.

<sup>140</sup> cf. The violence of Sulla's reign (2.28).

sentiment which foreshadows his suicide, declares that he would die before accepting the demands of a citizen (*Cato moriendum antequam ullam condicionem civis accipiendam rei publicae contenderet*, 2.49.3).<sup>141</sup> Each sentiment hints at the Pompeians' desire for war and, more importantly, how each man's personal desires and vendettas are placed before Rome's well-being. The various motives also suggest that the Pompeians, unlike Caesar's supporters, lack unity. True, they are unified in their resistance to Caesar, but the different reasons behind that resistance reflect how fragile that alliance is, recalling Caesar's own account of the discord within the Pompeian camp and Sallust's depiction of the Catilinarians' fragile loyalty to the conspiracy.<sup>142</sup> The Pompeians' lack of cohesion encapsulates one of the problems Rome has faced in the course of its decline: Rome lacks a leading figure who puts the state's welfare before his own desires. The lack of cohesion is even more apparent when Velleius carefully distinguishes Pompey from the Pompeians in the *synkrisis*, noting that the consuls and Senate did not hand over full control of the cause to Pompey (*consules senatusque causae non Pompeio summam imperii detulerunt*, 2.49.2). The comment separates Pompey from the cause he is supposed to represent and even undercuts the *auctoritas* given to him by the Senate. The Pompeian party, which supposedly represents the state, displays so many internal divisions while lacking of a true leader to unite it that it practically stands as a model for Rome's condition.

Stubborn resistance to a peace treaty and a noticeable lack of cohesion are not the Pompeians' only qualities; Velleius also emphasizes that Caesar's opposition embodies appearance without substance. I mentioned above how he recast Sallust's seeming/being dichotomy by asserting that Pompey's cause seems better, using *melior videbatur*—a play on the

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<sup>141</sup> Elefante (1997, 330) notes that, aside from this utterance by Cato, Velleius passes over his suicide when Caesar is in Africa. Velleius reveals Caesar's *condiciones*, which Cato found so unacceptable, following the *synkrisis* (49.4), perhaps to show how extreme, even unreasonable Cato's stance was.

<sup>142</sup> See above, pg. 4142ff.

byword for the Optimate cause —and *speciosa*. Keeping in mind these previous references to appearance, let us look at another word Velleius uses to describe Pompey’s side: *gloriosa* (2.49.3).<sup>143</sup> *Gloriosa* is generally translated as “illustrious” or “glorious,” though anyone familiar with Plautus knows that *gloriosus* also means “boastful.”<sup>144</sup> I find it improbable that the primary force in this context is “boastful,” but Velleius’ earlier emphasis on appearance allows a double meaning to lurk in the background. One can look to Caesar’s narrative for confirmation of this undertone; from the beginning of his commentaries, Pompey boasts of the number of his troops while claiming that Caesar’s men do not wish to follow him (*copias suas exponit: legiones habere sese paratas X; praeterea cognitum compertumque sibi alieno esse animo in Caesarem milites neque eis posse persuaderi uti eum defendant aut sequantur, Civ. 1.6.1-2*). Caesar soon proves Pompey’s assertion wrong; after his initial speech to his troops, he recounts the following reaction: “The soldiers of the thirteenth legion, which had been present, exclaimed as one that they were prepared to ward off the unjust treatment of their general and the tribunes of the plebs.” (*Conclamant legionis XIII, quae aderat, milites...sese paratos esse imperatoris sui tribunorumque plebis iniurias defendere, Civ. 1.7.8*) Caesar also reports overconfidence in the Pompeian camp after their victory at Dyrrachium: “Through these successes so much confidence and spirit entered the Pompeians that they did not consider any strategy but appeared as if they had already won....just as if they had conquered through their courage, and as if no change in success were able to occur, they celebrated the victory of that day through reports and letters sent throughout the world.” (*His rebus tantum fiduciae ac spiritus Pompeianis accessit, ut non de ratione belli cogitarent, sed vicisse iam viderentur. ... Proinde ac si virtute vicissent, neque ulla*

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<sup>143</sup> See Woodman (1983, 83-84) and the citations in Elefante (1997, 330) for more on the vocabulary of the Optimates.

<sup>144</sup> Gowing (2007, 417), who uses the reading *gloriosiora*, translates the word as “(more) glorious.” Shipley (1924, 161), who also reads *gloriosiora*, translates “greater prestige.” The difference in degree does little to change my argument, so I choose to follow Woodman’s (1983) text here.

*commutatio rerum posset accidere, per orbem terrarum fama ac litteris victoriam eius diei concelebrabant, Civ. 3.72.1,4)* Just a little after this scene Caesar gives a close-up of the Pompeians' overconfidence and their internal strife when he describes Domitius, Scipio, and Lentulus Spinther vying for his priesthood before Pharsalus (*iam de sacerdotio Caesaris Domitius, Scipio Spintherque Lentulus cotidianis contentionibus ad gravissimas verborum contumelias palam descenderunt, Civ. 3.83.1*). The Pompeians act as if they had already won the war before they set foot on the battlefield at Pharsalus: "In short, all of them were making a fuss about their offices or monetary rewards or prosecuting their personal enemies, and they thought not about how they would overcome our army but how they ought to use their victory." (*Postremo omnes aut de honoribus suis aut de praemiis pecuniae aut de persequendis inimicitiis agebant, nec quibus rationibus superare possent sed quem ad modum uti victoria deberent cogitabant, Civ. 3.83.4*) In short, *gloriosa* is a double-edged sword; it could refer to the glory accrued by Pompey's past achievements but, just as Velleius' *terribiliora* could be a nod to Caesar's account of his approach to Rome, *gloriosa* may refer to Caesar's account of the Pompeians' overconfidence and boasts of victory before the start of and throughout the war.

In the *synkrisis* of the Pompeians and Caesar, Velleius emphasizes Caesar's power and his efforts toward peace. These characteristics, though mentioned throughout the text, come into greater relief when the historian contrasts Caesar with the Pompeians, who are marked by mere appearance of authority and power and who possess a destructive desire for war. What makes Velleius' comparison striking is that he quickly abandons a direct comparison of Pompey and Caesar once he mentions the Senate. By switching to a face-off between Caesar and the Pompeians rather than between Caesar and Pompey, Velleius prevents Pompey from becoming a

victim of his negative portrayal of the broken governing body that chose Caesar's son-in-law as its figurehead.

By underscoring Caesar's superior strength, the loyal support of those who stand behind him, and his concern for the state, Velleius illustrates why Rome was moving in the right direction when Caesar won the civil war. The general presents a united front, the ideal condition of the state, while the Pompeian party is united only insofar as they oppose Caesar. The motives behind the Senate's resistance reveal what is ruining Rome, namely that personal gain and personal quibbles are put before the welfare of the state. Furthermore, Velleius' revelation of those different motives exposes the cracks in the Pompeians' "united" front; as Caesar himself reports, internal strife, different goals, and crowing overconfidence weaken the party which is supposed to represent Rome's interests. Though the Pompeians should be acting on the republic's behalf, both the *Historiae* and the *Bellum Civile* suggest that they actually present a danger to Rome. Caesar, by contrast, truly represents Rome's interests and has the strength to defend the state.

### **What about Cato?**

In this discussion of Caesar and Pompey, one figure is clearly neglected: Cato. Though Cato is not completely missing from the narrative, Velleius takes caution to praise Cato out of sight of Caesar. In his narrative on Catiline's conspiracy, for example, he mentions Cato's speech, yet Caesar cannot be found (2.35.3-4). During the civil war itself, Cato receives brief mention in the *synkrisis* as a *Pompeianus* and gets one more nod just before Caesar arrives in Africa (2.47.5 and 54.3). However, Cato never contends directly with Caesar in the narrative. Contrary what is found in Sallust, Caesar's primary antagonist in Velleius' narrative is Pompey, not Cato. In fact, one rarely sees Cato in proximity of Caesar in the *Historiae*. Here I would like to briefly address why, unlike Sallust, Velleius does not set Caesar next to Cato.

In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Caesar and Cato's debate is not only about the fate of a group of captured conspirators, it is also an ideological struggle, a struggle over which values the republic needs in order to function properly. Sallust does not give any hint that he sees Caesar as an emperor or as a precursor to emperors. In fact, if he is basing his presentation of Caesar off of Caesar's self-fashioning, then he is presenting Caesar as a republican whose ideas of the problems which the state—the ruling elite in particular—faces and the solution to those problems are quite different from others', such as Cato's, ideas. At the time when Caesar and Sallust wrote, no one could predict that the civil war would result in such a drastic shift in how Rome would be governed. In fact, Sallust's own account of Catiline's war, with its lack of closure at the end of the monograph, suggests that Caesar's civil war was just another in a series of Republican conflicts which had not yet found its true end. To Sallust, in short, Caesar is not representative of any new age but of one of two conflicting sides of the Republic. Thus, Cato is a proper choice for comparison of Republican values and ideology.

Velleius, however, does not want to engage Caesar in an ideological struggle with a man who, by the Tiberian period, represents pure antagonism to one-man rule, which, as much as he might not want to admit it in the *Historiae*, is the form of government under which he writes. For this historian, the real question is: who makes a better leader? In answering that question, he sets two of the strongest leaders of the late Republic next to each other: Caesar and Pompey. More than that, however, by keeping Cato away from Caesar, Velleius does not have to choose to praise one man at the expense of the other. Sallust has shown that Cato and Caesar's ideologies are not merely different, they are antagonistic. In a work which attempts to, in a sense, have its cake and eat it too by making Tiberius the leader *par excellence* yet also asserts that the Rome led by Tiberius is simply an improved Republic, ideological antagonism between

Caesar and Cato must be avoided. Accordingly, Caesar is nowhere in sight when Cato receives praise, and, conversely, Cato is usually nowhere to be found when Caesar is being praised.

### **Conclusion**

My investigation in this chapter has focused on how Velleius portrays Caesar, particularly characteristics which stand out in his narrative of the civil war. Several of these traits, such as *celeritas*, clemency, and desire for peace, are also found in Caesar's own account of events in his *Bellum Civile*. Parallels between these accounts of the civil war show the extent to which the historian remains faithful to Caesar's account of events. In fact, at times Velleius is more than faithful to the *Bellum Civile*; this Tiberian account of the war cleans up the general's narrative, making his exploits appear even greater and exonerating Caesar from blame for the onset of the civil war by shifting that blame onto Curio and the Pompeians.

In addition to supporting Caesar's account of events, Velleius includes references to his divinity in his portrayal of the general, showing that Caesar's portrait developed over time to include facets which are added after his death and are key aspects of imperial ideology. This sense of Caesar's divine nature, like many of his other qualities, reaches its greatest pitch in the civil war when Velleius recounts his arrival at Ilerda with language likening the general to one of Jupiter's thunderbolts. Strikingly, the historian's approach to presenting Caesar's divinity is different from what one finds in Valerius Maximus or much of Augustan literature. Rather than explicitly acknowledging Caesar's divinity, he prefers to hint at his divine status by recounting Caesar's extraordinary deeds, nature, and lineage. Velleius shies away from calling Caesar "divine" or "heavenly," as he does with Augustus and Tiberius. Caesar is the proto-divinity, setting a precedent for Velleius' acknowledgement of Augustus' and Tiberius' divine status, particularly when each man takes on Caesar's name. The difference between Velleius' subtle references to Caesar's divinity and his outright claim of Augustus' and Tiberius' "heavenly"

nature also exemplifies how Velleius creates a sense of progression from Caesar to his heirs, with successor surpassing his predecessor. By only hinting at Caesar's divinity, Velleius gives himself room to assign a better—i.e., explicitly divine—status to subsequent emperors, suggesting that, though Caesar may have some claim to divinity, Augustus and Tiberius surpass their ancestor with an undeniably divine nature, which Velleius cannot help but point out.

Setting Velleius' Caesar next to the depiction of Caesar in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, one finds that both Caesars are portrayed as powerful, extraordinary, and potentially dangerous to the state. In Sallust, the suspicion that Caesar does not act in the interest of the republic is never resolved. One could interpret such a lack of resolution as reflecting Sallust's times; the civil wars had not yet ended and the full consequences of Caesar's deeds were not yet apparent—the story, in a sense, had not yet ended. Velleius' distance from those civil wars allows him to allay fears that Caesar's extraordinary nature and deeds ultimately harmed the Republic. He is able to frame those deeds and Caesar's very nature as setting an example for Augustus' and Tiberius' conduct.

One trait which has persisted throughout the various depictions of Caesar has been his clemency. Caesar's *Bellum Civile* shows that his clemency reflects his concern for the state and its citizens. In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Caesar argues for merciful treatment based on concerns of expediency and reputation. Moreover, his willingness to pardon others is part of his greatness. But this mildness does not come without its problems; Sallust's Cato questions the policy of mercy, claiming that *mansuetudo et misericordia* can be nefarious, which, as the next chapter discusses, Lucan exploits to its fullest extent in his portrayal of Caesar. Clemency in Velleius causes far less anxiety than in Sallust. It is a positive attribute in civil war, though it, along with *fortuna*, contributes to Caesar's tragic downfall. *Clementia* in war, much like Caesar's repeated

suits for peace, demonstrates care for the republic. Concern for the state is a more contentious issue in Sallust's presentation of Caesar because of Cato's antagonistic presence. Sallust does say that Caesar cared for and invested boundless energy for the benefit of his *amici*. The question remains, however, whether, by caring for his *amici*, Caesar also cared for Rome. Sallust's Catiline, by contrast, reflects the divide between self-presentation and reality; while he claims to fight on behalf of the republic, Sallust rebuts these claims by calling Catiline's plot a crime (*scelus*). Like Caesar, Catiline also cared for his *amici*, but he and his *amici* were set against the state; thus, in Catiline's case, looking out for one's friends and allies ended up threatening rather than helping Rome.

Velleius, like Sallust, measures Caesar against another figure. Throughout the *Historiae* the reader is invited to compare Caesar and Pompey. However, only in a few instances does Velleius indulge in direct comparison of the two men. Even in the *synkrisis*, Velleius compares Caesar and Pompey only briefly before he dissociates Pompey from his senatorial supporters and focuses instead on comparing Caesar to the so-called "Pompeians." Regardless of whether Caesar is compared to Pompey or the Pompeians, however, Velleius makes him the superior figure. Judgement of the general in Sallust's *synkrisis* is more problematic. Though he sets out a direct comparison, he leaves it to the reader to judge who is the better man and gives little hint of whether he favors one man or the other. As I discussed in the previous chapter, most analyses conclude either that Cato reveals Caesar's dark side and therefore Cato is superior to Caesar, or that Sallust thinks the men are different but equal. The different interpretations available to the reader reflect the work's general lack of closure and sense of uncertainty regarding what the future holds. Velleius, by contrast, has a definite view of history's progress from the late Republic to Tiberius' reign, namely that Rome starts on a course of improvement from Caesar

onward. He shapes Caesar in accordance with that view, leaving little doubt that Caesar is superior both to Pompey and the party supposedly representing the republic.

Sallust's narrative of Catiline's war shows the cracks in Rome's republic; *luxuria* and greed are weakening the state. Allusions to Caesar's civil war within the narrative and the portrayal of players in this story of Catiline's *bellum* hint that even great men like Caesar and Cato were not able to correct these flaws, and the overall pessimistic tone of the work suggests that Sallust's view of Rome's current Caesar—Octavian—is hardly positive. Velleius has a distinctly different objective in mind when he presents Caesar in civil war. He structures his history in order to show continuity as Rome moves from Republic to Principate; Velleius' Rome moves "from Republic to better Republic" as it goes from Caesar to Augustus and Tiberius.<sup>145</sup> In order to create this sense of a continuum from Republic to better Republic, the civil war must not be portrayed as causing a break in the system but as a transitional period—growing pains, perhaps. Caesar becomes the transitional figure during this period; not only does he represent one of the best men in Rome, but he is also the *progenitor* of the *principes* to follow. The relevance of the civil war in Velleius' text, aside from representing these growing pains, is it becomes a venue for Velleius to develop and display Caesar's extraordinary traits, several of which reappear later in Velleius' depiction of Augustus and Tiberius.

Velleius' civil war, in short, sets in motion the continuum not only from Republic to better Republic, but also from Caesar to better Caesar. Evidence of the Caesarian continuum which accompanies the Republican continuum can be seen in both Augustus' and Tiberius' assumption of the name "Caesar" in the course of the narrative.<sup>146</sup> Caesar's successors inherit not only his name but also several of his traits. For example, Augustus inherits Caesar's

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<sup>145</sup> Gowing (2005, 43).

<sup>146</sup> e.g., 2.60.1, when Augustus first decides to take up Caesar's name and 124.2, when Tiberius receives pressure to succeed his "father" Augustus.

*clementia* during the civil war, both Augustus and Tiberius inherit some of Caesar's swiftness, and both are ascribed personal *fortuna*. Furthermore, Caesar's divine nature not only raises him above his peers in the narrative of the end of the Republic, but it sets the standard for Augustus' *caelestis anima* and Tiberius' semi-divine status.<sup>147</sup>

Caesar, though he has a divine nature, is not perfect. But Velleius—like Sallust—does not explicitly criticize Caesar; in fact, the historian finds ways to avoid casting him in a bad light. One method he employs is to use a scapegoat on whom to cast blame. Curio and the Pompeians serve this purpose when Velleius faces the issue of who is to blame for instigating the civil war. To sidestep blaming Caesar, he emphasizes his attempts to make peace while portraying Curio and the Pompeian party as the exact opposite; Curio in particular is characterized as a Catiline-like figure, reveling in the prospect of civil discord. *Festinatio* is Velleius' other means of avoiding anything that could be taken as less than complimentary to Caesar. As I mentioned earlier in the chapter, *festinatio* has long been recognized as a means for Velleius to be selective in the material he narrates.<sup>148</sup> In the Caesarian narrative, Velleius' *festinatio*, often hidden behind Caesar's *celeritas*, skips over instances in the civil war where Caesar encountered setbacks. Through this disguise it appears that Caesar, not Velleius, is rushing through Massilia and the standoff at Ilerda.

To sum up: in civil war, Velleius' Caesar displays virtues which will establish a template for Velleius' portrayal of Augustus and Tiberius. In the *Historiae* Caesar does not usher in the end of the Republic; rather he is the forefather for a line of *principes* who heal and improve Rome. Compare this optimism to Sallust, who used Catiline's conspiracy to express his lack of

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<sup>147</sup> Velleius refers to Octavian's *caelestis animus* upon his assumption of the name Caesar, as if Caesar's divine spirit enters Augustus when he takes on his adoptive father's name (2.60.2), and calls his spirit *caelestis* at Augustus' death (2.123.2). Velleius makes Tiberius' divine status known in, among other places, his eyewitness account of Tiberius' deeds as a general, which he calls *caelestissima* (2.104.3).

<sup>148</sup> See Lobur (2007, especially 215n14) for others who have taken up the question of *festinatio* and *brevitas*.

confidence that Caesar's civil war resolved anything. Sallust leaves his reader without any closure—no teleology, as it were—at the end of his monograph, whereas Velleius offers Tiberius as the culminating figure of great men in Roman history and, likewise, Tiberius' reign as a reassurance of peace.

As I will discuss in the next chapter, Lucan's approach to Caesar and civil war is quite different than Velleius'. Instead of a god, Caesar is a devil on horseback, and his civil war will usher in the end of *everything*...if the civil war ends at all.

### Chapter 3. “It’s Good to be Nasty”: Lucan’s Caesar

This chapter focuses on Lucan’s portrayal of Caesar vis-à-vis Velleius’ Caesar, Sallust’s Caesar (to a smaller extent) and Sallust’s Caesaresque Catiline. Starting with Lucan’s programmatic simile of Caesar as a lightning bolt, I devote a large section of the chapter to a study Caesar’s major traits, including his men and comparisons of him with other figures. Then, I set Lucan’s Caesar beside previously studied figures, Sallust’s Catiline and beside Velleius’ Caesar, which will underscore the metamorphosis he undergoes in the *Pharsalia*. Finally, I discuss how the choices the poet makes in his presentation of the general creates a lens through which one can view the *princeps*. The study of this chapter culminates in a discussion of how Lucan’s Caesar reflects on Nero, who receives a brief panegyric at the beginning of the poem.

#### 3.1 Lucan, civil war, and the Neronian period

The Neronian period presents a poignant shift in Imperial thought as it relates to the Republic. Unlike our extant authors of the Tiberian period, particularly Velleius Paterculus, who shaped the Republic and Principate as one, unbroken age, with the civil wars acting as a transitional period from the old Republic to the new Republic, authors of the Neronian period seem to have come to terms with the fact that the Republic has ended and a new order has taken its place.<sup>149</sup> With this new perspective also comes a shift in how the civil war and Caesar are portrayed; Seneca, for instance, tends to present Caesar in a negative light, often presenting him as an *exemplum* not to follow.<sup>150</sup> Caesar is equated with the fall of the Republic, an unforgivable disaster.<sup>151</sup> Along with the acceptance that the Principate was indeed a separate entity from the Republic, poignant political catchwords, such as *dignitas*, now fade into the background when

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<sup>149</sup> See Gowing (2005, ch.3) for an overview of this perspective in Seneca and Lucan, Griffin (1976, ch. 5) for this view in Seneca in particular.

<sup>150</sup> For example, Seneca criticizes Caesar for using the army entrusted to him for subduing Gaul and Germany in order to obtain power over Rome (*Ben.* 5.16.5). cf. Griffin (1976, ch. 5).

<sup>151</sup> *ibid.*, 193-4.

Caesar and civil war are discussed. These catchwords are replaced by qualities and issues which are relevant to a ruler, such as *clementia*, *ira*, and *beneficia*. In this context, Lucan both reflects and is an exception to this current of the age. Like Seneca, the poet of the *Pharsalia* depicts a clear break between the Republic and Principate, suggesting that he recognized that he lived under a regime quite different from the one found during the civil war. However, the fact that he gives so much attention to the event that brought about the end of the Republic (and *libertas*, which, like *dignitas*, is intimately tied to the Republic) is indeed exceptional.<sup>152</sup>

Lucan's poem differs from previous works studied in other ways, too. The previous works I have covered are—or strive to be—historical in nature. Although the individual forms have varied—commentaries, a monograph, and a compendium—certain, basic tenets of historiography have been adhered to, namely that, even if authors may bend the truth, they don't give their story quite the imaginative quality seen in the *Pharsalia*. Though Lucan adopts a poetic mold for his narrative, the Caesar seen here is not merely a character composed entirely from Lucan's imagination and named "Caesar." He is a figure whose basic traits are founded on historical knowledge and the Imperial image of Caesar handed down to the Neronian period. Granted, Lucan takes advantage of the poetic genre he writes in to invent scenes which, though not historically accurate, suit his aims in narrating the civil war between Caesar and Pompey. In other words, he has room to add his own flourishes, e.g. the consultation of Erichtho in book 6, but the added imagination should not count against the value of analyzing Lucan's Caesar; rather, the license granted to the *Pharsalia* ought to prompt the reader to ask why these particular flourishes exist. Lucan takes the liberty poetry offers to fashion a Caesar that, while

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<sup>152</sup> cf. Gowing (2005, 82).

recognizable, is the result of Lucan “absorbing and perverting” Caesar’s well-known traits.<sup>153</sup> Matthew Leigh (2009, 239) expresses the view as follows: “[Caesar] is the extraordinary product of Lucan’s engagement with prose history and with the ancient biographical tradition regarding Caesar, and of his attempt to reimagine the features that Caesar there displays in truly epic terms.” That Lucan attempts to “reimagine” familiar elements of Julius Caesar’s image is one of the reasons why I include Lucan’s Caesar. Lucan’s pictures, his very poem, are based on historical events—to a point; beyond that point Lucan’s agenda takes hold and drives his account of the civil war. However, the twist, perversions, and outright inventions found in Lucan’s Caesar will be all the more informative, for, just as in the texts previously discussed, Lucan re-fashions Caesar in ways which make the Republican general and dictator fit into Lucan’s conception of Rome’s history up to the Neronian period.

### 3.2 Lucan’s *Synkrisis* and Initial Simile

I begin, as many have, by discussing Lucan’s initial simile of Caesar as a lightning bolt.<sup>154</sup> This programmatic simile contains many qualities Lucan will unpack throughout the epic. The simile, which follows a brief description of Caesar vis-à-vis his opponent Pompey, establishes the reader’s expectations for the type of Caesar one can expect to encounter. In this section I will explore the terms of the rivalry as set out by Lucan, comparing his *synkrisis* and the accompanying similes to Velleius’ characterization of Caesar and Pompey. I compare the verbal and thematic similarities between these two authors with an eye toward showing how the same characteristics and themes can be fashioned and refashioned to create two very different Caesars.

Here is Lucan’s initial *synkrisis* in full:

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<sup>153</sup> Leigh (1997) uses this phrase in his discussion of Caesar’s *clementia* in the *Pharsalia* and I think that it adequately sums up Lucan’s overall method of composition when it comes to Caesar.

<sup>154</sup> Nix (2005 and 2008) in particular has focused on Caesar as Jupiter in the *Pharsalia*, which also addresses Caesar as a lightning bolt. In this section I underscore and build upon her work.

Stimulos dedit aemula virtus:

Tu, nova ne veteres obscurent acta triumphos  
 et victis cedat piratica laurea Gallis,  
 Magne, times; te iam series ususque laborum  
 erigit inpatiensque loci Fortuna secundi;  
 nec quemquam iam ferre potest Caesarve priorem  
 Pompeiusve parem. Quis iustius induit arma,  
 scire nefas; magno se iudice quisque tuetur;  
 victrix causa deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.  
 Nec coiere pares. Alter vergentibus annis  
 in senium longoque togae tranquillior usu  
 dedidicit iam pace ducem, famaeque petitor  
 multa dare in volgus, totus popularibus auris  
 inpelli, plausuque sui gaudere theatri,  
 nec reparare novas vires, multumque priori  
 credere Fortunae. Stat Magni nominis umbra;  
 qualis frugifero quercus sublimis in agro  
 exuvias veteris populi sacrataque gestans  
 dona ducum nec iam validis radicibus haerens  
 pondere fixa suo est, nudosque per aera ramos  
 effundens trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram,  
 et quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,  
 tot circum silvae firmo se robore tollant,  
 sola tamen colitur. Sed non in Caesare tantum  
 nomen erat nec fama ducis, sed nescia virtus  
 stare loco, solusque pudor non vincere bello.  
 Acer et indomitus, quo spes quoque ira vocasset,  
 ferre manum et numquam temerando parcere ferro,  
 successus urguere suos, instare favori  
 numinis, inpellens quidquid sibi summa petenti  
 obstaret gaudensque viam fecisse ruina,  
 qualiter expressum ventis per nubila fulmen  
 aetheris impulsu sonitu mundique fragore  
 emicuit rupitque diem populosque paventes  
 terruit obliqua praestringens lumina flamma:  
 in sua templa furit, nullaque exire vetante  
 materia magnamque cadens magnamque revertens  
 dat stragem late sparsosque recolligit ignes.<sup>155</sup> (1.120-157)

Rival valor applied the goads;

You, Pompey, fear that new deeds will cover over old triumphs  
 and the laurels from the pirates will cede to conquered Gauls; and  
 a now a continuous chain of toils and a Fortune that does not  
 endure second place urges you on, Caesar. Caesar is not able to

<sup>155</sup> The text used for Lucan's *Pharsalia* is Housman's (1927) revised edition. Translations are my own unless noted otherwise.

bear anyone before him, nor is Pompey able to bear an equal.

It is unspeakable to know who took up arms more justly;  
each was protected by a great judge: the conquering cause was favored by the gods,  
the conquered cause was favored by Cato.

Nor did they meet as equals; the one, with his years verging on old age and  
now more content from long enjoyment of the toga, has by now unlearned  
how to be a military leader due to peace, the seeker of fame gives much to the crowd,  
utterly pushed along by the breezes of the people, taking joy in the applause of his  
theater. He does not prepare new strength, but he relies a lot on his previous fortune.  
He stands in the shade of his reputation as the Great:<sup>156</sup>

just like a tall oak tree in a fruitful field,

bearing the old spoils of its people and the dedicated gifts of leader,  
it is no longer strongly rooted to the ground but it is fixed by its own weight.

It pours out bare branches into the air and it creates shade not through  
leaves but from its trunk. Although it totters, ready to fall at Eurus' first blow,  
and although so many trees with strong wood grow up around it,  
it alone is worshipped.

In Caesar, however, there was not just a name or the reputation of a leader,  
but a valor that does not know how to stand in place, and his only source of  
shame is to win through means other than war; bitter and untameable,  
wherever hope and anger had called, he bore his hand and he did not refrain from  
being rash with his sword, he pressed on his successes, he pressed upon divine favor,  
and pushing on whatever stood in his way when he is seeking the highest things,  
he gleefully bulldozed his path.

Just as a lightning bolt, pressed through the clouds by the wind,  
flashed with both a sound of the air being shoved out of the way  
and a cracking of the universe. It burst the day and terrified the trembling people  
as it binds up its light with a slanted flame; it rages against its temple and, since no  
substance prevents it from coming out it doles out great destruction far and wide as it  
falls, then turns back and collects its scattered fire.

Lucan is clear from the outset that a rivalry to be the better man drives Caesar and Pompey toward civil war (*stimulos dedit aemula virtus*). By focusing on the rivalry between Pompey and Caesar, Lucan touches on Caesar's claim that the civil war began because of the injuries Pompey allowed him to suffer, though Caesar himself had always supported Pompey's ambitions (*Civ.* 1.7.1). As I discuss later, the poet will refer to Caesar's claim in the *Bellum Civile* that he had endured unjust treatment (*iniurias*) from his enemies, but the Senate's refusal to acquiesce to his

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<sup>156</sup> I have to give credit to Denis Feeney ([1986] 2010), who examines well the word play and layers of meaning in this line. My translation does not do justice to those layers of meaning, but I have tried to stay away from the bland, "Great name" for *magni nominis*.

demands was the last straw. Lucan refers to this point in the *Bellum Civile* by having the general declare at the Rubicon that he is leaving behind this excuse of self-defense.<sup>157</sup> The poet does what he can to make Caesar into the aggressor of the civil war rather than depict him as a man who has to defend himself against others' attempts to harm him. Now that the break between Republic and Principate is acknowledged under Nero, Caesar's war is no longer a quest to preserve the state but becomes a shameless drive for kingship.

In terms of character, there is a lot to unpack in this pair of sketches. Judith Rosner-Siegel ([1983] 2010) has thoroughly discussed how these responding sketches resonate in the rest of the epic, so my first concern is to address similarities between qualities which appear in this *synkrisis* and Velleius Paterculus' comparison of Caesar and Pompey. One theme which reappears is the contrast between Pompey's reliance on past glory and Caesar's active pursuit of successes. Here Lucan makes the image more vivid with language denoting inactivity versus movement along with the contrast of old and new. Pompey is always still; he stands in the shadow of his reputation as Pompey the Great. Just like the old oak which continues to be venerated despite the new, stronger trees around it, his power comes from the fact that he was once powerful, though he is no longer as powerful as he was; he does not renew his strength, but relies on his prior luck (*nec reparare novas vires, multumque priori | credere fortunae*) and he fears that new deeds (*nova...acta*) will obscure—perhaps cast a shadow over—his old triumphs (*veteres...triumphos*).

As was discussed in the previous chapter, Velleius encapsulates Pompey's empty appearance of greatness by saying that Pompey's cause seemed better but Caesar's was stronger (*firmior*); compare the historian's *firmior* to the description of the younger trees around the old oak which have *firmitate...robore*. Velleius also says that Pompey's side was *gloriosa*, referring to

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<sup>157</sup> See section 3.7 below, pg. 148ff.

the fact that, at the time of the outbreak of civil war, Pompey's reputation was still greater than Caesar's. The use of *gloriosa* also neatly encapsulates the simile of the oak which bears so many trophies—emblems of past *gloria*—on its branches. Velleius contrasts the Pompeians' *gloriosa* with Caesar's *terribiliora*. Associating Caesar with awe or fear also occurs in Lucan's initial description of the general; the lightning bolt of his simile terrifies the populace as it rips through the air (*mundique fragore | emicuit rupitque diem populosque paventes | terruit.*)

In addition to contrasting fear and glory, Lucan employs the dichotomy of seeming and being in other ways. As I mentioned above, Pompey stands in the shade of his reputation (*stat Magni nominis umbra*); *umbra* immediately evokes an empty image, whether that image is a shadow cast by intercepting light or the shade of a dead person.<sup>158</sup> In Velleius, not only does Pompey's side seem better (*melior videbatur*), but he also emphasizes appearance by calling Pompey's side outwardly impressive (*speciosa*). Velleius associates Caesar, by contrast, with terms like *firmior* (stronger) and *valentia* (powerful). The *Pharsalia* follows Velleius by highlighting that Caesar is indeed the more formidable foe, saying that Caesar does not merely have the reputation (*nomen*) and fame of a leader, but he also has *virtus*—valor—which does not know how to stand still (*sed non in Caesare tantum | nomen erat nec fama ducis, sed nescia virtus | stare loco.*)

The similarities between Velleius and Lucan do not stop there. Lucan is not the only one to liken Caesar to a lightning bolt. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Velleius briefly uses language which likens Caesar's sudden arrival at Ilerda to a bolt of lightning.<sup>159</sup> For Velleius, the use of *fulgor* highlights Caesar's speed and perhaps even the brilliance of his arrival, which has a profound effect on the opposition. Indirectly, Velleius' reference to the quality of a flash,

<sup>158</sup> OLD *fulgor* 9, 10.

<sup>159</sup> Vell. 2.50.4, see above, pg. 79 for discussion.

such as lightning, is also a nod toward Caesar's divine nature.<sup>160</sup> Lucan builds on this base and makes the *fulmen* one of the key images associated with Caesar.<sup>161</sup> Because it is so central to our discussion, we will return to this simile—and to the rest of Lucan's introduction of Caesar—throughout the chapter.

The reappearance of the dichotomy of seeming and being, Lucan's appropriation of Velleius' *fulgor* to make Caesar a *fulmen*, and the contrast between glory and fear suggests perhaps that Lucan looked to the Tiberian author when constructing his character sketch of Caesar and Pompey.<sup>162</sup> Though Velleius and Lucan deploy similar images and themes in their presentations of Caesar, each man deploys these images with different aims in mind. Velleius defends and praises Caesar throughout the civil war and does his best to present a positive picture of Caesar. Lucan, however, takes a far different approach to Caesar; he concedes that Caesar is indeed powerful and that Pompey is in the shadowy twilight of his career, but, unlike Velleius, he does not shine a flattering light on Caesar. If Lucan is indeed showing himself as a reader of Velleius, the highly negative slant he puts on Caesar likely illustrates a response to Velleius' characterization by offering an antagonistic opinion of Caesar and the Principate.

### 3.3 Divine Julius?

One aspect of the lightning bolt in Lucan which has recently received attention is its association with Jupiter.<sup>163</sup> Lucan makes it clear that this lightning is more than just a meteorological phenomenon when the lightning “rages against its temple (*in sua templa furit*).” Such a description suggests that the lightning, striking its own *templa*, is sent by the gods—or,

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<sup>160</sup> The etymological connection between *fulgor* and *fulmen* was already known and perhaps had been illustrated by Varro (*L.* 5.70).

<sup>161</sup> Rosen-Siegel ([1983] 2010) demonstrates that the introductory similes for both Pompey and Caesar are programmatic for their appearance in the rest of the epic.

<sup>162</sup> I will concede here that one cannot be certain that Velleius is Lucan's source without also having Livy's text, though the similarities are striking and I am not the first to recognize the verbal and thematic parallels. Woodman (1983), for example, mentions several places in Caesar's narrative where Lucan seems to echo Velleius.

<sup>163</sup> See especially Nix (2005, 6-40) for the identification of the *fulmen*—and likewise, of Caesar—with Jupiter in Lucan.

more specifically, Jupiter. I am not concerned here with the identification with Jupiter so much as the identification of Caesar and divinity.

As the previous chapter showed, Velleius, though he avoids using the term *Divus Julius*, makes it quite clear through his account of Caesar's godly lineage, his behavior, and his effect on others that he has divine qualities. Velleius quietly establishes Caesar as a quasi-divine progenitor of the imperial line. Moreover, Caesar's divine nature explains how he was able to accomplish so many extraordinary deeds. As I have discussed, part of the reason why Velleius creates a divine aura around Caesar is to pass that aura on to Augustus and Tiberius. By the time of Augustus' rule, Julius Caesar had been established as *Divus Julius*, making the cult of *Divus Julius* a long-since established reality for Romans of the Tiberian period; Velleius simply takes Caesar's heavenly role a step further by intoning that he was divine from the start rather than divine by decree.<sup>164</sup>

Lucan also emphasizes Caesar's divine nature in his epic, yet the effect of Caesar's divinity is far different in Lucan than it is in Velleius. Caesar's divinity in the *Pharsalia* is not merely a device Lucan employs to explain Caesar's extraordinary nature, nor does the presence of a godlike nature justify the cult for Caesar and the deification of future emperors, as it does in Velleius. Indeed, Caesar's divine nature in Lucan suggests some sort of clash with the traditional gods of epic and the traditional gods of Rome. When Lucan suggests that the current emperor, Nero, will "inherit" Caesar's divine nature and will rule from the heavens, like his predecessors, he frames the emperor's deification as if he will replace one of the gods rather than merely be added to their number:

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<sup>164</sup> Sallust, of course, gives no hint of divinity to Julius Caesar in his narrative. Even if the monograph had been published after the decree in 42 BCE, the implications of Caesar's deification for Rome and for its future leaders—namely that Caesar would be the first of several deified Romans—were not yet clear. Furthermore, as I discussed in the first chapter, Sallust's characterization of Caesar and the issues raised in his clash with Cato clearly demonstrate that Sallust thought of Caesar in Republican terms rather than as a precursor to a new regime or even as an emperor (which had not even been created yet).

Te, cum statione peracta  
 astra petes serus, praelati regia caeli  
 excipiet gaudente polo: seu sceptrum tenere  
 seu te flammigeros Phoebi conscendere currus...  
 ... tibi numine ab omni  
 cedetur, iurisque tui natura relinquet  
 quis deus esse velis, ubi regnum ponere mundi. (1.45-48, 50-52)

When you seek the stars late in life, after your  
 watch here is over, the palace of your preferred  
 area of the heavens will receive you with a joyful sky;  
 whether you want to hold the sceptre of Jupiter  
 or you want to hop onto the flame-bearing chariot of Phoebus...  
 it will be yielded to you by every deity, and nature will leave to your  
 discretion which god you want to be and where in the universe you want  
 to put your kingdom.

Lucan here insinuates that Nero would usurp another god's role upon entering the heavens.

Though the imagery in this passage is relatively peaceful, the ascension of an emperor to divine status still implies upsetting the current divine order; the poet alludes to the disturbance of heaven when he suggests that Nero consider residing in the middle of the sky so that his light is not aslant (*obliquo*) and to keep the weight of heaven balanced:

Sed neque in Arctoo sedem tibi legeris orbe  
 nec polus aversi calidus qua vergitur Austri,  
 unde tuam videas obliquo sidere Romam.  
 Aetheris immensi partem si presseris unam,  
 sentiet axis onus. Librati pondera caeli  
 orbe tene medio. (1.53-58)

But do not choose your seat in the northern sky  
 nor where the hot sky or the opposite South sinks,  
 where you will look at your Rome with a slanted star.  
 If you press down on one part of the huge upper air,  
 the heavens will feel the burden. Keep the weight  
 of the sky balanced by being in the middle of the sphere.

The inheritance of divinity in Velleius is quite different what Lucan describes; in Velleius, there is no apparent conflict between Caesar's (or any other emperor's) apotheosis and the divine world which already exists. All deified emperors are simply added to the number of gods, but no

one replaces the function of an already-existing deity, as in the *Pharsalia*; the addition of a deified emperor does not cause any disturbance to the cosmological system currently in place. If the actions of Lucan's divine Caesar are a parallel to what occurs during Nero's apotheosis, Lucan may be suggesting that Caesar sets a revolutionary precedent for his successors, namely, that deifying an emperor involves an overthrow similar to Caesar's overthrow of the Republic and his usurpation of power from the aristocracy.

### 3.4 Caesar, the embodiment of energy<sup>165</sup>

The simile of the lightning bolt also raises another trait which has been associated with Caesar since the late Republic: his boundless energy, which is most often reflected in his *celeritas*. Caesar himself constantly highlighted the swiftness with which he and his men worked in the *Bellum Gallicum* and the *Bellum Civile*. His characteristic rapidity did not go unnoticed by other authors and it quickly became one of Caesar's standard characteristics. Sallust does not say much about Caesar's *celeritas*, but that quality is transferred to Catiline, who is the primary strategist and actor of the *Bellum Catilinae*.<sup>166</sup> Sallust does highlight Caesar's energy, however. As he says in the *synkrisis*, "Caesar had put into his mind to work hard and to stay awake and alert; focused on the business of friends, he neglected his own affairs." (*Caesar in animum induxerat laborare, vigilare, negotiis amicorum intentus sua neglegere, Cat. 54.4*) Velleius' Caesar is likewise energetic (*vigore animi acerrimus...animo super humanam et naturam et fidem evectus, magnitudine cogitationum, celeritate bellandi, patentia periculorum Magno illi Alexandro simillimus, Vell. 2.41.1*). He highlights the *celeritas* Caesar applies to all of his exploits, seen in part through his use of *fulgor*, which recalls lightning imagery. The

<sup>165</sup> Inspired by Fredrick Ahl (1976, 198), who calls Lucan's Caesar "energy incarnate."

<sup>166</sup> The most obvious example of Catiline's speed, particularly as a negative trait, is in Sallust's account of the first Catilinarian conspiracy, in which Catiline takes action too soon (*Cat. 18.8*). I discuss Catiline's energy and speed below, pg. 180ff.

historian takes the general's speed a step further by also emphasizing how extraordinary the speed is, thus suggesting that Caesar's *celeritas* reflects his divine status.

Like Velleius, Lucan shapes Caesar's extraordinary swiftness into a trait which, in part, reflects Caesar's quasi-divine nature. Caesar, as seen in his introductory sketch, has *virtus* which does not know how to stand still (*nescia virtus | stare loco*); Sarah Nix (2005, 10-11) shows how Lucan unpacks and emphasizes Caesar's speed and energy later in the character sketch: Caesar follows up his successes (*successus urguere suos*), he presses on the favor of the gods (*instare favori | numinis*), he pushes out of the way anything which might try to obstruct him (*inpellens, quidquid sibi summa petenti | obstaret*), and he rejoices in ruin as he blazes his own trail (*gaudensque viam fecisse ruina*). Lucan also connects the lightning simile to Caesar's energy. He repeats the verb *inpellere* in the simile, which emphasizes that both Caesar and the lightning will remove whatever tries to hinder their movement: *fulmen | aetheris impulsis sonitu mundique fragore | emicuit rupitque diem*.<sup>167</sup> The energy of the lightning bolt also reinforces Caesar's destructive side: Lucan uses language of breaking (*fragore*) and bursting (*rupit*) to refer to the *ruina* Caesar delights in causing when he makes his way.

This destructive aspect of Caesar's energy and speed does not appear in Caesar's commentaries; in fact, one can only find a tenuous connection between speed and destruction in Velleius, namely when the young Caesar races to execute the pirates he had captured. However, even that example may be defended as retribution; what Lucan refers to is destruction for the sake of wrecking something, not destruction as a means to a (defendable?) end. In fact, Lucan does not mention any wrongs done to Caesar in his description of the events which led to civil war. In all other accounts of civil war, including the *Bellum Catilinae*, the one who initiates a

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<sup>167</sup> As Roche (2009) notes, is it equally appropriate to the relationship between Caesar and Pompey that Pompey is the object of *inpellere* (1.133).

march on Rome always has an apology and a list of injustices (*iniuriae*) suffered at the hands of others. At some point in every narrative before the *Pharsalia* the aggressor (or the author, on the aggressor's behalf), claims that he was left with no choice but civil war. Here, however, Lucan does not offer Caesar that defense.<sup>168</sup> Instead, Lucan's Caesar wants destruction, a characteristic which further darkens the leader's brilliant nature.<sup>169</sup>

When Caesar crosses the Rubicon, Lucan draws another series of comparisons to illustrate his speed:

Sic fatus noctis tenebris rapit agmina ductor  
 inpiger, et torto Balearis verbere fundae  
 ocior et missa Parthi post terga sagitta. (1.228-30)

Having spoken thus the energetic leader snatches up  
 his army in the shadows of the night, swifter than the twisted  
 thong of a Balearic sling or the arrow of a Parthian who shoots  
 behind his back.

In this instance Caesar is compared to the shot of a Balearic sling and a Parthian arrow.<sup>170</sup> The simile not only represents how fast he is—faster than a speeding bullet, so to speak—but the imagery of these missiles gives the sense that Caesar's speed comes from another source; in other words, he is being propelled by something else. Lucan also raised the image of propulsion in the lightning simile, when the winds push the lightning bolt through the clouds (*expressum ventis per nubila fulmen*).

This imagery of propulsion highlights one major difference in Lucan's portrayal of Caesar's speed, especially vis-à-vis Velleius' and Caesar's own portrayal: Lucan depicts the general as subject to other forces—passions such as anger and hope in this case (*quo spes quoque*

<sup>168</sup> See also Brisset (1964, 86) for Lucan's explanation of the causes of civil war, and the fact that he leaves out the causes that Caesar cites in his commentaries.

<sup>169</sup> This desire for destruction is more akin to Catiline than Caesar. I discuss this similarity below, section 3.9, pg. 175ff.

<sup>170</sup> There are several other examples of similes and comparisons which emphasize Caesar's speed but I think that the example above will suffice for the purposes of my project.

*ira vocasset, | ferre manum, 1.146-47*). In the other portrayals of *celeritas*, Caesar appears to be in control of his speed; granted, the speed may reflect some slight recklessness, such as his swift execution of the pirates in the *Historiae*, but he never appears to be utterly out of control. By contrast, Lucan's Caesar seems to derive his energy and speed from the force of his anger and hope, just like the speed of a missile comes from the impulse of a slingshot or bow. The lightning simile also alludes to a major effect of being driven by an outside force: *furor* (raging madness). The lightning bolt, after coming through the clouds, rages (*furit*) against its *templa*. Likewise, Caesar often is associated with *furor* in the poem. The force of these passions and their effect on the general's *celeritas* also result in two concomitant qualities: rashness and impatience. For example, in the introductory simile, Lucan says that, in response to the call of hope and anger, Caesar does not refrain from being rash with his sword (*numquam temerando parcere ferro, 1.147*). However, his rashness and impatience is best encapsulated in the poet's description of Caesar as "headlong" (*praeceps*).

### Headlong Caesar

Like his *fortuna*, which does not endure being in second place (*inpatiensque loci fortuna secundi, 1.124*), Caesar has impatience for delays or anything associated with rest, particularly peace (*pax*):

At numquam patiens pacis longaeque quietis  
 armorum, nequid fatis mutare liceret,  
 adsequitur generique premit vestigia Caesar.  
 Sufficerent aliis primo tot moenia cursu  
 rapta, tot oppressae depulsis hostibus arces,  
 ipsa, caput mundi, bellorum maxima merces,  
 Roma capi facilis; sed Caesar in omnia praeceps,  
 nil actum credens cum quid superesset agendum,  
 instat atrox et adhuc, quamuis possederit omnem  
 Italiam, extremo sedeat quod litore Magnus,  
 communem tamen esse dolet. (2.650-660)

But Caesar, never enduring of peace or any long rest in fighting,

pursues his son-in-law and stays hot on the trail,  
lest fate be permitted to change anything.  
That so many city walls had been seized in the initial attack,  
so many citadels were overwhelmed and the enemy driven out,  
that Rome itself, the head of the world, the greatest prize of war,  
was ripe for capture might suffice for others;  
Caesar, however, headlong into everything, the man who believed  
that nothing was done when there was something left to be done,  
he pressed on fiercely all the way to the outermost shore where  
Magnus was sitting. Although he possessed all of Italy, nevertheless  
it stung Caesar that the land was still shared.

Notice all of the language highlighting Caesar's energy and impatience: he is never able to endure peace or a long pause in fighting (*numquam patiens pacis longaeque quietis armorum*), which stems from the possibility—in Caesar's mind, at least—that fate might change its mind (*nequid fatis mutare liceret*) and keep him away from success. He, therefore, is not only pursuing Pompey but also trying to stay ahead one step ahead of fate, for what he has already accomplished is not enough for him. He cannot stop his momentum. In fact, Lucan underscores this inability to stop by repeatedly calling the general *praeceps* (“headlong”).<sup>171</sup> The term denotes speed, but it is not merely a synonym for “fast”<sup>172</sup>; it is used in Latin literature to refer the speed of winds and storms,<sup>173</sup> the movement of heavenly bodies,<sup>174</sup> and any motion which seems characterized by rashness (*temeritas*) or impetuosity.<sup>175</sup> When Caesar, a man driven by *spes* and *ira*, is in motion, he is essentially “headlong into everything.” (*in omnia praeceps*, 2.656) There are several examples of Lucan's use of *praeceps* with Caesar, yet this one is

<sup>171</sup> In Seattle, a segment of the population insists on riding fixed-gear bicycles, otherwise known as “fixies”: they are single-speed bicycles whose rear gear is fixed onto the rear tire in such a way that back wheel will move only if the cyclist is pedaling, essentially breaking when he stops moving his feet. When the devotees of these two-wheeled death traps send themselves down some of the city's notoriously steep hills, their legs pedaling furiously to keep up with the momentum generated by the downward slope, in that moment they perfectly embody the idea of *praeceps*: uncontrolled motion, dangerous to stop, yet equally dangerous to continue moving.

<sup>172</sup> *Præceps* and related words appear in relation to Caesar or his men 15 times. The highest concentration of these instances, interestingly, is during the battle at Pharsalus.

<sup>173</sup> OLD *præceps* 2c.

<sup>174</sup> OLD *præceps* 1b.

<sup>175</sup> OLD *præceps* 3; TLL *præceps* 414.66.1b.

particularly illustrative of how the word works: the poet keeps Caesar moving by showing that he thinks there is always has something to do—nothing is finished when there is something left to be done (*nil actum credens, cum quid superesset agendum*, 2.657). Before this example, the last time Lucan mentioned Caesar he had captured Corfinium and pardoned Domitius, but these achievements are not enough. Almost without thinking or even without being unable to stop, Caesar continues through Italy toward Pompey. Lucan contrasts the general's activity with an image of Pompey sitting (*sedeat*) on the shore, again evoking the images from the programmatic simile in book one, wherein Caesar is characterized by movement and Pompey is associated with inertia.

Strikingly, when the poet talks about Caesar's speed he almost never uses the word *celer*. There is, in fact, only one example of *celer* associated with Caesar in the poem, appearing in a description of the liver of a bull sacrificed by Arruns:

Ecce, videt capiti fibrarum increscere molem  
 alterius capitis. Pars aegra et marcida pendet,  
 pars micat et celeri venas movet inproba pulsu. (1.626-29)

Behold! He sees the mass of a second head growing on the head of the entrails.  
 Part hangs sickly and droopy, the other part throbs and,  
 the rascal, moves the veins with a swift pulse.

The liver with two heads was identified early on as referring to Pompey and Caesar. The part of the entrails which droops and looks sickly represents Pompey, while the lower (*inproba*, which I have translated as “rascal”; it would not surprise me if Lucan had both meanings in mind when he used the word) part with the swift (*celer*) pulse is undoubtedly Caesar. In this case, Lucan uses the adjective most often associated with Caesarian swiftness to signal to his audience that the entrails in question represent Pompey and Caesar. When one sees the adjective *celer*, there is no doubt to whom Lucan is referring.

It is no surprise that Lucan's Caesar possesses extraordinary amounts of energy; even Sallust found Caesar's relentless nature remarkable. What is compelling about Caesar's energy in the *Pharsalia* is that it is directed toward destruction, whereas in past works the energy was directed toward *gloria*, if not preservation of the entire republic. Likewise, Lucan distorts the portrayal of Caesar's speed seen in the *Bellum Civile* and in the *Historiae*. True, Caesar uses speed in the *Pharsalia* to accomplish extraordinary deeds, thus functioning as it does in other works, but the extraordinary deed are done with vicious intent as Caesar is hell-bent on destruction and kingship. Like *celeritas* in Velleius, speed in this epic is a sign of the general's remarkable nature, making him seem near-divine. However, Lucan also adds negative aspects to his speed; it has become a sign of Caesar's restlessness, impatience, and rashness, all of which stem from the force of passions driving him.

### 3.5 Caesar and Fear

Fear is a key emotion in narratives of civil war. At the very beginning of the *Bellum Civile* Caesar presents the Pompeians as bullies, instilling fear in those who attempt to defend Caesar; Marcus Marcellus withdraws his motion after being intimidated by Lentulus' invectives (*Marcellus perterritus conviciis a sua sententia discessit, Civ. 1.2.5*), and other senators yield to the Pompeians in part because of the fear caused by the presence of his army (*sic...terrore praesentis exercitus...plerique compulsi, Civ. 1.2.6*). There is also a fear of Caesar, but those who seem to feel the fear most keenly are Pompey's supporters, such as Lentulus, who, when hearing of Caesar's approach, leaves the open treasury and rushes out of Rome (*Quibus rebus Romam nuntiatis tantus repente terror invasit, ut cum Lentulus consul ad aperiendum aerarium venisset ad pecuniamque Pompeio ex senatus consulto proferendam, protinus aperto sanctiore aerario ex urbe profugeret, Civ. 1.14.1*). Caesar, meanwhile, presents himself as relatively harmless and certainly not out to destroy Rome at large. Velleius depicts Caesar as fearsome in

the way a god might inspire fear—remember that Caesar’s cause is thought to be *terribiliora*—but Velleius also shows that Rome has nothing to be afraid of, for Caesar acts in the best interests of the state throughout the civil war.

Lucan, by contrast, insists on associating Caesar with fear.<sup>176</sup> Again turning to the introductory simile of the lightning bolt, the poet portrays him as a figure who inspires fear by describing people’s reaction to it (*populosque paventes | terruit*, 1.153-4). Lucan continues to develop this picture of Caesar as a source of fear for others throughout the poem. For example, in Caesar’s first speech to his troops, he remarks that Rome is in an uproar, as if Hannibal were coming: “Rome is being shaken by the huge tumult of war; you’d think that Punic Hannibal were coming over the Alps!” (*Non secus ingenti bellorum Roma tumultu | concutitur, quam si Poenus transcenderit Alpes | Hannibal*, 1.303-5) Though it is difficult to tell from this speech whether Caesar is incredulous or proud that Rome is so disturbed by his approach, later Lucan describes him as delighting in being feared: “Yet he is glad that he is so great a cause for fear for nations and he would not prefer to be loved.” (*Gaudet tamen esse timori | tam magno populis et se non mallet amari*, 3.82-3).” The line, which has already been recognized as alluding to the tag-line, “Let them hate me so long as they fear me,” first known to appear in Lucius Accius’ *Atreus* (“*Oderint dum metuant*”) but with variants commonly associated with the emperors Caligula and Tiberius,<sup>177</sup> is indicative of Caesar’s desire to be a tyrant. Because other emperors were thought to have uttered variants of this quotation, Lucan shapes the general to anticipate the future of Rome, which will be subject to the whims of rulers such as Tiberius and Caligula.

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<sup>176</sup> Nix (2005 and 2008) addresses the topic of Caesar as a figure that causes fear, but insofar as causing fear is an aspect of the lightning imagery in Lucan and insofar as Lucan is portraying Caesar as a quasi-divine figure. Of course, at the end of the poem (as we have it), Caesar experiences a reversal and instead of causing fear, he is feeling it: “The Latin leader is suddenly surrounded by the full fear of war” (*Dux Latius tota subito formidine belli | cingitur*, 10.536-37).

<sup>177</sup> The quotation was often revived by other authors, most recently by Seneca in his *De Clementia* (1.12.4), if not also in his tragedies.

Although Caesar is a figure who excites fear and delights in being feared, Lucan often hints that the fear is pointless, that his bark is worse than his bite, so to speak. Here is how the poet describes the rumor of Caesar's approach:

Nec qualem meminere vident: maiorque ferusque  
mentibus occurrit victoque inmanior hoste.

...

Sic quisque pavendo  
dat vires famae, nulloque auctore malorum  
quae finxere timent. Nec solum volgus inani  
percussum terrore pavet, sed curia et ipsi  
sedibus exilivere patres... (1.479-80, 484-8)

Nor do they see the sort of man they remember:  
In their minds eye he is greater and wild,  
more savage than the enemy he overcame.

...

Thus each person gives strength to the rumor  
by fearing no author of evils,  
but they fear figments of their imagination.  
Not only does the rabble, struck with empty fear,  
tremble, but the Senate house and the Fathers themselves  
relinquish their seats in exile.<sup>178</sup>

Perhaps Lucan is imagining the rumor of Caesar's first approach to Rome, when terror takes over the city and the senators flee because they hear he is at their doorstep (*Civ.* 1.14.1). The narrative of the *Bellum Civile* zeroes in on the fear of the Pompeians; Caesar does not say that the population at large feared him. Lucan, however, takes the *terror* a step further and extends that fear to the entire city. However, they fear a bogey. What they fear—a “monster,” as Duff (1928, 39) translates it—does not actually exist. Lucan continues with the image of Caesar as a great being (although he may not be that great in reality) with *volgus inani percussum terrore pavet*, which picks up on Lucan's initial lightning simile with its re-use of *terr-* and *pav-* words

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<sup>178</sup> Although Nix (2008, 281-82) strives to show that Caesar's show of power—including the fear he inspires—is fruitless in the end, she does not note the quotation above, which makes the fact that Caesar inspires empty fear explicit much earlier in the poem. The problem, of course, is that Lucan does not repeat the sentiment elsewhere, so the line is easily forgotten.

(*populosque paventes | terruit*). The common people are quaking with fear, but Lucan tells us that the fear is empty (*inani*). The fear Lucan does not voice but is suggested in other places is that Caesar's coming will ravage the city and its people, just like Hannibal (or even Sulla).<sup>179</sup> Throughout the epic, Lucan suggests that Caesar will attack and despoil the city like a second Hannibal or that, as victor, he will order proscriptions more bloody than the ones of the Sullan period, but it never happens; Lucan does not stray so far from history as to depict his demonic Caesar in the midst of a bloody sack of Rome.

As mentioned before, Velleius portrays Caesar as a figure who excites fear (*terror*) in others, but his Caesar does not delight in causing fear, nor does the historian shape him as a threat to the Roman people. In fact, Velleius focuses on fear as a product of Caesar's superhuman nature, a byword for *veneratio*, perhaps. The general instills fear and respect in the pirates, and his cause in civil war is likewise *terribilior*.<sup>180</sup> Although Velleius' Caesar can excite fear in Romans and even in Pompey's forces in the case of civil war,<sup>181</sup> the fear is not well-founded; Caesar, though mighty, is moderate and in the *Historiae* he tries to cause as little damage to the state as possible. Likewise, the general avoids casting himself as fearsome in the *Bellum Civile*, though he does mention that the report of his arrival stirred up some panic among the Pompeians in Rome. Sallust does not portray Caesar as fearsome at all, though, interestingly, Caesar's speech in the monograph does not express fear at the prospect of Catiline's conspiracy but it suggests that, if he were to be afraid of anything, he would fear the possibility that those trying to put down the conspiracy to use it as an excuse to revisit the proscriptions under Sulla (*Ita illi quibus Damasippi mors laetitiae fuerat paulo post ipsi trahebantur, neque prius finis*

<sup>179</sup> See 1.303-305 (cited on pg. 140) for Caesar likening himself to Hannibal, and 2.143-232 for the horrors of the Sullan proscriptions and the fear that Caesar and Pompey will do even worse than that.

<sup>180</sup> See Vell. 2.41.3 and 49.3.

<sup>181</sup> One can argue that Velleius' description of the swift surrender by the Pompeians at Ilerda was due in part by the fear that Caesar's impressive, lightning-fast arrival would have instilled.

*iugulandi fuit quam Sulla omnis suos divitiis explevit. Atque ego haec non in M. Tullio neque his temporibus vereor, sed in magna civitate multa et varia ingenia sunt, Cat. 51.34-35).* Catiline's conspiracy evokes fear (*Cat. 31.1-3*), yet, just before some of the conspirators are captured, Sallust lists people who were rooting for Catiline; even those who had lost family members and rights in the Sullan proscriptions looked forward to rather than feared Catiline's plot (*Cat. 37.9*).

### 3.6 Caesar's "*clementia*"

In contrast to fear of Caesar, which Lucan both augments and mocks in his epic, Caesar's clemency is a trait Lucan must go out of his way to distort. Every text studied thus far refers to Caesar's mercy and moderation as a virtue—or at least not a vice. Clemency was a prominent feature in Sallust's portrait of Caesar, though Sallust uses Cato to cast a critical eye on *mansuetudo et misericordia*, particularly if it is shown to criminal. In Velleius, Caesar's mercy reflects his concern for the state and for citizen lives; as a gift bestowed on other Romans, Caesar's clemency brings about his tragic death, for he expects his gift to be reciprocated in kind. Velleius does not show the trait as negative, he merely laments that it went unappreciated; it was not clemency itself which brought his downfall but the fact that those to whom he showed mercy were ungrateful and did not behave as expected; in other word, they should have reciprocated Caesar's mercy with appropriately docile behavior. Caesar himself cultivates an image of mercy and moderation in his commentaries,<sup>182</sup> though it is Cicero who makes the term *clementia Caesaris* stick. Obviously, Caesar's clemency was a lasting part of his image.

The association between Caesar and clemency did not dissipate in the Neronian period. Caesar's cultivation of a merciful image and the prominence of *clementia* as an imperial virtue may have informed Lucan's presentation of Caesar's clemency. My focus here is to show how very different Lucan's depiction of Caesar's clemency is from other presentations of clemency.

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<sup>182</sup> See also pg. 3f. and 18 for discussions of Caesar's *clementia*.

As Fredrick Ahl (1976), said, Lucan's major hurdle was that he could not deny that Caesar showed mercy, so he had to present the motivation behind the general's mercy as somehow sinister. In the *Pharsalia* Caesar's clemency is not a reflection of his care for the state or citizens' lives but a sheer show of power. Let us take a look at Caesar's pardon of Domitius in order to get a sense of how Lucan presents Caesar's mercy:

Ecce, nefas belli, reseratis agmina portis  
 captivum traxere ducem, civisque superbi  
 constitit ante pedes. Voltu tamen alta minaci  
 nobilitas recta ferrum cervice popscit.  
 Scit Caesar poenamque peti veniamque timeri.  
 "Vive, licet nolis, et nostro munere" dixit  
 "cerne diem. Victis iam spes bona partibus esto  
 exemplumque mei. Vel, si libet, arma retempta,  
 et nihil hac venia, si viceris, ipse paciscor."  
 Fatur et astrictis laxari vincula palmis  
 imperat. (2.507-517)

Behold, evil of war, the troops dragged the captive leader  
 after the gates had been opened, and he stands before the feet  
 of the proud citizen. Yet his high nobility demands the sword, with  
 his expression menacing and his neck outstretched. Caesar knows that  
 punishment is sought and favor is feared. He said,  
 "Live, although you don't want to, and look upon the day  
 thanks to my gift. Now become a reason for hope to the conquered party  
 and a specimen of my conduct toward them. Or, if it is pleasing, try again  
 at arms and, if you conquer me, I myself expect nothing in return for  
 this favor." He speaks and orders that the chains tying his hands back be relaxed.

From the first line we see that Lucan represent *clementia*—or at least Caesar's *clementia*—as an act of pride and a wielding of power inappropriate to a citizen as Domitius, the *captivum ducem*, is brought before the feet of Caesar, the *civis superbus*. Caesar is, in Lucan's eyes, not a *dux* but a private citizen, and by calling Caesar a citizen he immediately implies that Caesar is not in a position to bestow pardon on anyone. Perhaps the fact that a *civis* would grant pardon to a *dux* is symptomatic of civil war, a condition that involves the transgression of normative boundaries

and confusion of roles.<sup>183</sup> But this mis-assignment of roles is not the only way in which Lucan twists Caesar's clemency. Caesar and Velleius present *clementia* as an attempt to end the war, to preserve citizen lives, and to win over the general populace. By contrast, the *clementia* of Lucan's Caesar has perverted aims; the general knows that Domitius would prefer punishment to mercy (*scit Caesar poenamque peti veniamque timeri*). A key word in the portrayal of Caesar, *timeri*, triggers the expectation that he, characterized by delight in exciting anxiety, will grant pardon because it is precisely what Domitius does not want. The poet makes Caesar voice these twisted aims by saying: "*Vive, licet nolis.*" Caesar does not grant life to his opponents, rather he denies death to them.<sup>184</sup> Just as creating fear is a display of the general's power and aims toward tyranny, so too is this twisted pardon. Furthermore, the mercy Caesar shows to Domitius in the *Pharsalia* does not aim at ending the war, and, unlike Velleius' presentation of mercy, pardon is not a gift for which Caesar expects any appreciation or reciprocation. In fact, he considers that possibility that Domitius will rejoin Pompey's army and continue fighting, stating that, although he has bestowed mercy, he does not expect such *venia* in kind if he is defeated (*vel, si libet, arma retempta,| et nihil hac venia, si viceris, ipse paciscor*). In short, the *clementia* is not a token of the exchange culture; Caesar does not expect anything back from Domitius. By denying Caesar this aspect of *clementia*, Lucan makes the general's point of view clear: he superior to—not equal to—Domitius. The poet keeps *clementia* in his narrative of the civil war, but he removes all traces of the qualities that make it so poignant in the *Bellum Civile* and *Historiae*.

The other major instance of Caesar's clemency in the epic is similar. At Ilerda, after Afranius nobly begs for pardon for himself and his men, Caesar's reaction is as follows:

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<sup>183</sup> Bartsch (1997, ch. 1) offers a stimulating discussion of how and why themes of boundary violation and confusion of roles pervade the *Pharsalia*.

<sup>184</sup> See also Fantham (1992, 165): "Caesar's record of success and moderation toward defeated opponents forces the poet to concentrate his *interpretatio sinistra* on alleged motivation."

At Caesar facilis voltuque serenus  
flectitur atque usus belli poenamque remittit. (4.363-65)

But Caesar turned easy and serene in the face  
and he excused them from punishment and from experiencing war.

Here Caesar looks remarkably like Jupiter in his serenity.<sup>185</sup> His response is far shorter than in the Domitius episode; in this case, pardon consists of a calm look and a release from service and from punishment. However, Lucan has no need to linger over another instance of *clementia Caesaris*; Caesar's superiority was acknowledged by Afranius, and it makes him *facilis*. The mention of Caesar's easy expression is reminiscent of Caesar's *facilitas* in the *Bellum Catilinae*, which, one might recall, was countered by Cato's *constantia*. The implicit criticism of *facilitas* through the claim of *constantia* can be seen clearly here; Caesar's expression, possibly reflecting *ira* when Afranius is speaking, changes (*flectitur*) to something calm. *Constantia* would, by contrast, reflect a more even temper rather than Caesar's shifting between *furor* and serenity.

This episode has stirred up varied opinions on how Lucan feels about Caesar and his *clementia*.<sup>186</sup> When compared to Caesar's own account of the event, we might have a clue as to what Lucan is trying to accomplish with Caesar's silent *remissio*. In the *Bellum Civile*, Caesar presents Afranius as utterly servile: he begs for mercy (*orare atque obsecrare*, *Civ.* 1.84.4), and speaks submissively (*demississime et subiectissime exponit*, *Civ.* 1.84.5). Caesar, by contrast, speaks to Afranius not as a servile subject, but as an aristocratic Roman who, disappointingly, has not adequately fulfilled his role: "No one else is less suited to these parts either of complaining or of pitiful lament...thus parties of all ranks consisted in compassion, but the

<sup>185</sup> Putnam (1955, 234) has also noted Caesar's similarity to Jupiter here.

<sup>186</sup> Ahl (1976, 192-97) thinks that Lucan is still trying to make Caesar look bad by making Afranius look more noble, but this episode represents how difficult it is for Lucan to shed a negative light on Caesar, thanks to history's general praise of Caesar's *clementia*. Masters (1992, 78-90) takes the episode as simply a show of Lucan's Caesarian politics. Leigh (1997, 53-63) prefers to address the fact that this scene of Caesar with an expression of a *serenus* ruler should recall for the reader the realities of their situation under Nero (or any emperor); that one must be able "not only to follow his expression, but to second-guess it (61)."

leaders shrank from peace.” (*Nulli omnium has partis vel querimoniae vel miserationis minus convenisse...sic omnium ordinum partis in misericordia constitisse, ipsos duces a pace abhorruisse*, *Civ.* 1.85.1, 3) First Caesar shames Afranius with language of the stage,<sup>187</sup> as if Afranius is playing the wrong part and shunning his proper role as an aristocrat. Caesar then goes on to explain how Afranius did not fulfill his part as a leader; when everyone else wanted peace and compassion, he (and Petreius) refused. Caesar then goes on to repeat that he has been reasonable throughout this conflict, yet everyone attempts to obstruct his success. After he airs his complaints, he finally allows the Pompeian troops to disband (*Civ.* 1.85.5-12).

With a scene like the one above, it is no wonder that Lucan kept Caesar quiet. Remember that Lucan, when he listed the reasons for war, did not mention any of the complaints Caesar himself lodges against the Pompeians, namely that he is reasonable in seeking the consulship *in absentia*, that the Senate is refusing a request they had granted to others in the past, and that his *dignitas* is being infringed upon by a small group of people.<sup>188</sup> Lucan presents Caesar as an aggressor against Rome, not a defender of his rights and aristocratic status, therefore Caesar’s speech to Afranius in the *Bellum Civile* cannot appear in the epic. Instead, Lucan shows Caesar in the guise of a quasi-Jovian imperial ruler, silently pardoning Afranius; this picture fits far better with Lucan’s attempt to show Caesar’s megalomania—after all, Afranius is a fellow citizen—and that Caesar’s civil war sounds the death knell for the Republic and ushers in an age of rulers. Caesar acts like a ruler, though he is not (yet), and his actions during the civil war will make it acceptable for his descendants to behave in the same way.

As the discussion above has tried to show, Lucan cannot avoid Caesar’s *clementia*, so he distorts it; it is a behavior that Seneca himself says best befits a king or a *princeps* (*Cl.* 1.3.3),

<sup>187</sup> cf. *Pl. Mer.* 1-7 for *querimoniae*—especially of lovers—as a dramatic convention.

<sup>188</sup> See above, in my discussion of the Neronian context in which this poem was produced, for why these very Republican complaints do not make much of an appearance in Lucan’s epic.

and so we see Caesar transform from *civis superbus* to a *serenus* king as he exercises clemency over men whom he should consider his equal. Clemency reveals the shift from Republic to Principate which begins with the civil war. Caesar himself is mastering the art of being an “arch-dissimulator”:<sup>189</sup> he “turns easy and serene in his expression,” after hearing Afranius recognize his power, but what was his expression before it was *serenus*?

### 3.7 Luck be a Lady: Caesar and *Fortuna*

Caesar’s association with *fortuna*, or fortune, is well attested. Although Caesar himself does not assign himself a personal *Fortuna*, he becomes known as “Fortune’s favorite”.<sup>190</sup> In Velleius in particular Caesar is closely connected to *fortuna*; he attributes a large role to fortune at several points in Caesar’s life, such as the death of Julia, which precipitated the breakdown of Caesar’s and Pompey’s relationship, as well as throughout the civil war as *fortuna* helps Caesar overcome adversity and saves him from some pretty close calls. In Velleius, *fortuna* not only refers to some force resembling a providential deity accompanying Caesar during the civil war, but also is used to refer to a turn in the course of events (i.e., Julia’s unfortunate death). Sallust attributes a large role to fortune in determining the course of events, though it is again an impersonal force; the historian does not ascribe to either Caesar or Catiline a belief that fortune favors him specifically.

Although Lucan does not present the workings of fortune in the exact same way as any of our previous authors, it is as important to the course of events in the *Pharsalia* as it was to Velleius’ and Sallust’s narratives. In fact, as several scholars have noted, *fortuna* is the only divine force (discounting whatever divine force is assigned to Caesar) that has any efficacy in the

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<sup>189</sup> Leigh (1997, 61).

<sup>190</sup> Tappan (1931) focuses on debunking the idea that Caesar ascribed a personal Fortune to himself in his writings; the fortune that Caesar referred to seems to be ordinary chance. Cicero, however, does call Caesar Fortune’s favorite. See, e.g., *Marc.* 2.7 and *Att.* 7.11.1.

epic.<sup>191</sup> The gods are avoiding this war at all costs. They do not influence anything in this epic. In fact, their presence is felt only insofar as Lucan repeatedly declares their absence.<sup>192</sup> Instead, all power to influence events is left to fortune, to the point that it is not just “fortune” but “Fortune,” and Fortune favors Caesar.

Caesar’s relationship with *Fortuna* in the epic is similar to the personal *fortuna* which appears in Velleius. Lucan describes the relationship between Caesar and *Fortuna* in such a way that the two seem to interact. Before crossing the Rubicon, Caesar declares:

“Hic,” ait, “hic pacem temerataque iura relinquo;  
te, Fortuna, sequor.” (1.225-26)

“Here,” he says, “Here I abandon peace and violated rights;  
I follow you, Fortune.”

Caesar here declares that *Fortuna*—not attempts to negotiate peace, not clinging to his complaints that his rights and *dignitas* have been violated—is his guiding principle. Lucan’s Caesar is leaving behind the justifications for war which appeared in the commentaries, in the *Historiae*, even in the mouth of Sallust’s Catiline. Here the poet adopts an aspect of Caesar we see in Velleius, namely his enjoyment of Fortune’s assistance, yet he discards any justification the general could have for civil war aside from aiming at sole domination. Caesar’s declaration of his abandonment of the justifications given in the *Bellum Civile* reveal that this war is not a Republican war; that is, the issues driving it are not Republican issues. The Caesar of the *Pharsalia* does not see a need to justify his action in terms understandable to his fellow aristocrats because what he fights for are not his rights as an aristocratic Roman but for kingship.

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<sup>191</sup> The most complete discussion of the gods in Lucan is Feeney (1991, 250-301), but see especially 270n89 for a list of other scholarly discussions of the divine in Lucan. Nix (2005, 90-93) sees in Lucan’s depiction of Caesar as a quasi-Jovian force a replacement of the traditional gods with the deified emperors of the Principate, and especially the replacement of Jupiter with Caesar as the divine force who, along with *Fortuna*, guides the events of the epic.

<sup>192</sup> Feeney (1991, 301).

All he needs, therefore, is *Fortuna*, the guiding force of kings, such as Alexander the Great (see below, section 3.9, for more on Alexander).

Caesar believes in Fortune's assistance so deeply that the soldiers complain that Caesar never gives his men credit for their deeds:

Adde quod ingrato meritorum iudice virtus  
nostra perit: quidquid gerimus fortuna vocatur. (5.291-2)

Add the fact that our *virtus* perishes because the judge of merit is ungrateful: whatever we accomplish is called good luck.

Unlike the praise that Caesar regularly gives to his men in his commentaries, here the men declare that Caesar chalks up all accomplishments to Fortune; in Caesar's eyes the men are merely carrying out the goddess' will. Caesar actually confirms his men's complaints in his response to their grievances:

Invenient haec arma manus, vobisque repulsis  
tot reddet Fortuna viros quot tela vacabunt. (5.326-7)

These weapons will find hands, and after you've been sent away Fortune will bring back as many men as the number of weapons left behind.

Caesar calls his soldiers replaceable, as if they are puppets whom Fortune controls. He merely needs hands to hold the weapons. But, he accepts that not everyone is up to the task of carrying out Fortune's will and he even expresses relief that Fortune will relieve him (and perhaps even the soldiers) of the burden of having soldiers hesitant to follow Fortune's will:

Heu, quantum Fortuna umeris iam pondere fessis  
amolitur onus! (5.354-5)

Ah, how great a burden Fortune is lifting from shoulders already tired of this weight!

Caesar imagines here that, by relieving the men from duty, Fortune is lifting the burden of her will.<sup>193</sup> In his harangue, Caesar essentially calls the men imposter epic heroes, not up to the taxing task of following Fortune's will. They are no Achilles or Aeneas; they cannot accept and follow fate. Caesar, however, will follow his luck to the end, as he stated at the beginning of the war (1.225-26, cited above). Caesar's fierce belief in *Fortuna*, to the point where he perceives his men as merely her instruments, is apparently accepted by the men, who are shamed into ending their mutiny and instead continue to fight for Caesar.

Lucan corroborates Caesar's assertions that Fortune is on his side. As Caesar addresses and interacts with *Fortuna*, she is described as likewise interacting with Caesar:

Sed parvo Fortuna viri contenta pavore  
plena redit, solitoque magis favere secundi  
et veniam meruere dei. (4.121-3)

But Fortune, content with her man's small scare  
returns in full force, and even the gods earned pardon through  
a greater than usual show of support to the favored one.

Fortune plays an almost flirtatious game with Caesar in Ilerda; she pulls away briefly and lets Caesar consider the possibility that he may not be successful before she comes back to his side. Obviously, this close relationship—almost elegiac in tone—goes beyond the familiarity Velleius attributes to Caesar and Fortune. In Velleius, fortune accompanies Caesar and he even rails against his luck at one point, but never does Velleius describe Caesar's relationship with fortune in a tone reminiscent of a schoolyard romance. The *Pharsalia* personalizes *Fortuna*, truly making her Lady Luck.

It is perhaps no surprise that *Fortuna* acts on Caesar's behalf and that his belief in her efficacy and support is so strong. As discussed in the previous chapter, Velleius also highlights

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<sup>193</sup> Nix (2005, 46) thinks that Caesar is the one being relieved by Fortune. Duff's (1928) translation is ambiguous enough to allow for either Caesar or the men (or both) to be relieved.

the role of *fortuna* in Caesar's successes; that aspect of his image has been developing since the end of the Republic. However, like several of Caesar's other famous traits, Lucan also reimagines the implications of Fortune's support in order to accentuate the general's unsavory character. For example, Lucan has the following to say about Caesar's ability to cut down the sacred grove by Massilia without punishment:

Servat multos Fortuna nocentis,  
et tantum miseris irasci numina possunt. (3.448-9)

Fortune spares many guilty men,  
and the deities are able to become angry at those who are merely wretched.

Notice first that *Fortuna* is portrayed as if she is more powerful than the gods; she can prevent the guilty from becoming victims of the god's wrath. Thus, as Fortune's favorite, Caesar is able to get away with all of the misdeeds he commits during the civil war, including violations of sacred ground. This description runs counter to traditional conceptions of *Fortuna*, which would indicate that he who receives the support of Fortune would essentially be justified in his success; Sallust, for example, says at the beginning of his *Bellum Catilinae* that, "Fortune is changed along with one's characters. Thus power always is transferred from the less good to whomever is best (cited above, pg. 85)." In short, good men have good fortune, the bad will *fortuna* in line with their character. Velleius' conception of *Fortuna* is not as tied to Caesar's character—the historian does not portray him as any less of a good man at the time of his assassination than at any other point of his life—but the abandonment of Fortune leaves Caesar prey to the conspirators. In the *Historiae*, Caesar's luck must cede to fate. In the *Pharsalia*, however, Lucan twists these concepts of fortune; in the epic, *Fortuna* is a divinity of destruction who can favor bad men, even contending against Fate and the gods to see her favorite succeed—at least for a time. However, Lucan foretells that *Fortuna* will one day turn on Caesar, as she has turned on all of her favorites:

Vindicis an gladii facinus poenasque furorum  
regnaque ad ultores iterum redeuntia Brutos,  
ut peragat Fortuna, taces? (5.206-8)

Do you leave unmentioned that Fortune will complete the deed  
of the avenging sword and she will bring about the punishment of madness  
and she will make sure that kingship again meets with avenging Bruti?

Here Lucan picks up where Delphic oracle's prophecy left off and he foretells that *Fortuna* will be responsible for Caesar's assassination. Much like Marius, Sulla, Alexander, Curio, and Pompey, who relied on *Fortuna*, Caesar will also eventually experience the ugly side of Lady Luck's fickle nature.<sup>194</sup> Unlike the concept of Fortune in Sallust, however, Lucan gives no indication that Fortune will move on to favor better men.

### 3.8 Caesar's men

The works discussed previously have taken different approaches to how the men allied with Caesar are portrayed. In his *Bellum Civile* Caesar credits his men with many great accomplishments; their successes give prestige not only to them but also to their general, for they are following his guidance. However, Caesar rarely casts blame on his men when they are not successful; often he attributes their failures to overzealousness to do well in his eyes or even to an unusual factor or circumstances outside of their control, such as weather or a lack of food. Regardless, Caesar depicts only a select number of his men as anything less than courageous and loyal to his command and goals. He does not, for instance, narrate the near mutiny seen in book 5 of Lucan's poem. Moreover, the few men who do betray Caesar are on the receiving end of his insults in his commentaries.<sup>195</sup>

Sallust does talk not about Caesar's troops, but his description of Catiline's men in the climactic battle portrays a fatal devotion to their leader reminiscent of Caesar's men in the

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<sup>194</sup> Bernard F. Dick (1967) provides an informative discussion of the interaction between *Fortuna* and various characters in Lucan's epic and notes that Lucan is sure to mention that, for every character who relies on fortune, there is a point where he is abandoned by her.

<sup>195</sup> See especially *Civ.* 3.59-61, regarding the Allobrogian brothers whose greed led them to be despised by Caesar's men and who eventually went over to Pompey's side.

*Bellum Civile*. The tragedy of this devotion in the *Bellum Catilinae* is that, in a different context, such loyalty would be admirable; they show the energy of their ancestors, but that energy has been misdirected thanks to the conditions of society (greed, ambition, etc.). What stands out in Sallust's description of Catiline's men—and is a point to keep in mind for the discussion below—is that Sallust portrays the men of the Catilinarian conspiracy as being similar in temperament and in the same dire straits as Catiline. They are mini-Catilines, in a sense, just as Caesar's men in the *Bellum Civile*, such as Curio, try to be mini-Caesars.

### **Curio in the *Pharsalia***

In Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, Curio identifies himself as a member of Caesar's army, not a general in his own right: "Indeed I wish to be called a soldier of Caesar, *you* have called me by the title of *Imperator*. If you regret this, I release your kindness back to you; restore to me my name, lest you seem to have given me an honor that is a near-insult." (*Equidem me Caesaris militem dici volui, vos me imperatoris nomine appellavistis. Cuius si vos paenitet, vestrum vobis beneficium remitto: mihi meum restituite nomen, ne ad contumeliam honorem dedisse videamini*, *Civ.* 2.32.13-14) The soldiers respond to Curio as they would respond to Caesar and they encourage him to test their loyalty and valor (*discedentem vero ex contione universi cohortantur magno sit animo necubi dubitet proelium committere et suam fidem virtutemque experiri*, *Civ.* 2.33.1). Although Curio's confidence leads to being ambushed, he is somewhat redeemed with the report that, after losing the army entrusted to him, Curio could not stand to bring himself back into the sight of his general and so he dies fighting as a soldier (*at Curio numquam se amisso exercitu quem a Caesare fidei commissum acceperit in eius conspectum reversurum confirmat atque ita proelian interficitur*, *Civ.* 2.42.4). Curio's actions are meant to show the extent to which Caesar's men try to act as their leader would, and their disappointment if they fail.

Lucan likewise gives a sympathetic portrayal of Curio's death:

Curio, fusas  
 ut vidit campis acies et cernere tantas  
 permisit clades compressus sanguine pulvis,  
 non tulit adflictis animam producere rebus  
 aut sperare fugam, ceciditque in strage suorum  
 inpiger ad letum et fortis virtute coacta. (4.793-98)

Curio, as he saw the troops slayed on the field and the dust, pressed down by blood, allowed him to survey so great a catastrophe, he did not allow his life to survive this turn of events or to hope for flight, and he, ready for death and brave with his valor collected up, fell in the ruin of his men.

Curio receives a rather favorable depiction for the man who, unlike everyone who wants to buy Rome, sold it (*emere omnes, his vendidit urbem*, 4.824). Lucan takes up the Curio-tragedy in Caesar, but here it is not the overconfidence of a young leader gone awry, but the tragedy that such a talented youth did not direct his energy toward the benefit of the state—a tragedy akin to the tragedy of Sallust's monograph. In fact, Lucan's Curio fulfills Sallust's grim observation in the *Bellum Catilinae*, which is repeated by Jugurtha in the *Bellum Jugurthinum*, that everything, including Rome, is for sale (*omnia venalia habere edocuit, Cat. 10.4; "Urbem venalem et mature perituram, si emptorem invenerit," Jug. 35.10*).<sup>196</sup> As the previous chapter showed, Velleius was not nearly so kind to Curio; he made Caesar's lieutenant the scape-goat for the beginning of the civil war, and the description of his death is barely more than a footnote in Caesar's journey to Africa.<sup>197</sup> In the *Historiae*, Caesar's men are mentioned only if they accentuate his greatness; Curio, however, is a blunder to be covered up.<sup>198</sup>

<sup>196</sup> Gärtner (2009, 941-42) mentions the development in Lucan of Jugurtha's remark that Rome is for sale.

<sup>197</sup> For the discussion of Curio in Velleius, see above, section 2.5.

<sup>198</sup> Just as I said very little about Caesar's soldiers in the previous chapter, I will also say very little about Velleius' depiction of Caesar's men in this section because Velleius, notably, talks very little about Caesar's men in his narrative of the civil war. All accomplishments of the Caesarian army are things Caesar did, or are called as much. He occasionally highlights specific members of Caesar's army, such as Crastinus, but his overall goal in recognizing

**“*Invita peragam tamen omnia dextra*”: Caesar’s criminals**

The example above is not an isolated instance of the attention Lucan pays to Caesar’s soldiers. In fact, Lucan focuses a lot on Caesar’s army. As in Sallust’s description of Catiline’s co-conspirators, Caesar’s men in the *Pharsalia* display traits similar to their leader. In addition, they are ferociously devoted to Caesar, to the extent that they imagine that he is watching their heroic deeds if he happens to not be there. They anticipate that he will talk about how bravely they fought—a reference, perhaps, to Caesar’s recognition of their deeds in his commentaries. The centurion Laelius is the first to voice such fierce devotion in the epic; he clearly shows that the army’s devotion to Caesar is greater than their loyalty to their family members, to the gods, even to Italy and Rome itself:

“Per signa decem felicia castris  
perque tuos iuro quocumque ex hoste triumphos,  
pectore si fratris gladium iuguloque parentis  
condere me iubeas plenaque in viscera partu  
coniugis, invita peragam tamen omnia dextra;  
si spoliare deos ignemque inmittere templis,  
numina miscebit castrensis flamma monetae;  
castra super Tusci si ponere Thybridis undas,  
Hesperios audax veniam metator in agros;  
tu quoscumque voles in planum effundere muros,  
his aries actus disperget saxa lacertis,  
illa licet, penitus tolli quam iusseris urbem,  
Roma sit.” (1.374-86)

“I swear by the standards successful in ten campaigns and by  
your triumphs over whatever enemy:  
if you should order me to bury my sword in the chest of  
my brother and in the throat of my parent  
and into the innards of my wife, full with child,  
I will do all these things, even if my right hand is unwilling;  
if you should order me to despoil the gods and throw fire onto  
the temples, the flame of the camp’s mint will melt the godheads;  
if you order me to pitch camp above the waves of the Etruscan Tiber,  
I shall boldly come into the Italian fields and mark out the lines;

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these men is similar to Caesar’s objective in the commentaries, namely to highlight the general’s accomplishments and greatness.

whatever walls you want to spill out onto the plain,  
 the ram, driven by these arms, will scatter the rocks,  
 I will do it, even if the city you ordered  
 to be destroyed is Rome.

Laelius—and, by extension, Caesar’s entire army—lists the crimes against Rome and against *pietas* he is willing to commit. Such a list is reminiscent of the crimes Catiline’s followers indulge in:

Nam quicumque [inpudicus adulter ganeo] manu ventre pene bona patria laceraverat, quique alienum aes grande conflaverat quo flagitium aut facinus redimeret, praeterea omnes undique parricidae sacrilegi convicti iudiciis aut pro factis iudicium timentes, ad hoc quos manus atque lingua periurio aut sanguine civili alebat, postremo omnes quos flagitium egestas conscius animus exagitabat, ii Catilinae proximi familiaresque erant. (*Cat.* 14.2-3)

For whoever [a promiscuous man or adulterer or glutton who] had wasted his family property through his hand, his stomach, or his penis, and he who had contracted large debt, so that he might buy off disgrace or a crime, and, moreover, everyone who, from every side, had been convicted of parricide or religious crimes in court or were afraid of going to trial for their deeds, in addition those whom their hand and tongue nourished through perjury or civil bloodshed, and finally all whom disgrace, poverty, or a mind aware of such things agitated, these men were near and dear to Catiline.

Granted, Catiline’s men have committed these deeds before participating in the conspiracy, which is not the case for Laelius, who announces his willingness to commit crimes against his family, the state, and the gods in the context of civil war. Both Sallust and Lucan connect attacking Rome with other crimes; one cannot be a good person and still instigate aggression against the *patria*. Caesar and Velleius, on the other hand, emphasize that Caesar is not attacking Rome, rather he is defending the wrongs committed against him while also acting in the state’s interest. They emphasize Caesar’s endurance of wrongs for the sake of Rome before he finally decides that going to war is his only option. Caesar in particular is quick to point out in the *Bellum Civile* that the war he is about to engage in is not against Rome but against a small faction of men. Within Caesar’s and Velleius’ texts, civil war is not a crime but instead is cast as a necessity—or at least the criminal aspect is ignored. Thus, the Caesar depicted in the

commentaries does not have his men cast fighting on his behalf as a crime; in fact, they say that they are defending Caesar and Rome:

Conclamant legionis XII., quae aderat, milites—hanc enim initio tumultus evocaverat, reliquae nondum convenerant—sese paratos esse imperatoris sui tribunorumque plebis iniurias defendere. (*Civ.* 1.7.8)

The soldiers of the twelfth legion, which was present—for Caesar had summoned them at the beginning of the uproar, the remaining legions had not yet arrived—shouted that they were prepared to defend their general and the tribunes of the plebs against injury.

When examining the troops' response, Caesar's objective in the *Bellum Civile* is to show that he was defending himself from injury, and, above all, that he was not attacking anyone. Lucan's objective, by contrast, is to show that Caesar was an aggressor and a criminal for fighting over Rome despite claiming that he was fighting *for* Rome. When Lucan's Laelius lists the crimes which Caesar's men might have to commit, he underscores the pure destruction of personal ties, which is a consequence of citizens fighting citizens. Caesar, by contrast, does his best to show in the *Bellum Civile* that he did his best to not shed Roman blood, and certainly does not emphasize that brothers might be killing brothers, sons might be killing fathers, and so on.<sup>199</sup> The same mitigation of the horrors of civil war can be found in the *Historiae*, which, though recognizing that civil war is an unfortunate event, emphasizes Caesar's attempts to minimize bloodshed and ignore the transgressions of boundaries—physical and social—found in civil war.

### **Hopelessly Devoted...: Caesarian Loyalty**

The Caesarians' avowed willingness to commit crimes illustrates in part how devoted they are to their leader. Aside from the one incident in book 5, in which they threaten to abandon Caesar, Lucan portrays the men as very much bound to Caesar's cause. Their devotion stems from a mix of love of their general and fear of the consequences of disobeying him,

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<sup>199</sup> For an example of Caesar's claims that he did his best to come bring conflict to an end without bloodshed, see the discussion of the Ilerda episode above in chapter 1, section 1.1.

extending the fear Caesar inspires beyond the *populus* at large to his followers, too. The soldiers' love for their leader, which is the focus of this subsection, shows through when they chastise him for his suicidal attempt to cross the sea:

Circumfusa duci flevit gemituque suorum  
 et non ingratis incessit turba querellis.  
 “Quo te, dure, tulit virtus temeraria, Caesar,  
 aut quae nos viles animas in fata relinquens  
 invitis spargenda dabas tua membra procellis?  
 Cum tot in hac anima populorum vita salusque  
 pendeat et tantus caput hoc sibi fecerit orbis,  
 saevitia est voluisse mori.” (5.680-87)

The crowd, having surrounded the general, shed tears and assailed him with their groans and their not unpleasing laments.  
 “Where, hard-hearted Caesar, did your rash courage bear you?  
 Or to what fate were you leaving us, our worthless lives, as you were giving your limbs to be scattered by unwilling winds?  
 Since so much—the life and well-being of the people—hangs on your life and so much of the world has made you its head,  
 it is cruelty to have been willing to die.”

As others have noted, the soldiers' complaints display some influence from the elegaic lover's lament<sup>200</sup>; among their *querellae*, they call Caesar “hard-hearted.” These details make their devotion to Caesar a little bit more ridiculous, but they also highlight the height of the soldiers' loyalty: they would be lost without him.<sup>201</sup>

Two other cases in addition to the Curio scene discussed above in which Caesar's men remain fatally loyal to Caesar come to mind. One episode describes the mutual suicide of Vulteius and his troops (4.402-581); the other episode portrays Scaeva's relentless battling at Dyrrachium (6.118-262). Both episodes are remarkable in that, first, they take place in a context of a loss for the Caesarian camp, and, second, they emphasize the army's fierce loyalty to

<sup>200</sup> cf. Matthews (2008, 254-74).

<sup>201</sup> Barratt (1979, 227) briefly reviews the similarities in this speech to Craterus' speech to Alexander, which outlines not only the soldiers' devotion but also the leader's fitness to lead. Fantham (1985, 130-1) also notes the similarity.

Caesar, to the extent that suicide is valued over capture. Their loyalty to Caesar, which overrides their devotion to Rome's welfare, is underscored in these scenes. Although the actions of Caesar's men are extraordinary in some way, Lucan's commentary always casts a negative light on the loyalty of Caesar's men. For example, at the end of the Vulteius episode, Lucan comments:

Non tamen ignavae post haec exempla virorum  
 percipient gentes quam sit non ardua virtus  
 servitium fugisse manu, sed regna timentur  
 ob ferrum et saevis libertas uritur armis,  
 ignorant datos, ne quisquam serviat, enses.  
 Mors, utinam pavidos vitae subducere nolles,  
 sed virtus te sola daret! (4.575-81)

Yet, after the example set by these men, ignoble nations will not grasp how fleeing slavery through one's hand is, as an example of valor, not hard to follow, but kingdoms are feared because of the sword, and freedom is impinged upon by cruel war, they do not know that swords were given in order that no one become a slave. Death, would that you were unwilling to lead down the craven from life, but that valor alone would give you!

This act of devotion to Caesar the opposing leaders wonder at (*ducibus mirantibus, ulli | esse ducem tanti*, 4.572-73) is not a model (*exempla*) of *virtus*, as Vulteius claims:

“Nescio quod nostris magnum et memorabile fati  
 exemplum, Fortuna, paras.

...

Magna virtute merendum est,  
 Caesar ut amissis inter tot milia paucis  
 hoc damnum clademque vocet.” (4.496-97, 512-14)

“Fortune, you are preparing some sort of great and memorable exemplum for our deaths to represent.

...

For Caesar to call this a loss and a catastrophe, when only a few men among so many thousands have died, is a thing which must be earned through great valor.”

The act of great valor Vulteius refers to is the suicide of men trapped on the raft. As we saw above, however, Lucan's final comment is that their act does not constitute *virtus*, for it is cowardly for them, Caesar's supporters, to avoid life under a *regnum* they are helping their leader establish with this civil war. Finally, although Vulteius imagines that their suicidal devotion to Caesar will result in fame (*magnum et memorabile...exemplum*) and that their general will call their suicide a loss upon finding out, he would be disappointed; Caesar never mentions this misfortune in his account of the civil war, making Lucan the preserver of Vulteius' "fame".

Scaeva's bravery, by contrast, is recalled by Caesar:

Et cum laboris sui perculique testimonium adferre vellent, milia sagittarum circiter XXX in castellum coniecta Caesari renumeraverunt, scutoque ad eum relato Scaevae centurionis inventa sunt in eo foramina CXX. Quem Caesar, ut erat de se meritis et de re publica, donatum milibus CC [atque] ab octavis ordinibus ad primipilum se traducere pronuntiavit—eius enim opera castellum magna ex parte conservatum esse constabat. (*Civ.* 3.53.4-5)

And when they wanted to bring evidence of their hard work and the danger they faced, they counted up about 30,000 arrows shot into the stronghold, and when the shield of Scaeva, a centurion, was brought back to him, 120 holes were found in it. Caesar, as Scaeva had merited it on his own behalf and on behalf of the republic, rewarded him with 200,000 sesterces and announced that he would transfer him from the eighth cohort to the first—for it was agreed that his deeds saved a great part of the fort.

Caesar highlights Scaeva as an example of bravery and the rewards bestowed on account of it.

Lucan, however, draws a very different lesson from Scaeva's example:

Felix hoc nomine famae,  
si tibi durus Hiber aut si tibi terga dedisset  
Cantaber exiguis aut longis Teutonus armis.  
Non tu bellorum spoliis ornare Tonantis  
templum potes, non tu laetis ululare triumphis.  
Infelix, quanta dominum virtute parasti! (6.257-262)

You would have been lucky with this claim to fame, if the hard Iberian or the Cantaberian or the Teuton with his long shield had fled from you. You are not able to decorate the temple of the Thunderer with your spoils of war,

you are not allow to cry out in happy triumphs.  
Unlucky man, with what great valor have you made way for a master!

Lucan laments that Scaeva's bravery will go unrewarded; his actions, had they been directed toward a foreign enemy, could have merited a triumph.<sup>202</sup> However, we see that, with the transformation from hypothetically *felix* to *non...laetis* to truly *infelix*, that Scaeva's energy was misdirected and therefore to no avail other than making way for a *dominus*. Conte (1974, 80) sees a parallel with Sallust's *Histories* in the final epigrammatic statement: "And so the victorious army produces the greatest devotion to me, but they, through so many wounds, so many toils, have sought nothing but a tyrant." (*Itaque maxumam mihi fiduciam parit victor exercitus cui per tot volnera et labores nihil praeter tyrannum quaesitum est, Hist. 1.55*) The "tyrant" in question is Sulla, whose war against Marius for power, as others, such as Elaine Fantham (1992, 94-121), have noted, prefigures the clash of Caesar and Pompey in book 2 of the epic.<sup>203</sup> Here Lucan is undoubtedly making a more subtle reference to the parallel between Sulla and Caesar, as both will gain dominion through civil violence.<sup>204</sup>

What we have seen above is extreme loyalty from Caesar's men, but Lucan shows throughout the epic how misdirected their loyalty is. Sallust does something similar in the *Bellum Catilinae*. As I have noted before, although Catiline's men are cast as criminals, one virtue they have is loyalty in battle and willingness to fight bravely:

Sed confecto proelio, tum vero cerneres quanta audacia quantaque animi vis fuisset in exercitu Catilinae. Nam fere quem quisque vivos pugnando locum ceperat, eum amissa anima corpore tegebat. Pauci autem, quos medios cohors praetoria disiecerat, paulo divorsius, sed omnes tamen advorsis volneribus coniderant. (*Cat. 61.1-3*)

But when the battle was finished then you truly could tell how much daring and how

<sup>202</sup> Conte (1974, 79-80) discusses this section, Lucan's interpretation of events, and says much the same: Scaeva has acted "*fortiter* ma non *bene*."

<sup>203</sup> She also notes on various occasions in her commentary that Marius and Sulla are related to Caesar and Pompey and several events, such as Pompey's beheading, are foreshadowed in the narrative of the war between Marius and Sulla.

<sup>204</sup> This point is bears relevance to my discussion of Caesar and Catiline below, section 3.9.

great the force of spirit had been in Catiline's army. For, in almost every case, the spot each man had taken for fighting, that place he covered with his dead body. A few, however, whom the praetorian cohort had scattered in the middle, had fallen in places which were a little more spread out, yet all of them had fallen with their wounds in front.

As I discussed in the first chapter, Catiline's men battle bravely and die with wounds in front, showcasing their courage. However, the *virtus* they would normally attain from such courageous fighting is tarnished because Catiline's men fought against fellow Romans rather than a foreign threat. Furthermore, though Catiline tells them that they are fighting "for Rome, for freedom for our very lives," (*pro patria, pro libertate, pro vita, Cat. 58.11*) the original reason why most of the conspirators joined the plot was out of self-interest: the erasure of debts, proscriptions, offices, riches.<sup>205</sup> The conspirators in the *Bellum Catilinae* and Caesar's men in the *Pharsalia* reflect the condition of Rome at the end of the Republic; soldiers, promised great wages and booty, would have more loyalty to their general than to the state, while the general populace had greater concern for their own well-being than the well-being of the state.

### **Caesar's men and fear**

The relationship between Caesar and his soldiers is not made up of only lovers' laments and self-destructive devotion. As briefly mentioned earlier, Caesar's men also fear him. One of the best examples of their fear is when Caesar orders his men to chop down the sacred grove near Massilia. They are unsure what to do and their dilemma regarding whether or not to violate the sacred grove is based on the fear that their axes will bounce back onto their limbs (*si robora sacra ferirent, | in sua credebant redituras membra secures, 3.430-31*). However, Caesar soon convinces them to follow his order by being the first to drive an axe into one of the oaks. The men reluctantly obey:

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<sup>205</sup> Sallust notes various motivations throughout the first half of his monograph, but the greatest concentration occurs at *Cat. 21.2*, wherein Catiline explains the rewards awaiting the conspirators.

Tum paruit omnis  
 imperiis non sublato secreta pavore  
 turba, sed expensa superiorum et Caesaris ira. (3.437-39)

Then the throng obeyed his orders,  
 not because they felt safe now that their fear had been removed,  
 but because they weighed the wrath of the gods against the wrath of Caesar.

The soldiers' fear of Caesar—more specifically, of his anger—is likened to the fear of a god's wrath. In the previous chapter I illustrated several instances in the *Historiae* where Caesar excited fear similar to the fear and awe one would feel for a god. What we see here, however, is that the soldiers are torn between disobeying sacred law—their general flouts his disregard for the sanctity of the grove by crying out, “Believe that I have committed a crime against the gods,” (*Credite me fecisse nefas*, 3.437)—and disobeying Caesar. The true conundrum in this situation is that, as I described above, Caesar is likened to a god in the *Pharsalia*, making the soldier's dilemma not merely a choice between obeying the command of their gods or of their general, but choosing between obeying the command of their traditional gods or the new god, Caesar. In the end, they do as Laelius declared in book one and offend the gods before offending him.<sup>206</sup> Preferring to obey their general signifies not only the sway that fear of Caesar has over the soldiers but also that Rome is transitioning to a new age, where men will put more stock in their new gods (the deified emperors) than the traditional ones.<sup>207</sup> Although Velleius portrays Caesar as godlike, never in his *Historiae* does he depict the leader using his immense influence and power in order to commit misdeeds against the gods. Here, Lucan again shows not only that the soldiers fear the consequences of disobeying Caesar—which again is testimony to Caesar as a

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<sup>206</sup> Nix (2005, 106-11) offers this episode as an example to support her argument that Lucan associates Caesar as a quasi-divine force, and agrees with Sklenář's (2003, 131) observation that they pair their fear of the gods with their fear of Caesar because he places himself above the gods. In that same section Nix also offers a stimulating analysis of this metaphorical meeting of Caesar as a divine force/force of nature and the oaks that represent Pompey and the recreation of the *nefas* of civil war in Caesar's act of deforestation.

<sup>207</sup> Lucan calls the advent of these new gods (i.e., the deified emperors) revenge against the heavens for civil war (7.454-59). See also his address to Rome that Cato would be worthy of godhead (cited below, pg. 168).

fearsome figure—but it reinforces Laelius’ assertion that he will commit whatever crime Caesar orders, even if his right hand is unwilling. Moreover, in this scene Caesar delights in committing acts of *nefas*, whether he violates the gods by cutting down a sacred grove—which also fulfills his need for destruction—or violates the sacred bond between family members and fellow citizens by waging civil war. That the soldiers are afraid yet still obey Caesar illustrates their devotion to Caesar and his sheer power.

Matthew Leigh’s (1997) chapter on the Caesarian centurions in Lucan’s epic is entitled, “The Crazy Gang,” which, as my review of Lucan’s depiction of Caesar’s men has shown, more or less sums up their characterization. This section highlights more than the fact that Caesar’s men in the *Pharsalia* tend to display the same *furor* he does; I show that their loyalty to him is based on his own characterization of his men, though Lucan takes the loyalty shown in the *Bellum Civile* to a gory—if not nearly parodic—extreme. In many of these depictions of military valor gone awry in the *Pharsalia*, the poet laments the misguided attempt of Caesarians to try to display *virtus* by killing fellow Romans (or killing themselves). Similarly, Sallust illustrates the misguided bravery of Catiline’s men as he shows how well the men fought just before he reveals the tragic reality that nearly everyone on the battlefield was known—if not loved—by a Roman.

Caesar’s men also further underscore Lucan’s portrayal of their general as godlike through their reluctant, if not fearful, obedience to his commands. At Massilia his men chop down the sacred grove because they fear his wrath more than the gods, showing that *everyone*—Roman citizens and even Caesar’s soldiers fear him and his godlike *ira*. The widespread fear of this man is, as I mentioned earlier in the chapter,<sup>208</sup> is different from Caesar’s self-portrayal in the *Bellum Civile*; Caesar’s troops in the *Bellum Civile* are obedient, but their loyalty stems not

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<sup>208</sup> See section 3.5.

from fear of Caesar's wrath but from shared identification with his cause as theirs and from their respect for order and Caesar's authority.<sup>209</sup>

### 3.9 Caesarian Comparisons

The following sections discuss Lucan's portrayal of Caesar vis-à-vis other figures. Just as comparison has been a key component of other portrayal of Julius Caesar, so too is Lucan preoccupied with setting Caesar against other great men. Earlier in the chapter I addressed the *synkrisis* between Caesar and Pompey that appears at the beginning of the poem. Now I turn to how Caesar compares to two figures within the *Pharsalia*, Cato and Alexander. The final two subsections juxtapose Lucan's Caesar and Catiline (both Lucan's and Sallust's) and sets Lucan's Caesar beside Velleius' version of him.

#### Caesar vs. Cato in Lucan

Although he does not offer a direct comparison of the two, Lucan invites his audience to compare Caesar and Cato in his epic. Several scholars have taken up the invitation: Ahl (1976, 254-262), for instance, shows that, though the two men never meet, Lucan juxtaposes episodes wherein either Caesar or Cato is the leading figure to allow the audience to consider the men side-by-side. Of course, it is not a novel thing to compare Caesar and Cato; in the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust set them side-by-side through a set of opposing speeches and through a comparison highlighting the ways in which each man was a portrait of *virtus*.<sup>210</sup> Sallust describes Caesar as a man of action, work, and ambition; his *virtus* comes from his participation in the social and political life of Rome. By contrast, Sallust highlighted Cato's *constantia*, with a heavy emphasis on the *-stant-* part; Cato's qualities were indicative of the inactivity which came with his moral philosophy, and Cato himself was characterized more by the actions he abstained from than the activities he participated in. The historian's comparison of the two men also

<sup>209</sup> See Grillo (2008, 161-165) for an overview of Caesar's army-community in the *Bellum Civile*.

<sup>210</sup> Marti (1945, 361) also recalls Sallust in discussing Cato in Lucan.

underscores the theme of being vs. appearance, for Cato preferred to *be* good rather than *seem* good. Sallust himself never explicitly judges one as better than the other; nevertheless scholarly opinion generally tends toward arguing that Cato comes out on top in the *synkrisis*.<sup>211</sup>

The problem in the *Bellum Catilinae*, however, is that we never see Cato *be* good; in fact, we never see Cato (or Caesar, for that matter) do anything after his speech. Lucan solves this problem. When we first see Cato in book 2, he is mulling over whether to join the war. Lucan shows him as the textbook Roman citizen:

Hi mores, haec duri inmotata Catonis  
secta fuit, servare modum finemque tenere  
naturamque sequi patriaeque inpendere vitam  
nec sibi sed toti genitum se credere mundo.  
huic epulae vicisse famem, magnique penates  
summovisse hiemem tecto, pretiosaque vestis  
hirtam membra super Romani more Quiritis  
induxisse togam, Venerisque hic unicus usus,  
progenies; urbi pater est urbique maritus,  
iustitiae cultor, rigidi servator honesti,  
in commune bonus; nullosque Catonis in actus  
subrepsit partemque tulit sibi nata voluptas. (2.380-91)

This was the character, this was the fast rule of hard Cato,  
to preserve moderation and hold to the limit,  
to follow nature, and to value the life of his fatherland,  
nor did he believe that he was born for his benefit but for  
the benefit of the whole world. To him a feast was to have  
conquered hunger; a great home was to keep off the winter with a roof;  
fancy clothing was the rough toga he put over his limbs in the manner  
of the Roman citizen; the sole purpose of love was this: offspring. He  
is father and husband to the city, the worshipper of justice, the  
keeper of rigid virtue, good to the community; pleasure born for its  
own sake crept in and bore a part in none of Cato's actions.

Much of the above description of Cato displays the same mustiness, the same strict adherence to philosophy Sallust shows us. However, Lucan's Cato is more than the inert philosopher; he challenges Caesar's constant action with his own exhibition of leadership in book 9. With

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<sup>211</sup> Duxbury (1988, 293) offers a concise overview of the range of scholarly opinion regarding whether Sallust favored Caesar or Cato.

Pompey dead and his spirit now in Cato (9.15-18), our Stoic hero takes the Pompeian troops on a journey through a snake-infested desert. The march is meant to be reminiscent of Alexander the Great's crossing; in that episode Lucan displays in Cato many of the praiseworthy traits of the Macedonian general.<sup>212</sup> I would like to pause on one scene in particular that encapsulates the poet's indirect comparison of Cato and Caesar. After refusing to consult the oracle of Jupiter Ammon, Lucan pauses to praise the Stoic leader:

Ecce parens verus patriae, dignissimus aris,  
 Roma, tuis, per quem numquam iurare pudebit,  
 et quem, si steteris umquam cervice soluta,  
 nunc, olim, factura deum es. (9.601-4)

Rome, behold, the true father of the country,  
 most worthy of your altars, by whom it will never  
 be shameful to swear and whom, if ever you stand  
 with your neck loosened from its bonds, now, or  
 at some time, you will make him a god.

This praise for Cato, particularly the comment that Rome, when free, would make him a god, is a nod to Lucan's initial mention of him as the one who favored the losing side in the war, whereas the gods favored Caesar. By putting the gods in favor of Caesar and Cato in favor of Pompey, Lucan was already suggesting a connection between Cato and divinity. Here, Lucan bestows on Cato all of the honors an emperor receives; the title *parens patriae* and deification with all of the trappings, such as altars, being the name by which others swear oaths. Lucan declares that such honors should be given to one who is morally worthy of them rather than the one who has won the war. Caesar, being the only other divine force walking around in this civil war, as I discussed above,<sup>213</sup> is the figure to whom Cato is being compared. By bestowing so many

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<sup>212</sup> Ahl (1976, 275) discusses the parallels in Cato's crossing of the desert with the story of Alexander, showing that Lucan gives Cato favorable comparisons. Johnson (1987, 54-55) sees the entire journey as a lampoon on Alexander's journey and as a criticism of Cato's moral philosophy in action, which is part of his larger contention that Cato is a caricature of a true Stoic in the first place. Thus, any Catonian pretensions to embody the Stoic *sapiens* will likewise result in ridiculousness.

<sup>213</sup> For Lucan's portrayal of Caesar's divine nature, see above, section 3.3.

honors on Cato, one is invited to insinuate that Caesar is unworthy both of his godhead and to lead Rome.

By applying Lucan's praise of Cato to the poet's current age, one can take this analysis a little bit farther. Lucan certainly means to have his reader infer that Julius Caesar is not worthy of the honors he received, but a closer reading also reveals that Lucan could also be including another Caesar in his implicit designation of unworthiness, namely Nero. Though Julius Caesar may be the only other somewhat divine character with an active role in this war, Lucan clearly outlines that the teleological end point for the war is Nero and, eventually, his deification, at which point the emperor would receive the same honors outlined above. By praising Cato and, by implication, criticizing the honors Caesar received, Lucan is also criticizing Nero, whose apotheosis the poet has already forecast at the beginning of the poem.

Just as Sallust's Cato matched Caesar on the battlefield of rhetorical debate in 63 BCE, so too does Lucan's Cato get a chance to match Caesar on the "battlefield" of military leadership. The poet's praise of Cato brings up a point that is perhaps obvious but should be pointed out, anyway: in a context of civil strife, particularly when the focus is on the welfare of the state, one of Cato's key roles is to contend against Caesar on both the literal and ideological battlefield. Authors of the Imperial period who do not wish to challenge imperial ideology, such as Velleius Paterculus, tend to keep distance between the two men in order to avoid the dicey reality that Cato embodied not only moral rectitude but also staunch republicanism. In his comparison of Cato and Caesar, Lucan has revived Sallust's *synkrisis*, but he has gone the extra mile to put Cato unambiguously on top. Lucan's Caesar is indeed mighty and history dictates that he will defeat Cato, but when it comes to the poet's judgement of who is the more worthy hero, Cato overcomes Caesar.

### Caesar and Alexander the Great

Lucan likens his Caesar to foreign enemies several times throughout the narrative.<sup>214</sup> In this section, I am going to focus on the connection Lucan makes between Caesar and Alexander the Great, for this connection appears in previous depictions of Caesar. Links between the two men are abound in the *Pharsalia*,<sup>215</sup> but our poet is not the first to liken Caesar to Alexander.<sup>216</sup> As we saw in the previous chapter, Velleius was rather fixated on setting the general next to Alexander. In Caesar's initial character sketch, the historian likens his military prowess to Alexander (Vell. 2.41.1-2).<sup>217</sup> Alexander the Great was also used as a reference when Velleius praised Caesar's exploits in Gaul (Vell. 2.46.1). His travels to conquer new parts of the world and his amazing leadership, which will result in his ascension to a position of extreme power, allude to the man who was an *exemplum* for skilled generalship and pioneering exploits. When the historian compares these two figures, he does so in favor of Caesar. Moreover, any negative points in the character of Alexander are mentioned only as a foil to Caesar's stellar character.

When Lucan associates Caesar with Alexander, the comparison is far less favorable for both men. The poet portrays Alexander as a tyrant, a force which destroyed freedom. He laments the worship of Alexander—perhaps also anticipating similar worship of Caesar—and he focuses on their shared vices. In particular, Lucan uses the Macedonian general to comment on his preferred fate for men who deprive others of *libertas*. Caesar, like Alexander, is prey to his passions: Alexander's temper was well known,<sup>218</sup> and, by the time Caesar arrives in Alexandria,

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<sup>214</sup> He likens Caesar to Hannibal early and often; see Roche (2009, 128) for a list of references. When Caesar crosses the Rubicon, he is likened to the weapons of Rome's foreign foes, the Baleaeric sling and the Parthian bow and arrow (see the section 3.4 for the passage). For discussions of Caesar and Hannibal in Lucan, see, e.g. Ahl (1976, 107-1112), Hunink (1992, 54-55, with citations).

<sup>215</sup> e.g. Ahl (1976, 222-30), Green (1978) for a more general discussion of Caesar and Alexander, Marti (1945, 362-363), and Radicke (2004, 123n194) for copious citations of other erudite discussions on Alexander in the epic.

<sup>216</sup> Nor is he the last to compare Caesar and Alexander; most notably, Plutarch's biography of Caesar was meant to be paired with his biography of Alexander the Great.

<sup>217</sup> See above, pg. 66ff. for my discussion.

<sup>218</sup> One can use Velleius' description of Alexander at 2.41.1-2 as an example.

he has been repeatedly characterized as a man of *ira* and *furor*. As highlighted in the *Historiae*, both men were comparable as great leaders, but Lucan passes over a favorable comparison, preferring to assign the actions which made Alexander famous as a leader to Cato in book 9.<sup>219</sup> When it is Caesar's turn to be likened to Alexander in book 10, Lucan emphasizes the Macedonian's flaws, making him a target for the narrator's vitriol.

Part of the connection between Caesar and Alexander in the epic is their enjoyment of *Fortuna's* gifts. Like Caesar's death, foretold in book 5, Alexander's death is described as vengeance for his misdeeds:

Illic Pellaei proles vaesana Philippi,  
felix praedo, iacet, terrarum vindice fato  
raptus. (10.20-22)

There the mad offspring of Pellaeian Phillip,  
the lucky bandit, lies, having been snatched by  
a death which avenged the world.

Compare that passage to what Lucan says when he foretells Caesar's death:

Vindicis an gladii facinus poenasque furorum  
regnaque ad ultores iterum redeuntia Brutos,  
ut peragat Fortuna, taces? (5.206-08)

Or do you remain silent that Fortune will carry out the deed  
of the avenging sword, inflict punishment madness and bring an end to the  
kingship which returns again to meet avenging Brutuses?

The theme of vengeance is associated with the death of each man. Strikingly, *Fortuna*, the force which aids each man's rise to power, also plays a part in each man's demise; the connection between *Fortuna* and death is explicit in the case of Caesar's assassination, but Alexander, who is referred to as *felix*, i.e., lucky, runs out of luck when he is taken by a death which avenges the world he conquered.

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<sup>219</sup> See Ahl (1976, 222-30) for a discussion of Cato and Alexander.

After death, however, these two figures enjoy an afterlife which, according to Lucan, is too good for them. Here I am referring to the posthumous worship of both Caesar and Alexander. Lucan expresses displeasure at the worship of Alexander:

Sacratis totum spargenda per orbem  
 membra viri posuere adytis; Fortuna pepercit  
 manibus, et regni duravit ad ultima fatum.  
 Nam sibi libertas umquam si redderet orbem  
 ludibrio servatus erat, non utile mundo  
 editus exemplum, terras tot posse sub uno  
 esse viro. Macetum fines latebrasque suorum  
 deseruit victasque patri despexit Athenas,  
 perque Asiae populos fatis urgentibus actus  
 humana cum strage ruit gladiumque per omnis  
 exegit gentes, ignotos miscuit amnes  
 Persarum Euphraten, Indorum sanguine Gangen,  
 terrarum fatale malum fulmenque quod omnis  
 percuteret pariter populos et sidus iniquum  
 gentibus. (10.22-36)

The man's limbs, which should have been scattered through the whole world, have been placed in a sacrosanct tomb; Fortune spares his hands and his fate lasted to the end of his reign. For if freedom would ever restore the world to itself, he would be preserved as a laughing-stock, he would be displayed as a model which does the world no service, that so many lands are able to be under one man. He left the boundaries and hiding places of his Macedonians and he looked down on Athens, conquered by his father, and driven through the nations of Asia by pressing Fates he rushed with human destruction and he drove the sword through all peoples, he mixed with blood streams until then unknown: the Euphrates of the Persians, the Ganges of the Indian, a fated evil to lands and a lightning bolt which strikes all people equally and a star hostile to civilizations.

Lucan wishes that Alexander's limbs had been scattered throughout the earth rather than carefully maintained in a sacred tomb. He goes on to explain that Alexander's honors are a result of his domination of freedom (*libertas*), and he recounts the blood and gore Alexander shed in his time as general and the various nations he put down. The passage, though focused on Alexander, also creates a lens through which one is invited to examine Caesar. For instance, both men are characterized through their travels to the far reaches of the planet in order to cause bloodshed. Alexander mixes blood into the rivers of the various reaches of the earth and extends

his violence throughout the world (*ignotos miscuit amnes | Persarum Euphraten, Indorum sanguine Gangen; humana cum strage ruit gladiumque per omnis | exegit gentes*, cited above).

While Caesar has been zipping around the Roman empire during the civil war, from its westernmost reaches at Ilerda and going east all the way to Thessaly. At these points his presence has brought bloodshed, culminating with the bloody topography of Pharsalus, post-battle:

[Caesar] cernit propulsa cruore  
flumina et excelsos cumulis aequantia colles  
corpora. (7.789-91)

[Caesar] looks upon the rivers flowing with blood  
and the corpses equaling the lofty hills in respect  
to their peaks.<sup>220</sup>

Caesar's landscape of bodies, blood, and gore at Pharsalus vividly recall Lucan's later description of Alexander mixing blood in the Persian Euphrates and the Indian Ganges. Both men leave a bloody trail behind them as they journey all over the world as they endeavor to deprive people of *libertas*.

In addition to causing worldwide bloodshed, Lucan creates echoes of Caesar's divine power in his description of Alexander. He refers to Alexander's *Fortuna* (*Fortuna pepercit | manibus, et regni duravit ad ultima fatum*), who is also Caesar's divine companion in the *Pharsalia*. Alexander is also described as a "fatal bane of the world and lightning bolt which strikes all people equally." (*terrarum fatale malum fulmenque quod omnis | percuteret pariter populos*) The use of *fulmen* would immediately remind Lucan's audience of Caesar, who has been associated with lightning since the poem's opening simile; like Caesar's lightning bolt, Alexander causes destruction far and wide, almost indiscriminately. Finally, the Macedonian

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<sup>220</sup> The depiction of Caesar looking down at the bloodshed that he created also recalls Sulla observing the piles of bodies and blood that resulted from the civil war and proscriptions. See Leigh (1997, 289-90) for the Sulla-Caesar connection and the spectacle of bloodshed.

general is also “a star hostile to nations.” (*sidus iniquum| gentibus*) Although Lucan does not associate Caesar with a *sidus*, he does not have to, for Romans would know about the *sidus* from the legend behind Julius Caesar’s deification and the subsequent iconography of Divus Julius, who was depicted—at least on coinage—with a star framing his head.<sup>221</sup> With that association already in mind, along with prior mentions of *Fortuna* and the *fulmen*, a Roman reader would readily associate Alexander with Caesar.<sup>222</sup> Thus, when Lucan criticizes the fact that, in return for ruining nations and destroying *libertas*, Alexander is worshipped and his remains honored, one is supposed to understand that the criticism also extends to Caesar and the subsequent Julio-Claudian emperors, who, in return for shedding the blood of nations and of fellow Romans, could also attain the status of a god.<sup>223</sup>

The connection between Alexander and Caesar in the *Pharsalia* is rather different from what we find in the *Historiae*. Although both Lucan and Velleius acknowledge that Alexander and Caesar are extraordinary men, Lucan questions whether the praise—nay, worship—each man receives is warranted. Velleius, on the other hand, uses Alexander the Great not only to highlight Caesar’s remarkable nature, but also to perpetuate the image of the Roman general as a man who is in control of his passions and appetites, unlike the Eastern Alexander. Lucan does not go into much detail regarding similarities in temperament between Alexander and Caesar, but perhaps he does not feel the need; his initial description of Alexander as *vaesana* (“frenzied”), combined with repetitive descriptions of blood and gore do enough to remind one that Caesar,

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<sup>221</sup> See Zanker (1988, 35-6) for a discussion of the proliferation of the *sidus Iulium* in Augustan Rome. It would be safe to say that the association of Julius Caesar (or Divus Julius) and the *sidus* would still be recognized in Neronian Rome.

<sup>222</sup> Ahl (1976, 222) makes the keen observation that at no point does Lucan ever name Alexander, yet he is immediately recognizable.

<sup>223</sup> S. Nix (2005) also postulates that Lucan’s combination of disparaging comments about Caesar and yet his insistent and constant characterization of Caesar as a quasi-divine force reflects Lucan’s disapproval of the divine worship of emperors, but in her dissertation she neglects to discuss this passage.

too, is a frenzied hero, often associated with *furor*, *ira*, and *spes* and responsible for a topography of corpses and gore all his own.

### **The Catiline in Caesar**<sup>224</sup>

As my Sallust chapter illustrated, Caesar and Catiline share a connection, and the characteristics of one may appear in the other. Parallels in their careers make it easy to see shades of one in the other: both were noble-born men of great promise, extraordinary energy, and ambition; both were at some point prevented from standing for the consulship by members of the Senate; both set armies against the state in order to advance their aims. In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust not only makes allusive connections between the men as he describes them in the monograph, he also shapes Catiline with some elements from Caesar's self-presentation from the *Bellum Civile*.<sup>225</sup>

In the *Pharsalia*, it is Catiline's turn to put a bit of himself into Caesar. Now that Caesar's civil war rather a Caesar-like "civil war" is being depicted, we no longer have a story of how Catiline is a precursor to Caesar, but how Caesar is Catiline's inheritor. Lucan first mentions Catiline in Pompey's speech to his men in book 2:

"Nec magis hoc bellum est, quam quom Catilina paravit  
arsuras in tecta faces sociusque furoris  
Lentulus exertique manus vaesana Cethegi." (2.541-43)

"Nor is this any more a war than when Catiline prepared  
burning torches against our homes along with Lentulus, his  
buddy in madness and the frenzied hand of watchful Cethegus."

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<sup>224</sup> Narducci (2002, 207-217) also draws comparisons between Lucan's Caesar and Sallust's Catiline (and Livy's Hannibal) with an eye toward how the men conform to a "modello del 'sovversivo'." The connections are certainly not unfounded; Clauss (1997) has shown that Livy's depiction of Hannibal contains several Catilinarian elements, and, though my study does not extend to thorough consider the connection between Lucan's Caesar and Hannibal, I am convinced that the poet is keenly aware of the influence of Catiline on Livy's depiction of the Carthaginian general and that the connection between Lucan's Caesar and Hannibal is not merely coincidental.

<sup>225</sup> See section 1.2 for these links between Caesar and Catiline.

Pompey likens Caesar's aggression to Catiline's conspiracy. He mitigates the threat his former ally presents by saying that what he and his men face is no worse than the Catilinarian conspiracy. Magnus' comparison of Caesar's march on the state to Catiline's aggression is intriguing for several reasons. First, because, as I had mentioned in my chapter on Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, Caesar and Catiline share an opponent in Pompey's lieutenant, Petreius. Second, Sallust mentions at several points (*Cat.* 16.4, 39.1) that Pompey was not even in Rome during the Catilinarian conspiracy, though he was salivating over the opportunity to save Rome from Catiline (*Cat.* 17.7); now Pompey is in a position to put down this conspiracy-like aggression, and Lucan's audience can see how he fares. Finally, this reference to the Catilinarian conspiracy may be playing on Sallust's depiction of Catiline's conspiracy as a miniature civil war by calling Caesar's war a puffed-up conspiracy. However, the "conspiracy" comment will come back to haunt Pompey in book 7, when Cicero, the man whom Lucan credits for putting down the Catilinarian conspiracy, has to urge Pompey to action in order to put an end to a "conspiracy" that has gotten out of hand and has indeed become a war.

Lucan also reminds his audience of the connection between Catiline and Caesar in book 6, as the corpse raised by Erichtho describes the uproar in the underworld:

Maior Carthaginis hostis  
 non servituri maeret Cato fata nepotis:  
 solum te, consul depulsis prime tyrannis  
 Brute, pias inter gaudentem vidimus umbras.  
 Abruptis Catilina minax fractisque catenis  
 exultat Mariique truces nudique Cethegi. (6.789-94)

Cato the Elder, Carthage's enemy, mourns the fate of his descendant, who refuses to become a slave: Only you, Brutus, first consul after the tyrants had been driven out, do we see rejoicing among the shades who have *pietas*. Catiline, the menace, his chains already broken and burst apart, gleefully dances around, as do fierce Marius and Cethegus

of the naked arm.

Catiline has burst his chains and is rejoicing at Caesar's civil war, while all of the good ghosts (*pias umbras*)—except for Brutus—weep and moan at the condition of the state. Catiline's joy creates another link between him and Caesar. In many ways, Caesar's war is a revival of what Catiline had tried to accomplish, though, by this point in the narrative, one doubts whether Pompey would claim that Caesar is merely leading a minor conspiracy; it is, indeed, a war, with the climactic battle just around the corner. With this in mind, I turn to the next mention of Catiline in the *Pharsalia*, which, although brief, is significant on several levels.

Lucan mentions again when he introduces Cicero:

Cunctorum voces Romani maximus auctor  
Tullius eloquii, cuius sub iure togaque  
pacificas saevus tremuit Catilina secures  
pertulit iratus bellis... (7.62-65)

The greatest source of Roman speech,  
under whose law and toga fierce Catiline  
trembled at peace-making axes, angry  
because of the war, brought forth the voices of all...

This reference to Catiline, building on the previous references, weaves a web of cyclical civil war by linking not only Catiline and Caesar but also Cicero and Pompey. For instance, the brutal (*saevus*) Catiline “trembled at peace-making axes.” (*pacificas ...tremuit Catilina secures*) Just as Caesar is never able to endure peace (2.650), neither is Catiline. The antagonistic relationship between Cicero and Catiline—that Cicero was able to stop Catiline without a war of this magnitude—reflects what Pompey had expected to happen when he said that Caesar's “war” was no more a war than the Catilinarian conspiracy had been a war. However, the appearance of Cicero—despite the fact that everyone knew he was not present at the battle—also reminds the reader of Pompey's boast that what he was about to face was merely another Catiline, not to mention his failure to defeat this new “Catiline”. The multiple references to Catiline, along with

the added flourish of Cicero's appearance at Pharsalus, suggests that Pompey is Cicero's heir, just as Caesar is Catiline's. However, in this *bellum Catilinae*, the new Catiline (Caesar) will defeat the new Cicero (Pompey), and Rome will finally experience the *regnum* the original Catiline sought over a decade ago.

As Catiline's inheritor, Lucan's Caesar possesses traits which Catiline was also known—or perhaps rumored—to possess. To review, Sallust initially describes Catiline in the following way:

L. Catilina, nobili genere natus, fuit magna vi et animi et corporis, sed ingenio malo pravoque. Huic ab adulescentia bella intestina caedes rapinae discordia civilis grata fuere, ibique iuventutem suam exercuit. Corpus patiens inediae algoris vigiliae supra quam cuiquam credibile est. Animus audax subdolos varius, cuius rei lubet simulator ac dissimulator, alieni appetens sui profusus, ardens in cupiditatibus; satis eloquentiae, sapientiae parum. Vastus animus inmoderata incredibilia nimis alta semper cupiebat. Hunc post dominationem L. Sullae lubido maxuma invaserat rei publicae capiundae, neque id quibus modis adsequeretur, dum sibi regnum pararet, quicquam pensi habebat. Agitabatur magis magisque in dies animus ferox inopia rei familiaris et conscientia scelerum, quae utraque iis artibus auxerat quas supra memoravi. (*Cat.* 5.1-8)

Lucius Catiline, born into a noble class, had great force of mind and body, but his nature was evil and depraved. From a young age internal wars, murder, pillaging, and civil discord were pleasing, and there he employed his youth. His body was enduring of hunger, cold, and a lack of sleep to a degree beyond belief. His mind was daring, tricky, and shifty, it was pleasing for him to be a pretender or concealer in whatever matter; he was covetous of others' possessions, profligate with his own, and burning in his desires; he was pretty eloquent, but had too little wisdom. His vast mind always desired the immoderate, the unbelievable, whatever was too high for him. After the rule of Lucius Sulla the greatest desire for taking over the republic assaulted him, and he valued little by what means he pursued it, so long as he acquired kingship for himself. His violent mind was agitated more and more every day by the poverty of his possessions and the awareness of his crimes, both of which he had increased by the arts I recalled above.

Catiline is powerful (*magna vi et animi et corporis*) but evil (*ingenio malo pravoque*). He loves civil wars, violence, rapacity. He can withstand extreme conditions, thus showing that he has the physical heartiness of the consummate soldier. Because his disposition is daring and wily, greedy, and burning with desire (*ardens in cupiditatibus*), however, he constantly strives for anything and everything beyond his reach (*nimis alta*). After the rule of Sulla, Catiline develops

the greatest desire for taking over the state (*maxuma lubido...rei publicae capiundae*). Catiline, in essence, burns for *regnum*, or *dominatio*, similar what Sulla enjoyed. His mind is plagued not only with desires but also with his own shortcomings—his poverty and the crimes he committed as a youth.

Lucan's characterization of Caesar reflects many of these qualities. Although the poet does not directly describe Caesar as having physical heartiness, he gives that sense throughout, especially in the lightning simile. One example which illustrates a somewhat Catilinarian restlessness and energy comes in the scene wherein Caesar sneaks off in the middle of the night to sail back to Brundisium, Lucan highlights the contrast between his and his men's need for sleep:

Solverat armorum fessas nox languida curas,  
parva quies miseris, in quorum pectora somno  
dat vires Fortuna minor; iam castra silebant,  
tertia iam vigiles commoverat hora secundos:  
Caesar sollicito per vasta silentia gressu  
vix famulis audenda parat, cunctisque relictis  
sola placet Fortuna comes. (5.504-510)

Weary night had loosened the tired cares of war,  
a small rest for the wretched, into whose breast a  
smaller fortune gives the strength of sleep; now the  
camp is silent, already the third hour had roused the  
second watch: Caesar prepared things scarcely dared  
by slaves with a careful step through the wide silence,  
Fortune alone was pleasing as a companion when everyone  
had been left behind.

While his men sleep, Caesar is awake and active. Lucan attributes the men's sleepiness and Caesar's wakefulness to a difference in Fortune: the soldiers' destiny is smaller than Caesar's, therefore they are allowed sleep. Catiline is likewise wakeful, restless, and always at work in he

*Bellum Catilinae:*

Interea Romae multa simul moliri: consulibus insidias tendere, parare incendia,  
opportuna loca armatis hominibus obsidere; ipse cum telo esse, item alios iubere, hortari

uti semper intenti paratique essent; dies noctisque festinare vigilare, neque insomniis neque labore fatigari. (*Cat.* 27.2)

Meanwhile at Rome Catiline undertook many things: he extended his plots to the consuls, he prepared fires, he beset opportune places with armed men, he himself was always with a weapon and he ordered others to do the same, urging that they always be attentive and prepared; day and night he hurried, staying awake, not tired from the work or the lack of sleep.

Catiline, like Caesar, is in constant motion. He toils relentlessly and he hurries (*festinare*) at all times. Contrast his activity with that of his contemporaries, whom Sallust describes as “sleeping before there is desire for sleep.” (*dormire prius quam somni cupido esset, Cat.* 13.3) This wakefulness, which nearly reflects nervous energy, seems to be characteristic of extraordinary men, regardless of whether they are morally good or corrupt.

Catiline is not the only one who is fast and energetic; his co-conspirators also value speed. Sallust’s description of Cethegus includes, “He thought that the greatest good was in speed.” (*Maximum bonum in celeritate putabat, Cat.* 43.4) When Sallust introduces Cethegus, Catiline has left Rome and has trusted Cethegus (among others) to continue moving the plot forward in the city. The similarities in nature are likely intentional; only a homogenous group of Catiline-like men would come together to overthrow the republic; it is their divergent and self desire which are responsible, at least in part, for bringing about the plot’s failure. The speed in Catiline and his men—like Caesar’s speed in the epic—is directed toward ruining the state, making it almost evil speed. Moreover, both men are essentially propelled by their passions, which, as Caesar’s *Bellum Civile* has shown, further indicates how dangerous their rapidity is. Recall that, in most cases, men propelled by an outside force fail in their endeavors, which keeps the republic safe. Caesar, however, prove to be an exception to his own rule.

The need to be active is likewise associated with Catiline and Caesar. In the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust says the following about Catiline:

Scilicet ne per otium torpescerent manus aut animus, gratuito potius malus atque crudelis erat. (*Cat.* 16.3)

Indeed, he preferred to be evil and cruel without cause lest his hands and his mind become lazy through leisure.

Compare that to Lucan's comment about Caesar: "He believed that nothing was done when something was left to be done." (*Nil actum credens, cum quid superesset agendum*, 2.657) Both men always put their boundless energy to use. Catiline prefers to do evil rather than do nothing, and Caesar, who sees nothing as accomplished if he still has something to do, insists on continuing at all costs a war that is nothing less than *nefas*. The energies of both men focus on bad deeds—namely, destruction of the republic and attaining *regnum*.

Kingship (*regnum*) is indeed the primary desire of both Sallust's Catiline and Lucan's Caesar. Lucan highlights Caesar's aims with fire imagery and a hint at Caesar's slavery to his passions just before the battle at Pharsalus: Caesar is "burning with a desire for kingship" (*flagrans cupidine regni*, 7.504) as he sees Pompey's army and realizes that the culmination of everything he has been working for lies in the contest at Pharsalus. One can see the same line of thinking in Sallust's character sketch for Catiline. As shown above, Catiline burns with desires (*ardens in cupiditatibus*), but his greatest desire is for *regnum*, for which he would do anything (*dum sibi regnum pararet, quicquam pensi habebat*, cited above, pg.178).

But one might be able to trace this desire for kingship even farther back. In both Lucan and Sallust, each protagonist's desire for *regnum* leads back to Sulla. Sallust makes it clear that Catiline's desire to rule Rome began after Sulla's rule. Similarly, Lucan uses the majority of book 2 to recount the showdown between Marius and Sulla and use it as a foil to demonstrate that the war between Caesar and Pompey is, in a sense, a continuation and an amplification of that war. The old veteran who narrates the horrors of the civil war between Marius and Sulla caps his narrative by commenting on the ambitions of the two generals of the current civil war:

“Neither one would instigate civil wars if he were content with what contented Sulla.” (*Neuter civilia bella moveret | contentus quo Sulla fuit*, 2.231-32) In addition, as several scholars have pointed out, Caesar echoes some of Sulla’s behaviors outlined in book 2.<sup>226</sup> This connection to Sulla—the grandfather of civil war, in a sense—creates a civil war lineage, making Catiline and Caesar related by blood(shed) .

Another trait shared by Catiline and Caesar is that they are driven by *spes* and *ira*.

Catiline says the following in his first speech to his co-conspirators:

Ni virtus fidesque vostra spectata mihi forent, nequiquam opportuna res cecidisset; spes magna, dominatio in manibus frustra fuissent, neque ego per ignaviam aut vana ingenia incerta pro certis captarem.

...

Ceterum mihi in dies magis animus adcenditur, quom considero quae condicio vitae futura sit, nisi nosmet ipsi vindicamus in libertatem. (*Cat.* 20.2,6)

If your valor and loyal had not be seen by me, for nothing would this opportune moment have fallen into our laps; a great hope, namely mastery, would have been in our hands in vain, and I would try grasp uncertain things as if they were certain through cowardice or empty talent. ...However, for me at least, my mind is ever the more enflamed every day, when I consider what the terms of life will be, unless we assert our claim to freedom.

The passages above exemplify the two major emotions Catiline expresses: first he expresses hope at being able to undertake his plans. Second, he says his “spirit is enflamed,” another way to show that his mind is somehow affected by some passion or emotion. In this instance Catiline is kindled by anger at the state of the republic and Catiline’s role (or lack thereof) in governing it. The second passage is especially remarkable because, as Catiline expresses his anger, he borrows a well-worn slogan Caesar had used in his commentaries: *vindicare in libertatem*.

Lucan was quite familiar with Caesar’s major image points and slogans, as the study up through now has shown, and he is rather preoccupied with *libertas* in his epic.<sup>227</sup> The *Pharsalia*,

<sup>226</sup> e.g., Leigh (1997, 292-304) for a discussion of both Sulla and Caesar as spectators of civil bloodshed.

<sup>227</sup> Both Lucan and Seneca tend to talk about the transition from Republic to Principate in terms of the loss of *libertas*. For Seneca, see Griffin (1976, 183ff.).

however, does not offer Caesar the chance to present himself as standing for liberty, nor does it show any hint that Catiline had ever presented himself as fighting on behalf of the people; instead, he connects the two men through their anger and their desire to destroy liberty in the name of sovereignty. Furthermore, their anger is displayed through fire imagery, which links their anger to each man's destructive tendencies.<sup>228</sup> Recall from the introductory character sketch in Lucan that Caesar brings his hand where his passions call (*quo spes quoque ira vocasset, | ferre manum*) and the lightning simile, in which the thunder bolt gathers up its fires (*ignes*) after casting destruction far and wide.<sup>229</sup> Much like Catiline, *ira* drives Caesar's actions, and this anger infect each man with *furor*—a sense of mad frenzy. Although *furor* is applied to Caesar in Lucan more often than it is to Catiline, Catiline too can be characterized with *furor*.<sup>230</sup> Moreover, Catiline's *furor* in the *Bellum Catilinae* similarly promises destruction through fire imagery: "I will extinguish my fire with ruin." (*Incendium meum ruina restinguam, Cat. 31.9*)

Catiline also claims that he is driven headlong (*praeceps, Cat. 31.9*) by his enemies. *Praeceptus* is often used of Lucan's Caesar—he is, after all, "headlong into everything"—though instead of being driven by his *inimici*, Caesar is driven headlong by his passions in the *Pharsalia*. Earlier in the work Sallust describes Catiline as being driven by his passions, too, but Catiline casts the blame on others. This passage, as I had suggested in the first chapter, seems to be taken in part from Caesar's *Bellum Civile*; he frames the conflict of the civil war as beginning with his *inimici* blocking his attempt at office *in absentia* and driving him to defend himself.<sup>231</sup> Lucan,

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<sup>228</sup> That said, it would not be far-fetched to think that Lucan's connection of Caesar, *ira*, fire, and destruction was influenced by his uncle Seneca's *De Ira*. Lucan's Caesar embodies the anti-Stoic. Because he is constantly being pulled by emotions, especially anger, Lucan's Caesar acts much like the angry man Seneca describes in *De Ira*, an irony compounded by Seneca's praise of Caesar's equanimity in the same treatise.

<sup>229</sup> Nix (2005, 13) makes the point early on that fire and lightning are connected not only to each other but also to Caesar.

<sup>230</sup> See above, chapter 1.2 for evidence and a discussion of Catiline's fury.

<sup>231</sup> See above, chapter 1.2 for my discussion of the parallels between Catiline's alleged reasons for fighting and those found in the *Bellum Civile*.

whose primary goal is to give his Caesar no excuses for the civil war, does not let Caesar play the blame game; instead, his Caesar embraces, even delights in inciting and continuing civil war. *Inimici* do not have to drive him to escalate the war, for he is propelled by his own *ira*. In the *Pharsalia*, Caesar does not blame his *inimici* for the continuation of the war, nor should we expect to; he not only embodies the negative traits of Catiline—the delight in ruin and bloodshed, the desire for kingship, being ever motivated by hope and anger—he embraces those qualities. In that sense, he outdoes Catiline by parading his desire to destroy the republic.

In addition to being driven by anger and frenzy, both men command a loyal of followers who fight and die bravely for their cause. In both Sallust's monograph and Lucan's epic we find scenes of the men's bravery. In his final observations on the climactic battle (see above, pg. 53 for the passage), Sallust credits Catiline's men with *audacia* and *vis animi*, which is the closest he comes to saying that the men displayed *virtus*.<sup>232</sup> Like the ideal Roman soldier, Catiline's men stand their ground and fight to the death, each one dying with wounds in front—signifying that they had faced the enemy head-on and had not tried to flee. Lucan gives a similar description at the beginning of the Scaeva episode when Pompey surprises the Caesarian troops:

Tot simul e campis Latiae fulsere volucres,  
tot cecinere tubae. Nequid victoria ferro  
deberet, pavor attonitos confecerat hostes.  
Quod solum valuit virtus, iacuere perempti  
debuerant quo stare loco. Qui volnera ferrent  
iam derant, et nimbus agens tot tela peribat. (6.129-134)

At the same time so many Latin eagles glittered from the fields,  
so many horns sounded. That victory would not owe anything to the sword,  
fright had finished off the thunderstruck enemy.  
The only thing which was useful was valor (*virtus*), they laid dead at the  
place where they had been assigned to stand. Now they lacked men

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<sup>232</sup> As I have suggested before, Sallust refrains from associating *virtus* with Catiline or his men, no matter how brave their actions might be. The mere fact that those actions occur in the context of attacking the republic disqualifies them from *virtus*.

who could bear wounds, and the storm driving so many javelins died out.

In this scene, wherein Rome's (i.e., Pompey's) army surprises and starts to overtake Caesar's men, Caesar's troops stand their ground. Similarly, Sallust's account of the battle between Catiline's army and the Praetorian cohort, Caesar's men stand their ground against Pompey's army (*iacuere perempti | debuerant quo stare loco*) and those who do not flee are mowed down to a man (*qui volnera ferrent, | iam derant*). As I suggested in the first chapter, Sallust's description of the Catilinarians' valor is itself similar to Caesar's own portrayal of his army, which shows incredible bravery, even in the face of a loss.

Lucan's description of the brave but ultimately defeated army in the passage above has a purpose, which is to make way for Scaeva, who will also endure a bevy of wounds yet stand his ground and cut down plenty of Pompeians, besides. The introduction of Scaeva is strikingly reminiscent of Catiline:

Victoribus unus  
eripuit vetuitque capi, seque arma tenente  
ac nondum strato Magnum vicisse negavit.  
Scaeva viro nomen: castrorum in plebe merebat  
ante feras Rhodani gentes; ibi sanguine multo  
promotus Latiam longo gerit ordine vitem,  
pronus ad omne nefas et qui nesciret, in armis  
quam magnum virtus crimen civilius esset. (6.141-148)

From the victors one man snatched away [the post] and prohibited it from being captured. He said that while he was holding arms and not yet laid low Magnus would not conquer. The man's name was Scaeva: he served in the plebian ranks of the army before the fierce tribes of the Rhone; there he had been promoted through much bloodshed and he bore the Latin vine-staff in the long line of centurions, inclined to every wicked deed, he was the sort who didn't know how great a crime valor in civil wars was.

Scaeva is highlighted in Lucan's description of Dyrrachium much as Catiline is in Sallust's battle narrative. Lucan's sketch of Scaeva has several elements which recall Catiline: Scaeva is ready for every unspeakable deed and he does not understand how evil it is to fight bravely in civil

war. Similarly, Catiline spent his youth in bloodshed and civil wars (*huic ab adolescentia bella intestina caedes rapinae discordia civilis grata fuere, ibique iuventutem suam exercuit, Civ. 5.2*). Both men are bloodthirsty, and, as I will discuss, they readily accept as many wounds in battle as they dole out.

Scaeva is remarkable in two ways: first, as a follower of Caesar he is an exemplar of many of Caesar's traits: he delights in bloodshed, he does not hesitate to commit *nefas*, and he does not know that *virtus* in the context of civil war is not *virtus* at all. As shown above, Catiline is much the same way. He delights in civil war (*bella intestina; discordia civilis*) and bloodshed (*caedes*). Similarly, in his pre-battle speech, Catiline assigns *virtus* and bravery to his men while also urging them to shed as much (Roman) blood as possible, which suggests that he, too, does not see—or does not admit to—the crime that he and his men are about to commit by killing fellow Romans:

“Cum vos considero, milites, et cum facta vostra aestumo, magna me spes victoriae tenet. Animus aetas virtus vostra me hortantur, praeterea necessitudo, quae etiam timidos fortis facit. Nam multitudo hostium ne circumvenire queat prohibent angustiae loci. Quod si virtuti vestrae fortuna inviderit, cavete inulti animam amittatis, neu capti potius sicuti pecora trucidemini quam virorum more pugnantem cruentam atque luctuosam victoriam hostibus relinquatis.” (*Cat. 58.18-21*)

“Soldiers, when I think upon you and when I judge your deeds, a great hope of victory holds me. Your spiritedness, your age, and your valor urge me on, and besides this necessity, which makes even the fearful brave. For the numbers of the enemy are not able to surround us, the narrowness of the place forbids it. But if fortune should look askance at your valor, take care that you do not lose your life unavenged, and that you are not be captured and slaughtered like cattle rather than leaving behind a bloody and mournful victory for the enemy by fighting in a manly manner.”

Sallust's final observations on the outcome of the battle—see above, pg. 53—show that Catiline's exhortation did not go unheard. However, there is disagreement between Scaeva's and Catiline's perception of their behavior in battle and the narrator's judgement of it; while Scaeva and Catiline think they they are fighting bravely and do not even take into consideration the fact

that the “enemy” is a fellow Roman, the narrator always denies them *virtus*, no matter how remarkable the feats or how much bravery was displayed. Scaeva and Catiline are great fighters, whose power and skill in battle would be of great use to expanding the empire and defending Rome from outside enemies, yet they use their talents to further one man’s ambition. They, in essence, represent Rome’s moral and political condition at the end of the Republic.

Now that I have mentioned Scaeva’s and Catiline’s military prowess, let us take a closer look at them as fighters. Lucan’s Scaeva is notorious for his tenacious battle against the Pompeians, who stick so many spears into him that Lucan likens the image to a forest growing out of Scaeva’s chest (*ferens in pectore silvam*, 6.205). Likewise, Catiline runs into the thick of the enemy and he does not fall until he is utterly run through (*in confertissimos hostis incurrit ibique pugnans confoditur*, *Cat.* 60.7). After the battle, Sallust says that Catiline was found far ahead of his men and, in his final glance at Catiline, notes that he is still breathing (*Catilina vero longe a suis inter hostium cadavera repertus est, paululum etiam spirans ferociamque animi, quam habuerat vivos, in voltu retinens*, *Cat.* 61.4). Similarly, we do not see Scaeva die, and, in fact, he reappears at the very end of the poem: “And Caesar, unsure whether to fear or wish for death, saw Scaeva in the packed battle array.” (*Dubiusque timeret | optaretne mori, respexit in agmine denso | Scaevam*, 10.542-44)

Scaeva’s bravery and heartiness is like Catiline’s: he takes on the entire Pompeian army, and he lives and fights on for an incredible span of time. Furthermore, in what resembles some an intertextual obedience of command, Scaeva seems to take to heart Catiline’s exhortation that, if his men are going die in battle, they ought to make their defeat as bloody as possible for the enemy. What makes this parallel between Catiline’s exhortation and Scaeva’s action is that Scaeva announces his wish to die in the sight of Caesar before he runs into battle:

“Peterem felicior umbras  
Caesaris in voltu: testem hunc Fortuna negavit:  
Pompeio laudante cadam.” (6.158-60)

“I would be happier to seek the shades under Caesar’s watchful eye :  
Fortune has denied me this witness, so I will fall with Pompey praising me.”

Scaeva behaves as if his general, Caesar, is watching, yet the behavior Scaeva exhibits is exactly what Catiline urges his own men to do if they are faced with defeat. At the risk of taking this analysis too far, I would like to suggest that whatever orders Scaeva imagines that his commander Caesar would give, they are the same ones Catiline gave his own troops. In this way—a very subtle way and perhaps more evident of the fact that Scaeva is so Catilinarian in his personality and behavior that one could imagine him wearing a “What Would Catiline Do?” wristband into battle—Caesar and Catiline are linked even closer together, for even Caesar’s followers are a bit Catilinarian, just as their general, Caesar, is a bit like Catiline.

Lucan creates another, less subtle connection between Scaeva’s episode and the battle of Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*. When the battle between Scaeva and the Pompeian army finishes thanks to the approach of one of Caesar’s cohorts, Scaeva declares the following:

“...Pacem gladio si quaerit ab isto  
Magnus, adorato summittat Caesare signa.  
An similem vestri segnemque ad fata putatis?  
Pompei vobis minor est causaeque senatus  
quam mihi mortis amor.” (6.242-246)

“If Magnus seeks peace from that sword,  
let him put down his standard after he has paid honor to Caesar.  
Or do you think that I am similar to you and I move slowly toward death?  
The cause of Pompey and the Senate means less to you than the love  
of death means to me.”

Compare that remark with Sallust’s commentary on the carnage from the battle:

Postremo ex omni copia neque in proelio neque in fuga quisquam civis ingenuus captus est; ita cuncti suae hostiumque vitae iuxta perpercerant. (*Cat.* 61.5-6)

Finally from [Catiline’s] whole army no true citizen was captured in battle or in flight;

thus everyone had been sparing of their own lives only as much as they had spared their enemy's.

Before this observation, Sallust had documented that Catiline and all of his men had been killed while fighting bravely; the statement above caps that description. While it is in some sense admirable that these men preferred to die in battle, what is interesting is that Sallust makes no mention of fighting to the death for a cause. Instead, he emphasizes that each man was as ready to kill as to be killed; one must infer from Catiline's pre-battle speech that his men, who fought as hard as their commander, also believed that they were fighting under the banner of *patria* and *libertas*. Essentially, Catiline and his men had the same *amor mortis* as Scaeva. In both Lucan and Sallust, the focus is on death and carnage in battle and how the conduct of men in both scenarios would be evidence of bravery if the Catilinarians and Scaeva had not been fighting in civil war. However, in the heat of battle everything has become bloodshed for bloodshed's sake. Even as people come out from the camp after the battle between Catiline's troops and Petreius', Sallust describes their reactions as they go through the battle field:

Multi autem, qui e castris visundi aut spoliandi gratia processerant, volventes hostilia cadavera amicum alii, pars hospitem aut cognatum reperiabant; fuere item qui inimicos suos cognoscerent. Ita varie per omnem exercitum laetitia maeror, luctus atque gaudia agitabantur. (*Cat.* 61.8-9)

Many, however, who had come out from the camp to visit or to pillage, as they turned over the enemy corpses some found a friend, other found a guest or a relative. There were also some who recognized their personal enemies. Thus throughout the whole army happiness and grief, sorrow and joy were variously expressed.

While Sallust paints a striking picture of the realities of civil war—these corpses are known to other Romans, they are not just nameless strangers—he also shows that the reasons for battle have disappeared. The beloved are mourned, even if they were part of Catiline's army and were fighting to overtake the republic. Others rejoice at the death of an enemy—a personal enemy, not a foreign aggressor—despite the fact that this *inimicus* (no longer a *hostis*) was a fellow

Roman. The cause behind the battle no longer matters; the corpses are recognized as friends and enemies, not as aggressors against the state. Scaeva and the Catilinarians, by contrast, utterly disregard the identity of their enemy as fellow Romans, for they are too focused on the game of kill-or-be-killed.<sup>233</sup>

The scene of Scaeva's *aristeia* (as Conte calls it) illustrates not only the sort of behavior Lucan's Caesar would approve of—remember that Scaeva acts as if his general is watching—but, based on what we see of Caesar in the *Pharsalia*, Scaeva mirrors his leader's Catilinarian side in his delight in bloodshed and destruction, his relentless pursuit of violence, and his readiness to commit any sort of *nefas*. Likewise, Sallust portrays Catiline's followers—especially ones like Cethegus—as akin to mini-Catilines; they have the same temperament, and they are likewise bent on total destruction.

What I have attempted to show here is that Lucan shaped Caesar in such a way that Caesar becomes the culminating figure in a line of civil war instigators who have been striving to destroy the republic. While Sallust seems to take some of Caesar and place it into Catiline in order to create a figure who evokes ambivalence from his readers, so they see glimmers of recent slogans regarding *libertas* and *dignitas* in a man otherwise characterized as utterly bereft of virtue, Lucan does the reverse: he takes the bereft aspects of Catiline and places them into his Caesar, replacing slogans of *libertas* and *dignitas* with outright designs for domination and a desire for bloodshed. Not only do Caesar and Catiline overlap in their burning temperaments and the goals they hope to attain by attacking the republic, they also lead a band of men who not only fight fiercely but also have the same disposition as their leader.

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<sup>233</sup> The Catilinarians and Scaeva exemplify an “alienating” viewpoint. See n.11 for more.

### Caesarian Face-off: Lucan vs. Velleius

Lucan and Velleius Paterculus, by contrast, portray Caesar in such a way that you'd think they must be talking about brothers rather than the same man, Lucan's Caesar being the evil brother while Velleius' Caesar is the good brother. Both men build their portrait of Caesar from many of the same elements: Caesar's divinity, his speed, his clemency, his enjoyment of Fortune's favor, associations with lightning, fear, and comparisons with Pompey. This set of components common to both depictions of Caesar may have their common source in Livy, but the similarities may also derive from a now-ossified image of Caesar, such that while the basic portrait of Caesar has not changed, the interpretation of those qualities can vary, as we have seen. Velleius paints Caesar's traits in colors of worship and praise, while Lucan uses the darker hues of criticism in his portrait of the general.

When it comes to Caesar's speed, Lucan emphasizes it as part of his restless, reckless nature. In the epic, Caesar is often described as *praeceps* ("headlong") whenever he moves about; he is out of control, driven by hope and especially by anger. The speed feeds into the general's *furor* in the epic. Velleius' Caesar experiences no such lack of control, in part because he also lacks the anger of Lucan's Caesar. Caesar's speed is calculated; it takes him exactly where he needs to go, and it is so lightning-fast that sometimes the opposition just gives up, thus avoiding more destruction and bloodshed than necessary.<sup>234</sup> One aspect of Caesar's speed emphasized by both authors is the mention of delay, especially in reference to Massilia. In Velleius, Massilia delays Caesar's journey to Spain (*festinationem itineris eius aliquamdiu morata Massilia est*, Vell. 2.50.3). Lucan also portrays Caesar's siege of Massilia as a hiccup on his way to Spain, though he spends more time lingering on the siege than Velleius. Lucan has

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<sup>234</sup> Here I am referring to the *fulgor* of Caesar's arrival resulting in the surrender of the Pompeian forces at Ilerda (Vell. 2.50.4), which, as I mentioned in the previous chapter, is not historically accurate, but Velleius' depiction wants to use Caesar's speed to zip through messier aspects of that campaign.

Caesar declare that, though he is in a hurry, he can spare a little time to wreck Massilia (*quamvis Hesperium mundi properemus ad axem, | Massiliam delere vacat*, 3.359-60). Massilia itself, furthermore, “held up the headlong course of war, which was blazing onto everything, alone overcome with delay, when everything else had been snatched up by Caesar.” (*tenuit flagrantis in omnia belli praecipitem cursum, raptisque a Caesare cunctis vincitur una mora*, 3.390-92) In fact, Caesar eventually can no longer endure the fact that the siege of Massilia was taking so long (*dux tamen impatiens haesuri ad moenia Martis*, 3.453), and so he moves on. For both authors, Massilia represents a hindrance to Caesar’s activity; it causes a delay in his speed and the siege is always characterized by *mora*.<sup>235</sup> However, each author’s judgement of the delay Massilia presented to Caesar differs from the other; Velleius portrays Massilia as well-intentioned but foolish (*fide melior quam consilio prudentior*, Vell. 2.50.3), for the city tried to restrain Caesar when it didn’t have the power to and so it paid the price. For Lucan, the Massiliots are the last bastion of *libertas*; they refuse to join Caesar, even if it means bucking destiny (*causas, non fata, sequi*, 3.303), and they declare they are not afraid to undergo suffering in the name of freedom (*nec pavet hic populus pro libertate subire*, 3.349). Lucan portrays their outright defiance of Caesar as brave rather than foolish, and they succeed in at least slowing Caesar down, which is very difficult to do.

Caesar’s clemency is likewise subject to varying interpretations. Velleius presents Caesar’s mercy as a positive trait: it was—to Caesar, at least—a token of exchange in Republican culture, a way to ingratiate the aristocracy to him. Moreover, Caesar’s moderation preserved Roman lives and demonstrated Caesar has concern for the state. As I discussed above,

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<sup>235</sup> Indeed, it is intriguing to see, because Caesar does not treat his journey to Massilia as a delay on his way to Spain; when he leaves Rome, he says that he went to Gaul (*in ulteriorem Galliam pervenit*, Civ. 1.33.4) and only when he gets there does he find about the activity in Spain (*quo cum venisset, cognoscit missum in Hispaniam a Pompeio Vibullium Rufum*, Civ. 1.34.1).

Lucan distorts Caesar's clemency in order to show it as a nefarious trait. He does this by including a sinister motivation behind Caesar's show of *clementia*. In the *Pharsalia*, Caesar is not concerned for the welfare of the state or the exchange culture of the Republic; instead *clementia* is a pure show of power, a "gift" which expects no reciprocation. It prohibits Domitius and other aristocrats from dying an honorable death, and above all it asserts Caesar's belief that he is superior to his fellow Romans. Caesar saves lives in order to demonstrate that he can; moreover, if one is like Afranius and recognizes his power, he will display the calm countenance of Jupiter, satisfied that his *imperium* has been recognized. Caesar's mercy stops the fighting, but pardon is utilized in such a way that it proves that the fighting stops only when Caesar wishes it.<sup>236</sup> No longer does Ilerda stand as an example of the contrast between Petreius' violent behavior and Caesar's moderation, as it is in Caesar's commentaries. In this epic, Petreius continues the violence of the civil war in the hopes of preserving *libertas*, but Caesar shows that he has the power to grant peace, and he will grant "peace", which is merely a release from fighting, when his superiority is recognized, in effect taking away *libertas* simultaneously with offering *pax*. Unlike Velleius, Lucan uses this argument to show that violence preserves freedom and peace denies it, particularly when peace is obtained through pardon.

Lucan cannot deny Caesar's clemency—even though the poet does everything he can to pervert this trait—but he can deny that Caesar ever desired peace. Caesar never endures peace or any long time away from arms (*numquam patiens pacis longaeque quietis | armorum*, 2.650-51). However, one aspect of Caesar's character which has appeared in all narratives until now is his avowed desire to avoid escalating conflicts. In his commentaries, Caesar describes his attempts to sue for peace in order to end a conflict he presents as a tiff with personal enemies which has

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<sup>236</sup> Leigh (1997, 54-55) remarks that Caesar's clemency stops the fighting "only after the failure of *Concordia* and the defeat of Petreius."

gotten out of hand.<sup>237</sup> In Sallust, Caesar's speech likewise aims at avoiding the execution of the arrested conspirators, which he fears will escalate into further violence. Velleius also portrays Caesar as repeatedly attempting to circumvent conflict and preserve peace. Lucan, however, takes the opposite approach with Caesar. In the *Pharsalia*, we see no insistence on peace; rather, Caesar does all he can to avoid letting the war end before he has achieved total domination. For Lucan's Caesar, peace is but an obstacle to be shoved out the way, the way a lightning bolt is pushed through the clouds and breaks through the air. In the *Historiae*, by contrast, Caesar tries in vain to obtain peace terms; it is the senators who insist on war (*nihil relictum a Caesare quod servandae pacis causa temptari posset, nihil receptum a Pompeianis*, Vell. 2.49.3).

As I mentioned at the opening of this section, when one puts Velleius' Caesar next to Lucan's Caesar, the effect is similar to looking at brothers. These two Caesars have several traits in common, yet they do not look like the same person. Velleius' Caesar fights in defense of himself and on behalf of making the state better, he avoids bloodshed and destruction if its possible, he offers pardon to his fellow citizens in the hope of stopping violence. Lucan's Caesar, on the other hand, is depicted as the aggressor, completely hostile to Rome, as a foreign enemy would be; he gleefully paves a path of destruction, fearlessly commits *nefas*, and calmly gazes down on landscapes of blood and bodies at Pharsalus; his clemency is sinister and is a means of displaying his power, essentially telling his opponents that violence will stop *only when he says so*; he is characterized by a lack of control and anger drives him the same way it drove Alexander the Great (and Catiline, for that matter); he is out to ruin the republic, not save it. In fact, all of the ways in which Lucan distorts the Caesar we find in Velleius point to the traits he

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<sup>237</sup> We see that everything starts with his *inimici* attempting to block his success at *Civ.* 1.7.1. Caesar explains the demands that will keep him from feeling forced to go to war at *Civ.* 1.9.5-6. One example of Caesar's attempt to start negotiations that would end the conflict comes at Brundisium (*Civ.* 1.26.2-5).

shares with Catiline. Lucan's Caesar may be the evil brother to Velleius' Caesar, but he is practically Catiline's conjoined twin.

### Conclusion

I would like to conclude my discussion of Lucan's Caesar by turning to the Caesar living in the poet's age: Nero. Lucan's panegyric to Nero at the beginning of the poem, regardless of whether it is sincere,<sup>238</sup> puts the emperor into the audience's mind. Although it is programmatic in the Principate to address the emperor in one's poetry, Lucan not only begins his poem by praising Nero, he also claims that Nero represents the war's teleological end point (1.33-38, cited below). The position of the panegyric and Lucan's characterization of Nero as the war's teleology strongly suggests that the audience should be thinking of Nero from the start. Moreover, Lucan uses the title "Caesar" to refer to Nero twice in the panegyric; the first use comes during Lucan's list of the horrors of the civil wars, "Let the Perusine famine and the toils of Mutina be added to these fates, Caesar," (*His, Caesar, Perusina fames Mutinaeque labores | accedant fatis*, 1.41-42) and the second usage comes when Lucan imagines Nero taking his place in the sky, "Let no clouds stand in the way of Caesar!" (*Nullae obstant a Caesare nubes*, 1.59) Perusia and Mutina, of course, recall the wars Octavian fought against Antony for power, wars Lucan will not narrate in his epic but nevertheless made it possible for the principate—and, therefore, Nero's position as emperor—to exist. The second use of Caesar takes us away to the sky, where Nero will one day be located along with the other deified Caesars. The essential point, however, is that Lucan's use of the formal title of "Caesar" in the panegyric connects the emperor to his Imperial lineage and particularly to the *Pharsalia's* (anti-)hero, Caesar.

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<sup>238</sup> The issue of Lucan's sincerity in his address to Nero is a debate that will never reach a consensus. Grimal ([1960] 2010) thinks that the praise is sincere, citing that Lucan had probably written before his fallout with Nero. Martindale ([1984] 2010, 274-76) suggests taking the panegyric at face value (i.e., Lucan was not mocking Nero), but that at the same time Lucan did not necessarily believe the praise that he bestowed on the emperor. Marti (1945), Griset (1955), and a host of others, including the Berne scholiasts, see an undertone of mockery behind Lucan's praise.

As my discussion of Velleius' and Sallust's narratives pointed out, it is not unheard of to narrate the exploits of one Caesar with an eye toward the current one. Velleius in particular made several connections between Caesar and Tiberius to give a sense of continuity as Rome passed from old Republic to a new one; in Velleius, each Caesar is essentially a better version of the previous one, but the reader is expected to make that connection on his own. Lucan is more explicit than Velleius in his association between Caesar and the current emperor. He begins the panegyric with the following:

Quod si non aliam venturo fata Neroni  
 invenere viam magnoque aeterna parantur  
 regna deis caelumque suo servire Tonanti  
 non nisi saevorum potuit post bella gigantum,  
 iam nihil, o superi, querimur; scelera ipsa nefasque  
 hac mercede placent. (1.33-38)

But if the fate could find not other way for Nero to come  
 and if eternal kingship is made ready at great cost to the gods  
 and if heaven was not able to serve its Thunderer unless it came  
 after the wars against the savage giants, then we have nothing to  
 complain about now, oh gods above; those very crimes and unspeakable  
 acts are pleasing if this is price we have to pay.

Lucan depicts the civil wars as the price paid for Rome to enjoy Nero's reign. When the first lines to Nero connect him to the crimes his predecessor Caesar commits, it is hard to deny that Lucan wants his reader to look at Nero and think of Caesar, and vice versa. In fact, when Lucan's audience comes to the description of Nero's apotheosis, they find that Rome—and the universe, in fact—is well beyond the point of civil war:

Seu scepra tenere  
 seu te flammigeros Phoebi conscendere currus  
 telluremque nihil mutato sole timentem  
 igne vago lustrare iuvet, tibi numine ab omni  
 cedetur, iurisque tui natura relinquet  
 quis deus esse velis, ubi regnum ponere mundi. (1.47-52)

Whether you want to hold the sceptre, or get on  
 the flame-bearing chariot of Apollo  
 and with your fire circle the earth,  
 which will not be afraid, though the sun has changed,  
 it will be yielded to you by every deity,  
 and nature will leave it to your proclamation  
 which god you want to be, where in the universe you want to put your kingdom.

Nero's elevation to godhead does not involve mere addition to the number of deities to worship. As Feeney (1991, 299) puts it, "The emperor's elevation disturbs order." Nero's apotheosis will displace one (or more!) of the gods from his current position. Furthermore, the gods will simply cede to Nero. There will be no Gigantomachy, no fight to keep the current order. By the point of Nero's reign, in essence, Caesars have firmly entrenched themselves among the gods; the heavens are as subject to the Caesars as Rome. There will be no more fear when a Caesar takes over—even if he takes over the sun—because both heaven and earth are subject to Caesar(s).

One cannot approach Lucan's story of the civil war without an eye to Nero because Nero is the product of this civil war. Just as Tiberius was the *telos* of Velleius' history, so too is Nero the end of Lucan's tale.<sup>239</sup> Remember that Velleius chose to depict Caesar as a positive figure; Caesar tried to defend himself and preserve peace at Rome, and Tiberius has managed to succeed in the task started by him. As mentioned in the previous chapter, Velleius takes the reader from Caesar to better Caesar in the course of his narrative. Lucan's tale, however, reflects the acknowledgment that Rome under Nero is not a renewed Republic; Julius Caesar drives Rome into a civil war that is so horrible and so destructive that the break from Republic to Principate feels practically apocalyptic; Nero rules the new world spawned from that seemingly apocalyptic event.<sup>240</sup> The aftermath Lucan suggests is that Rome, after trying to defend herself against the

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<sup>239</sup> Feeney (1991, 300) referring to Grimal, even suggests that Nero is a continuation of Caesar's revolution.

<sup>240</sup> See Lapidge ([1979] 2010) for a discussion of the imagery of cosmic dissolution in Lucan.

aspiring tyrant Caesar, has become so accustomed to being ruled that now even the gods will cede to a Caesar.

## Chapter 4. The End of Caesar

In his review of Diana Spencer's *The Roman Alexander*, Erich Gruen (2003, 640) noted that, when it comes to Alexander the Great, Spencer finds "no monochromatic portrait, but a series of shifting images, an unstable and fluid perception that allowed for moulding and remoulding in accord with the aims of authors and the currents of the age." As the preceding chapters have shown, the same can be said of Julius Caesar. Despite the general's self-made portrait, future authors did not simply adopt the picture offered to them but used it as a template for their own representations of the general. Several basic traits and issues, such as clemency, speed, rationality, desire for peace, *dignitas*, and kingship, have appeared again and again throughout this diachronic study of Caesar in civil war, but these characteristics are emphasized, downplayed, or outright inverted "in accord with the aims of authors," if not also with "the currents of the age." In this chapter, I would like to first review the major traits which have repeatedly appeared the various portraits of Caesar in order to trace individual traits have shifted from Caesar's *Bellum Civile* through Lucan's *Pharsalia*. At the end of this chapter (section 10) I offer some final insight regarding the importance of examining these various portraits of Caesar and how each author tailors his story of Caesar and civil war in accordance with his view of how the story ends, namely, his view of the current Caesar in power.

### 4.1 Clemency

It is hardly surprising that *clementia* is closely linked to Caesar. Caesar repeatedly underscores his mercy in the *Bellum Civile* and advertises it as a cornerstone of his policy to win hearts and minds during the civil war. Sallust presents Caesar's clemency as part of a set of virtues involving generosity and participation in socio-political world of exchange in Rome. Caesar's speech in the *Bellum Catilinae* argues that leniency is a result of rational deliberation, corresponding to Caesar's own presentation of mercy in the *Bellum Civile*. Yet the historian

shows that clemency is part of only one set of virtues; Caesar's *mansuetudo et misericordia* opposes Cato's *severitas*, which is bound up with virtues of frugality and abstinence. Moreover, Cato questions his opponent's version of mercy, particularly when it is appropriate to show it, and suggests that showing mercy to criminals is not true *mansuetudo et misericordia*. Sallust does not give his audience an answer regarding whose stance is right. The lack of closure on the issue suggests that the goal of presenting this debate is not to give a definite answer; instead, Sallust's debate mimics the war over key watchwords and virtues waged through the late Republic, most recently by the Caesarians and the Pompeians (here represented by Cato) during the civil war. As several scholars have noted, the war between Caesar and the Pompeians was fought not only with weapons, but also with words.<sup>241</sup> Each side attempted to depict itself as embodying the virtues of the Republic and, accordingly, also attempted show that the opposition did not embody those virtues. Sallust, having seen that the battlefield of civil war exists as much in propaganda and words as it does on terrain, shows these fights over virtues, their meaning, and their validity for Rome in the debate of Caesar and Cato, which also retrospectively foreshadows their war of words a little over a decade after Catiline's *bellum*.

Beyond making up a key component of Caesar's self-presentation, *clementia* also became a principal imperial virtue, perhaps indicative of the *princeps*' moderation or generosity.<sup>242</sup> Because clemency becomes an integral part of an emperor's public persona—particularly for Augustus and Tiberius, but also for Nero, how each Imperial author treats that facet of Caesar's portrait, particularly as it relates to civil war, can be illustrative not only his opinion of Caesar but also of the regime. Velleius Paterculus remains mostly faithful to Caesar's own presentation of his *clementia*, which is to say that, during civil war, clemency signals Caesar's desire for

<sup>241</sup> e.g. Raaflaub (1974), Grillo (2008 and 2012).

<sup>242</sup> Wallace-Hadrill (1981, 302) notes that *clementia* was often regarded as a subset of another virtue, like *temperantia* or *iustitia*. See n.88 for more on *clementia* as an object of exchange in the Imperial period.

peace—more on that below—and it is bestowed without limits. Furthermore, as I suggested, Velleius makes *clementia* a civil war virtue; Tiberius, though he inherits many of Julius Caesar’s other traits, is not assigned clemency, but he has no civil war to fight and therefore has little need of a virtue forged by Caesar in the fires of civil conflict. Velleius, having the benefit of hindsight and knowledge of *clementia*’s importance in the Imperial period, also shows that mercy is an important component of restoring the Republic—Octavian also shows clemency to his enemies during civil war in the *Historiae*—but is not needed when peace (*pax*) rules Rome. Another aspect of *clementia* emphasized in Velleius’ history is its function as a gift; Caesar’s assassins, who had received pardon from Caesar, are called “ungrateful (*ingrati*),” suggesting that their “reciprocation” for the kindness showed by Caesar—namely, killing him—was inappropriate considering the relationship of exchange Caesar established with these men by showing them mercy. On the flip side, Caesar’s *clementia* is not perfect; his own stubborn adherence to clemency, particularly his refusal to eliminate threats, also leaves him vulnerable to an assassination plot. The balance between *clementia* and *vigilantia*—or perhaps *moderatio*?—is finally struck by Caesar’s successors Augustus, who ends the cycle of civil war, and Tiberius, whose *vigilantia* neutralizes all other threats to the state, thus eliminating the need for clemency.

In the *Pharsalia*, by contrast, Caesar’s *clementia* is a precursor to Imperial clemency only insofar as it presages monarchical rule, or, more specifically, Nero’s reign. As several have commented, one key passage portraying Caesar’s clemency, wherein he pardons the Pompeians at Ilerda, presents Caesar in a Jovian—i.e., kingly—light, with the serenity of one who knows that he has power over the one he is about to pardon. This scene comes after Caesar, called the proud citizen (*civis superbus*), has pardoned Domitius against the latter’s will. Lucan twists Caesar’s *clementia* so as to make it barely recognizable; instead of representing a desire for

peace or care for the state, Caesar's speech to Domitius suggests that he is sparing in order to prolong the war, for he invites Petreius to take up arms against him again. *Clementia* in the *Pharsalia* does not reflect rational considerations of Rome's welfare or care for the lives of fellow citizens. In this case clemency is utterly self-serving; Caesar wields it to display kingly power and to prolong civil strife.

#### 4.2 Rationality, Self-Control, and Speed

Speed, a key virtue in the military sphere, reveals a lot about characters in Caesar's commentaries. To be called slow (*tardus*), as Caesar does with the Pompeians, also reflects slow thinking, implying that the Pompeians are stupid. When Caesar presents characters as essentially being too fast, such as Vibullius and Curio, he shows that their actions are driven by hasty decisions, i.e., a lack of rationality.<sup>243</sup> As one would expect, Caesar represents the perfect mix of speed and rationality; his swift action comes from swift thinking—but not too swift. By balancing *celeritas* and planning, Caesar anticipates Sallust's *sententia* that one must be able to use the body and the mind in order to accomplish great things; one without the other will not yield desirable results.

Though Sallust himself does not apply *celeritas* to Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae*, Catiline is associated with swiftness. The matrix in the *Bellum Civile* of what results can be expected if one possess speed without rational planning plays out in the *Bellum Catilinae*. Catiline's lack of rationality results in him being too swift (like Vibullius and Curio); in the so-called first conspiracy Catiline acts too soon, resulting in the abandonment of the plot. His constant movement throughout the *Bellum Catilinae* likewise reflects being driven by passions, foreshadowing his failure.

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<sup>243</sup> Grillo (2008, 40).

Also following the example set in the *Bellum Civile*, Velleius depicts Caesar's speed as a key component of his aptitude as a general. Caesar possesses speed from his youth, as illustrated in the pirate episode, and it is a trait he shares with Alexander the Great. However, *celeritas* becomes more than a military virtue for Velleius' Caesar; in his narrative, the historian highlights Caesar's extraordinary speed for several purposes. For one, his incredible rapidity is used to suggest his divine nature through vocabulary associated with the flash of lightning, an image also often linked to Jupiter. Velleius also appropriates Caesar's speed in order to mask his own *festinatio* through stickier parts of the civil war, such as the siege of Massilia or Caesar's journey to Dyrrachium.

One interesting aspect of speed in the *Historiae*, particularly in light of the fact that the historian usually remains quite faithful to Caesar's self-fashioning in the *Bellum Civile*, is that Velleius shows that he is alert to the fact that *celeritas* is a double-edged sword. As Caesar displays in his commentaries, speed can reflect efficacious planning and quick thinking or it can reflect recklessness. Velleius' Caesar carefully walks the thin line between efficacy and temerity, sometimes showing that his swiftness puts him in danger, as in the pirate episode, while other times speed alone can be enough to defeat his opponents, such as at Ilerda. When Tiberius inherits Caesar's speed, his *cura* and *providentia* temper the potential for reckless action; thus, we find that Tiberius is able to act quickly, decisively, and with a little collateral damage as possible.

While Velleius merely alludes to Caesar's *celeritas* as a component of his divine nature, Lucan develops the connection between speed and divinity. Caesar is likened to a lightning bolt: always moving, full of energy, associated with divinity (and with the divine monarch, Jupiter), and mindlessly destructive. The simile is an apt description of how Caesar's speed functions in

the *Pharsalia*. The poet turns the *Bellum Civile*'s categorization of the relationship between speed and rationality on its head; though Caesar undeniably possesses incredible, efficacious swiftness, he is also driven by passions rather than rationality. Like the lightning bolt, Caesar's speed reflects reckless action, yet, unlike Caesar's Vibullius and Curio or Sallust's Catiline, whose speedy recklessness results in disaster, Caesar is successful in achieving his aims. The irony in the *Pharsalia* is that, while speed and recklessness are often a dangerous combination for he who possesses both, the general's speed and recklessness in the epic spells disaster not for the possessor but for Rome.

### 4.3 *Studium Pacis*

Another theme reverberating throughout these portrayals of Caesar is the desire for peace—*studium pacis*. In the *Bellum Civile*, the desire for peace and reconciliation is a key issue separating Caesar and the Pompeians. Caesar reported repeated suits for peace; indeed, it is not until the third book of the commentaries that he appears reluctantly resigned to war. The Pompeians, on the other hand, instigate further conflict. The desire for peace is also one of the motives behind Caesar's boundless *clementia*; by offering mercy to his defeated enemies he attempts to stop further bloodshed. Moreover, the general's desire for peace is closely linked with displaying care for the republic; conversely, the Pompeians' desire for war is a major component of more general argument in the *Bellum Civile* that Pompey and his supporters do not truly represent Rome's best interests; in fact, Caesar's presentation of his opponents suggests that they are a threat to Rome.

The desire for peace—more specifically, the desire to stop potential bloodshed—is a cornerstone of Caesar's speech in the *Bellum Catilinae*. In his argument for clement treatment of the captured conspirators, he warns against the precedent which might be set by executing the conspirators; in particular, he claims that such a precedent could be abused by lesser men for

private gain. In several respects, the argument's emphasis on the potential for *severitas* to be perceived as *crudelitas*, the importance of setting aside personal vindication for a greater good, and the aims behind Caesar's recommendation against execution mirrors Caesar's self-presentation in the *Bellum Civile*. In both texts, clemency is presented as a reflection of a desire for peace and care for the state.

However, unlike in the *Bellum Civile*, Sallust does not let Caesar's vision of clemency as a means for peace go unchallenged. His recommendation that the shortest route to peace is through clemency is to be contrasted with the speech of Cato, who argues for execution of the conspirators as the fastest way to achieve peace in the state. To his mind, shedding the blood of a few guilty men will prevent the bloodshed of the innocent, whereas clemency for the guilty would leave good men vulnerable to attack from the wicked. While the Senate's decision in favor of Cato does not necessarily invalidate Caesar's claims, the competing points of view reveal what Caesar hides in the *Bellum Civile*; namely that the call for bloodshed in order to remove a threat to Rome can be seen as a valid argument.

Caesar's *studium pacis* in the *Historiae* remains faithful to Caesar's self-presentation in the commentaries. The historian recounts Caesar's attempts to broker a peace, though those attempts are foiled. Where Velleius departs from Caesar is who he blames for preventing peace. As seen above, Caesar places the blame squarely on the shoulders of the Pompeians; Velleius, instead of attaching blame to Pompey, makes Curio the scapegoat for civil war. In order to further villainize Curio, Velleius describes him with qualities also ascribed to Sallust's Catiline, another acknowledged threat to the state. Like Catiline, Velleius' Curio encourages war for private gain, though he will be consumed by the flames of the civil war he kindles. Such a characterization creates a striking contrast to Caesar and highlights that the general, who did not

want war, acts in the interest of the republic rather than his own interests. Again, Caesar's desire for peace is a facet of presenting him as a republican at heart and contributes to Velleius' larger aims of presenting the Principate not as a break from the Republic and its values but a restoration of it led by Augustus and Tiberius.

Unlike the Caesar of Velleius', Sallust's, and Caesar's own narrative, the phrase *studium pacis* is not part of the vocabulary of Lucan's Caesar. Instead desiring peace, the Caesar of the *Pharsalia* seems to dread it. As I mentioned in the section above on clemency, Caesar wants to prolong the war, not end it. The poet does not portray his antiheroic general as suing for a treaty with the Pompeians; even his acts of clemency aim to preserve his enemy so that they might fight against him another day. Caesar's shunning of both peace and the republic highlights how closely linked the desire for peace is with republicanism in the other texts. Accordingly, Lucan's poem focuses on the civil war as the end of the republic and the beginning of a new form of government.

#### **4.4 The *Synkrisis***

As each author—including Caesar himself—gives an account of civil war, we have found that Caesar is compared to other figures, either explicitly or implicitly. Though Caesar himself does not give an explicit *synkrisis* of his qualities vis-à-vis the Pompeians, he invites the reader to make comparisons by juxtaposing scenes featuring his deeds with scene featuring the Pompeians' behavior. He does not set himself beside either Cato or Pompey in particular, but both men become “natural” choices for other authors who want to compare Caesar to his opposition and highlight the divisions coursing through the Republic; Pompey was the figurehead of the republican opposition during the civil war, while Caesar and Cato's opposing characters and long-standing enmity, together with each man's eventual association with either the republic or the principate, makes for a fruitful comparison.

Yet not every author compares Caesar to both Pompey and Cato. An author's choice to compare Caesar to one man or the other (or both!) illuminates qualities or issues which are compelling for that author, or even shows who Caesar's "true" opponent is in the struggle at the end of the Republic.

In the Imperial period we find Caesar compared to another figure: Alexander the Great. As we have seen, such a comparison can be to Caesar's advantage or disadvantage depending on the qualities the comparison highlights. Though Alexander was never opposed Caesar, he had become a standard by which Roman leaders—especially generals—could measure their success.

#### **4.5 Caesar and Cato**

Though Caesar delineates no explicit comparison between himself and Cato, the few places where he allows Cato to appear are striking in that his sketch of the Stoic is far different than the impression one gets from other authors, both during the Republic and Principate. True, the stone-cold opposition (*severitas*) to Caesar is present, but we find very little of Cato's other famous trait: *constantia*. He abandons his post in Sicily and despairs of Pompey after he perceived the slightest threat from the Caesarians. By removing the quality of *constantia* from Cato, Caesar is able to not only discredit the opposition's claim to moral superiority by virtue of having the ideologue Cato on their side, but he is also able to claim qualities such as *constantia* for himself. Setting Cato's behavior beside Caesar's invites the reader to infer that Caesar is the one who possesses *constantia* and other virtues normally assigned to Cato, whose behavior does not suggest a steadfast nature.

Of the authors discussed in this study, only Sallust explicitly compares Caesar and Cato. As I suggested above, the qualities and issues mentioned in the comparison represent many of the key values Caesar and the Pompeians struggled over during the civil war. Several of the values and issues, like mercy, *dignitas*, generosity, and the value (or danger) of emotions, also

appear in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*. The parallels in issues debated by Caesar and Cato in the *Bellum Catilinae* suggests that Sallust may be looking to the ideological conflict in Caesar's civil war when he shapes this conflict. In this case, Cato represents the qualities of *constantia* and *integritas*, which Caesar attempted to claim for himself in the *Bellum Civile*, suggesting that, by presenting Caesar with only one set of virtues, Sallust is countering Caesar's claim to be the consummate Roman.

One might ask why, if Sallust were attempting to recreate the ideological struggles of Caesar's civil war in the *Bellum Catilinae*, why Cato rather than Pompey was chosen as Caesar's opposition. Leaving aside the fact that Pompey was not in Rome at the time—a point Sallust brings up multiple times, the answer might lie in the afterlife of the civil war. Cato's suicide has a far greater impact on Rome and his reputation as a key opponent of Caesar than Caesar lets on in the *Bellum Civile*.<sup>244</sup> The fight between Caesar and Pompey ended at Pompey's death, but his fight with Cato continued on long after Cato had killed himself. This long-standing conflict—one which extends beyond the grave!—combined with the traditionally opposed characteristics of Caesar and Cato likely provided the perfect template for Sallust to show that the battlefield is not the only front for civil conflict; the Senate house, too, sows the same seeds of contention and, as Caesar's account of his war shows, battles can be fought with both the stylus and the sword.

Lucan does not explicitly compare Caesar and Cato, though he shows from the beginning of his poem that the two men are opponents. In the *Pharsalia*, the poet revives the issues seen in Sallust's *synkrisis*—particularly the conflicting characteristics of Caesar and Cato—but, unlike in the *Bellum Catilinae*, which offers no explicit judgement of which man is better, Lucan does offer his reader judgement. In fact, he does more than that: he gives Cato an army, displays his

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<sup>244</sup> Grillo (2012, 45) speaks of Caesar's unsuccessful attempt at what was essentially *damnatio memoriae* of Cato in the *Bellum Civile* and nods to the debate over Cato's memory through pamphlets like Cicero's (and Brutus') *Cato* and Caesar's *Anticato*.

skills as a leader, and crowns him with honors reserved for the imperial family. Lucan's pairing of Caesar and Cato tells two tales: one story is about how Caesar won the civil war and paved the way for his descendant Nero to rule as *princeps*; the other story suggests that, though Caesar won the war, Cato is the better man, the *primus inter pares*, the one who, if the universe had been set aright, would have won the war for Rome and for *libertas*.

That Cato is often used as a figure to counter presentations of Caesar—particularly ones in which the audience is invited to cast a critical eye on him—makes his absence (or at least his distance from Caesar) in Velleius' and Caesar's own narratives rather striking. Though Cato appears three times during the so-called "Caesarian narrative" of the *Historiae*, these appearances, with the possible exception of his assertion near the beginning of the civil war that he would prefer to die than accept a citizen's demands, maintain a safe distance from Caesar. When Velleius praises one man, the other is hard to be found, even if it would be appropriate to mention him.<sup>245</sup> This distance is sometimes literal; when Cato is sent to Cyprus and returns with a vast sum of money, Caesar is in Gaul. Even when Velleius briefly notes Cato's actions in Africa, he does not explicitly show Caesar and Cato clash. Not only is the bitter antagonism between these two men hard to find, though it plays a poignant part in other portrayals of Caesar treated in this study, but it would be difficult for one not already familiar with the history of the late Republic to realize that these two men even knew each other as well as they did.

So: why does Velleius keep so much distance between the two men? As already seen in the other narratives, Cato embodied virtues opposite to Caesar's, as Sallust and Lucan show, and, like Caesar, was assigned a nature "closer to gods than men (Vell. 2.35)" in the Imperial

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<sup>245</sup> To give two striking examples: Velleius' account of the Catilinarian conspiracy recounts the success of Cato's speech against the conspirators (2.35) but he does not mention Caesar's presence at the debate at all, let alone attribute to him the proposal that the conspirators be put in custody in various Italian towns; similarly, Velleius does not dampen his praise of Caesar's success and *clementia* during his African campaign in the civil war by bringing up Cato's suicide.

period.<sup>246</sup> Furthermore, Cato was a severe opponent to Caesar yet highly praised during the Principate, despite his antagonism toward Caesar. Because Velleius aims to portray the form of government led by Augustus and Tiberius as a new and improved Republic, for which Caesar is the precursor, he seems to shy away from bringing one of Caesar's harshest critics within striking distance of the general. The closest Cato can come to criticizing Caesar is to say that he would rather die than bend to the demands of a citizen, but we hear little more from Cato than the expected cry of a staunch republican. If anything, one might even interpret it as a stubborn refusal to embrace needed change in the face of a corrupt and crumbling state. Moreover, because Cato embodies high philosophical virtues, some of which Tiberius must inherit if he is to become the consummate Republican figure, Velleius cannot completely ignore him or eschew praising him. It seems that, in Velleius' view, the best way to laud both Caesar and Cato to the degree each deserves and not bring up the dicey issue of their diametrically opposed political views is to turn a blind eye to one when focusing on the other. An outright comparison would result in a value judgement being made, even if Velleius does not voice a verdict *in propria persona*.<sup>247</sup> Thus, in order to preserve the worth of each man, Velleius does all he can to avoid opening the door for a comparison of the two. Instead, he turns his gaze to a comparison of Caesar and Pompey, which is the topic I address next.

#### **4.6 Caesar and Pompey**

Whereas comparisons of Caesar and Cato often involve ideological clashes, whether it be a contest of virtues or the conflict of preserving republicanism in the face of an aspiring tyrant, comparisons between Caesar and Pompey often emphasize Caesar's skills as a general, or Pompey as a man in the twilight of his career, or to reveal one of the greatest issues at the end of

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<sup>246</sup> Certainly this view was present in the Tiberian period.

<sup>247</sup> The *synkrisis* in Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae* and the mountains of scholarship attempting to discern whether he favored Caesar or Cato should be evidence enough of how difficult it is to approach a comparison without formulating an opinion regarding which man is superior.

the Republic, namely the consequences which ensue when one powerful man cannot bear to have an equal while the other cannot bear to have a superior.

Caesar, though he indulges in no direct comparison between himself and Pompey, shows through correspondences with Pompey and juxtaposed scenes the differences between him and Pompey in styles of leadership and in views about what it really means to be fighting for Rome. As the figurehead for the senatorial side, Pompey is lacking in powerful leadership; it rarely seems that he has established a proper hierarchy when everyone, from lieutenants to the soldiery, questions his strategies. Furthermore, Caesar's Pompey voices slogans and catchwords near the beginning of the *Bellum Civile* which are proven to be empty words as the war progresses: he praises the Senate's *constantia*, appeals to Caesar's *dignitas* when demanding that he lay aside his quarrels and surrender to the Senate for the good of the state, warns against *ira*, and boasts that Caesar's authority over his army is shaky at best. The rest of the commentaries tells a different story: *constantia* lies in the Caesarian, not Pompeian, camp. Caesar's mission to defend his *dignitas* is merged with defending, not harming, Rome; it is Pompey's men, not Caesar's, who fall prey to *ira* and cause undue harm to the state as a result; and we never find any cracks in Caesar's authority: he never mentions his soldiers mutinying and, in fact, his men echo his cause several times, whereas Pompey faces criticism by his army at nearly every turn. In short, Pompey becomes the straw man Caesar knocks over again and again in order to demonstrate his effectiveness as a leader and that he, unlike his opponents, always fought for Rome.

Outside of the *Bellum Civile*, comparisons of Caesar and Pompey appear in the *Historiae* and the *Pharsalia*. Velleius' comparisons of Caesar and Pompey emphasize two points: first, that Pompey is great but Caesar is greater; second, that, in the civil war, Pompey was the representative but not the true leader of the senatorial cause. In the *synkrisis* proper, Velleius

begins by comparing Caesar and Pompey but quickly shifts the comparison to set Caesar beside the Pompeians, quietly pushing Pompey out of range of his criticisms of Caesar's opponents. In this narrative, the real threat to Caesar is Pompey and the real obstacle to Caesar's greatness is...well, Pompey. Cato, as I mentioned above, is nowhere to be found, though he figures prominently as an opposing figure in other narratives of civil war involving Caesar.

Lucan's comparison of Caesar and Pompey also ignores the ideological opposition of republic versus monarchy—he admits that Pompey was just as thirsty for power as Caesar, so there is no difference there—in favor of comparing each man's skills as a military leader. Pompey is cast as a figure past his prime, a man of inaction; Caesar is quite the opposite: he is characterized by pure action. Just as Caesar and Cato represent political and ideological opposition, Caesar and Pompey represent two very different phases of one's career as a military leader; Caesar is a shooting star—or perhaps more like an apocalyptic meteor hurling toward earth?—but Pompey is in the twilight of his career. He, in fact, has turned from being a general to a politician who craves popular approval. He is, in short, no match for Caesar on the battlefield, yet this is precisely where he must face his former fellow Triumvir.

Unlike comparisons between Caesar and Cato, where one senses that the two men are different but equal or that Cato is a better man than Caesar, the comparisons between Caesar and Pompey are rather clear-cut. Ideological contention never arises between the two men; their conflict is always related to the battlefield. Moreover, certain key qualities are consistently assigned to Pompey: the desire to be first in Rome, which causes the conflict between the two men in the first place, boasting of his own power while downplaying Caesar's might, and the eventual (or swift) revelation that Pompey's boasts are empty. Pompey always turns out to be the loser in such a *synkrisis* with Caesar—a designation appropriate to his historical place as the

man who lost to Caesar in the civil war. Though authors certainly show sympathy for Pompey, seeing that he is consistently depicted as the lesser man next to Caesar makes the nearly unabashed favor bestowed on Cato, who also technically lost in his encounter to Caesar and whose consolation (if it could be called that) was that he denied Caesar the chance to grant him clemency, all the more striking. Though one cannot deny Caesar's historical victory on the battlefield, those who wish to question the benefits of Caesar's victory for Rome can set him against Cato on the ideological battlefield, where victory tends to be far less certain. In fact, I would even go as far as to say that the battlefield on which Caesar is nearly certain to lose is on the ideological battlefield against Cato, particularly in the Principate (Sallust leaves an open invitation to lean that way but the lack of definite answer shows that, at the very least, he isn't sure how things will turn out and who will prove to be better for Rome, if either man is "better" as a single entity). That Caesar is so frequently compared to Pompey or Cato (or both) shows that these two men not only represent Caesar's main opposition from the Senate but also, based on the qualities so often compared, each man represents a specific conflict: Pompey is paired with Caesar as his primary military foe yet Cato is Caesar's ideological opposition. Fitting, since Caesar himself uses Cato in the *Bellum Civile* as a foil for laying claim to some traits normally associated with a Stoic philosopher, such as *innocentia* and *constantia*.

#### **4.7 Caesar and Alexander the Great**

As the past studies have shown, Pompey and Cato are not the only figures juxtaposed with Caesar. We have seen that Caesar is often compared with Alexander the Great, particularly during the Principate. Because, as Diana Spencer has illustrated so well, Alexander is such a multivalent character in the Roman mind, authors will highlight qualities they feel are compelling and which align with their own aims when comparing the Macedonian and Roman generals, sometimes to Caesar's benefit and other times to his detriment.

In the *Historiae*, for example, Velleius sets Caesar next to Alexander in order to compare their military virtues. Caesar comes off rather well in this comparison; he possesses the best of Alexander's military skill without the licentious behaviors for which the Macedonian is criticized. Setting Caesar next to Alexander reinforces Velleius' portrait of the Roman general as the best of the Romans at that time—at least in terms of military prowess. The historian ignores features of the Alexander-portrait which might be less flattering to Caesar; some of those qualities appear in Lucan's comparison of Caesar and Alexander, however.

One other striking aspect of the comparison of Caesar and Alexander in the *Historiae* is that, when comparing the two men, Velleius passes over who would be, at first glance, the “more natural” figure to set next to Alexander: Pompey.<sup>248</sup> In addition to an already flattering comparison to Alexander, such a snub to Pompey further elevates Caesar in comparison to his rival. Perhaps in some ways the comparison to Alexander is, indirectly, also a comparison of Caesar and Pompey. As I suggested earlier, though Velleius clearly depicts Caesar as superior to his son-in-law, he is nonetheless hesitant to pair the two rivals in any direct comparison; in the formal *synkrisis*, for example, he carefully removes Pompey from the comparison before too long, preferring to compare the “Pompeians” and Caesar. In short, Alexander functions not only as a way to emphasize Caesar's military skill but also is, by passing over a comparison of Alexander and Pompey, another way the historian points to Caesar's superiority to Pompey.

Lucan shows how Alexander can be used either to praise or criticize other figures in the *Pharsalia* by using him as a reference point for two characters: Caesar and Cato. I will mention

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<sup>248</sup> Christopher Pelling (2011b, 27-28), though talking about Plutarch's choice to pair Alexander and Caesar, makes a strong argument for why one would pair those two rather than Pompey and Alexander. In short, though Pompey showed promise of being a second Alexander, in the end his career fell short of the mark, due in no small part to being defeated by Caesar. Caesar's military activities, attainment of near-monarchical power, and eventual deification, by contrast, presents a career far closer to Alexander's. cf. Green (1978).

the Cato/Alexander connection briefly at the end of this summary, but first let us look at how he pairs Alexander and Caesar, for his comparison of the two is far different from Velleius’.

Rather than embodying the standard for military excellence, Alexander exemplifies tyranny, uncontrollable vice, and undue divine worship when set next to Caesar in the *Pharsalia*. When the general visits Alexander’s tomb, the poet takes a moment to describe and rail against the deified tyrant, yet the charges he lays against Alexander also resonate with the portrait of Caesar found in the *Pharsalia*. Though Lucan’s Caesar never voices a desire to imitate Alexander—in fact, he shuns some of the Macedonian general’s activities, such as looking for the source of the Nile—nonetheless, it is obvious that, in the *Pharsalia*, Caesar is the next Alexander. However, unlike in Velleius’ account, the Alexandrian attributes assigned to Caesar are not complimentary.

Though Caesar’s portrait is further darkened through a comparison to Alexander in the epic, Lucan also uses the Macedonian general as a positive point of comparison. In book 9, Cato is filled with the spirit of Pompey and embarks with his army on an expedition across the African desert. The journey itself mimics a march taken by Alexander and, moreover, several of Cato’s deeds on the expedition highlight in the Stoic several praiseworthy Alexandrian traits. Moreover, Lucan praises Cato for actions that prove he is not Alexander, such as the philosopher’s refusal to consult the oracle at the temple of Jupiter Ammon, which Alexander visited to confirm his divine lineage. Likewise, when one of his soldiers finds some fresh water and offers Cato a sip first, he quenches the thirst of his men not by letting them drink before him (as Alexander reportedly did on a similar occasion) but by tossing the helmet of water and letting no one drink. The point of this action has been debated: some see it as Cato getting Alexander “wrong”, yet one can also see the action as testing Roman mettle: do the Roman soldiers really

need water or can they be true men and stand to go without? The answer, apparently, is meant to be the latter.

In short, Lucan deploys Alexander for two ends in the *Pharsalia*. He pairs Alexander with Caesar in order to denigrate the latter and to support his claim that Caesar's aim in the civil war was single man rule. When Cato imitates Alexander's journey across the African desert, however, we find Lucan using this journey to assign Alexander's best aspects as a general to Cato while having the Stoic shun other aspects, thus proving the superiority of Romans over other people in matters such as of self-control. The indirect comparison of Cato and Alexander comes to Cato's benefit; unlike in other depictions of Cato, where he is solely a doctrinaire figure, here he is assigned the qualities of a general, but not just any general: he is likened to one of the most highly regarded generals in history, just as Caesar was in Velleius' *Historiae*.

These different ways of pairing Alexander with Caesar (and the somewhat surprising pair of Alexander and Cato) show how one man can be presented in various lights in order to fit an author's needs. As I mentioned above, pairing Alexander and Caesar is fitting: both men were fashioned slightly differently in order to suit an author's aims. Often the goal in using Caesar in the first place were to shed some light on the current regime; certainly that is the case in the Principate, when the man who ruled Rome was called "Caesar," but I suspect that Sallust likely also had Octavian, who had recently taken up his adoptive father's name, in mind when he wrote about Caesar in the *Bellum Catilinae*.

#### **4.8 Caesar and Catiline**

One surprising find in this study is the close connection between Catiline and Caesar throughout several of these narratives. Caesar does not make any (discernible) reference to Catiline in the *Bellum Civile*, yet other authors have made connections between the two men, particularly when the author's outlook on Caesar's effect on Rome is arguably pessimistic. With

this in mind, it is unsurprising that the closest one comes to finding some Catiline in Caesar in Velleius Paterculus' narrative is their similar potential for great deeds. Instead, the more Catilinarian characters of the *Historiae* are those who contribute to Rome's ruin, such as Clodius and, more poignantly, Curio, the historian's firebrand for civil war. Just as Velleius maintains distance between Caesar and Cato in order to avoid praising one at the expense of the other, he likewise keeps associations between Caesar and Catiline to a minimum, lest Catiline's associations with monarchy, corruption, and ruin rub off on the *progenitor* of the line of new Republicans.

Sallust and Lucan, by contrast, do not eschew linking Caesar and Catiline. Sallust prefers to put some Caesar into his Catiline, though he keeps the relationship rather subtle, preferring to deploy these parallels via slogans and similar military opponents rather than draw explicit connections between the two men. The greatest concentration of parallels with Caesar's *Bellum Civile* occurs when Catiline speaks for himself and near the end of the monograph, when Sallust describes the fortitude of Catiline and his men in battle. The verbal and thematic connections between the two works present Catiline as a precursor to Caesar and, furthermore, Catiline's "war" as a prequel to (or perhaps miniature recreation of) Caesar's civil war. Moreover, Sallust's lack of closure at the end of his work, which is similar to the lack of ending found in Caesar's *Bellum Civile*, suggests that Rome has not seen the last of its civil wars. If the lack of closure suggests as much, Sallust is undoubtedly referring to Caesar's war, which followed the Catilinarian conspiracy, and perhaps even the looming civil wars fought by Antony and Octavian. The lack of closure could also point to Sallust's uncertainty that Caesar's war resolved the Republic's problems, just as nothing seems resolved by the faceoff between Catiline's army and the Senate's.

Lucan is more forthright when he connects Caesar and Catiline in the *Pharsalia*. Here we find that he seems to have put some—or perhaps a lot of—Catiline into Caesar. Not only does the general have Catiline’s great force of mind and body, he also possesses many of Catiline’s more villainous traits, such as being driven by passions (*furor* and *ira* in particular), a lack of endurance for peace, their shared desire for kingship (*regnum*), and leadership of a band of men who are fatally committed to their leader’s cause. If the connections in characterization were not enough, the poet further urges his audience to see Caesar as Catiline’s heir by having Pompey link Caesar’s actions to the (easily quashed) threat to Rome Catiline presented little more than a decade earlier. Later on in the epic, Lucan presents Catiline again in a scene where he cheers on Caesar from beyond the grave, gleeful at the sight of the crumbling republic.

Lucan’s digression in book 2 on the war between Marius and Sulla also strengthens the connection between Catiline and Caesar. Though it is not made explicit, most members of Lucan’s audience would be aware that Catiline was one of Sulla’s minions in that period and, as Sallust notes, several of Catiline’s co-conspirators were Sullan veterans. If they had a difficult time remembering, however, Lucan subtly reminds them by having Pompey mention Catiline in a speech to his troops within the same book. The poet also draws a connection between Sulla and Caesar by having the narrator of that civil conflict note that neither Caesar nor Pompey would be content with what Sulla had attained, thus implying that the featured war of the *Pharsalia*—the war between Caesar and Pompey—is similar to the war between Marius and Sulla, yet it is also worse than that war because the stakes are higher, which can only come a greater expense to Rome. Catiline and Caesar’s common connection to the war between Sulla and Marius is likely intentional; Caesar becomes not only Catiline’s successor, but both are Sulla’s heirs, thus creating a lineage of civil war.

The close connection between Caesar and Catiline in the *Pharsalia* would likely reflect criticism of the current Caesar, Nero. Though Lucan professes a time of peace under the current emperor's watch, one thing cannot be denied: Nero is reaping the benefits his predecessor fought for, namely, kingship. Furthermore, along with inheriting Caesar's name, Nero, one could assume, would also inherit some of his namesake's traits, much as we saw with Tiberius in Velleius' *Historiae*. Not many traits belonging to Lucan's Caesar are positive, implying that Nero would likely inherit (if not augment) the general's more Catilinarian qualities. Despite Lucan's lip service to better times under the current Caesar, it could be argued that the keen reader would know to look to Julius Caesar in order to build a portrait of his successor.

#### **4.9 Republic-saver vs. Republic-breaker: Caesar and the Principate**

One major recurring issue in these portrayals of Caesar, from the general's own account through Lucan's poetic rendering of events, is the effect of this war on Rome. In particular, every author asks the question: did Caesar help or hurt Rome? Caesar's answer to that question is, unsurprisingly, that he fought the good fight and strove to save the Republic from the ill-conceived designs of a few. Velleius does not deny that Caesar obtained more or less sole power after the civil war, but he came at a time when Rome needed strong leadership, which is what he intended to provide. Caesar is not presented as a tyrant and, in fact, Velleius highlights his generosity even after he had obtained victory in the civil war. For the *Historiae*, Caesar's civil war represents the beginning of a transitional period for Rome from the crumbling Republic before the period of civil war, when Rome was in need of a great leader, yet contention for that position was destructive rather than constructive, to the new, improved Republic led by men who embody Rome's greatest virtues.

Not everyone, however, sees Caesar's role in the civil war as one of attempted restoration. As the above discussion on Caesar and Catiline briefly hinted, Lucan's Caesar does

not take on the civil war in defense of Rome; rather he battles for supreme power. The poet repeatedly laments the loss of *libertas*—one of Caesar’s key slogans in the beginning of the *Bellum Civile*—and the destruction of the republic, for which the general is claimed to be responsible. The civil war at this time signifies a definitive break in Rome’s history, when it shifted from Republic to Principate. Consequently, Nero represents the form of government Caesar strove for: single-man rule. Unlike in Velleius, who presents the new form of government under Augustus and Tiberius as an improved form of the Republic and, accordingly, Tiberius as the ideal Republican, Lucan depicts Nero as nothing less than a monarch—a monarch who is to be worshipped, but still a monarch—and thus the civil war is the point at which Rome breaks from the Republic and its ideals, shifting into a new age with correspondingly different values.

Now that I have discussed the Imperial authors, let us turn back the clock to the Triumviral period. What about Sallust? He wrote on the cusp of the Principate, so what can we glean from him and how he relates civil war relates Rome’s history and welfare? Though Caesar is not fighting the war in the *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust still uses the general’s speech and description in the *synkrisis* to reconstruct the ideological conflicts between him and the Senate/Pompeians (here represented by Cato) at the end of the Republic. The conflict juncture is resolved peacefully for the time being through a debate and vote by the Senate, but Sallust offers hints throughout his comparison of Caesar and Cato that the differences are deeply embedded and will resurface later on. In fact, as Caesar presents himself as arguing for a course of action which he presents as being in Rome’s—or, in particular, the Senate’s—best interest, Cato’s rebuttal implies that Caesar’s proposal would ruin the state rather than save it by preserving evil men at the cost of destroying good ones.

Catiline and his war offer more insight into how far Rome has declined. He echoes the same slogans of *libertas* and release of the people and republic from the power of a few which Caesar expresses in the *Bellum Civile*, yet Sallust comments *in propria persona* that Catiline was shooting for kingship. The contradiction in word and (supposed) intent encapsulates Sallust's own uncertainty about Rome's future, namely whether the men fighting over it are truly fighting for the republic or whether they are, like Catiline, using nice-sounding slogans as a way to garner support for their true goal, which is to attain supreme power over Rome. Here, Catiline is a republic-breaker with the slogans of a republic-saver, a testament to the confusion of values and the divide between being and seeming in the Republic. His narrative enacts conflicts similar to the one presented between Caesar and Cato, but Catiline's occurs on a bloodier stage. Furthermore, whereas the audience receives very little information from Sallust on Caesar's "true" nature, he more readily reveals the discrepancies between Catiline's public persona and his more depraved, private nature. Such a complex character sketch warns the reader to be on the lookout for other men like Catiline, lest Rome falls into complete ruin at the hands of another Catiline.

#### **4.10 Caesar's *Bellum Civile* as a template for future portraits**

I would like to discuss one final point which, to my mind, is one of the most compelling aspects of the presentations of Caesar found in the texts produced between his death and the end of the Julio-Claudian era. Throughout this study, many common threads have appeared which run throughout the various portraits of Julius Caesar. These qualities and issues have been emphasized, downplayed, and outright twisted to suit the author's needs, but rarely are they absent. One can trace most of these common aspects to Caesar's self-portrait in the *Bellum Civile*. While I am not contending here that every author who depicts Caesar in civil war is necessarily using the commentaries as a source—though I think Sallust, Velleius, and Lucan

have shown themselves to be keen readers of Caesar, if not also of the other texts which have come before theirs, I do want to contend that Caesar's *Bellum Civile* and his self-portrayal in that work have served as a template which other authors re-mold (and even build on) to varying extents, according to how Caesar's presentation of himself, the nature of the conflict, and its effect on Rome resonates in their own age.

Sallust characterizes Caesar in two different ways, emphasizing the conflict between how he presented himself to others, identifiable in his speech and often corroborated in the *synkrisis*, and how others received and likewise presented him, which can be seen in Cato's speech and his responding characteristics in the *synkrisis*. His depiction of Caesar both mimics the general's self-portrait, yet it also unmask this portrait as a conscious act of self-fashioning that might not be congruent with reality. By casting a critical eye on Caesar's self-fashioning, Sallust invites the reader to be a critical judge of figures both inside of the *Bellum Catilinae* (such as Caesar and Catiline) and, perhaps, contemporary figures equally capable of harming or helping Rome, i.e., Octavian and Antony.

Velleius' portrait of Caesar, particularly in the sections on civil war, mirrors Caesar's own account extensively. In fact, in certain respects, the historian's account is even more flattering to Caesar than the general's own account. For example, Velleius is able to fast forward through unflattering sections of Caesar's fight or parts where he experienced an especially great amount of trouble, such as the protracted struggle at Massilia. Furthermore, we find in the *Historiae* an additional dimension in Caesar's portrait, namely, divinity—a subtle addition to be sure, but certainly present—which make his actions even more awe-inspiring. Staying true to the general's self-presentation also correlates to Velleius' contention that Caesar acted in Rome's best interests, offering reassurance that Caesar was not the threat to the state others felt him to

be. Furthermore, the civil war is not depicted as an event which causes a break from the Republic but as a transitional period into a more secure Republic led by none other than more “Caesars”: Augustus and Tiberius.

As chapter three illustrated, Lucan takes the template Caesar set out in the *Bellum Civile* and turns it on his head. Though he cannot outright deny many of the general’s more famous traits, such as his speed and clemency, he *can* (and does) twist them so as to make them nefarious instead of positive. The threat Caesar presented to the republic is much more tangible in Lucan, whose depiction of him is so similar to Sallust’s Catiline that the two seem practically related. Accordingly, Caesar’s war is represents a break from the Republic, particularly evidenced by Lucan’s panegyric to Nero, which makes no attempt to hide that the *princeps* is a regal figure, choosing not to present the emperor as the ultimate embodiment of the Republican values, as Velleius does with Tiberius. However, what concerns Lucan more—and this heavily influences how he shapes Caesar and the conflict—is his view on the great disruption in values, power relationships, perhaps even in the overall way of life caused by the civil war. Nero represents a new reality, the product of the first Caesar’s destruction of heaven and earth. Despite the flattering tones of the panegyric to the current Caesar, Lucan’s railing against Julius Caesar for causing such destruction drowns out the formal praise and compliments to the point that one wonders whether Lucan is railing only at (Julius) Caesar; perhaps, by the end of the poem, he rails at Nero, as well.

How civil war functions in Rome’s view of its history is a question without a single answer, just as the question of who Julius Caesar was—particularly in relation to the Republic—offers several possible responses. Each response both reacts to and further shapes the vision of what Rome is and the image of the Caesar who controls it. In the light of an ever-shifting

Caesar, who tries to save and destroy the Republic, is both excellent and dangerous, altruistic and selfish, a godsend and a demon, one cannot help but think that it reflects the constant negotiation of who his successor, the current Caesar, is in relation to Rome and what sort of power this man wields (or should wield).

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